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NEO-LIBERALISM AND CIVIL SOCIETY. SWEDISH EXCEPTIONALISM AND POLISH PLURALISM.

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Abstract:

Social science is a battle-field for concept formation. The Swedish case is peculiar. “Civil society” re-entered the scene as a neo-liberal and social conservative reaction against the social democratic ideology of the “strong state”, in which state and society were almost conceived of as synonymous.

The Swedish revival of an old concept evidently contrasts to the reception East of the Elbe in recent decades, where “civil society” often was seen as a label for grass-root social movements, independent of the state and the nomenklatura, in mal-functional regimes with low legitimacy and poor output.

This is lacking in the Swedish case, where we find a characteristic “merge” between the “top-down” and “bottom-up” perspectives.

“Real existing” civil society in Sweden has a long history *avant la lettre*. Self-organized initiatives were seeking support from the state – and often getting it - in some cases creating institutions that grew into the state agencies. Forestry, electrification and early social insurance provide examples with some variations in the interplay between state, market and society.

Civil society the Polish way displays a more complex pattern, where also Utopian elements play a significant role, in a situation with an open future. While Polish civil society in one of its incarnations, the Solidarity movement, has been extremely successful for its original purposes, it does not seem to offer the ideal design for improved polity and “good government” in the ongoing process of Modernization.

The role of chambers of commerce as “match-maker” in “commercial society” deserves scrutiny and is a virgin field of inquiry.

Such a comparative field study might add to our understanding of civil society, since its identification with the Solidarity-movement in recent decades has been an impediment to finding paths to prosperity and social peace, due to “negative politics”. A united front of disparate interests are good at articulating discontent, less functional in building an active civic culture. Mancur Olson is a recent classic author whose work maintains a high topical relevance.

Key concepts: **to be added.**

SVEN ELIAESON

**Part 1: SWEDISH EXCEPTIONALISM:
A STUDY IN THE CONCEPTUAL AND REAL HISTORY OF CIVIL
SOCIETY:**

Preamble:

The Swedish and Polish cases of civil society are by no means “communicating bowls” – but together they offer good objects (*wissenschaftliche Gegenstände*) for comparison, of contrasting cases.

Swedish civil society has deep roots in history, going back to at least late Medieval days. It has been formative for the way the relatively successful so called Swedish model has been designed, in the social engineering and piecemeal reforms during the period from the 1930 to the 1960s, with its consensual character and typical mixture of “bottom-up” and “top down” perspectives.

Polish civil society has become a momentous recent world-historical success, due to its “snowball”-effects, the people mobilizing against a regime with low legitimacy, eventually leading both to the hole in the iron curtain between Hungary and Austria, and *die Wende*, when the wall came tumbling down in Berlin.

Although self-organization in popular movements is a crucial element in both cases, the role of the state and the attitudes to the state and its bureaucracy differ, in terms of trust in impartial institutions.

Is there a Swedish model of civil society? Probably yes, although "in demise", relating to a drastic drop in membership for such civic associations as political parties, while other "special interest"-oriented associations have become increasingly "empty shells", raising questions if they really need their members. Yet Swedes do still have a relatively high degree of participation in various grass root associations; they are not "bowling alone".ⁱ

The notion of a peculiar Swedish version of "civil society" is a weak notion that calls for arguments. There are always similarities and differences between two or more items; in addition the notion of an exceptional case implies a nomothetic bias, that there is or should be a normal case. This has teleological and metaphysical implications that should rather be avoided.ⁱⁱ

Moreover, the rhetoric about "exceptionalism" or *Sonderweg* is something we find in very many places, only to mention the USA (S M Lipset) and Germany (Veblen, Barkin, Sheehan, Stern, Eley, Plessner, Kocka, etc). There is no primrose path to Modernity, peace and welfare. On the other hand, the variations seem to be relatively unaffected by the political and ideological factors.ⁱⁱⁱ Understanding political culture craves for long lines in history, looking for the future in roots since long past. Even if we don't find the independent variable, to use the language guise of quantitative method, comparisons are nevertheless meaningful, moreover being the method we normally have available in the humanities/social sciences. Since all nations are dinosaurs this calls for long lines in history and time relativism.

Sweden is very useful as a comparative case, due to its strategic mixture, from the point of view of applying canons for comparative analyses in the search for independent variables. It is the most Americanized country in the whole world, or at least in Europe (the Philippines might be even more Americanized). Yet the Swedish political culture is extremely different from the US case, regarding what the state should do and what ought to be public transfers or financed from our own pockets. Sweden is a highly centralized small homogenous and egalitarian peasant nation born out of taxation, pretty much the opposite to the USA in all these respects.^{iv}

Sweden displays some exceptional traits that deserve attention also regarding civil society, both concerning the conceptual history as well as the actual history.

In Europe - and one might even say universal discourse - the almost forgotten concept of *civil society* reentered the intellectual scene in the 1980s, following the ECE developments, originating in Poland. Solidarity movement was the only independent civic association East of the Elbe. It provided an example of civil society as a concept for

new social movements, characterized by civil disobedience against regimes, with a deficit of civil rights and democracy – and legitimacy. Latin America, in particular Brazil, is also mentioned, with several examples of corrupt regimes with low popular legitimacy, in which some monitoring of government was provided by new networks, with civil society as an old and revitalized label. Civil society might be rather impotent as an analytic or taxonomical concept but certainly has proved useful for generating debates, about what makes a society hang together and tick.^v

The conceptual history is rather complex and could take its point of departure anywhere between Aristotle and Hobbes (or Pufendorf, who stands for the diffusion of Hobbesianism), or the "republican" parts of Machiavelli's *oeuvre*. It is a good example of social science/thought as a battle-field of concept formation, important both for cognition and agenda setting. As the late F H Tenbruck noted, a century ago underdeveloped countries did not exist, instead we had "the white man's burden". Today we have a sudden oversupply of new or reborn concepts, such as globalization, risk society, glocalization, post-Modernity, "mixophobia", etc – not to forget civil society. This oversupply may reflect frustration in a social science community with low self-confidence, rather than a sudden increase in creative knowledge formation. Some of these concepts will survive. Other concepts such as class and nation are still going strong, but need monitoring for their cognitive relevance. They are still highly relevant, in particular if a trans-national comparative perspective applies historical relativism. In well-consolidated North West European welfare states they are decreasingly relevant after WW2.^{vi}

Probably four main definitions or clusters of definitions of civil society could be recognized. One is the **Scottish one**, born in Scottish Enlightenment, in which civil society is synonymous with bourgeois society or commercial society, sometimes "polished"^{vii} (civilized) society, in contrast to previous stages of human developments, of gathering, hunting, herding and agriculture. The market and private property is the core. Evidently there is a lot to it, from a historical point of view, while previous Hobbesian approaches are restricted to a rational reconstruction, explaining why the individual has to adjust to a peaceful coexistence in a legitimate order. This variation is the classical one that also dominates in neo-liberal usage.

It is a problem in the history of ideas why no breakthrough appeared in France, especially since there are links between Turgot and Adam Smith and many embryonic elements in the works of Montesquieu that would have made a French breakthrough rather natural. Instead Scottish Enlightenment and the various four stages theories

brought us both civil society and sociology. Since Saint-Simon/Comte continued a French tradition one possible explanation would be the inhibiting effects of Rousseau's Romantic anti-Enlightenment confusions and contradictions.^{viii}

There is evidently a high correlation between state, market and civil associations promoting democracy - or at least a constitutional order (*Rechtstaat*). It is a paradox that the anonymous mechanism of the market stimulates both (limited) state power and generates a lot of human interaction, both in trade (less surprising) and in clubs of various sorts, just as Tocqueville and later Max Weber noticed during their American travels. Market and democracy is a tricky field. It appears that all democratic states employ the market system, but there are evidently also market systems without democracy. In one way the market appears as a threat to democracy, since decisions are made outside the representative democratic decision making polity. Yet the market provides a basis for the revolt of the masses against the elites, in terms of free choice, of nutrition for instance, or many allocation decisions of goods, where centralized decisions simply tend to become clumsy and dysfunctional.^{ix}

We can also recognize a **Hegelian** definition, in which the state has a certain primacy. We avoid the "iceberg" of closer scrutiny of the Hegelian case, except for noting that independent of what distinctions Hegel makes between state and civil society, there is a strong state idealist bias in his approach, which is less intrinsically interesting to us, although of course a nice example of the seminal contextualist element in conceptual history, since state idealism has more fertile soil in nations without states, or strong states with undefined nations. It is not by chance that liberal doctrines develop in countries with a relatively well established state power and calculability in the legal system (although we have a so called England-problem here, which is to some extent also a USA-problem, about the legal framework, which deviates from systematic Roman law).

We can also see a **"Polish definition"**, meaning civil disobedience and protest movements against regimes with low legitimacy. This definition was embraced by a number of - often Californian - sociologists traveling East of the Elbe in the wake of 1989, but also cultivated by local scholars.^x There is a further elaboration of this type in second part of this paper.

We can also speak of a **"Greek" or communitarian or perhaps Habermasian-conservative** variation, with focus on local self-determination. Alan Wolfe is one prominent exponent for this approach, synthesizing Greek elements with Habermas's ideas about the need for *Lebenswelt* regaining ground from a suffocating *Systemwelt*.

Despite the fact that both Hegel and Habermas are pretty much "dead dogs" in Swedish discourse, the Swedish case nevertheless unites traits from both the Hegelian

and Habermasian/conservative/Greek modalities, while the Polish type is almost absent and the Scottish one rather neglected, despite its central role in intellectual history.^{xi} Uncontrolled but trusted expertise can unpunished tell us what is good for us, for instance to "eat six to eight slices of bread every day" and to forbid the old sport of professional boxing, etc. There is a perhaps naïve trust in state agencies as well intended and at our service.^{xii}

The classical Scottish definition also makes us face problems that remain unresolved. Doesn't the market have an inhuman deforming and corrupting influence on us as human beings? ("Shop until you drop"-syndrome; manipulated "market-soldiers" substituting consuming real life by pseudo-experiences, also including watching reality shows on TV, becoming soccer-hooligans, attending so called bingo-lotteries, etc). Social psychological research is called for, and has begun, yet in relatively modest scale. I have particularly in mind Erich Fromm and Robert Lane.^{xiii}

In Sweden, as a contrast to the ECE-countries, the concept of civil society entered the scene about 15 years ago, as part of a neo-liberal and social conservative reaction against the social democratic rhetoric about the strong society, or the strong state, as supportive of the weak individual. The very lack of a distinction between state and society in Swedish consciousness was one point of departure for this anti-socialist offensive.^{xiv} There are a number of interesting paradoxes involved. If the general picture is that scholars in the USA and Europe try to re-conquer the concept from the neo-liberals, in Sweden the neo-liberals won on "walk over" and the *concept* of civil society as such was uncontested as it was shaped by the antisocialists, as indicating a mediating sphere between the state and the "small context" with interpersonal ties, be it households or individuals interacting in clubs/civil associations, parishes.

