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Cultural Diplomacy in Cold War Finland

Identity, Geopolitics and the Welfare State

Louis Clerc



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The efficient management of cultural foreign policy is, both for the State and for certain long-lasting private organisations and individuals, the best way to ensure that Finland's level of spiritual development does not lag behind that of other states. Through active participation in the collective work of nations, Finland also defends its position as a civilized nation (sivistyskanssa) amongst other civilized nations. However, Finland's cultural foreign policy does not only consist in receiving foreign acknowledgments to lay on the altar of national self-satisfaction: it has to be a project conducted in earnest in order to fulfil the country's national and international cultural duties, to repay its cultural debt.

—*Kalervo Siikala, 1960*¹

¹Siikala 1960, 142. Translated from Finnish. All translations from Finnish or Swedish, unless specified otherwise, are the responsibility of the author. A reader interested in the original versions of these translations should be in touch with the author.

To Ulla, Iina and Soni

PREFACE

Like good novels, good academic books set up the reader with their first sentence. It doesn't get much better than Robert Jervis' 1976 book *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, where Jervis plunges directly into the thick of things:

*Before discussing the causes and consequences of the ways in which decision-makers draw inferences from the world, we must ask a preliminary question: do the decision-makers' perceptions matter?*¹

A while ago, this question became the heart of my PhD thesis, when I worked to find the influences shaping French perceptions of the Nordic countries during the interwar period. What I came to acknowledge was the role of Nordic governments themselves in shaping these perceptions; for countries small and peripheral to French central concerns, there existed a limited possibility to promote their own image and leverage it for strategic gains. Finland in particular used various means to do so, from Finnish cultural artefacts to publications describing its contribution to a roughly delineated "European civilization". Set on a background of French expectations and interests, these elements were essential in building up French perceptions. This came to take a certain importance in 1939, when in the context of increased tensions, the French and British leadership had to decide how to react to Soviet aggression against Finland.

¹Jervis 1976.

Before Finland's 1917 independence, most of these efforts were spontaneous, personal projects. They emanated from national activists, private promoters of the Finnish national project: the domestic process of building a national identity spilled over through diasporas and cultural contacts. But after 1917, this became a part of the Finnish state's international activities. Cultural relations, strategically used in the long term by Finnish representatives for political and identity purposes, came to have an effect on the decision-making in 1939–1940. This kind of strategic image promotion by a small state is not a phenomenon for history books only: it is well illustrated by the Ukrainian government's communication activities towards European and American societies in reaction to the February 2022 Russian aggression.

With time, I learned that this process of convincing others was also an essential part of building the Finns' perceptions of themselves. National activists promoted abroad an image of their developing nation, and also hoped that the nation would come to correspond to this image and develop in certain directions. Finnish nationalism is a sensitive thing, where self-perceptions develop through contacts with the world in a never-ending cycle of persuading oneself and others of Finland's worthiness. The contours of Finland's national project are drawn in a dialogue between external models and blueprints, foreign perceptions and Finnish intentions. This is how I came to see Finland's cultural and image diplomacy as more than calculated statecraft: a process intertwining with the very definition of Finland's national identity, one more scene where the debates of national identity played out. The book is the result of this evolution, an attempt at replacing culture and image in the way the Finnish state defined its Cold War foreign policy.

Country-specific studies of public and cultural diplomacy in the Nordic countries are a steady trend, criticized either for lacking in comparative, theoretical depth or for being too concerned with the present day.² This book acknowledges the first criticism but sets its dial to empirical variety and contextualized understanding rather than broad, general explanations. I will, however, take advantage of conceptual suggestions made elsewhere and work to extract from my case some general insights as by-products of empirical exposition. Hopefully, this book will provide enough depth in the empirical case while retaining the interest of those readers mostly interested in wider issues—the cultural Cold War, cultural diplomacy and nationalism, institutional organizations, the foreign policy of small states and so forth. As to the second criticism, this book is an

²For the first critic, see Ang et al. 2015, 365–381. For the second, see Viktorin et al. 2018, 11–12.

attempt at moving away from the present day to explore the historical roots of current practices in Nordic public and cultural diplomacy.

Alongside burn-outs and scarce funding, self-branding has become an integral part of the twenty-first-century academic experience on both sides of the Atlantic. For scholars of cultural diplomacy, it sometimes means highlighting one's interest in culture and the arts, with cultural references a rite of passage in the corporation. Here's mine, for what it's worth. I would like in this book to convince the reader of the benefits gained from seeing European cultural diplomacy during the Cold War not as a Rotko painting, made of great, striking masses of colour, but as one of Hieronymus Bosch's depictions of Hell: a burst of hues, forms and situations, with innumerable details tied together by the painter's style, inspirations and palette. As Bosch's richness of detail makes his painting what it is, empirical case studies are an essential tool in making sense of the European Cold War. For most small countries, indeed for most countries, the Cold War was not primarily about generalized notions built for great powers, cultural hegemony or ideological battles, but about recognition, survival, postwar reconstruction, the modernization or cultural conservation of societies, idiosyncratic notions of self-identification and nationalism, and specific institutional arrangements. Localized case studies often rime, exposing general variables in different patterns, under different angles. Sometimes they also introduce new elements. An understanding of variety is necessary for one to be able to find common threads linking the cases together. This book is an attempt to contribute to such an understanding.

It struck me in the last moments of writing this book that there might also be an autobiographical side to it. Immigration is a limited and recent occurrence in Finnish history, and being born elsewhere very much defines one socially in the eyes of most Finns. Despite the long years, there will always be an accent, an oddly-shaped sentence, a lost cultural reference, a variety of skin colour, or a foreign-sounding family name, bringing you back to the one social role that seems to matter most: being a foreigner. As a humanities scholar, one is obviously conscious of this, and one often thinks about the ways in which it influences one's work. Some things remain hidden that are obvious to insiders, some networks remain inaccessible. Some things on the other hand are easier, and some realities come in sharp focus that insiders don't realize. It might also be harder to connect one's own experience to the subject one studies, and there might be a certain distance with part of the country's collective experience for someone studying Finnish history "from outside".

In that case, however, the connection is obvious. Finland was never closed, but it is peripheral and easily isolated. After the war, cultural

isolation was one of the perceived problems some in Finland's state apparatus worked to resolve through renewed cultural contacts. To many extents, it resolved itself, with the Finns' cultural, political and economic horizons broadening at the same pace than the rest of Europe. The state was for nothing in young folks taking the boat to Stockholm to buy jeans and rock LPs. But a part of this integration was the result of treaties and policies that facilitated it. The 1955 Nordic Passport Union made trips to Stockholm easier, allowing the trickling into Finland of fashions and cultural artefacts. One of the results of these policies was the increase in personal exchanges, student and academic mobility. Eventually Finland became a more open society, ready in the 1990s for the blossoming of Erasmus programmes. More Finns went abroad, and more foreigners came to Finland—including me. In a way, I am a product of the very process described in this book, a small link in a chain started after World War II and to which Finnish state agencies also contributed.

Academic research is a mix of lonesome work and team efforts. During this work, I have benefitted both from long days holed behind closed doors and from comments and support from colleagues: my heartfelt thanks for both go to the staff of the section of Contemporary History and the Department of History at the University of Turku, and to the members of the Network for New Diplomatic History.

Warm thanks also to the editing team and the series editors for their patience and support throughout the years this book has been in the making.

Several organizations have made it possible for me to write this book and make it electronically available as an Open Access publication. For that, I want to thank the Faro Foundation and the University of Turku, especially the Faculty of Social Sciences and the Department of Contemporary History, Philosophy and Political science.

Time writing a book is spent agonizing over deadlines, the right turn of phrase, insufficient archival basis or the right balance between details and big picture. As one moves to the later stages, when writing each sentence feels like swimming through molasse, one becomes for a while a more distant parent and spouse. Eventually the trip is over. What remains is a bit of confusion and an immense debt of gratitude.

Turku

July 2022

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CHAPTER 1

Studying Finland's Cultural Diplomacy from World War II to the CSCE

*Finland's international cultural relations are a part of this country's
cultural work.*

—*Kalervo Siikala 1976* (Siikala 1976, 336-338. Translated from
Finnish.)

1.1 OPENING FINLAND TO THE WORLD

Between 1945 and the Helsinki CSCE meeting in 1975, personalities and institutions in Finland's government discussed the role of the state in the country's international cultural relations, both in the frame of the Cold War and in the context of a rapidly changing welfare state. After a period of war and conservatism, the reality of Finland's opening up to the world could be seen in the emergence of new cultural forms, new movements of population, new economic activities, and a surge in international trade contacts.¹ Behind these spontaneous changes, one could also discern the handiwork of a series of public institutions and personalities, trying to channel these changes into certain directions, modernize Finland's society and its position in the world.

This book is an effort to understand what international cultural relations meant for Finland's foreign policy managers, and to document the

¹For Finland's economic and social developments in the 1960s–1970s, see Alasuutari 2017. For the development of Finland's trade and its opening up to new markets, see Aunesluoma 2011; Ojala et al. 2006.