"Less state, more civil society" could be a slogan for this reaction against centralized state power and excesses in "speed blind" large scale solutions, already criticized by Gunnar Myrdal, in his book from the early 1980s, on How is the country ruled? (*Hur styres Landet?*).^{xv}

There is a certain resemblance between the way the "right" (whatever that concept today is supposed to denote) managed to hegemonize the concept of civil society and the way the social democratic leader Per Albin Hansson in the late 20s managed to take over the concept of *Folkhemmet* (the people's home, *Volksheim/Volksgemeinschaft*), which was launched by the social conservative or radical conservative Rudolf Kjellen.^{xvi} The concept has a rather unclear provenance but I think Norbert Gótz (2001) might represent the last word.

Anti-socialist is a better term than neo-liberal, since one of the many paradoxes in recent Swedish conceptual history is the unholy "marriage" between neo-liberals and conservatives, in which the problem-nexus "Less market, more civil society" for some time remained a tacit dimension, a neglected complication, that both state and the market could damage civil society. The Swedish-American sociologist Hans Zetterberg's leading and bridge-building role provides one possible explanation. He managed to sit on two chairs, or rather that the neo-liberals tried to; Zetterberg being pretty consistent, as a Swedish "Charles Murray". Zetterberg emphasized the small-scale context and the compassionate dimension, of love and personal concern. The state is more of a machine or an automat, to which no personal ties of responsibility or accountability really apply, while family or parish somehow promotes reciprocity and solidarity, which has gone lost in the process of growth in a top-heavy public sector.^{xvii} It is also easier to cheat the system than your neighbours, in terms of for instance calling in sick when really rather being lazy and irresponsible. *Der innere Wächter* or the internalized Martin Luther needs some help of social control, which calls for a smaller context and less anonymity, to check that you are not "cultivating your garden" when you are supposed to be in bed with fever.

Another factor is institutional, that the private City University in Stockholm hosted both conservative and neo-liberal reactions against the social state (welfare state, *Sozialstaat*). That is also where Zetterberg and his wife located their project.^{xviii}

However, the successful hijacking of the concept by no means meant that the neo-liberals and/or anti-socialists won the debate as such, about the proper balance between state, market and (civil) society. At least on the scholarly level this discussion, about the design of the welfare state and its institutions and principles for (re)distribution, employed the famous "Titmussian triad", or its more ideologically colored "regime"-re-conceptualization by Gösta Esping-Andersen.^{xix}

It would be exaggerated to suggest that Sweden was unaffected by the general neo-liberal wave. The market mechanism came into use as an indicator, albeit fictive, also in public services and privatization in various forms became fashionable and increasingly also practiced, in the form "contracting out", franchising, etc. Hospital patients became "customers" or clients. It remains as a dominant impression that this was more noise than deeds and also had other reasons, such as Machiavellian decentralization of decision making in times of scarcity and cost elimination. It illustrates the decrease in state level relevance, that much of the topics on the national political agenda in election times really were about decisions that have to be made on the local or regional level, as

the social state is organized in Sweden, with local government taxation financing education and health care, etc.

It remains a main impression that neo-liberalism simply is un-Swedish and alien to the Swedish political culture, even if even the social democrats at some point two decades ago were enough affected by fancy pre-dominantly neo-liberal yuppie-culture to initiate a certain flirtation with this group in the electorate. This weak basis for neo-liberalism is further indicated by the aftermath of the neo-liberal wave, which in Sweden seemed to result in an increased interest for the communitarian alternative, as a pragmatic synthesis. This is furthermore indicated by the renaissance for traits in common to socialism and conservatism. A re-evaluation of Rudolf Kjellen is part of this nexus. So is the interesting fact that main combatants in the defense or attacks vis-a-vis the large public sector independent of each other displayed a certain positive curiosity about communitarian strands of thought. They might have very condescending things to say about each other, but are clearly more cautious in what they say about for instance Robert Putnam, Etzioni or Sandel. One might speak about a convergence once the heated ideological confrontation had peaked.^{xx} One might also add that communitarian notions about *Lokalvernunft* as a pragmatic solution to value-incommensurability “polytheist” problem in post-Enlightenment harmonizes well with the tradition of Scandinavian legal realism, the legal positivists in the wake of the so called Upsala school of value nihilism, with Axel Hägerström as prophet and Gunnar Myrdal, Alf Ross and Karl Olivecrona as (some of) the apostles.^{xxi}

Sweden provides a case of "real existing civil society" *avant la lettre*. What is so typical for the Swedish case is private local initiatives seeking state support - and getting it. This is the way Sweden becomes electrified and the way our forests became better cultivated, in a more sustainable manner.^{xxii} This is the way loan and saving banks are created. This is the way early insurance systems emerge. There is little apathy and lots of enthusiasm for modernization from below, bottom-up, soon growing into the state apparatus, with its surveillance and top down perspective. This merge between top down and bottom up is perhaps not exceptional for Sweden, but typical and pronounced, arguably its most typical trait.^{xxiii} In addition local government craved for citizens with citizen creed, simply needed people to fill in all functions. (This has changed, due to local government reforms and rationalization, in two waves, 1952 and the 1960s [decision taken 1962], bringing down local government from around 2500 to below 300).^{xxiv} A high level of literacy, even long before the school reform decision of 1842,^{xxv} and the immense role for mobilization and participation of various popular people's movements created a political

culture of active responsibility and accountability, which managed to accommodate with a strong central bureaucracy, which had survived a number of radical constitutional shifts, representing continuity.^{xxvi}

The roots and reasons are to be found in Swedish history, going back even to Medieval times, as indicated by research by Eva Österberg and others.^{xxvii} The peasants in Sweden felt that they had a stake in the running of the government – and to some extent they had. The land-owning and tax-paying peasantry formed a recognized political force very early, although it remains a matter of controversy when they in a formal sense became an estate in the Swedish parliament.^{xxviii} Between one third and half of the land was in the hands of self-owning tax paying peasants, although the legal regulations for title to land might have varied somewhat and has a complicated history and sometimes was a matter of conflict.

The word for peasant in the Swedish language (*bonde*) has no genuine correspondence in other languages. It has very positive connotations and denotations, of pride and self-reliance, which one does not find in other languages, where villain, peasant, farmer, Bauer, etc, often has a slightly condescending scent to it. Something very important here gets lost in translation. The Swedish peasants also had a long tradition of local self-determination and "freedom". Whatever that concept might mean in Medieval days, it might at least refer to the fact that Swedish peasants were never fully feudalized. There is also a mythical tie between king and people, reflected also in the right of the citizens, including the peasants, to "write to the king" (so called *supplikrätt*, in Swedish), a petition right that was also exercised in Baltic Swedish territories, such as Estonia. The king was seen as "First peasant". It is less important if these images about local self-determination and peasant power capability in conjunction with the king is myth or reality. It is to quite some extent "invented tradition", by 19th century patriotic national "liberal" history writing, with its recurrent criticism of the nobility. The myth had some reality to draw on and had a legitimacy function and was "live myth", a useful fiction. There are several indications of this. High nobility might have been powerful during the great Power period, especially during the reign of Queen Christina, but certainly had "bad press" in Sweden. But actually already Gustaf Vasa – Sweden's "Kemal Atatürk" or "Jozef Pilsudski" - had to depend on the nobility in his power balance act. His grandson Gustavus Adolphus even had to make major concessions to the higher nobility, to secure his throne (King Zygmunt in Cracow was the legal heir to the throne). This, however, does not really alter the dominant stereotype of king and people keeping the nobility on "short leash". As demonstrated in Eva Österberg's research the mental structure of the

late Medieval peasant village with its combination of solidaristic egalitarianism and envy is an embryo for the design of the 20th century welfare state.

Moreover, Sweden is one of the few places in Europe where the peasants actually won during the many uprisings in late Medieval days. It happened also in Dithmarschen (part of Schleswig-Holstein) and Switzerland, but while Wilhelm Tell is mythical Sweden was indeed ruled by Engelbrekt Engelbrektsson for about two years (1434-1436), until he was assassinated by a nobleman and became a martyr.^{xxix} And in the Swedish state-formation as reflected in the educational indoctrination, Gustaf Vasa's adventures in Dalecarlia, seeking popular support among the peasants for the national Swedish project and breaking out of the Nordic union, overshadowed his later brutal assaults, punishing grass root reactions among the peasantry against his methods of taxation. Peder Svart's chronicle is not exactly unbiased, yet live memory still today. Every Swedish school pupil has heard of Gustaf's adventures in Dalecarlia and how the peasants from Mora finally offered their support for his insurgency against the (Danish) union king Christian "The tyrant".^{xxx}

Swedish political culture is still today much imprinted by Gustaf Vasa ("an economic success and a cultural catastrophe", referring to effective taxation registers of all estate owners, the so called *Jordabok* of 1542, and destruction of many cultural treasures in Catholic monasteries) and Axel Oxenstierna (the idea about non-partial state officials), far more than most Swedes are aware of. We have here a main source for a main characteristic of the Swedish welfare state and its public sector, a relatively^{xxxii} high propensity to pay taxes, even if with a certain masochist chill.

There are other factors that deserve mentioning. One specific circumstance was that sons of peasants could study and become priests, which cultivated this let's say "intimacy" or partnership between rulers and ruled. The priests were the voice of the central power, and not that rarely the priest was "one of us". The mansion of the priest was the local power centre and the priest normally chaired the meetings of the local government council. In addition the priests were themselves literally speaking peasants, since part of their salary was a homestead, which they could either cultivate themselves or lease to a tenant. They were in addition also public servants, already in their capacity of priests, and not infrequently priests' sons became high state officials, so there is a ladder for class circulation, from peasant, to priest and to *Beamter* (state official).^{xxxiii} The contrasts provided by the peasant legacy in Sweden are pretty clear to countries such as Poland, where the history of self-determination in Modern times is pretty short, or Russia, where the Soviet full scale experiment in expert rule was pretty hostile to

spontaneous civil society manifestations, which, moreover, had a pretty poor seedbed in the lethargy in the wake of the *semstvo*- and *mir*-traditions.

It has actually even been suggested that the self-owning peasants in Sweden had in effect as much of political rights as the poorer nobility in Poland, although *szlachta zagrodowa* has a value system in common with the high nobility (David Kirby 1990). It might be an exaggeration – but a telling one.

There is in addition to the free peasant mythology another tradition, which contributes to the negotiated order and consensus-climate, but more from the top down perspective, i.e. the “feudal capitalism” in especially iron industry, before it becomes large scale. The word *bruk* is another of those terms that have very typical denotations and connotations that simply get lost in translation. The literal and “flat” translation could be plant or factory, but it means a place where the owner family and workers live in a sort of community generation after generation. It is not market capitalism, since the owner has a responsibility for the welfare of his community, no “outsourcing” on the decision agenda.^{xxxiii} The existence of this type of community is less specific for Sweden, only to mention *Fuggerei* in Augsburg and Marienthal (today part of Graumatneusiedl). It is part of the background of Swedish consensus climate and class compromise.

The cooperative network economy that was cultivated in the *bruk*-ambience is worth more research; to elucidate how the transformation into modern Swedish welfare *Folkhem* took place.^{xxxiv} It is an important piece in the puzzle.

Swedish social engineering has thus been historically well prepared for its strange merge between top down and bottom up. The long background of the peasants’ (feeling of) having a stake in the running of the state, as an integrated political force, is also the reason for a certain blindness for the so called free rider problem in modern welfare states and the trust in institutions that is more of a deficit in most comparable countries.^{xxxv}

It is probably a fair judgment to say that the civil society has been penetrated by the state in Sweden. Forestry is one good example. Local initiatives to improve knowledge and promote sustainable and responsible cultivation interplayed with a bureaucratic expert organization, with a united front against “big capital”. When a small-scale forest-owner deal with "Skogsvårdsstyrelsen" (forest cultivation agency) there is a live legacy that it is not Big brother's eye but to some extent my own – and my neighbors’.^{xxxvi} One of Zetterberg’s main observations was that the Swedish social insurance design is so individualistic, meaning that it enables for instance mothers without husbands to enter or remain in the workforce and to exit ingrown paternalistic family contexts, to recast their life and achieve “self-realization”. Conservatives inspired

by *The Public Interest* and Charles Murray might object that it is rapidly eroding a basic social institution, leading to family decline and a lot of social problems, frustrated children, etc. Ideological preferences might vary but the effects are rather obvious. One effect is that the individual getting support from the state to pursue his/her own life also becomes dependent.

There are reasons to be on the alert against teleological and apologetic interpretations of the Swedish case. Any account of roots might invite to "Whiggish" interpretations, especially since the Swedish system has been very successful in many ways, with the social democrats as "whigs". But there is no determinism involved. There are many alternatives in history. Above account only indicates that the development that actually did result was deeply embedded in long historical traditions. It remains nevertheless a historical problem why the Swedish way differed so much from the Swiss way; both countries have a lot of similar historical preconditions, including the religious factor – and a nature that makes feudalization a hard task. Both countries have been rather successful, but with different polity designs.

The long term traditions also indicate why Sweden hardly is a model to copy. To a liberal, moreover, the Swedish case must appear as a dystopia, with its authoritarian and top-down traits, even more pronounced through Lutheran social reform creed, with its almost totalizing Saint-Simonian Enlightenment reason. The Myrdals' social engineering provides good examples of this. Roland Huntford's book on "the blind totalitarians" might be much exaggerated, but has a kernel of truth, in the sense that Swedes seemingly are happily unaware of the dangers of Rousseauan "populism", that democracy has a totalitarian element and is to some extent opposed to liberty. One might say that Sweden, even formalized in the constitution from the 1970s, is too much a ("monistic") democracy but hardly a full-fledged *Rechtstaat*. The Swedish constitution would be totally unfit for let's say Belgium, or Germany – or Bosnia. There is, furthermore, no tradition of law review in Sweden and the judiciary is not independent but seen as a part of the administration (which is though, must be added, fully independent of the government cabinet). Minority rights and even individual rights are not as strong as in more liberal and less democratic systems, like the constitutional order of the USA, where legitimacy rests on the individual and John Locke is still going strong.^{xxxvii} Furthermore, there is no constitutional court, since it would violate the sovereignty of the people in parliament assembled. But we do have a deeply rooted "nämndemannahkultur" (a culture of laymen in the court system), as Gunnar Myrdal characterized it in the 40s. That Sweden is – historically – a small and homogeneous peasant-state, with a lot of solidarity – and envy

– is a main source for peculiarities in the Swedish modality of civil society. Today Sweden is of course rather multi-cultural, but hundred years ago it was as homogenous as Poland is today (about 98 percent of the population of “ethnic” majority stock; I put “ethnic” within quotation marks, since the provenance of the term is somewhat opaque).

Regional cleavages are normally not capitalized in politics, despite the fact that there are some such gulfs, although certainly much less than in regional and federal Germany. One only has to look at the electoral map of recent EU-referenda to realize that there is a gulf between backward Northern territories and the big city regions and the Europe oriented South. Sweden might indeed historically be a small and centralized homogeneous peasant country - mainly.^{xxxviii} But we have our Tornedalen, and greater Scania (including the landscapes of Blekinge and Halland) having their own identities and centrifugal powers.^{xxxix} The same is true of landscapes such as Dalecarlia (Dalarna) and Värmland. In general, local patriotism is not much of a factor in political life where electoral geography plays little role. There is no serious separatism anywhere. And no *Weißwurstäquator*.^{xl}

An almost amusing example of the tacit corporatism in the small and homogeneous peasant state and the merge between top-down and bottom-up is that the Sami people representation (*Sametinget*) in fact also is part of the Swedish state administration (see Vasara-Hammare 2002), to some extent functions as a state agency, despite extremely important lawsuits between the Swedish crown and the Sami people, about who owns the mountains up North, including many iron ore rich areas. Independent of what the court decisions might be, one can safely predict that the original Sami-owners won't take over the iron ore fields in Lapelonia (Lapland). A consensual solution “the Swedish way” is anticipated.^{xli}

Another corporatist-promoting peculiarity (shared with several continental powers, but distinguishing us from Anglo-Saxon tradition) is that civil servants are eligible to run for public office and for instance get elected to parliament, where they, for instance, as teachers decide on money for education, etc. The idea that they sit on two chairs and have a self-interest, in budget-decisions etc, seems to be absent. The typical defence is that it is part of the Swedish consensus climate, to take responsibility on various levels.^{xlii}

To a pure-hearted socialist Sweden must appear as a strange hybrid (middle-way, “third way”), since the revisionist class compromise resulted in a system with socialized

consumption and monopoly capitalism in good consensual cooperation, with a high degree of involvement of organized interests, first the blue collar workers, followed by white collar workers. It is sometimes suggested that in some respects the Swedish case appears as a wet dream of Mussolini, i.e. a successful corporatist and rather egalitarian nation state, with consensus and class compromise replacing the spell of socialist revolution. In a way this is - cognitively - true, if we manage to neglect ideological associations. One way to put it is that the Swedes very seriously and in strict democratic forms did what the Italian fascists only pretended that they were doing.^{xliii}

Yet another illustration of Swedish corporatism is *Folkets hus* (Casa del popolo, [Peggy Kuhn-ref in]) where sometimes the formal power even becomes tenant of the people movement, when the local government council has its headquarter in *Folkets hus*.

To the communitarians the Greek city state, Swiss *Kanton*, or US local government traditions apply better; here Sweden rather provides fertile soil for missionary endeavours, due to the stalemate between liberals and socialists in civil society controversy. But Swedish traditions imply ready soil.

That the Swedish system nevertheless enjoys a high legitimacy and consent is due to long traditions promoting participation and trust in institutions. The relations between civil "promoting associations" and institutions call for further empirical and historical research. On a theoretical and heuristic level game theory and Mancur Olson's thinking about collective vs individual rationality might be helpful. Rational choice plus history is a nice combination, which we find already in Max Weber's critical scrutiny of Eduard Meyer.^{xliiv} Solidarity and democracy can hardly be deduced from the point of view of individual rationality. Yet it exists and is increasingly popular, in a world wide perspective.

In the Polish case, as a contrast, the Solidarity movement as a conglomerate of interest groups were successful in articulating discontent with a dysfunctional and corrupt system – but apparently is not ideally designed for furtherance of common goals and values (*Gemeinwohl*).

One root of modern Sweden that deserves mentioning, although we don't penetrate this topic, is the parliamentary experience in the Era of liberty.^{xliv} It is remarkable that Sweden actually had sort of parliamentarian rule already in the 18th century, with parties in parliament, especially considering that the breakthrough to modern mass democracy and equal franchise was late, half a century later than for instance in Prussia. A cynical observer might of course claim that this proto-parliamentarianism – just like in the British case – was really a system of bribery, that

power holders bought support from members of parliaments, which is the origin of party groups and parliamentary system. Towards the end of the period it was actually parliamentarianism, and shifts in power no longer motivated in judicial terms.^{xlvi}

To a foreigner it might appear as peculiar that there is little constitutional debate, nor much of serious security policy debate, not as issues on the political agenda.^{xlvii}

Some “community of assumptions” not only over the rules of the power game but also concerning belonging and community supposedly promotes cohesiveness and civility. There might be a certain frustration over lost sense of identity in Sweden, although this should not be exaggerated. Belonging somehow implies exclusion and Sweden is after all a country without deep tensions. But on the other hand a community without a purpose or common goal might start to erode and disintegrate. Again, a sense of proportion suggests that we should not exaggerate this threat; after all, talk about “atomization” and dissolution of natural bounds in “industrial society” has been going on for two centuries and even very rootless societies such as California seemingly hang together. It is easier to preserve national unity and social peace in a consensus-oriented homogeneous state, compared to, let's say, India or Canada. Sweden as such might lack a goal except for the trivial but crucial ones of welfare and stability. John F Kennedy's old imperative “ask what you can do for your country” would sound strangely odd in modern Swedish ears. But there are no major divides.^{xlviii} Things could be worse.^{xlix} We don't even have much of a tension between generations, since it is a general consensus that those generations once building our welfare deserve their fair share of wealth, health service, etc.¹

Swedish real existing civil society is historically linked to nation-building, in odd contrast to the self-image in Sweden in post-WW2-era.

It should also be noted that Sweden is a country "in the centre of the periphery" with a deficit of Enlightenment, yet quite a lot of Enlightenment reason in the formative years of social engineering 1930-1960, with "rationalizing intellectuals" in close conjunction with the political power.^{li} The Myrdals again being very good examples, both making double careers and becoming members of the Swedish government.

It would be misleading to conclude from previous reflections that the Swedish way is the “constructive” and responsible one, while the Polish model of civil society is the anarchistic and irresponsible. The models serve different purposes and are products of the historical determinants in respective political culture. The Swedes have just like the

Germans “never chopped off a king’s head” and had no real revolution since 1434 (1809 was a bourgeois *coup d’etat* and Gustaf Vasa’s independence war in the early 1520s a rather complex story with several conflicting interests involved, with Swedes on both sides). However, the Swedish model (of civil society) is evidently instrumental in promoting the infrastructure that made “Sweden Inc.” a historical success story.

On the eve of post-Westphalian Europe one might note that the Polish way also has been extremely successful, in eroding the legitimacy of a dysfunctional regime. Evidently it offers no optimal prescription for “beyond” or “towards the future”, which also Solidarity’s charismatic leader Walensa clearly saw early on. Yet both models answer to the core intention of “civil society”, namely self-organization (Kocka 2001).