*development of state activism in this domain during the first three decades of the Cold War.*² The process through which the Finnish state aimed at channelling and strengthening the country's cultural relations overlapped with several aspects of Cold War Finland: foreign policy, domestic cultural policy, domestic political debates, economic considerations, and national identity debates. For some, it was also seen as a way—indeed a duty—to showcase Finland's participation in international cultural relations, and contribute to the stabilization and pacification of international relations through cultural contacts. It was also framed into a series of concrete aspects of trade, economy, educational and scientific purposes the Finnish state tried to achieve through exchange programmes, study trips abroad, cultural exports or the use of culture to brand Finland as a trustworthy economic and political partner. As an administrative endeavour, finally, Finland's cultural diplomacy was the object of a tug of war between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and between the state authorities and various private or semi-autonomous organizations.

The Finnish politician Paavo Lipponen reflected on these developments in a long essay published in 1993 by the daily *Helsingin Sanomat*.³ Finland certainly had gone some way since 1945. At the end of the war, the country had to extract itself from the ruins of its wartime alliance with Nazi Germany. It was isolated, impoverished and dominated by its totalitarian neighbour. By the end of the Cold War, Finland had developed into a prosperous welfare state involved in relations with both East and West. In 1993, it was negotiating its accession to the EU. From this perspective, the compromises involved in Finland's Cold War position, such as accepting a measure of Soviet influence in both foreign and domestic matters, could be seen either as a small price to pay for reconstruction and stabilization or as a Faustian bargain, a stain on the soul of a democratic nation.

² As a point of comparison besides Sweden, Matthieu Gillibert has dealt with the same elements in the case of Switzerland: Gillibert 2013.

³ Lipponen 1993. Born in 1941, Lipponen was the secretary for international affairs of the Social-Democratic party in the early 1970s. His political engagement brought him to being Prime Minister Mauno Koivisto's secretary from 1979 to 1982, then a member of the Finnish parliament from 1983 to 1987. In times of weaker political winds, he made his place in the Finnish press and research milieu as a commentator on international politics, becoming in 1989 the director of the Finnish Institute for International Affairs. Eventually, he served as prime minister under Martti Ahtisaari's and Tarja Halonen's presidential mandates in the late 1990s and early 2000s. While dominated by Finnish domestic politics, Lipponen's memoirs for the period 1979–1995 have long developments on international affairs as well: Lipponen 2014. All biographical details to follow are taken from each individual entry in the *Kansallisbiografia*-biographical encyclopedia: <https://kansallisbiografia.fi>

Part of Lipponen's essay dealt especially with the reconstruction of Finland's cultural contacts with the world. Finland had changed since the war, its youth had adopted foreign models and discovered the world beyond their country's immediate neighbourhood and its relation with the Soviet Union. Private organizations, semi-public societies and public authorities had worked to develop and coordinate the country's opening to international contacts. For Lipponen, this movement was not spontaneous: Finland did not *internationalize* as much as it *had been* internationalized. Starting in the mid-1960s, the Finnish authorities took upon themselves to build a "cultural state" (*sivistysvaltio*) as an aspect of the "welfare state" (*hyvinvointivaltio*):⁴ a series of institutions supporting the democratization and the strengthening of education, technology, science and the arts. This process was favoured by the arrival in power after the war of political figures situated left of centre and emphasizing democratic access to education, knowledge and the arts.⁵ It also had an international dimension: it corresponded with a will to reconstruct Finland's international contacts after 1945, broaden its cultural horizons, adapt its cultural relations to the Cold War, and develop a policy of neutrality dominated by relations with the USSR.

Amongst the personalities whom Lipponen thinks helped and guided Finland's cultural modernization and internationalization, he mentions Kalervo Siikala, a civil servant in the Ministry of Education.⁶ One could

⁴In Finnish, *sivistys* means the same thing as *bildung* in German, a mix of enlightenment and cultural development. In political terms, it is strongly linked to an idealized vision of the national group and its process of self-cultivation and collective cultural maturation. In the Finnish context of the mid-1960s, it is to be understood as a branch of a developing welfare state marshalling material but also spiritual resources in a process aiming at strengthening and educating the nation. *Sivistys* also points to the vision of an idealized culture, centrally defined as good and appropriate for this harmonious cultural development of the people. For a presentation of the political and administrative project aiming at a *sivistysvaltio* in Finland, see Pernaa and Tiitta 2007. On the various models of welfare states and especially the Nordic one, see Béland et al. 2021.

⁵Autio and Heikkilä 1990, 13-18.

⁶Born in 1932 in Kemi and starting as a journalist in postwar Finland, Siikala became in 1957 the head of Finland's UNESCO committee. Through his activism in the Center Party, he became the personal secretary of Prime Minister J.V. Sukselainen from 1959 to 1961. In 1962, he moved to the national broadcaster Yle before becoming in 1966 the head of the Ministry of Education's Department of International Affairs. He retired from the ministry in 1997 and died in 2009.

suggest additions to this list: Reino Oittinen,⁷ a politician, educator and early advocate of Finland's accession to UNESCO; Jaakko Numminen,⁸ the long-term chancellor of the Ministry for Education from the 1960s to the 1980s; Kalevi Sorsa,⁹ a UNESCO civil servant who became Foreign Minister in the early 1980s; Max Jakobson,¹⁰ a journalist, diplomat and productive non-fiction writer, and tens of civil servants working in the ministries of Education and Foreign Affairs. Lipponen emphasized the role these characters, mostly involved in state agencies, played in modernizing Finnish society and opening it to the world.¹¹

⁷Born in 1912, Oittinen was a social-democratic politician, educator and civil servant. Coming from a modest family, Oittinen trained as a teacher, became rector of his school and then branched into journalism before leading the Finnish Workers' Academy up to 1950. He worked from 1950 to 1972 as the head of Finland's School administration and served as Minister of Education in five different governments. He is known especially for his role in the creation of a renewed Finnish system of elementary schools in the 1960s–1970s. He died in 1978.

⁸Born in 1928, Numminen did most of his career as a civil servant in the Ministry of Education. He led the division of Universities and Science from 1970 to 1972 and was the chancellor of the Ministry between 1973 and 1994.

⁹Born in 1930, Sorsa started his career as a journalist in the late 1950s, in the press of the social-democratic movement, then became an editor. He lived in Paris from 1959 to 1965, where he worked as an international civil servant at UNESCO. In 1965, he became the head of Finland's UNESCO committee and an assistant director in the Ministry of Education's Department of International Affairs. In 1969, he was chosen as the first secretary of the Social-Democratic Party, launching a political career that will bring him to assume, at various intervals between 1972 and 1987, the post of prime minister and several ministerial portfolios in a host of governments. Sorsa died in 2004.

¹⁰Born in 1923, Jakobson had a particularly long and rich career between journalism, diplomacy and think tanks. He started as a journalist, working after the war as a correspondent in London then entering the Ministry for Foreign Affairs as a press attaché. In 1958, he became the head of the Press Division of the Ministry, before becoming in 1962 the head of its Political Division. He was Finland's representative to the UN, then ambassador in Stockholm. In 1975, Jakobson left the Ministry to become the head of the Finnish Business and Policy Forum, a think tank and lobby group for Finnish business circles. He died in 2013.

¹¹The debate on the internationalization of Finland, meant as the opening of the country to foreign trends and also increasingly to immigration (in stark contrast to the past for a country mostly used to emigration since the nineteenth century) was particularly strong in the 1990s, when Lipponen wrote his article. Books, reports and editorials debated the place of Finland in a new post–Cold War world and its relations with international trends. A good example of such activity is a report written for the University of Helsinki and dealing with the University's internationalization: Vogt and Heiskanen 1993. Reports dealing with the same subjects and drawing mostly the same conclusions and recommendations have been a regular feature of Finland's public life ever since.

The process Lipponen gives his generation credit for was also linked to Finland's geopolitical position. In the context of the 1950s–1960s, extracting Finland from the war meant first of all building stable relations with the Soviet behemoth, a process where culture and Finland's international reputation became important tools. Finland was both “finlandized” by the influence of the Soviet Union and “westernized” through its economic and cultural integration, spontaneous and state-led. In a delicate geopolitical position, the expansion of the state's cultural activism was an attempt at controlling various aspects of public life in order to keep them in sync with a carefully constructed official foreign policy line. Finland's cultural diplomacy, with its corollaries in educational, artistic and scientific contacts, depended thus on the development of the Finnish welfare state, Finland's foreign policy in the Cold War and the evolutions of Finland's national identity.