What to be done, research-wise, and what can we learn? The latter question I leave to others – it depends on perspective/interest - but I would suggest that what we can learn *from* is long term historical factors, for better or worse. And that Swedish exceptionalism in the conceptual history of civil society as well as real existing civil society calls for further research, following up on "främjandesällskap" (promoting associations), social movements, and collective memory.^{lii} In particular rewarding would studies of early social insurance initiatives, forestry cooperation and electrification in the countryside be. This is a reasonable forecast, not an established fact. To quite some extent it might be a matter of scrutinizing old substance from new vantage points. There might be a whole lot of historical research already done, on for instance “promoting associations” between the private and the public. Re-conceptualized interpretive schemes or even theories might contribute to cumulative – perhaps even testable – knowledge formation. One might also speculate that combining research from the historical departments and the KTH (“Kungliga Tekniska Högskolan”, the technical university in Stockholm) might prove seminal, to throw light upon civil society and infrastructure development.

One example of how old wine could serve well in new skins is the research program of Professor Skytteanus Carl Arvid Hessler, launched in his inaugural speech in Upsala from 1947, where called for an approach that had a wider empirical referent than the political institutions of parliament, government and parties. His pupils produced a

number of “The State and...”... dissertations, on the state and the iron fields up North, the state and the allocation of institutions for higher learning, the state and the water powers, etc, etc. Focus is more on the state than on civil society but provide an immensely huge empirical material, thorough idiography, which could be re-interpreted in the light of the debate in recent decades.

There are anomalies. Swedish religious non-conformists function more like in the Polish case, in effect contributing to an associational culture that facilitated the breakthrough to modern mass democracy, following a couple of decades of bad atmosphere in the country, uneasiness over the new organization of a conscript army in a Swedish *Obrigkeitsstaat* (“one man, one rifle, one vote” was a slogan in the democratization process leading up to the 1907-09 compromise), resulting in mass emigration to the USA, the largest people’s movement in Swedish history. Because of the consensus bias in my account it must be mentioned that the conservative paternalistic rule in Sweden was not lockstepping with the demands of modern mass democracy and the period between let’s say 1880 and 1909 more characterized by class conflict and stalemate than consensus and cooperation. Although there is a clear “merge” in Swedish political culture between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, to employ Tönnies’s terminology, this does not exclude that the great transformation to industrialized mass society also in Sweden had its “bottle-necks”. It appears, however, as a relatively smooth process, with two new elites in politics and economy soon learning to co-operate, in an intertwined simultaneous process of constitutionalism and democratization, which also explains the relative absence of a crucial distinction in Swedish political life, between *Rechtstaat*, constitutional order, and democracy.

Of course the labor movement drew momentous straws to the same stack, although the difference compared to Poland is that they – political and trade union branches - early on behaved as if they had read Mancur Olson, before his main works were written.^{liii} Mancur Olson in fact refers to Sweden as a deviant case, concerning the fiscal stress caused by special interests. The main and dominant Swedish labour union (LO) felt a responsibility for the society as a whole, and behaved accordingly.^{liv} When the big labor union shifted to imposing their program through legislation in the 1970s the cooperative spirit vanished and the Swedish model of consensus was replaced by so

called block politics and ideological confrontation. This has changed again, but that is an altogether different story.^{lv}

This part of the paper –Swedish case in focus - has no real punchline. A brief summary could be that the neo-liberals won the conceptual battle - but not the related debate on the optimal relation between state, market and civil society; rather merely somewhat altering the state centered understanding of “society” in Sweden, which has very deep roots and display a peculiar mixture of “top-down” and “bottom-up”, obedience and self-reliance.

Some limitations with the long lines in history should, however, be mentioned. They are telling and there is a deficit in our awareness of them, especially in Sweden, less so in Central Europe (*Mitteleuropa*). But they don't really exhaust the search for explanations and there are some obvious methodological problems. Sudden shifts such as *die Wende* 1989 make the long lines and their lingering strength visible, but one cannot really say that the long lines explain why 1989 happened precisely 1989. We need to supplement by the dull idiographic “jurisprudence” approach: “What lead up to this event?” Pure long term historical *Entäusserungen* don't easily live up to Popperian criteria of falsifiability.

The focus on long lines in the Swedish case might bring with it a harmonizing or idyllic bias. However, although the consensual element is important and the sense of belonging in the *Volkshelm* genuine, it nevertheless appears as reasonable to suggest that Swedish nation-building is shaped also by violence and war, in combination with taxation and national Bible translation.^{lvi}

Sidonia Jedrzejewska

Part 2: “REPORT FROM THE FIELD”: Chambers of Commerce and Industry - Between Civil Society and Market? Comparing Poland and Sweden

For an outsider an immediate association of Poland and civil society is the Solidarity movement of the 1980's and its contribution to the ending of the Cold War.

This association have been supported and promoted by the Polish intellectuals. Bronislaw Geremek describes the concept of civil society used by the Solidarity as “a program of resistance to communism”¹.

Disobedience towards the illegitimate state was the core of the Polish understanding of the concept of civil society.

More facts - the split within the Solidarity movement, on one had entering into governmental circles and on the other contesting the state. Finally this was the reason for the split

Solidarity movement was much more complex and heterogeneous that it seemed to be at the time of its dissident situation.

I would wish to introduce to the paper the problem of the Olson-style problems of collective action particularly present in the atomised landscape of business association in Poland.

The fashionable concept of civil society has enjoyed enormous interest among social sciences and maybe seen as part the eternal quest for a better society. This paper does not have an ambition to reconstruct the history of the term², neither it proposes a revolutionary definition. Rather it attempts to understand chambers of commerce and industry with the use of selected theories of the civil society and collective action.

Why do chambers, as non-for-profit associations of enterprises, exist at all? Why enterprises belong to them? Why individuals get involved and participate? What are the chambers' organisational forms? What functions do they perform? Can the chambers be analysed as civil society organisations?

Obviously the size of this discussion paper makes it impossible to go deep into any of these question, but rather aims at generating certain hypotheses based on experimenting of placing chambers in the context of theorising on civil society.

¹ Geremek, Bronislaw Lecture at the National Humanities Centre, November 1991
<http://www.nhc.rtp.nc.us/publications/civilsoc/civilsoc.htm>.

² For the introduction to the history and evolution of the concept of civil society see: Zivilgesellschaft in historischer Perspektive. Jürgen Kocka in: *Forschungsjournal Neue Soziale Bewegungen*, 2003. On the peculiarities of the German case see Jürgen Kocka, "The difficult rise of a civil society: societal history of modern Germany", in: Mary Fulbrook (ed.), *German History since 1800* (London: Arnold, 1997), pp.493-511

The approach applied in this paper follows the postulate of Dieter Gosewinkel to ask how is civil society possible instead of asking what is civil society³. Moreover Gosewinkel calls for historical contextualisation of the research on the civil society. This paper does not have the second advised focus, but rather introduces a comparative perspective of present national projects of civil society. Civil societies, despite visible exceptions, are still mainly nation-state projects.⁴ The cases analysed in this study are chambers in Germany, Sweden and Poland.

Civil society, state, economy and associations of enterprises

The debate on the civil society has been very intensive and closely linked to the macrochanges in modern societies; as Jean Cohen and Andrew Arato state:

“The concept of civil society, in a variety of uses and definitions, has become quite fashionable today, thanks to struggles against communist and military dictatorships in many parts of the world.”⁵

If we assume that the re-birth of the concept was inspired by the fall of the communist regimes in the 1980's and the 1990's, we can see its opposition to the state as the prime feature - as its key characteristics. Where the (totalitarian) state is the evil, there the civil society is the light in the tunnel, or even as Krzysztof Michalski wrote “the name for the human dreams.”⁶

Indeed civil society often is defined in the opposition to the state. It might be even said that defining civil society as different from the state is the only un-debated element in the conceptualisations of civil society both in historical perspectives and in today debates.

There are however controversies around inclusion or exclusion of other spheres, such as family and household, market, economy into the realm of civil society.

With the triad of civil society, state and economy the new additional element in the discussion was introduced: exclusion of economy from the realm of civil society. Even more clearly the work of Jürgen Habermas⁷ underlined the distinction between civil society and economic society.

But the debate on the civil society has also another level: a discussion between normative and descriptive understanding of civil society. Much thinking on civil society is actually a normative social theory. Purely descriptive understandings of civil society, although rare, find certain applause due their simplicity and applicability. This may be in particular seen in the research (and its wide resonance) of John Hopkins University

³ Dieter Gosewinkel, *Zivilgesellschaft – eine Erschließung des Themas von seinen Grenzen her*, Discussion Paper Nr. SP IV 2003-505 Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin 2003. P. 17.

⁴ Jürgen Kocka, *Zivilgesellschaft in historischer Perspektive*. *Forschungsjournal Neue Soziale Bewegungen*. 2003 „Trotzdem bleibt die Zivilgesellschaft auch heute noch meist im nationalstaatlichen Rahmen“. P. ???

⁵ Jean L. Cohen and Andrew Arato. *Civil Society and Political Theory*. Cambridge/London: MIT Press 1994.P. vii.

⁶ *Europa und die Civil Society*. Castalgandolfo-Gespraech 1989. Ed. Krzysztof Michalski Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta 1991. Vorwort: Krzysztof Michalski p.8.

⁷ Habermas, Jürgen *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press 1996.

Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project and in the practise of the European Union's Social and Economic Committee. I shall return to this later.

However the academic debate is dominated by much more normative views on civil society which in the background have a longing for a better society. Jürgen Kocka argues that civil society is constituted by associations and social movements, with corresponding resources of communication, education and trust. As other characteristics of civil society Kocka mentions diversity, limiting and minimising of violence, culture of civility, appreciation of tolerance, independence and achievement and readiness for individual and collective involvement for common good.⁸ Similarly enthusiastic is the definition of John Keane:

Civil society (...) is an ideal-typical category (...) that both describes and envisages a complex and dynamic ensemble of legally protected non-governmental institutions that tend to be non-violent, self-organizing, self-reflexive, and permanently in tension with each other and with the state institutions that frame, constrict and enable they activities.⁹

These normative (and dynamic) understandings of civil society are centred around the modes of interaction between individuals underlining the 'civility' – tolerant and non-violent organisation of human interaction.

On the contrary the Economic and Social Committee (ESC) which is the European Union's organ for consultation with "organized civil society"¹⁰ neglects the internal processes within the society and instead it limits (or focuses on) civil society to non-governmental organisations ESC defines it as follows:

"Civil society is simply defined as including : (a) trade unions and employers federations; (b) professional federations and organizations representing social and economic players; and finally (c) NGOs 'which bring together people in a common cause', community based organizations and religious communities."¹¹

Similarly the long term and highly visible project of Lester H. Salamon and Helmut Anheier and their collaborators at the John Hopkins University (Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project) aimed at research of third sector, equalised civil society with associations:

Known variously as the "nonprofit," "nongovernmental," "voluntary," "civil society," "third," or "independent" sector, this set of institutions includes within it a sometimes bewildering array of entities—hospitals, universities, social clubs, professional organizations, day care centers, environmental groups, family

⁸ Kocka, Zivilgesellschaft. Zum Konzept und seiner sozialgeschichtlichen Verwendung. In: Neues über Zivilgesellschaft. Aus historisch-sozialwissenschaftlichem Blickwinkel. Jürgen Kocka, Shalini Randeria, Paul Nolte, Sven Reichardt. December 2001. WZB Berlin. P. 10

⁹ John Keane. Civil Society. Old Images, New Visions. Polity Press, 1998. P. 6.

¹⁰ Organised civil society is a name for meeting organized by Economic and Social Committee in 1999 and 2001 involving organizations as listed in the definition.

¹¹ Economic and Social Committee () Opinion on 'The role and contribution of civil society organizations in the building of Europe', OJ C 329/30, 17 November 1999. P. 59 .

counseling agencies, sports clubs, job training centers, human rights organizations, and many more.¹²

Even though the approach of Salamon and Anheier may be seen as a form of a revival of sociology of associations and even if it limits drastically civil society to the realm of associative life, it has achieved the creation of concrete criteria for an entity to be identified as a civil society organisation. It should be:

- “*Organizations*, i.e., they have an institutional presence and structure;
- *Private*, i.e., they are institutionally separate from the state;
- *Not profit distributing*, i.e., they do not return profits to their managers or to a set of “owners”;
- *Self-governing*, i.e., they are fundamentally in control of their own affairs; and
- *Voluntary*, i.e., membership in them is not legally required and they attract some level of voluntary contribution of time or money.”¹³

What are non-for-profit associations of enterprises and how are they possible?

Before discussing Chambers of Commerce and Industry it is necessary to briefly sketch a wider landscape of business associations. There is a significant diversity in that landscape. Common sense knowledge would suggest that just like enterprises, also the associations of enterprises are profit-oriented organisations. However already Max Weber observed that, as he called them, *Wirtschaftsverbände* (business associations) may but not necessarily have to perform economic tasks only, but they might have other area of action.

Weber in *Economy and Society* noted 4 categories of business associations **according to their relation to economy**:

1. *wirtschaftender Verband* – next to primarily non-economical activities, also performs some economic tasks (churches, the state, etc)
2. *Wirtschaftsverband* – primarily aimed at economic activities.
3. *wirtschaftsregulierender Verband* – regulates the directions of economy, that is performs economic policies (gilds, trade unions, employers associations, but also the modern state or medieval towns.)
4. *Ordnungsverband* – regulates formally and guarantees exchange (ex. the state).¹⁴

¹² Salamon, Lester M., S. Wojciech Sokolowski, and Helmut K. Anheier. “Social Origins of Civil Society: An Overview.” *Working Papers of the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project*, no. 38. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Center for Civil Society Studies, 2000. P.1

¹³ Global Civil Society. *Dimensions of the Nonprofit Sector*. Lester M. Salamon Helmut K. Anheier, Regina List, Stefan Toepler, S. Wojciech Sokolowski and Associates

CHAPTER 1 Civil Society in Comparative Perspective Lester M. Salamon, Helmut K. Anheier, and Associates, Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Center for Civil Society Studies, 1999. P. 3-4

¹⁴ Max Weber. *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*. Tuebingen 1980. P. 38.

For this study the category of “wirtschaftsregulierender Verband” is of particular interest. This economy-regulating association, according to Weber, does not limit the autonomy of its members. Neither is it primarily aimed at performing economic activities, it is rather a regulator and creator of economic policies.

If we understand business associations as those organisations that associate companies and are not-for-profit, interest representation oriented entities, we can identify several types of them **according to the characteristics of members**. The below categories are very simplified and may serve the purpose of a very basic overview of the diversity of associations:

1. Branch associations, gathering a certain branch of industry or services.
2. Territorial associations, gathering companies having their seat (or some cases operating) in a particular area (municipality, region etc).
3. Size of companies, gathering large companies or small and medium enterprises (SMEs).
4. Employers’ associations.

In the sociological literature dealing with the associations functioning on the border of economy and society, there is a striking richness of research on trade unions and labour movement in general. On the other side there is a relatively low interest in the organisations of entrepreneurs, or as they are here called in a simplified way business associations. But as already Adam Smith observed:

“We rarely hear, it has been said, of the combinations of masters, though frequently of those of workmen. But whoever imagines, upon this account, that masters rarely combine, is as ignorant of the world as of the subject. Masters are always and everywhere in a sort of tacit, hut constant and uniform, combination, not to raise the wages of labour above their actual rate. To violate this combination is everywhere a most unpopular action, and a sort of reproach to a master among his neighbors and equals.”¹⁵

Indeed when talking about the ‘business associations’ the main focus of the debate and the largest body of the literature is related to the bargaining duo of trade unions and employers’ organizations (often with the state as the third actor). Still the impression that entrepreneurs associations only embrace employers and their main focus is the wage/work conditions bargaining is very much misleading. In his classical now study *The Logic of Collective Action* Mancur Olson noted the relatively high number and strong influence of business associations on political life in the US context “The segment of society that has the largest amount of lobbies working towards its goals is the business community.”¹⁶

Olson’s theory explaining why rational individuals associate in order to pursue their common interest, deserves elaboration here. Contrary to belief that a group of individuals would further their common interest, Olson argues that “unless the number of individuals

¹⁵ Adam Smith quoted in Henry Phelps Brown *The Origins of Trade Union Power*, Oxford: Clarendon, 1983. P. 99

¹⁶ Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1965). Edition 1971 Harvard University Press Cambridge “. P. 141

in a groups is quite small, or unless there is coercion or some other special device to make individuals act in their common interest, rational self-interested individuals will not act to achieve their common or group interest”.¹⁷ He claims that the main reason for this is the specialization of lobbies:

“The segment of society that has the largest amount of lobbies working towards its goals is the business community. (...) The high degree of organization of business interests, and the power of these business interests, must be due in large part to the fact that the business community is divided into a series of (generally oligopolistic) “industries.”¹⁸

However it should be noted that he meant trade associations, that is associations of enterprises of a certain industry, embracing relatively small numbers of firms. Olson’s correlation between the size of the group and its privileged position has been contested and it maybe said that it does not hold true for all groups.¹⁹

More relevant for this study is Olson’s another hypothesis, that of free-riding possibilities and of selective incentives . The important reason of the strength of business associations and high density of membership, is the high visibility of absence and therefore very limited possibility of free riding. Rather the second argument explains the participation of enterprises in the CCIs which are regional organisations which do not limit its membership to a particular branch of industry. For Olson “business community as a whole is not well organised in the sense that particular industries are. The business community (...) is definitely a large, latent group. As a result it has the same problems of organisation as the other segments of society.”²⁰ The business associations such as chambers have to strengthen themselves by using selective incentives; “they provide noncollective or nonpublic benefits”.²¹ And indeed they do so, particularly by delivering exclusive or lower-cost services to their members.

Interpretations of membership-based organisations operating on the area of economy (but also politics and values) underline their primary aim of interest representation. This is meant as influencing political decision processes in favour of their members.²² Still, the interest representation aspect of business associations does not exclude the possibility of their ‘civility’. On the contrary interest groups can make a key contribution to the political integration.²³

¹⁷ Ibidem, P.2.

¹⁸ Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1965). Edition 1971 Harvard University Press Cambridge “. P. 141 and 143.

¹⁹ For the discussion on the defectiveness of Olson’s group size argument see Russell Hardin, *Collective Action*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press 1982.

²⁰ *The Logic of Collective Action* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1965). Edition 1971 Harvard University Press Cambridge “. p. 145-146.

²¹ Ibidem. P. 145.

²² Weßels, Bernhard. *Vermittlungsinstitutionen und Interessenvertretung: Zur Performanz von Mitgliederorganisationen in Deutschland*, in: Achim Koch, Martina Wasmer, Peter Schmidt (Eds.), *Blickpunkt Gesellschaft* 6, Opladen: Leske + Budrich 2001. P. 225.

²³ Ibidem. P. 221

Origins of chambers of commerce and industry in Poland

The chambers of commerce and industry existed in pre-war Poland and their involvement into the economic and social life of Poland in the years between the two World Wars had been considerable.²⁴ Even earlier, during the partition of Poland, the chambers existed under respectively Prussian and Austrian authorities. The communist rule brought an end to the existence of the chambers in Poland. Still, in the symbolic and legal sense the present chambers in Poland refer to their prewar existence.

Another source of inspiration and human resources for the today chambers is the Solidarity movement. Some Solidarity movement activists were involved in creation of so called business societies (Towarzystwa Gospodarcze)²⁵. Those societies were created in years 1986-87 and their formal registration started in autumn 1988.²⁶ Their activities were aimed at facilitating and promoting of creation of free market, private property, entrepreneurship and capitalist economy in Poland. They were very regionally embedded and their focus was on small and medium enterprises. The societies confederated themselves in a national council of business societies on October 19, 1989 (Krajowa Rada Towarzystw Gospodarczych).

During the meetings of the Round Table the societies sat at the social (Solidarity) side of the Table²⁷ together with the representatives of trade union movement and liberal approaches to the reform were dominated by the resistance to more radical changes in the economy.²⁸

At the beginning of the 1990's people involved in the business societies moved to founding regional chambers of commerce and industry²⁹ which was enabled by the law from May 30, 1989 on chambers. Some attention to the mythology of reconstruction of the pre-war civil society in Poland (cases of political parties and chambers of commerce re-created and referring to their past in the 1920's and 1930's or earlier). While there is a lack of historical continuity and it is rather use of symbols for identity formation. Still some organisations have successfully lasted and survived during the years of communism. This is strongly contrasting with the Swedish case where the chambers enjoy remarkable continuity³⁰.

To categorise chambers within the categories of business associations is not enough even to be able to define them. As Mancur Olson shortly states:

²⁴ For instance the Wielkopolska Chamber of Commerce and Industry initiated and to large extent founded the Higher School for Economics in Poznan, a university level school functioning till today.

²⁵ Malgorzata Dehnel-Szyc and Jadwiga Stachura. Gry polityczne - orientacje na dzis. Warszawa: Volumen 1991. P.265.

²⁶ Malgorzata Dehnel-Szyc and Jadwiga Stachura. Gry polityczne - orientacje na dzis. Warszawa: Volumen 1991. P.270.

²⁷ It should be clarified that the opposition representation at the Round Table was called "social", while the other "party-governmental".

²⁸ Malgorzata Dehnel-Szyc and Jadwiga Stachura. Gry polityczne - orientacje na dzis. Warszawa: Volumen 1991. P.272.