1.2 SHIFTING NOTIONS OF CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

Cultural and public diplomacy studies are a maze of terms and categories, used to corral a large and rich field of activities. Technical issues such as scientific and technological contacts or exchange programmes have a tendency to spread towards more general matters of foreign policy, image and identity. In a policy field where state action often lags behind private initiatives, the private and public spheres easily entangle, making studying international cultural contacts extremely difficult—even in Finland, a small, tightly-knit polity.¹² Jozef Batora and Monika Mokre open their edited volume with a one-size-fits-all definition of cultural diplomacy, as the way “*political entities use culture to support their soft power potential, to generate goodwill, to frame international agenda in particular ways, to erect and re-enact boundaries and/or to create societal linkages across them*”.¹³ Coping with the same problem, Nicholas J. Cull proposed a narrower definition of cultural diplomacy as “*the dissemination of cultural practices as a mechanism to promote the interests of an actor*”. This points to the use by state authorities of culture in a strategic, operative sense, and covers most of the ground we are going to study in this book both in

¹²For general reflections on the influence of smallness on decision-making processes, see Corbett and Veenendaal 2018; Baldersheim and Keating 2015. For specific reflections on Nordic societies and their political and social peculiarities, see Aucante 2013. For a general presentation of the most salient aspects of Scandinavian societies and cultures, see Lindskog and Stougaard-Nielsen 2020.

¹³Batora and Mokre 2011, 2.

terms of practices and in terms of agents.¹⁴ Cultural diplomacy as we see it in the Finnish case has its origins in state actions, in definitions of the national interest, and in debates about national identity.

Debates about a definition of cultural diplomacy are linked to debates about culture in the history of international relations. In a recent article, Patrick Finney analysed the current state of affairs in international history after the cultural turn, concluding that approaches drawing on cultural studies are now firmly engrained in the heart of the discipline, rejuvenating it with new questions.¹⁵ Finney advocates a form of profound engagement with the categories and preoccupations of cultural studies, susceptible to completely change the main gist of international history. But he also mentions a more modest approach, which is the one of this book, for which “*attending to cultural factors was often justified on the rather more empirical grounds that it produced a fuller picture of the fabric of policy-making*”. Culture has added new layers of ground to the floodplains of international history, through which the historian can dig to better understand various aspects of foreign policy and international relations. As we look at official decisions and state policy, culture, representations, images and narratives are now an essential part of what we look for. To understand statecraft without culture would be near impossible, but to study culture without power would yield equally weak returns in terms of elements of answers to what constitute, still, the fundamental questions of international history:¹⁶ the structures of international and transnational relations through history, the actions of states and other agents, the ways they organized their relations, under which influences and to what ends.

The Finnish case provides a fertile ground for such exercise: culture and image were not just an afterthought in the country’s foreign policy, but an important part of Finland’s relation with the world, institutionalized and thought about, resourced and coordinated by civil servants. Hence, the richness of material available and the fact that tending to these aspects provides a better, more life-like picture of Finland’s foreign relations and position in Cold War Europe: it highlights the interplay of statecraft and culture, representations and strategic agency, the intersection of private activities and public efforts to coordinate them. The observer can connect broad cultural assumptions and representations to actual policies, the

¹⁴ Cull 2008, introduction, esp. xv.

¹⁵ Finney 2018, 609-630.

¹⁶ Buzzanco 2000, 623-632.

activities of private agents to the institutions of the state, or domestic developments to foreign relations. Pascal Ory underlined the way in which different national instances of the use of culture in foreign policy can be studied as localized patterns of different variables, positions on a series of axes: from official diplomacy to private relations, from structured policy to informal contacts, from massive campaigns to punctual events, from short- to long-term policies, from a field of private agents to a field dominated by public institutions.¹⁷ My approach will be to consider the way cultural relations were conceived by their own protagonists in Finland's state agencies: were they mostly about the construction of national identity, the necessities of foreign policy, or the facilitation of economic and commercial endeavours?¹⁸

Approaching culture in Finland's foreign policy means looking at the way a variety of elements (the arts, cultural phenomena, science and education) were instrumentalized in the state's strategic planning, and looking at how both local cultural trends and the geopolitical context of the Cold War shaped the process. A set of public policies defined by cultural representations was also seen as a strategic tool deployed in a certain context by various actors in order to try and reach strategically defined aims. This book will present tangible structures occupied and managed by people with constructed meanings and representations, institutions embedded in national contexts. Cultural diplomacy in the Finnish case will be studied as those parts of the state's foreign activities dealing with cultural matters, using culture for various purposes. The book will concentrate on isolating these purposes, describing the creation of dedicated public institutions and their various activities. Working on historical practices of cultural diplomacy returns us to the notion that the use by state authorities of culture in foreign policy is a part of statecraft, a means in service of conceptions of the national interest. The recent insistence on an altruistic understanding of cultural diplomacy, as an attempt at fostering dialogue between nations in a connected world, might leave us insufficiently prepared for studying the historical use of culture by sovereign states.

In his recent work, Guillaume Tronchet invites us to remember that "*the concept of cultural diplomacy, before being a useful category of analysis, was a category of practice, which foreign ministries used to incorporate under their*

¹⁷ Ory 2002, 11-12.

¹⁸ For an attempt to define a series of similar variables for public diplomacy, see Clerc 2016, 110-123.

administrative control all international activities distinct from military, economic or political considerations".¹⁹ The Finns used a varied vocabulary to designate the ways the state used culture and cultural issues in foreign policy. It ranged from terms referring to pure propaganda efforts, aiming at promoting a certain image of Finland abroad, to more altruistic notions on the use of culture to foster international dialogue and modernize the country. A part of the book will thus be dedicated to exposing the ways the protagonists themselves defined the use of culture in foreign policy and the hopes they invested in it. Another important aspect is the concrete organization of cultural diplomacy: for a small state, smaller central budgets and resources make things more complex and impose specific ways of doing things, such as the extensive private-public cooperation I will describe.²⁰

This book will revolve around a narrow definition of cultural diplomacy, as a set of activities linked to the country's international cultural relations, coming out of official policy and thought about strategically as parts of the country's foreign policy. This concentration on state activities does not encompass the entirety of Finland's international cultural contacts, and in many cases such as scientific contacts or artistic collaboration, the Finnish state was far from being the main protagonist. It will force this book to consider also semi-autonomous or private organizations that worked with the state.

I will however mostly focus on culture and image in the activities of agents and institutions located in or revolving around two ministries: the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education. This arrangement will provide the book with a mooring, a set of people and organizations to look at, a repository of archives to work with. It is also in tune with the development of the book's subject matter, as cultural relations were increasingly construed in Finland as an important sector to be supported by the state, discussed and institutionalized by a group of civil servants. Increasing coordination by the Finnish state of activities linked to cultural relations abroad was a conscious effort trying to pull Finnish society and its spontaneous cultural contacts into certain directions corresponding to definitions of the national interest.

While my insistence on the strategic use of culture suggests the country's foreign policy as the main context of the book, another background force is domestic and identity-based developments. Cultural diplomacy appears as a process through which the "imagining" of a political group's

¹⁹Tronchet 2018, 50.

²⁰Szondi 2008, 292-313.

own identity as well as the workings of its cultural, scientific and artistic fields were strategically interpreted and coordinated by state institutions as part of the country's foreign policy.²¹ Despite its focus on the strategic use of culture, however, this book is not unsensitive to the culturalist approach emphasized by Finney:²² Finnish cultural diplomacy will appear also as an extension of domestic political and identity debates, with roots in auto- and xeno-stereotypes, local idiosyncrasies of taste and organizations and local attempts to interpret transnational trends.²³ The Finnish state's support, control and use of culture and its promotion of certain forms of international cultural contacts over others contributed to a definition of the cultural traits of an ideal national community and their representation and promotion abroad. This suggests that cultural diplomacy must, apart from its strategic role in the country's foreign policy, be considered also in relation to and as the expression of larger trends of cultural policy and the definition of a national identity.

Cultural diplomacy in Finland is thus at the same time all of three things: an important sphere of foreign policy in itself, this fourth pillar of foreign policy Willy Brandt talked about in 1966;²⁴ a state activity aimed at domestic audiences and at influencing the structures of society; a facet of the definition of a national Finnish culture. Cultural relations can be used as ways for the state to foster what civil servants would consider modernity,²⁵ not unlike recent nation branding campaigns concerned with both the national and the international.²⁶

1.3 CULTURE AND SMALL NATIONS DURING THE COLD WAR

Culture has been integrated in Cold War studies as an important dimension, one of the reasons why the Cold War went the way it went.²⁷ Studies dealing with the cultural aspects of the Cold War have, however, mostly dealt with culture as a front of the bipolar ideological fight. Propaganda,

²¹ For a reflection on the dialogue between “imagining” and “imaging” processes, see Clerc and Glover 2015, 3-22.

²² An approach well summarized by Charlotte Faucher in Faucher 2016, 373-385.

²³ Gillibert 2017, 11-25.

²⁴ Quoted in Varga 2013, 442-458.

²⁵ A trend suggested in Huijgh 2019.

²⁶ Kühschelm 2018, 52-78.

²⁷ For example, Badalassi and Snyder 2018 have emphasized the role of culture and human rights in the CSCE process as ferments to the end of the Cold War.

attempts at influencing public opinions or the ideological quarrel between blocs have been emphasized.²⁸ In a victorious narrative describing the Cold War as a “50-years war”²⁹ ending up with the victory of the Western bloc, détente does not have a place, and Europe barely figures: the most important elements are the activities of the Great Powers, their titanic struggle ending up with the death of one at the hand of the other.