²⁹ Malgorzata Dehnel-Szyc and Jadwiga Stachura. Gry polityczne - orientacje na dzis. Warszawa: Volumen 1991. P.272

³⁰ With the exception of their territories which tend to shift considerably, with one chamber loosing some provinces and the other gaining.

“The logical place to begin any systematic study of organizations is with their purpose”.³¹

In Poland the CCI (*USTAWA z dnia 30 maja 1989 r. o izbach gospodarczych*, Law on Chambers from May 30, 1989) describes chambers as organisations of economic self-government lists and it the following tasks of the chambers)

- representing associated subjects, in particular towards organs of the state
- shaping and promoting ethical rules in business

Additionally chambers MAY:

- express opinions and participate in law creation concerning functioning of economy
- express opinions on existing law and its implementation
- contribute to creating conditions for economic activities and supporting initiatives of its members
- supports professional education
- organise arbitration
- give opinion on existing economic practices

In all the three countries chambers are granted the task of representing the business community towards the state and of supporting enterprises in their activities. Although the level of detail differs considerably in each of the legal documents, the tasks of the chambers are strikingly similar in all of the three countries under consideration.

Based on empirical research it is possible to list many more functions of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry. The extensive study on the Chambers of Commerce and Industry in the new German Länder from the year 2000³² explores the role of chambers in the transition of the economy from state planning to free market. Some researches noted functioning of chambers as insurance companies satisfying sudden informational needs of members³³ or as creators of social environment for local entrepreneurs.³⁴

As a result of my field study in the 12 Swedish Chambers I stated that the tasks performed by the chambers in the Swedish context differ depending on the size of the chamber (understood as number of member enterprises) and the specificity of a region. Bigger chambers have a wider spectrum of activities while smaller tend to focus on

³¹ The Logic of Collective Action (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1965). Edition 1971 Harvard University Press Cambridge “, p. 5.

³² Nils Diederich, Ingeborg Haag, Georg Cadel. Industrie- und Handelskammern in den neuen Bundesländern. Regionale autonome Interessenorganisationen im Prozess der Neustrukturierung der Wirtschaft. Westdeutscher Verlag: Wiesbaden 2000.

³³ Robert J. Bennett. Can Transaction Cost Economics Explain Voluntary Chambers of Commerce?. Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics. V. 152n 4 (December 1996) pp. 655-680

³⁴ Zieliński, Eugeniusz Lech Rola samorządu gospodarczego w kształtowaniu środowiska społecznego przedsiębiorców (na przykładzie IPH w Gdyni) (The role of business self-government in shaping social environment of entrepreneurs (the example of CCI in Gdynia). Poznań 1995 Manuscript of doctoral dissertation.

advocacy and get specialised in one particular area of action. As far as representing of interest of entrepreneurs is concerned the chambers get involved in lobbying the local, regional and rarely national authorities on the issues of:

- transport infrastructure development (investments in local airports, prioritising certain road and rail connections)
- higher education development (founding or extending higher education institutions and support for transfer of academically educated people into SMEs).

In what I call self-help function, the Swedish chamber perform the following:

- training activities for their members (on themes such as fiscal policy and internationalisation of a company)
- issuing documents facilitating business activities (in particular in foreign trade)
- initiating and facilitating networking among members and among members and outsiders
- provision of space for members for debate on the issues of common concern, also involving authorities
- performing arbitration
- match making in the international context (fairs, study trips, exchanges of members, functionaries and staff).

The functions of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry, both those declared in legal acts and those observed by researches may be summed up to two main functions:

1. Advocacy function – representing members towards the authorities and towards the public.
2. Self-help function – supporting members in their activities.

The proportions of both functions in each chamber may differ, with the tendency of localised associations to focus on self-help, while nation-wide umbrellas on advocacy.³⁵ The author's own research in Sweden indicates that there is a difference of importance perception between large companies and small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Large companies stress the importance of the advocacy function (in particular towards local authorities and in particular in the area of infrastructure development), while SMEs underline the self-help function, especially legal advice and training.³⁶ This phenomenon is easy to understand if we realise that large companies have much better access to information that the chambers have (e.g. often big enterprises employ more people in their legal departments than a local chamber has staff altogether). On the contrary the large enterprises' possibilities to speak confidently towards authorities are better if they speak through the chamber and in some cases the chamber gives large companies opportunities to act in the name of the whole business community in a particular region.

³⁵ OECD Working papers. No 58. The Emergence of Business Associations and Chambers in the Economies in Transition: Examples from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and the Slovak Republic. Paris 1994. P. 8.

³⁶ Based on interviews in 12 Swedish chambers in 2001.

The researches on German chambers add third group of chambers' tasks and namely obligatory and state tasks that are expression of self-government of German economy.³⁷ In their functions German chambers of continental character are much closer to the state than their voluntary counterparts in Poland and in Sweden are.

It should be added that Chambers of Commerce and Industry are not involved in labour market bargaining. What constitutes their special niche is their regional dimension and the multisectorality of their membership. Ideally a CCI is the only regional organisation of business community in a given geographical area.

Two understanding of the functions of the civil society might be identified. One that sees civil society as an actor parallel to the state and the other as a pro-actor towards the state. In the first, mainly conservative, understanding the civil society delivers goods and services that the state cannot, should not provide or provides at too high cost. While the second understanding stresses the political role of the civil society in demanding certain good or services (also public goods such as policies) FROM the state. Chambers combine both aspects, the first one under their self-help function and the other in the advocacy function.

Does the organisational form matter?

As it has been visible earlier, much of the debate on the civil society revolves around the issue of creating a better society and therefore it is a discussion on the (positive) characteristics of civil society. Research on the organisational forms of the civil society has been rather neglected but "the questions concerning the organizational forms of civil society are not uninteresting and they cannot be avoided."³⁸ Arhne lists networks, social movements and associations as organisational forms of civil society, in this sense his approach is wider than that of the John Hopkins Project, which excludes entities with no institutional form and presence. However even though a voluntary association is seen as a most common and the most un-controversial civil society organisation, some associations may not qualify. Keane underlines the importance of voluntary associations but he doubts whether overly bureaucratized or too large associations belong to civil society.³⁹ There are more overlaps or exclusions of that kind in the debate on the organisational forms of civil society.

If we test German, Polish and Swedish chambers against the five criteria used by the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project we can see that both the Polish and Swedish chambers fulfil all of the criteria, while the German ones pose difficulties as far as the obligatory membership is concerned and very close resemblance to the state administration. Anheier, who within the JHU Project wrote on German non-profit sector

³⁷ Nils Diederich, Ingeborg Haag, Georg Cadel. *Industrie- und Handelskammern in den neuen Bundesländern. Regionale autonome Interessenorganisationen im Prozess der Neustrukturierung der Wirtschaft.* Westdeutscher Verlag: Wiesbaden 2000. P. 24-25.

³⁸ Göran Arhne 'Civil Society and Uncivil Organizations' P. 85. In: Alexander, Jeffrey C (Ed.). *Real Civil Societies. Dilemmas of Institutionalisation.* SAGE Studies in International Sociology 48. SAGE: London 1998.

³⁹ John Keane. *Civil Society and the State: New European Perspectives.* London: Verso 1988. P.12.

was aware of the issue, but did not find it to be a sufficient argument for excluding chambers from the “third sector”:

“The associational system includes a great variety of organizational forms ranging from village improvement associations, singing clubs and amateur theaters, and sports clubs to professional and business associations and foundations. In general, the term excludes organized religion, cooperatives, and political parties. However, it generally includes political and civic organizations and local voters' groups, as well as compulsory economic associations like chambers of commerce and craft unions.”⁴⁰

This inconsistency could be caused by the large amount of similar cases in different countries where most of studied entities do not fulfil all of the five criteria.⁴¹

Still, the obligatory membership in an association remains very problematic for the reflection on chambers as civil society organisations. However I would argue that the very fact of legal obligation to belong to an association should not automatically exclude the association from civil society⁴². As it is argued throughout this paper what should be analysed is a combination of organisational form and the internal practise such as provision of a space for public discourse.

Although chambers in Germany, Poland and Sweden have very similar functions, they differ very much. The main line of difference lies in the organisational structure of the chambers in Poland and Sweden on one side and in Germany on the other.

The Swedish and the Polish chambers belong to the model that is often called the “Anglo-Saxon” one, because it is in use in the UK, the USA and the Commonwealth. But it is practised in many more than just in English-speaking countries - it exists in all the Nordic countries and in the countries of ex-Soviet block. Its main feature is voluntary membership and the legal form of a private association. In Germany the “continental” model is in existence, similarly to most of the EU states. Membership is compulsory for all the enterprises, membership dues are deducted automatically and the chambers have a legal form of a public law corporation. Table 2 compares the both models.

⁴⁰ Anheier, Helmut K. and Wolfgang Seibel. "Defining the Nonprofit Sector: Germany." *Working Papers of the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project*, no. 6. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Institute for Policy Studies, 1993. P. 11.

⁴¹ It may be even said, after the lecture of the countries' monographies within the Project, that the civil society would shrink immensely if all of the criteria of the Project were applied in classifications.

⁴² Here it should be noted that there are many more associations based on obligatory membership. These are e.g. professional associations and student unions (in Sweden).

Table 2: Continental and Anglo-Saxon models of Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

Type	“continental”	“Anglo-Saxon”
Membership	Obligatory	Voluntary
In existence	In Germany, Netherlands, Italy, France, Austria ...	In all Nordic countries, the UK, Poland ...
Based on	Public law	Civil law (Private law)
Legal form	Public law corporation	Association

The question which model is a “better” one is complex. Following the study of OECD a (Working Paper of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation in Europe) it may be stated that the main disadvantage of the voluntary membership is the difficulty of a chamber to have sufficient number of members. The small number of companies makes it hard for a chamber to finance itself, to adequately represent and to provide useful services. The disadvantage of obligatory membership is that the chamber is seen as part of state bureaucracy and that entrepreneurs feel forced to belong and feel that they derive little benefit. Moreover the obligatory chambers lead to creation of single, strong organisations consultative towards the government, while voluntary chambers tend to be fragmented and ineffective.⁴³ And even if the continental system seems to outweigh the Anglo-Saxon one it keeps strong in many countries and moreover it has been widely rejected in the post-Soviet area. Definitely the obligatory membership in any kind of a body raises controversies in the countries that endured authoritarianism. However it should be added that the resistance of the Polish entrepreneurs against obligatory chambers, that is documented in the consultations of the Sejm (Parliament) with the representatives of business community⁴⁴, has many more reasons than just the allergy against so well-known forced membership. Business associations’ leaders expressed their fear that chambers of continental model could give too far going powers to bureaucrats, that chambers would become organs of the state and therefore one more obstacle for an entrepreneur to act freely. Moreover during the 1990’s a highly complex landscape of business associations was established in Poland, therefore it may be expected that most of the present associations’ leaders could lose their influence in case of any change of the system.