However, publications have also started to consider Europe and especially the Nordic Countries beyond the paradigm of great powers and confrontation.³⁰ Scandinavia and Northern Europe have seen a number of studies looking at inter-bloc cultural interaction and the Nordic Countries’ use of culture and image in the Cold War.³¹ In their 2004 book, Rana Mitter and Patrick Major insisted on the necessity to look at the Cold War’s home fronts and their specific developments, not only in the United States but also elsewhere, in small states and peripheral places.³² Studying Finland’s cultural diplomacy forces one to take such a step aside: a peripheral small state, Finland appears as an interesting example of the role of small European states as in-betweeners during the Cold War, and of the role of local developments in shaping responses to the context of the Cold War. The international behaviour of the smaller nations of Northern Europe and their supposed exceptionalism has been the object of a certain amount of scholarly interest, a good part of it emphasizing the importance of their reputation in giving them a standing beyond their apparent capacities.³³

This quest for alternative views of the Cold War has also brought scholars to look at moments of begrudging cooperation between the blocs, interstitial spaces and strategies of coping with the environment created by the Cold War. Oliver Bange and Poul Villaume criticized a Cold War scholarship emphasizing confrontation between blocs and forgetting moments of cooperation and (mostly) peaceful cohabitation.³⁴ Cities,

²⁸The best example is a book that rejuvenated the study of Cold War cultural relations in the early 2000s, Saunders 2000.

²⁹To borrow Georges-Henri Soutou’s title to his book Soutou 2001.

³⁰See Villaume et al. 2016; Autio-Saraso and Miklóssy 2011. For a quick presentation of these developments and the role of the Nordic Countries as cases through which they venture a re-evaluation of the Cold War, see Mikkonen 2013, 5-14.

³¹Ingimundarson and Magnúsdóttir 2015; Mikkonen and Koivunen 2015; Bastiansen & Werenskjöld 2015.

³²Mitter and Major 2004.

³³Ingebritsen 2006, 1; Browning 2007, 27-51. See also Glover 2011; Marklund 2013, 263-287; Marklund 2009, 264-285; Marklund and Petersen 2013, 245-257.

³⁴Bange and Villaume 2017, 1.

regions and entire states have defined strategies of survival in-between blocs, specific ways of manoeuvring through the Cold War, using margins of manoeuvre and channels of influence.³⁵ Some “places”, both in the abstract and concrete sense, have seen interactions and cooperation between East and West. Some have used their interstitial situation to their advantage, while others have interpreted the Cold War context at variance with the great trends of the bipolar conflict. For some, the Cold War has been before everything the end of World War II and the construction of a new world, or a period of political, economic and social changes, or a rethinking of their national identity in a specific international context. By titling his book *Cold Wars* in the plural, Lorenz Lüthi aptly reminded his reader of this multiplicity of local versions of the bipolar conflict.³⁶

Localized case studies, in this context, allow one to consider different patterns of narratives and agency, chronological context and global trends, and different configurations of actors in different settings: Finland is interesting both in itself and as an example of various Cold War evolutions and international phenomena. It provides us with a different view on the cultural Cold War than the one provided by studies concentrating on great powers³⁷ or aiming at theoretical generalization. The Cold War, as we will see, was not the only context in which Finnish cultural diplomacy developed, despite its importance as a structure.³⁸ It may have depended also on developments such as the expansion of the welfare state, social and economic modernization, or certain visions of Finland's position in the world. One example of such localized development is Finland's perception of itself as a periphery: Marja Jalava, Stefan Nygård and Johann Strang have insisted on the need to look at small and peripheral actors through asymmetries in the transmission of ideas and intellectual backgrounds, assimilation of or resistance to external, global trends.³⁹ Small states and peripheral, interstitial places are intellectual spaces where the intractability of the narrative of great powers' Cold War confrontation can be questioned or at least re-interpreted.⁴⁰

³⁵ Crump and Erlandsson 2020, 1-10.

³⁶ Lüthi 2020.

³⁷ See, for example, the contributions to Sirinelli and Soutou 2008.

³⁸ In the case of Finland, Simo Mikkonen underlines the way “*politics was only one aspect of cultural exchanges*” (Mikkonen 2019, 13).

³⁹ Jalava et al. 2018.

⁴⁰ Gienow-Hecht 2010, 398-419; Cull 2010, 438-459; Vowinkel et al. 2012; Romijn et al. 2013; Sirinelli and Soutou 2008.

In all these fields, Finland is a particularly rich case, allowing one to consider a specific form of cultural diplomacy beyond models tailor-made for great powers and often brought wholesale to studying smaller states. The country had a developing and modernizing economy and society, changing dramatically in the years between 1945 and the late 1970s. It had its own way of organizing cultural policy in a welfare state, a corporatist organization that spilled over in foreign relations. As a small state, it had a strong and developed reflection on image policy and self-identity, alongside robust debates about culture, modernity, the role of elites and contacts with the world. Its position as a small country closely tied to the USSR contributed to tensions in its domestic and foreign policies, but also made it more interesting in the eyes of the West than it would have been without this relation with the Soviet Union.

1.4 LITERATURE AND SOURCES

The focus of this book, set mostly on the Finnish state and its conception of Finland's international cultural relations, has practical reasons: despite the size of the country, studying the entirety of Finnish society's cultural relations with the world during the Cold War would be a daunting task difficult to satisfactorily fulfil in the length of a single book. Finland's cultural history has been presented in multi-volume series emphasizing also international contacts as a part of a cultural whole.⁴¹ Considering Finnish public central institutions and their views regarding the use of culture, science and education in foreign policy, this book is allowed to lean on well-defined archival material and studies dealing with Finland's cultural foreign relations.

Finland's international position and foreign policy during the Cold War have been the objects of robust scholarly scrutiny, in Finland obviously but also elsewhere.⁴² Cultural matters and Finland's public and cultural diplomacy during the Cold War, however, haven't been the main interests of Finnish historical studies, which remain largely dominated by political relations with the USSR. Studies in Finland's cultural relations with the

⁴¹ Such as Kolbe et al. 2004; Kaartinen et al. 2016.

⁴² In English, Marek Fields provides the most detailed description of the historiography of Finland's Cold War. Fields interrogates recent changes in this historiography, mostly the move from studies concentrating on Finland and political relations with the USSR to a wider range of research interests and perspectives: Fields 2015, 21-33. See also Majander 2004, 43-82.

world, however, have developed in several directions. Researches on the evolutions of Finnish national culture in an increasingly international and open environment have benefited from an unabated editorial and academic fascination with the contours of Finnish culture and national identity.⁴³ Studies have also detailed the spreading to Finland of cultural trends, especially coming from the United States,⁴⁴ as well as various aspects of cultural relations with the Eastern bloc such as the role of friendship societies.⁴⁵ There has been a host of specific studies on scientific, technical and artistic contacts, the international relations of various organizations, from sites of higher learning⁴⁶ to municipalities, from companies to language teachers, from diaspora associations⁴⁷ to exchange organizations such as the Youth for Understanding's Finnish chapter.⁴⁸ All of these could be described as dealing with the internationalization of cultural practices in Finland during the Cold War. Studies have also looked at Finland as the receiving end of other states' cultural diplomacy, trade promotion or propaganda.⁴⁹ Research describing bilateral cultural relations with various countries and the image of Finland in these countries have also been a staple of this editorial production.⁵⁰ Finally, studies of Finland's postwar cultural developments have also described the spontaneous "internationalization" of the Finnish cultural landscape.⁵¹

Recently, some publications have worked to present and make sense of those parts of Finland's diplomacy dealing with cultural relations, by outlining the contours of a rhetoric of neutrality,⁵² considering Finland's image and public diplomacy towards certain states and regions,⁵³ or comparing Finland's case with other Nordic Countries. Some rare researches have

⁴³ For a recent example, see Valtonen 2018.

⁴⁴ See for example the relevant parts of Kaartinen et al. 2016.

⁴⁵ See for example the history of the Finland-Soviet Union Society: Kinnunen 1998. Unfortunately there is no systematic study of friendship societies in Finland during the Cold War, despite their numbers and active role in grassroots' international contacts. The Finland-Soviet Union Society remains the only one systematically studied—a testimony to the centrality of the USSR for Cold War Finland and for Finnish historiography.

⁴⁶ Klinge et al. 1990; Halila 1987; Jalava 2012.

⁴⁷ For example, *Kielisillan rakentajat* 1997; Seppinen 2002.

⁴⁸ Mämmelä 2011.

⁴⁹ See, for example, Fields 2015.

⁵⁰ A good example of this "*Finland seen from country X*"- school of publications is provided by the book Sihvo 1995.

⁵¹ See Kaartinen et al. 2016.

⁵² Rainio-Niemi 2008.