In case of Poland another problematic issue is the atomisation of the chambers, that may put under question whether they are at all able to execute the functions that they legally have:

“The law allows any group of 50 companies – state-owned or private – to establish a Chamber which has led to small, unrepresentative Chambers being set

⁴³ OECD Working papers. No 58. The Emergence of Business Associations and Chambers in the Economies in Transition: Examples from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and the Slovak Republic. Paris 1994. P. 9.

⁴⁴ Wołodkiewicz-Donimirski, Andrzej Chodyra, Jaki samorząd gospodarczy? (What kind of economic self-government?) Volume 10(28) Warsaw 1999. Biuletyn Biuro Studiów i Ekspertyz Kancelarii Sejmu (Bulletin of the Research Office of the Chancellery of Sejm).

up in different cities – sometimes two or three in the same town. (...) The ultimate effect of competition in this area tends to be a waste of resources devoted to the multitude of organisations.”⁴⁵

The specificity of the Swedish civil society is the situation where most of associations are interest representation entities:

Since the Swedish nonprofit sector is primarily involved in advocacy and representation rather than service delivery, the interest element of the sector is of crucial importance. Interest organizations often exert considerable pressure on the government.⁴⁶

But the confrontation between the state and civil society might not necessarily be so sharp, on the contrary - the border line may be very blurred. This is particularly visible in the Swedish case, as Michele Micheletti noted “the civil society and the state merged and created the strong society”⁴⁷.

Trust and space for debate

Chambers do fulfil two criteria of providing civil society qualities: they strengthen the capital of trust and they create space for debate on common good.

In the last twenty years there has been much interest in the research on the meaning of culture in the creation of wealth, mainly in the writings within so called new institutional economy.⁴⁸ Fukuyama in particular highlighted the importance of trust.⁴⁹ In their function of the guardian of the good name of the respectable merchant (as in the German case) or in other forms of caring for ethical standards in business activities chamber (as in Poland and in Sweden) chambers build social capital. The image of a respectable merchant created in the 19th century⁵⁰ has been formalised in the German case by introducing the task of defending the good name of the merchant into the legal foundations of the chambers of commerce and industry. The mechanisms of this defence

⁴⁵ OECD Working papers. No 58. The Emergence of Business Associations and Chambers in the Economies in Transition: Examples from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and the Slovak Republic. Paris 1994. 34 p. P. 8.

⁴⁶ Lundström, Tommy and Filip Wijkström. "Defining the Nonprofit Sector: Sweden." *Working Papers of the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project*, no. 16. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Institute for Policy Studies, 1995. P. 9

⁴⁷ Micheletti, Michele (1994) *Det civila samhället och staten*. Stockholm: Fritzes P.22

⁴⁸ Williamson Oliver E. *The Economic Institutions of Capitalism*. New York: Free Press 1985; Granovetter Mark, *Economic Action and Social Structure: The Problem of Embeddedness*, *American Journal of Sociology*, 1985: No91, PP. 481-510; David Thosby, *Economics and Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2001

⁴⁹ Fukuyama Francis, *Trust. The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity*. New York 1995.

For the reconstruction of the meanings of trust as social capital in particular in the economic sphere see Sven Reichardt *Soziales Kapital "im Zeitalter materieller Interessen"*. Konzeptionelle Überlegungen zum Vertrauen in der Zivil- und Marktgesellschaft des langen 19. Jahrhunderts (1780-1914). Discussion Paper Nr. SP IV 03-503. Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin 2003. Pp. 9-16.

⁵⁰ Sven Reichardt. *Soziales Kapital "im Zeitalter materieller Interessen"*. Konzeptionelle Überlegungen zum Vertrauen in der Zivil- und Marktgesellschaft des langen 19. Jahrhunderts (1780-1914). Discussion Paper Nr. SP IV 03-503. Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin 2003. Pp. 16-20.

legally are left open to the chambers and they might themselves establish relevant methods to fulfil the task. According to empirical studies the German chambers establish own arbitration courts, issue opinions to the state courts, appeal for punishment of their members and, educate and warn their members about legal requirements.⁵¹ The issues dealt with are mainly concerning unfair competition and misleading advertisement.⁵² Establishing and running arbitration courts by the chambers is by no means a German specificity, on the contrary it is quite a common arrangement for the chambers. Also Polish and Swedish chambers have their own arbitration courts. The very existence and popularity of the arbitration⁵³ demonstrates, among other things, that chambers perform their role as space for voluntary, out-of-state, non-violent conflict resolution.

Many of the activities of the chambers (in all the three countries studies) involve elements of debate on the issues of common interest and are followed by actions oriented at provision of good (often of collective character). The debate is not only internal but also involving other civil society actors (such as other business associations, but also environmental organisations).

Conclusions

Theories of civil society are ambivalent concerning the inclusion of business associations such as chambers of commerce and industry into the realm of civil society. The issue is the tendency to see these association automatically as part of the sphere of economy without the study of their functions. However if we interpret chambers as collective actors and interest representation organisations providing resources such as trust and debate on issues of common concern, chamber may be identified as civil society organisations. This is the case particularly with the voluntary chambers of commerce. Clearly it is much more problematic with the chambers of the continental model due to their performing of self-government tasks and therefore resemblance of state bureaucracy.

On the other hand though, if we take a more normative view on the civil society both types of the chambers need to be evaluated using additional set of criteria. If we take the Hegelian approach of combining the private interest and communal purpose we can interpret business associations as civil society organisations. Here there is space for empirical research of the chambers with the focus on the internal democracy, discourse and members' participation.

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⁵¹ Hermann Adam. *Der Einfluss der Industrie- und Handelskammern auf politische Entscheidungsprozesse*. Frankfurt/New York: Campus Verlag 1979. P. 39-40.

⁵² Gerhard Frenzel, Ernst Jaekel. *Die deutschen Industrie- und Handelskammern und der Deutsche Industrie- und Handelstag*. Frankfurt/Bonn: Athenaeum Verlag 1967. P. 47.

⁵³ According to the report of the Polish Chamber of Commerce for the year 2002 (Warsaw May 2003, page 18) the Court of Arbitration at the Polish Chamber of Commerce received 657 cases for its judgment (compared with 552 in 2001).

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ENDNOTES

ⁱ Despite some ups and downs the social democrats have lost some 100 000 members during the last decade, roughly one third of their membership. Other associations, such as the tenants' (Hyresgästföreningen), have become quite corporatist, in their case to the extent that they have their counterparts – the real estate owners - to distribute their material. It is a process of petrification. In particular the political parties have become a crisis branch and would have difficulties to survive without state subsidies.

ⁱⁱ It is partly avoided in Rokkan's stages-theory, which builds upon the experiences of predominantly North-West European nation states.

ⁱⁱⁱ Refs to Torstendahl and Stråth. **ref in** Also Peter Flora. **ref in.**

^{iv} The Finns were loyal Swedes and Finland part of Sweden, in contrast to the Swedish colonies in Northern Germany. Great power period Sweden including also the Baltic provinces was more multicultural. The relation between Swedes and Finns is complex. Perhaps best way to put it is Erik Lönnroth's formulation that it in the end - after the *Kleinschwedische Lösung* 1809 (ref in to Matti Klinge in Helsingfors) - turned out to become two countries built together by two people.

^v A point made by Hartmut Kaelble (2004).

^{vi} Not fully irrelevant, perhaps "dismantled" is a better characterization. Thinkers such as Richard Rorty stresses the need most common people still feel for a natural identification with a nation state, also in the age of globalization and Europeanization. The same point is made by Alt-Kanzler Helmut Schmidt (for instance in DIE ZEIT, 22 April, 2004).

^{vii} Ferguson often used this term.

^{viii} **Ref in** to Björn Eriksson.

^{ix} I would like to mention Charles Lindblom's works as a particularly nuanced account, in a field full of ideological believers.

^x For instance Bronislaw Geremek, in his contribution to Castelgandolfo-Gespräche, "Die *Civil Society* gegen den Kommunismus: Polens Botschaft", in *Europa und die Civil Society*, ed. by Krzysztof Michalski (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1991).

^{xi} This is a judgment with some anomalies that have to be explained *ad hoc*. For instance religious non-conformists in the mid 19th century falls outside the general pattern, but are very momentous, for cultivating a seedbed for more inner-worldly associations and interest groups, thus unintentionally paving the way for modern mass democracy. Yet they also illustrate the typical Swedish merge between a top down and bottom up perspective; being a practicing sect member and a state church member simultaneously was more rule than exception in Sweden. This has to do with Swedish law. It used to be illegal not to be a member of the state church.

^{xii} Another example is the frequent suggestions from busybodies in the parliament about mandatory helmet when riding bicycle. There is also in Swedish television a Program "Anslagstavlan" (the Notice-board) in which the Swedes are told what is good for them, what to do, etc. I am not sure this program would be possible in any other country.

^{xiii} **Refs in.** Also Charles Lindblom. Insert some remarks about problems with intersubjectivity, and risk for non-testable clichés or “interpretative schemes” replacing theories.

^{xiv} There is a distinction in the language, *stat* and *samhälle* – but the words are often understood by the common Swede as synonymous.

^{xv} **ref in** In his case this must be seen as a self criticism, highly relevant but little noticed. Myrdal was in the 30s the great social engineer in a Saint-Simonian, "Jacobinian" non-liberal tradition. As Sweden's "grumpy old man" he made an account with his own creation, probably without being aware of the boomerang-effect.

^{xvi} Kjellen is sometimes characterized as a proto-fascist, although his term national socialist is more incidental. He is most known for *geopolitics* and his scholarly relevance perhaps is due to his early variation of resource analysis in international politics. He was a main source of inspiration for Gunnar Myrdal, esp. *Asian Drama*. Kjellen, however, was not the first to use the concept of *Folkhem*, which provenance is unclear. The term was also used by Alfred Peterson in Påboda, in 1909. "Påboda" was the first peasant in government and the one who formulated the suggestion for equal franchise for men in parliamentary elections in 1907. Norbert Götz has traced the term to Denmark in the 1860s. At the moment I would believe that Norbert Götz in Greifswald represents the research frontier on this topic. *Ungleiche Geschwister: Die Konstruktion von nationalsozialistischer Volksgemeinschaft und schwedischem Volksheim*. Die kulturelle Konstruktion von Gemeinschaften im Modernisierungsprozess 4. Diss. Baden-Baden. Nomos, 2001. There is a Swedish Kraftbrüheversion “Den moderna Tomteboluckykan”, pp 113-29, in Kurt Almquist & Kay Glans (eds): *Den svenska framgångssagan*. (The Swedish Success Story). Sthlm: Fischer, 2001.

^{xvii} DER SPIEGEL on “Kindergulag in Schweden” is one example; an article by Herman Orth, documenting how taking children away from unfit parents is many times more frequent in Sweden than in any comparable country. This might be humane – yet problematic from the point of view of human rights (*Rechtstaat*) and integrity. Certainly many cases are well motivated (suburban “latchkey-kids”, perhaps with drug abusing mothers, etc) but if this is several hundred percents more frequent in Sweden than comparative countries it appears as alarming, especially as the officials making the decisions have little legal training and the need for “service” is decided by the producer, a problem in common to some public sector activities, esp. within health care.

^{xviii} **Ref. In to Zetterberg’s project.**

^{xix} Sven E Olson (later Olson-Hort and later than that Hort) is a good example.

^{xx} Some debates in major Swedish dailies reflect the ideological confrontation

^{xxi} This is extremely important background to Swedish political culture. I have dealt with this in other texts.

^{xxii} It is estimated that information campaigns resulted in tripled output in sustainable forestry.

^{xxiii} Since this is a hypotheses generating paper the narratives remains to be further scrutinized. There are a number of organizations between private and public, often so called promoting associations (*främjandesällskap*); they have a start and take-off as private initiatives but later become part of the bureaucracy.

^{xxiv} It is a recurrent issue if the middle level of “landsting” (county council) should remain or not; today much of health care is handled by the *Landsting*.

^{xxv} In 1711 no less than 58 percent of the soldiers at Elfsborg regiment could read and exactly hundred years later 99 percent, probably more than today Corresponding numbers for ability to write readable texts were 5 percent and 18 percent respectively (according to e-mail from Jan Lindegren of 1 June, 2004).

^{xxvi} Axel Oxenstierna is in several ways the pivotal historical figure, in building a central state bureaucracy that managed to accommodate with a number of regimes, including the social democratic one in 20th century, and making the individuals attached to central government. Oxenstierna also promoted the careers of commoners, often sons of peasants students he had got to know as a young student in Germany. They launched into the priest-career. Oxenstierna ruled Sweden as chancellor for more than forty years. During the Era of Liberty further formative steps towards Swedish independent and impartial state agencies were taken.

The Hammarskjöld family is one eminent example of this new tradition of impartial *Beamtentum-Ethik*, often carried by nobility nobilized in the 17th century, when Charles XI broke the power of high nobility – but also created a new civil servant nobility.

^{xxvii} It is a matter of squeezing new insights out of already existing historical findings, approached from new vantage points. Eva Österberg carries no responsibility for what I try to articulate about the peculiarities of the Swedish model and the Swedish model of civil society.

^{xxviii} The first Swedish *Riksdag* (Reichtag) is supposed to have taken place in 1435, since all estates including the peasants were – perhaps – called to participate. This is much contested among historians - and the peasants were a recognized political force much earlier in any case.

^{xxix} Engelbrekt is a good example of how national-liberal history writing in the 19th century could elaborate on a myth. Engelbrekt as a man of liberty is of course a retrospective invented history, yet his role in history is quite remarkable. However, it is a matter of interpretation. Lübeck did not only own shares in Falu copper mine (Stora Kopparbergs Bergslag) but also in the iron mine in Norberg, very close to where Engelbrekt came from. Evidently the Hanseatic league and the small scale iron producers in *Bergslagen* had common economic interests, conflicting with the Nordic union. This has been pointed out by Erik Lönnroth. **Ref in.**

^{xxx} In addition being reminded about it every first Sunday in March, when the cross-country skiing contest between Mora and Sälen takes place.

^{xxxi} This characterization of Gustaf Vasa might be a stereotype. After all the Reformation was a widespread phenomenon. What happened in Sweden (of course including Finland) was not unique and not extreme. Closing down Uppsala University, which was a Catholic stronghold, appears in a different light from this perspective, although he could have re-opened it as a Protestant institution, which happened two generations later.

^{xxxii} Sten Carlsson makes this point, in his works on Swedish social history. Although the last – rather formal – privileges of Swedish nobility lasted into the third millennium, the nobility never had an efficient monopoly on high offices (most famous example of class circulation: Johan Skytte, who re-established the Uppsala university after the demise during Gustaf Vasa and his sons, and who also on behalf of Sweden negotiated the Westphalian treaty, together with Salvius and Grotius, was the son of a bourgeois person).

We should in this context also mention that we had a state church in Sweden until 2000.

^{xxxiii} Lesjöfors bruk is a good example, where Baron de Geer has to pretend that he likes “bandy”, a strange variation of ice-hockey but with a smaller ball and played outdoors, in sometimes twenty centigrades below freezing point. The spirit of the “bruk” is rather egalitarian (among the workers; it is also a stable class society) and somewhat “thick” or “ingrown”, not that different from the Medieval village with its solidarity and envy, in a typical combination. It is often small communities in the countryside, as small “societies” of their own. Vira bruk in Roslagen is one famous example. Also pretty big communities might have the live “bruk”-tradition. This goes for Bofors, where the big guns (howitzers) are made. You don’t stick out in this

(very un-American) ambience. This is where the famous “law of Jante” rules (ref to Henningsen-brothers and Sandemose).

^{xxxiv} There are some relevant östudies, for instance Ylva Hasselberg: *Den sociala ekonomin. Familjen Clason och Furudal's bruk 1804-1856* (The Embedded Economy: The Clason family and Furudal ironworks 1804-1856). *Studia Historica Upsaliensia* 189, 1998....fill in more bibl details

^{xxxv} **Refs in** recent Rothstein on trust Fukuyama *The Economist's* corruption league

^{xxxvi} This is rather complex at closer scrutiny. For one thing we have to keep in mind that the state had a very long engagement in forestry, “the oaks of the crown”, etc. There is a considerable element of education and enlightenment involved, what we today would label “information campaigns”

^{xxxvii} The role of Hägerström and Lundstedt and the so called Scandinavian legal realism must be mentioned. I don't elaborate on this very intriguing theme here. See Eliaeson (2000).

^{xxxviii} Recent multi-culturalism would make this a suspect statement, bringing to our mind the racist bedmates of communitarianism, as Zygmunt Bauman formulated it. Today's Sweden is multi-cultural – rather than integrationist – and has an immigrant population of about 15 percent of the population as a whole. However, in Swedish statistics one foreign-born parent is enough to be classified as of immigrant background - and of the immigrants the Finlandian part is about half of the group as a whole. Due to 700 years of common history it would appear as slightly weird not taking this into account.

The point with the homogeneous and egalitarian peasant population is that Sweden has never been at the cross-roads of people coming through before finding their homelands, in contrast to for instance Northern Italy or Ukraina, where countless new waves have left their imprints. Sweden has never been occupied by foreign forces, if we keep in mind that we entered the Nordic union voluntarily. The Nordic union did not really become a “starter”, basically due to communication difficulties, but was in principle in force during the 15th century.

^{xxxix} Finlandian history before 1809 is identical with Swedish history and Scania's (Schonen's) history before 1658 identical with Danish history. But history curriculum the same in all Sweden. Finlandian websites might be a good source for learning about Swedish history.

^{xl} Although there is a crayfish-equator, at the height of the Dalecarlia river. I mention this peculiar marker of Swedishness – which we share with the Finlandians, but not the Norwegians - since the picture of the opening of crayfish season at Sundborn is even on the inside covers of our passports, after the painting by our national romantic painter Carl Larsson (*Das Haus in der Sonne*; he painted his family at his home outside Falun). In the far North of Sweden they instead develop rituals about eating a kind of rotten fish, a canned fermented Baltic herring. The home of Carl Larsson is today a museum.

^{xli} In Sweden any mining company could make claim to exploit ore resources on land belonging to any private owner. So owning land in Sweden means owning the surface soil, about one meter deep, or so.

^{xlii} Gunnar Myrdal (Op. cit.) makes quite a point of this.

^{xliii} Göran Hägg (2004: 556) catches the core, in stating that to some extent the Swedish system was similar to what Italian fascism pretended to practice - but in Sweden pursued very seriously and in strict democratic forms. Hägg's scholarly field is history of literature but he catches something characteristic for the Swedish model, which has a lot of corporatist traits.

^{xliv} Weber and F H Tenbruck refs

^{xlv} Brittske historikern Roberts??? Metcalf???Scott fill in refs

^{xlvi} My mentor here is Jan Lindegren who also points out that the Swedish constitution of 1721 was very momentous and the text taken seriously in the American way (instead of later focus on constitutional praxis). The processes of Modernization of forms of state and political exchange were parallel in Sweden and the UK – but the “Modernists” won in Sweden and remained in opposition in the UK, although Sweden then experienced a royal contra-revolution in 1972. Lindegren even suggests (e-mail from 1 June 2004) that one might even suggest that a parliamentary initiated revolution was imminent in Sweden already a quarter of a century it took place in France, which is “food for thought” (the development to modern mass-democracy, as a contrast, very late in Sweden).

^{xlvii} There is a scholarly debate though, only to mention Olof Petersson’s pioneering work in matters of citizenship and public sphere (the SNS so called Constitutional project), and Bo Huldt and his collaborators at the Swedish “Försvarshögskolan” (defence academy), trying to realign Swedish foreign policy doctrine in the wake of *die Wende*.

^{xlviii} The historical new bridge between Malmö and Copenhagen might change regional identity in the long run in the prosperous and by Swedish standards densely populated Öresund-region, and promote a more continental orientation, as a supplementary identity. But this is a slow process. For the time being rural peripheral parts of Sweden seemingly have been non-European as part of their identity.

^{xlix} An expression for optimism in Minnesota, indicating that everything is pretty good.

^l This is, however, a problem-area where a lot of hardship is to be expected, “around the corner” and which only can be solved on the pan-European level. Ref. to Stein Ringen’s demography piece in. In Sweden the pension reform of the late 1950s (ATP) was regarded as the “flag-ship” of the modern welfare state, but simply had to be realigned a few years ago, since it was not sustainable. According to recent prognosis we have to work until age 78 or so in order to have ends meet. The system was not designed as an insurance system but as a redistribution system (between generations) and the new crisis in the population question is increasingly hurting, even if the reproduction rates are higher in Sweden than in for instance Germany.

^{li} Ron Eyerman’s concept (in *Theory and Society* 1985).

^{lii} Eva Österberg in English Skytteanum P E Back The term collective memory creates some methodological problems.

^{liii} I have here particularly in mind his book on the Decline and fall of nations.

^{liv} Insert more detailed ref to Mancur Olson here.

^{lv} The so called wage earners’ funds being the most famous example, but it also applies to several “speed blind” (according to their critics) work life reforms in the 70s, probably explaining the shift in government 1976. The wage earner’s fund were – in effect – inspired by previous theories of so called functional socialism (Gunnar Adler-Karlsson), building upon legal positivist ideas formulated by Hägerström and advocated by Vilhelm Lundstedt.

^{lvi} The Upsala historian Jan Lindegren elaborates on this in his inaugural lecture a few years ago.