⁵³ Ipatti 2019, 103-130.

emphasized the way culture was used in times of crises by Finland's foreign policy: Heikki Rausmaa's PhD thesis describes how, in the late 1980s, while the Finnish state could not officially endorse the Baltic liberation movements, cultural relations and other means were used to support them indirectly.⁵⁴ Access to international organizations was, for Finland, an extremely important aspect of how the country expanded its international reach and especially its international cultural relations. The UN and its ancillary organization UNESCO were one of the first postwar international organizations Finland joined, but Finland's relations with UNESCO have garnered only little studies.⁵⁵ More is needed to understand the patterns of relations between domestic Finnish institutions and international organizations. Exchange and stipend practices from and to Finland, for example, have been seldom described outside of official reports.⁵⁶

One aspect of our subject that has been especially researched is the specific field of cultural relations with the Eastern bloc, and particularly with the USSR. Studies have long concentrated on the semi-public organizations managing cultural relations with the USSR, especially the Finland-Soviet Union Society. In 2002, Ville Perna's PhD directed analytical light on the activities of Finnish ministries, by studying the creation and development of the Soviet Institute (*Neuvostoliitto-instituutti*) working inside the Finnish Ministry of Education. Perna's research was ground-breaking in that it looked at Finland's official cultural diplomacy towards the East as the result not only of interactions between private and public actors but also of policy developments inside the Finnish public sector: the institute was discussed intensely between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, with different logics pulling it in different directions. Perna also emphasized the way the Finnish state used culture for various purposes, including buttressing its relations with the USSR, finding educational outlets for students, or promoting exports. But Perna's work has had only a few followers willing to continue studying the various layers of public institutions and policy managing Finland's cultural policy overseas.

⁵⁴ Rausmaa 2013.

⁵⁵ Haggren 2009, 88-111.

⁵⁶ Some exceptions exist, such as Perna 2002. However, these rare exceptions deal mostly with exchange programmes between Finland and one of the superpowers: either exchange programmes with the USSR or the Fulbright and ASLA-programmes with the United States (*Amerikan Suomen Lainan Apuraha*, Grant from the Finnish American Loans) (see Fields 2020, 209-214).

However, cultural relations with the East in particular haven't been laid to rest, and remain an important subject of historical research and political polemics in Finland. The subject was somehow re-ignited in 2018 by the journalist Leena Sharma, whose pamphlet on relations between the Finnish cultural milieu and the USSR marshalled a string of anecdotes in the service of a foregone conclusion on Finland's cultural elite's cosy if not traitorous relations with the USSR during the Cold War.⁵⁷ Sharma's book exemplifies a recent critical return on the real or imaginary excesses of Soviet influence in Cold War Finland, in which the history of the Cold War is used as a tool to justify current policy options or to delegitimize political and public personalities in the present day. More recently and more seriously, Simo Mikkonen's study on the role of the arts in Finno-Soviet relations during the early Cold War came in 2019 to rejuvenate this field of studies.⁵⁸ Mikkonen was already well-known for several contributions to the study of Cold War cultural relations,⁵⁹ and his book brought forward a wealth of details on the specificities of Soviet cultural activities in Finland.

Based on both Finnish and Russian sources, Mikkonen's book certainly set the bar to clear for any coming attempts to study Finno-Soviet cultural relations. He highlights the role of private or semi-private organizations in Finland and the influence of Soviet state-led cultural diplomacy on bilateral cultural relations between Finland and the Soviet Union. He also makes sense of periods of intense activity on the Soviet side and periods of relative disinterest, and describes the difficulties for Finnish protagonists to coordinate their activities with mercurial Soviet authorities prone to quick changes of mind. He retraces the effects of wide political changes (the end of World War II, Stalin's death) on these cultural relations, and insists on the way Soviet cultural diplomacy managed at times to reach wide stretches of the Finnish population while emphasizing high European culture: this is well illustrated by late 1940s scenes of classical musicians from Leningrad playing for audiences of workers in factories' courtyards or the halls of transportation companies. Twenty years later, the same type of audiences would probably listen to rock'n'roll before attending state-funded adult education sessions organized by trade unions. Some of them would travel through UNESCO's workers' exchange

⁵⁷ Sharma 2018.

⁵⁸ Mikkonen 2019.

⁵⁹ Mikkonen et al. 2019.

programmes, while their children would go to the United States on a Fulbright grant or get their engineering degree in Leningrad.

From another perspective, Marek Fields has dealt extensively with British and US cultural propaganda in Finland in the first decades of the Cold War. Fields also looks at ways in which the Cold War context influenced Finnish governments to develop their own cultural propaganda activities, completing Elina Melgin's 2014 doctoral thesis on Finland's interwar and wartime cultural diplomacy.⁶⁰ In an ambitious work, Melgin presented Finland's reorganization of its field of propaganda institutions and cultural diplomacy in the years 1944–1948. Her work was essential in unearthing for the first time a series of case studies of cultural and artistic cooperation, insisting mostly on the role of private actors and providing unique information on these activities. Melgin also presented the way the Finnish state's cultural diplomacy activities developed slowly during the interwar period, then experienced a major boost during the war before disappearing after 1944.

The research project on Finnish cultural policy concluded in 2010 and organized by the Finnish organization for cultural relations *CUPORE* deserves special mention here. Coordinated by Anni Kangas, this project brought several interesting publications. The most relevant for us is a book by Tomi Mertanen,⁶¹ who writes an overview of Finnish cultural and arts policy in the 1940s and 1950s. The book gives a basis for studying the international aspects of this policy that have mostly been left outside of its scope.

The two ministerial organizations that form the core of this book, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education, have been considered through broad administrative history projects. The three-volume administrative history of the Ministry of Education has dedicated several pages to international cooperation and the creation of institutions to manage these.⁶² Timo Soikkanen's two-volume history of the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs has brushed upon the development of a press and culture bureau inside the ministry as well as the creation of a network of cultural attachés.⁶³ However, entire fields such as the negotiations of cultural treaties or the organization of exchange programmes remain

⁶⁰ Fields 2015; Melgin 2014.

⁶¹ Mertanen 2010.

⁶² Autio and Heikkilä 1990; Autio 1993.

⁶³ Soikkanen 2003, 2008.

unexplored. A series of books made using mostly the archives of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' Press Bureau, and concentrating on the Bureau's image promotion and propaganda efforts, will also be useful in this study.⁶⁴

The archival material used in this book is mostly originating from the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs (*Ulkoasiainministeriön arkisto*, UMA) and from the Finnish National Archives (*Kansallisarkisto*, KA). The archives of the Ministry of Education held in the National Archives have been used, as well as the archives of the Finnish UNESCO committee. A number of documents dealing with the activities of the Ministry of Education were still deposited at the ministry at the time of research, and have been used especially to highlight relations with UNESCO and stipend programmes (*Opetusministeriön arkisto*, OPMA). The archival situation of these documents is, however, changing in 2022, when they are in the process of being deposited to the National Archives. The classification of archive boxes and the structure of funds should, however, remain the same. The dichotomy between funds in the Ministry and funds in the National Archives has been preserved in this book in order to reflect the situation at the time of writing.

Some personal archives have been useful to this book, especially Jaakko Numminen's archival funds, kept at the Ministry of Education, and Kalervo Siikala's papers, kept in Helsinki at the archives of the Centre Party (*Keskustan ja Maaseudun arkisto*, KMA). Finally, papers kept in President Urho Kekkonen's presidential library and archive centre have been used whenever necessary, as well as a few documents deposited in the Archives of the Workers' movement (*Työväen arkisto*, TA). The records of parliamentary debates and committees on cultural policy have been used to complete these sources.

Several publications by protagonists have also been used, written at the time and dealing with Finland's cultural diplomacy. Kalervo Siikala,⁶⁵ whom we will meet regularly in this book, Jaakko Numminen⁶⁶ or the former head of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' Press Bureau Heikki Brotherus⁶⁷ have written witness accounts of their work that will be used in this book. They provide excellent starting points to recompose the

⁶⁴ Lähteenkorva and Pekkarinen 2008.

⁶⁵ Siikala 1976.

⁶⁶ Numminen 1964; Numminen 2020.

⁶⁷ Brotherus 1984.

atmosphere in which this process started and the main intentions that shaped it. Despite the analytical take of especially Siikala's and Numminen's books, those will be treated as primary sources, in order to re-situate their emphasis on the state's role in opening up Finland to international trends and contacts.

1.5 FINLAND'S CULTURAL DIPLOMACY BETWEEN MODERNIZATION, THE WELFARE STATE, AND GEOPOLITICS

The organization of this book will follow three threads, in an effort to make sense of the development at the official level of a Finnish cultural diplomacy between 1945 and 1975, with dedicated organizations and practices, a certain context and certain goals.

The **first part of this book** will delve into the way civil servants framed Finland's cultural diplomacy in the context of Finland's Cold War developments. Reflections about cultural diplomacy mixed national identity to modernity, geopolitics to economy and trade, education to technological development.

There are many reasons and many possible patterns of activities and explanations for why a country would engage in cultural diplomacy. Varga and a large literature on nation branding have described a post-Cold War moment in which foreign cultural policy has become economized, depoliticized and transformed to assist nation branding efforts.⁶⁸ This is a specific pattern in evolutions that have seen constant negotiations between various poles in order to define the main thrust of cultural foreign policy, with two main tensions: between economy, identity and politics; between state coordination and an autonomous cultural field. Cultural diplomacy crystallized in Finland as part of a wider endeavour concerned with the management of cultural, artistic, technological, scientific relations with foreign states and international organizations.

While Finland's geopolitical situation next to the Soviet Union is one of the most important incentive for the country's cultural diplomacy, there are other reasons this chapter will explore. A part of the reason for small states having a cultural diplomacy in the first place has to do with a fear of cultural backwardness, a desire to modernize their society through the appropriation of cultural trends and organizational frames.⁶⁹ At the same

⁶⁸ Varga 2013, 442-458.

⁶⁹ Chaubet and Martin 2011, 33-35, 103.

time, these small states can also consider themselves as the origin of unique, idiosyncratic cultural practices susceptible to become selling points, identity markers to be presented abroad, bridges to dialogue with others, models to be followed. There is thus an ambiguity in the case of Finland between the desire to adopt foreign cultural trends out of a necessity to modernize the country, and an emphasis on national features considered as unique and susceptible to be preserved and maybe “exported” to the world. This happens bilaterally but often also multilaterally as small states can project on multilateral organizations their desires and goals.⁷⁰ This “export” of cultural trends was increasingly conceived as the contribution of Finland to international cultural relations aiming at peace and stability. The same reflex will have smaller states emphasize the necessity for them to participate in international exchanges in order to emphasize their worthiness as international agents. Limited resources might, however, force them to manage this engagement “on the cheap”, looking for cooperation with other countries, economies of scale and emphasizing the efficiency of international organizations.

Linked to this question of the goals envisaged for cultural diplomacy is the question of balancing between those activities aimed at foreign audiences and those aimed at domestic audiences. As we will see, Finland’s cultural diplomacy’s aims were not only to solidify prestige, win sympathy, markets and cultural and scientific contacts for the country but also to actually usher into existence the sophisticated yet idiosyncratic national culture it promoted outwards. Somogy Varga describes in his work on Germany’s Goethe Institute the way the 2003 Institute’s brand manifest called for each German to “live the brand” in order for the brand to succeed in competition.⁷¹ In Finland, cultural and public diplomacy documents insisted already during the Cold War on the necessity to push also the population of the country to act in certain ways in order to foster the country’s neutrality and to enhance its society’s development in the right direction. A small state situated in a difficult situation had to use image and narratives as resources, not only in its foreign policy but also in transforming its society. Cultural interactions had to be used to change the country and its population, to hasten its modernization, to open it to the world. There is a modernizing ethos to the discourse of Finnish cultural diplomats that matches long term trends in the way Finnish civil servants

⁷⁰ Crump and Erlandsson 2020, 13-31, 177-179.

⁷¹ Varga 2013, 442-458.

saw their role in society during periods of momentous changes. More generally, this part will show how, despite the importance of the Cold War as a backdrop, cultural diplomacy was also framed in terms specific to Finland's national, domestic development.

In his contribution to Scott-Smith and Krabbendam's edited volume on the cultural Cold War in Western Europe, Scott Lucas suggests that the most efficient way to approach cultural diplomacy is to descend into each national case to look at concrete institutional organizations.⁷² **The second part of this book** will thus look at the field of agents, agencies and organizations developed by the Finnish state to manage a cultural diplomacy.

The process was one of slow institutionalization, ushering a situation in which the state coordinated parts of the field of international cultural relations without dominating it completely. In such a small polity, contacts between protagonists over administrative boundaries were easy and frequent. The state could not do much without the support and often the initiative of nongovernmental actors, while non-state actors also needed the state. The division of labour between government and civil society changes from one country to the other, and even inside public administrations the division of labour between various organizations is different. While Åkerlund and Pamment see public-private cooperation as mostly a result of the end of the Cold War and globalization, in the Finnish case, this kind of collaboration is already on display during the Cold War.⁷³

From these considerations will appear a constant negotiation and dialogue between the state and society, and an increasing need for state involvement born of the growing complexity of cultural phenomena and the increasing resources needed. It is this crowded field that Chaubet and Martin⁷⁴ describe in their book, where centralization under the state is always resisted by private actors but also by NGOs, international organizations, transnational actors. Mass culture and high culture erupt at different levels and at different times, with the state picking and choosing what will be emphasized in its activities.

Finally, I will look in **the third and fourth parts of the book** at the activities of this field, from cultural treaties to Nordic cooperation,

⁷² Lucas 2003, 53-72.

⁷³ Åkerlund and Pamment 2018, 290-307. Robert Frank went further in 2003 by previewing the disappearance of public and cultural diplomacy in the globalization era, following the rise of the market and the retreat of the state (Frank 2003, 323).

⁷⁴ Chaubet and Martin 2011, 9.

exchange programmes to trade promotion campaigns. Small states, as we will see, emphasize cooperation with other small states. They can also join efforts and cooperate closely to achieve common foreign policy and economic goals. International organizations such as UNESCO will be the object of particular attention, as the implication of Finland in international cultural organizations was considered as one of the most efficient way to develop the country's cultural policy overseas. The organizations were seen as capacity enhancers for a small state, aggregators of knowledge, influence and networks, despite the cost they entailed. In the 1950s–1960s, the administrators of Finland's cultural policy abroad, especially in the Ministry of Education, were in touch with a host of international organizations in order to rejuvenate Finland's contacts with the world. This part will also dedicate some time to consider the negotiation and nature of the cultural, technical, economic and scientific treaties signed by Finland in the 1950s–1960s. These treaties will give us an occasion to consider the relations between diplomats, politicians and cultural actors in the domain of international cultural relations. We will be able to consider for example the way the Ministry of Education and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs shared their responsibilities in the negotiations of these treaties.

In the **conclusion**, I will consider the ways cultural diplomacy was defined in Finland and the roles it was assigned by state agents. It appears as a crossroad between four processes: the creation of institutions and a process through which the state came to expand its role in Finnish society; the creation of a new “public policy” in a cultural field that had been dominated by private efforts, and at the same time the preservation of strong private agents; geopolitical debates about the position of Finland between East and West, and the role of cultural diplomacy in defining the role of Finland in this new environment; and finally, a reflection on the modernization of the country and its cultural identity. Cultural diplomacy, as we will see, was not only a reaction to a certain geopolitical situation (the Cold War) but also a part of a redefinition of Finnish identity and a modernization of Finnish society. The conclusion will also question the existence of Finnish specificities in the use of culture in foreign relations, amongst which feature prominently the perception of state-coordinated cultural foreign relations as a tool for centralized modernization and their role in the management of Finland's specific international position.

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Defining Finland's Cultural Diplomacy from Postwar to Cold War

First of all, one has to define the reasons why Finland should promote cultural exports. I would summarize it that way: 1. Make our country better known abroad, seek acknowledgment and appreciation. This is what one could call cultural propaganda. 2. Participate in routine international contacts in the arts, science, education and other cultural fields. This is what one could call international cultural cooperation, made of both exports and imports. Its role is to maintain a certain level of development, to avoid arrogant provincialism, and to emphasize Finland's modest but real contribution to Humanity's cultural capital. 3. Economic reasons. Either the direct acquisition of export markets for cultural goods or indirectly cultural support for other forms of exports.

—*Kalervo Siikala, 1976* (Keskustan ja maaseudun arkistot (KMA), *Kalervo Siikala fund*, Box 1960-1970 luku kirjoituksia, esitelmää. Keskustapolitiikka, Taide- ja kulttuuripoliittikkaa, kansainvälistä yhteistyötä, *Speech text*, Kalervo Siikala Suomen kulttuuriliiton keskustelussa, 13.3.1976. *Translated from Finnish.*)

We Finns are easily proud of our position as part of a developed European civilization. But this position is a duty, that we are bound to fulfil also beyond our own borders. We need to educate the youth in order for them to understand the necessities and duties of internationalization.

—*Reino Oittinen, 1962* (Kansallisarkisto (KA), R. Oittinen fund, Box 17, Unesco yms..., file YK. Unesco, Artikkeleita 1958-1963,

Article draft for Opettajain lehti, 26.4.1962. Translated from Finnish.)

By European standards we Finns are latecomers to the cultural race. We will be able to catch up on others only if we wholeheartedly embrace international dialogue and influences.

—*Urho Kekkonen, President of the Republic of Finland, 1962 (KA, Fund Urho Kekkosen julkaistu tuotanto, Speech by president Urho Kekkonen, Helsinki, 17.5.1962, Suomi maailman kartalla. Translated from Finnish.)*

Cultural diplomacy, as a dimension of the state's cultural and foreign policy, refers to specific actions planned, coordinated or organized by central public institutions, aiming to support the objectives of the state. But the objectives of any state's policy are rarely an object of absolute consensus: they might be disputed in society, and different emphases might be found even inside the state's organizational frame. An important starting point in our search for the contours of Finland's cultural diplomacy is thus to find the various reasons for which Finnish administrators would engage in and develop such a policy. Discussing these elements in the context of the Cold War, one has to consider both the weight of the bipolar divide on any policy undertaken by the Finnish state as well as the local context.

This chapter will deal with the various contexts in which Finnish protagonists replaced the country's cultural diplomacy, starting from geopolitics, moving on to reflections on Finland's cultural identity and ending up with the most concrete aspects of trade promotion or participation in development aid. Arguments in favour of state-led cultural outreach overseas showed a certain consistency over the three decades studied here, with certain concerns expressed immediately after the war and continuing up to the 1970s. This continuity was also the result of continuities in personnel, with roughly the same individuals dealing with international cultural relations inside the Finnish civil service. They developed a number of rationales for cultural diplomacy, between supporting Finland's foreign policy in a difficult geopolitical situation, modernizing Finnish society through curated foreign examples and an opening up to global cultural trends, promoting a new image of the country abroad, supporting trade or participating in the work of international organizations.

2.1 “DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING OF FINLAND’S GOALS”: CULTURAL RELATIONS AND GEOPOLITICS FROM 1945 TO 1975

2.1.1 *Adapting to a Radically New World, 1945–1953*

Despite sharing a long border with the USSR, Finland lies just enough to the North to remain a sideshow of European developments. In 1944–1948, this peripherality compensated to a certain point the country’s difficult position as a small and defeated neighbour of the USSR, giving the Finns a window of opportunity to influence their situation. Finland’s stubborn defence in the battles of the summer 1944 had also contributed to this situation: the Finnish army had managed with German assistance to stave off a Soviet summer offensive in June–July 1944, ensuring that in September 1944, when Finland signed a truce with Moscow, the country was free of Soviet troops. It was however considered a former ally of Nazi Germany and a part of the Soviet remit, although both the United States and Great Britain manifested to Stalin their interest in seeing Finland remain independent and democratic.¹ Exhausted by the war, Finland had to welcome in the autumn of 1944 an Allied control commission dominated by Soviet diplomats and led by one of Stalin’s most prominent feal, Andrei Jdanov. During the winter of 1944–1945, Finnish forces also fought a series of battles against their former allies, as German troops stationed in the North of the country had to be pushed out towards Norway.

In 1945, a country that had been independent for less than 30 years thus found itself isolated from its main cultural and political contacts with Western Europe, first by its wartime alliance with Nazi Germany, then by its position in the Soviet Union’s immediate neighbourhood. Finland was mostly perceived in the West as ripe for assimilation in the Soviet sphere of influence, a development seen as unwelcome but largely inevitable. For Finnish wartime leaders and a large part of the population, external danger was compounded by domestic threats: the Finnish communist party and

¹ A good summary of the main events in English can be found in Naimark 2019, 88–121. There are a few excellent presentations in English of Finland’s contemporary history: Henrik Meinander’s well-rounded *A History of Finland* (Hurst, London, 2011) covers a lot of ground in elegant and well-thought prose; Jason Lavery’s *The History of Finland* (Greenwood, London, 2006) is a good mix of synthesis and details; David Kirby’s *A Concise history of Finland* (Cambridge University Press, 2006), finally, is the detailed and complex product of a long career spent studying Finland and Scandinavia.

its organizations, which had been forbidden in the early 1930s, made their return to public life with strong Soviet support. During the 1945 general elections, a coalition of leftist organizations won 49 seats out of the 200 held by the Finnish Parliament, but didn't get the possibility to rule without opposition despite membership in the governmental coalition (the communists Yrjö Leino and Mauri Pekkala became respectively minister for Domestic Affairs and minister of Defence). This brought back suppressed parts of the Finnish polity, the collective memory of the local workers' movement, and hopes that the Soviet victory could mean social and political change in Finland as well as a new, pacified relation with Moscow. These hopes, in a postwar context, extended one way or another beyond the confines of Finland's limited communist movement.

The battles of summer 1944 and Stalin's decision in the autumn to concentrate his resources on the race to Berlin had left Finland free of Soviet troops. The country retained a functioning army, a legitimate government and popular leaders: successive presidents between 1944 and 1956 were first the wartime commander-in-chief of the Finnish army, C.G.E. Mannerheim, then a veteran of Finnish politics, Juho Kusti Paasikivi. State institutions functioned in a context dominated by uncertainties but also a measure of optimism linked to the end of the war and the economic bustle of reconstruction. The resurgent communist party did not manage to acquire a monopolistic or even a dominant place in Finnish domestic politics: it found itself matched by a social-democratic party which more or less retained its positions both during elections and in the cloak-and-dagger fights for control of the main trade unions. While the communists were admitted in government, the main decisions shaping Finland's developments remained in the hands of a group of conservatives and social-democrats, whose long careers harkened back for some of them to their experience of Finland's nineteenth-century autonomy inside the Russian empire. This meant not only familiarity with the Russian language and Russia's mindset but also a certain frame of mind emphasizing both the core economic and political interests of the country and the inevitabilities of Finland's relations to its powerful neighbour. It also meant strong cultural links with Western Europe, seen as a culture and a market Finland wanted to remain a part of.

The situation stabilized with the signature in April 1948 of a bilateral treaty with the Soviet Union. Once again, the treaty's content had much to do with Stalin's attention being drawn elsewhere: already approached by the Soviet Union in late 1947, Paasikivi delayed negotiations until the

late spring 1948, when Stalin had more pressing matters to deal with than forcing a country he didn't occupy into a harder treaty. Finland did not have to give military assistance to the Soviet Union but only to defend against an attack aiming at its own territory. It didn't have to coordinate its foreign policy with Moscow, and the treaty even stated Finland's wish to remain "*outside of great powers' conflicts*". Suspicious of Moscow's intentions but convinced that Finland had no choice but to comply and to stabilize its relations with Moscow, Paasikivi accepted and made most of the Finnish elite accept a move from the confrontational policies of pre-war times to a policy of cautious reckoning with the USSR's power. He convinced himself that Moscow had mostly defensive interests in Finland and could be persuaded not to mingle too deeply in Finland's domestic arrangements, through a mix of giving way to Soviet demands and stalling the most unsavoury ones until Moscow's interest would shift elsewhere. Soviet trust had to be cultivated in order to avoid moments of crises, which included what Paasikivi saw as painful but necessary measures: the trial of wartime leaders, a return to politics of the communist party, Finland's polite refusal to participate in the Marshall plan, and a certain level of domestic self-censorship. In a small society, the president himself was quick to react to anything he considered either as undue kowtowing to the USSR, or as visible criticism of Soviet actions.

From this emerged a situation in which Finland took into considerations the USSR's strategic interests and was nonetheless allowed to retain its social and political model and contacts with the West. Despite Paasikivi's will to preserve Finland's domestic policy from Soviet encroachments, a measure of Soviet influence was unavoidable. In economic and trade terms, Moscow asked for the payment of extensive war reparations, after which a system of preferential clearing trade was set into place. While most of the Finnish economy and especially its main staples in the wood and paper industries remained turned to Western markets, some significant sectors became dependent on the USSR: for example, a Finnish refinery sector emerged in the 1950s, geared towards refining Soviet crude oil and selling it to the West.² Finno-Soviet relations became a complex bilateral game engaging Finnish society as a whole. Soviet pressures increasingly relayed by Finland's state authorities forced all levels of society into various degrees of commitment to an official line regarding the Soviet Union,

² Between 70% and 80% of the Finnish economy remained dependent on Western markets for the entirety of the Cold War: Kuisma 1997, 31.

from rhetorical concessions through self-censorship to actively seeking Soviet support for one's personal career or commercial endeavours, from cynical assessments of Finland's geopolitical situation to genuine hopes about moving away from the nationalism of the interwar period. The reflexes, hidden meanings, small lies and doubletalk needed to sustain this arrangement became instinctively assimilated by the Finns, a state of mind observers often misread as wholesale submission to Soviet influence. The country became split by the dividing line of the Cold War: the West had the cultural and political sympathies of a majority of the population and strong positions as a market for key sectors of the Finnish economy, especially wood and paper; the East had a strong communist movement, influence on state authorities and Finnish foreign and domestic policy, and a position as both the main outlet of key Finnish economic sectors and the main provider of oil and gas to Finland. While Finland took in lots of Soviet cultural material, including the rhetorical and ideological content this material was a vehicle for, it also managed to keep up open and thriving cultural contacts with the West.³

In the political as well as in the cultural field, the return of communists to public life did not mean wholesale change: most of the pre-war cultural and academic elites remained in place, a number of them opposed to the new foreign and domestic policy and willing to use their cultural contacts with the West to compensate for the surge in Soviet influence. In 1948, commenting the year's visa applications to France, the French embassy in Helsinki underlined that Finland's pre-war cultural elite remained in place: they were mostly conservatives for whom trips to France amounted to temporary exile from what they saw as unfortunate changes in their country's domestic and foreign policy.⁴ The sharp criticism drawn by Olavi Paavolainen's 1946 book *Synkkä yksinpuhelu*, where the writer and former war propagandist cautiously criticized the war and the alliance with Nazi Germany, is a good example of the mood of cultural circles at the time: while most would understand the need for arrangements with the USSR, only few were ready for what they saw as useless self-flagellation about the recent past. Another good example is the Finnish Academy, created in 1948 on the model of the *Institut de France*. The left and especially the

³ Mikkonen 2019, 11-12.

⁴ *Archives diplomatiques françaises* (ADF), Box Z Europe, Finlande 1944-1949, 9, Francois Coulet to Maurice Couve de Murville, 2.1.1948; *idem*, Francois Coulet to French MFA, 5.5.1948.

communists opposed the creation of the Academy on the ground that it would be composed of pre-war conservative figures, and it quickly became a centre of opposition to the new official foreign policy line.⁵ Parts of the cultural field however were willing to seize the new situation to usher a new cultural landscape through Soviet support: nominated in the spring of 1945 to lead the national broadcaster *Yle*, the communist playwright Hella Wuolijoki became the symbol of these groups situated mostly on the left but representing also a wider desire for domestic change and a pacification of the country's jingoistic wartime foreign relations.

While the cultural field split itself between East and West, culture could be seen by the Finnish leadership as a way to rebuild relations with the West and to build new relations with the East without too much political consequences. In late 1944, a memoir written to the Finnish embassy in Stockholm, one of the few Finnish embassies functioning in a Western country after the war, spelled out this need, asking the embassy "*to do anything in (its) power to strengthen our position in the world's public opinion and to develop an understanding of Finland's goals*".⁶ In a context where Finland tried to recreate its contacts with the world after its wartime isolation, culture became a tool in the country's limited panoply. Cultural relations were considered especially around the president and in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs through the lens of geopolitics, as a way to support the country's policy, to ensure good relations with East and West, and to buff the economic and commercial potential of a country strongly depending on exports to foreign markets for its economic development.⁷

These state-level reflections were limited by the narrowness of the Finnish state's involvement in culture. While successive education ministers from 1945 to 1948 were leftists, from the cultural leftist Johan Helo to the communist Eino Kilpi, their ministries were small and dominated by conservative or social-democratic civil servants. The most visible communist nominations of the years 1944–1948 were also short-lived: Wuolijoki, for example, lost her position in 1949.⁸ Finland was between 1944 and 1954 an object of regular waves of active Soviet cultural diplomacy,⁹ mostly connected to political events such as the 1945

⁵ Tiitta 2004.

⁶ Quoted in Lähteenkorva and Pekkarinen 2008, 13. Translated from Finnish.

⁷ On Paasikivi's considerations in the matter see Polvinen et al. 1999, 4–8.

⁸ Lyytinen and Vihavainen 1996.

⁹ Mikkonen 2019.

general elections, but cultural relations with the East were managed in Finland mostly out of the state's reach, by non-governmental actors created after the war and trusted by the Soviet Union, such as the Finland-Soviet Union Society.¹⁰ Relations with the West were also dominated by personalities, non-state organizations and non-state institutions of higher learning that worked to rebuild relations interrupted by the war. Those mostly kept their distance from state authorities suspected of selling out to Moscow and local communists. In this field, the state was present mostly through limited funding and facilitation activities especially through the network of embassies and general consulates.

After the war, this situation was rapidly considered as unsatisfactory. In 1945, the first state committee dealing with cultural relations with foreign countries approached the matter mostly through the promotion of Finland's image abroad and the organization of the state's official communication. The wartime propaganda organization had been dismantled, and something else had to be built to do the same job in new circumstances. The committee involved both experts and politicians, including Väinö Meltti, a moderate communist who had been imprisoned during the war.¹¹ Its report dealt with what it called "state communication abroad", including the use of culture for the promotion of a renewed national image. Cultural relations were meant to bring concrete returns for the government's policy: showcase the country's stability, promote and support the official foreign policy line, and gather ideas and support for educational and scientific development.

Reflections on these questions developed in sync with Finland's domestic developments. The year 1948 was an important period, as the treaty with the USSR in April was followed by general elections in July 1948. The Finnish far left made a poor showing in these elections, and Paasikivi nominated a minority cabinet dominated by the social-democratic party. Its prime minister, K.A. Fagerholm, was a former member of wartime governments who had evolved to criticize the policy of German alliance but remained staunchly anti-communist. He intended to show that, while Finland had changed in its relations to the USSR, the communists were not needed to manage new peaceful relations with Moscow, and this could be left to state authorities. He also brought to power social-democratic personalities attached to the promotion of a "national" culture, the

¹⁰Numminen 2020, vol 2, 202-204.

¹¹Melgin 2014, 155 et s.

development of popular education and cultural relations both in Finland and worldwide, like the new Education minister Reino Oittinen. Realizing the fragility of the country's position, Fagerholm planned to enhance the state's cultural activities in order to marshal culture and the country's image in the promotion of Finland's position abroad.¹² Oittinen on the other hand had a wider vision of things, wanting to use culture in order to develop education, science and the arts in Finland.

In September and October 1948, the question of external cultural relations was considered during sessions of the evening meetings of the Fagerholm government, where Oittinen directed discussions and a number of tensions appeared.¹³ In his presentation on September 29th, Oittinen spoke of the necessity to rebuild cultural relations with the West, mentioning plans for a Fulbright exchange program and an application to UNESCO. In exchange, he proposed that the state would work to develop cultural relations with the East, mentioning for instance the proposals of the Finland-Soviet Union Society for a cultural treaty with the Soviet Union. On October 8th, he emphasized the lack of state coordination for foreign cultural relations, and the necessity to change this situation, develop cultural representation, cultural treaties, and state support to cultural organizations. Oittinen considered that cultural relations with the West were essential both for the stabilization of Finland's international position and for the cultural and pedagogical development of its society. Fagerholm however was not overtly enthusiastic, answering Oittinen that "*our first order of business should be to get commercial relations to work*". The Fagerholm government was however unanimous in expressing the need to wrestle cultural relations with the USSR from communist organizations and to promote cultural relations with the West.¹⁴ If Oittinen was one of the first to emphasize the importance of UNESCO for a small country such as Finland, accession was seen as impossible due to Soviet

¹² Fields 2019, 119-121.

¹³ Pernaa 200245; Työväen arkisto (Archives of the workers' movement, TA), K.A. Fagerholm Fund, File *Muistiinpanoja Pääministerin neuvottelukokouksista/iltakokouksista liitteineen 1.8.1948-29.12.1948*, document *Muistiinpanoja valtioneuvoston iltakoulusta 22.9.1948 klo 18 VN:n juhlahuoneistossa*; *idem*, document *Muistiinpanoja valtioneuvoston iltakoulun istunnosta 8.10.1948 klo 18 VN:n juhlahuoneistossa*.

¹⁴ Pernaa 2002, 79-85.

opposition but also, as Oittinen himself underlined, due to the perceived high cost of membership for a small country.¹⁵

Official committees were created to debate the place of culture, scientific exchanges and image in Finland's international relations. In a May 1949 report, a committee created by the Finnish parliament insisted on the need for more scientific, cultural and artistic exchanges and a renewed effort to promote Finland's image abroad.¹⁶ Led by Professor Erik Lönnroth, the committee gathered political representatives (Leo Ehrnrooth), journalists (Yrjö Kaarne), members of Parliament (Sylvii-Kyllikki Kilpi), scholars (professor of social policy Heikki Waris) and diplomats (Heikki Brotherus). It was expected to make practical suggestions as to ways to strengthen the "*development of spiritual exchanges and practical scientific and artistic cooperation with other countries*".¹⁷ The state wanted to promote national culture on the international stage, but the Ministry of Education only had limited subsidies to influence the cultural field's activities. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs concentrated its activities mostly on producing updated publications on Finland and distributing them through its diplomatic network.¹⁸ Participants emphasized the lack of funds for these promotional and cultural activities, and the need to have them coordinated by a centralized body.¹⁹ For politicians and civil servants in the early 1950s interested in the development of cultural relations and image diplomacy, the main arguments in favour of increased "cultural relations abroad" aimed mostly at recovering contacts with the West and

¹⁵ Virolainen 1984, 204–205. In a 1947 memorandum Oittinen proposed that Finland would start preparations for joining UNESCO: *Opetusministeriön arkisto (OPMA), Unesco-arkisto fund, Series 8, Box 8 Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 1a, Yleiset asiakirjat, 1955–1976*, file 81, *SUT:n perustamiseen liittyviä materiaalia—historia*, PM, *Yhdistyneiden kansakuntien kasvatus-, tiede- ja kulttuurijärjestöstä ja siihen liittyisestä aiheutuvista velvollisuuksista, eduista ja oikeuksista*, R.H. Oittinen, 12.6.1947.

¹⁶ The state committees were an important institution of the Finnish state between World War II and the 1990s. Gathering experts, civil servants and political representatives, they were created by the Parliament or the government to reflect on complex matters and provide the state with analyses and guidelines. The 1949 committee published its report: *Komiteamietintö, Mon. 1949: 9, Suomen ulkomaisia kulttuurisubteita tutkimaan asetetulta komitealta*, 9.

¹⁷ *Komiteamietintö mon 1949: 9, Suomen ulkomaisia kulttuurisubteita tutkimaan asetetulta komitealta*, 1-2. Translated from Finnish.

¹⁸ Mertanen 2010.

¹⁹ Lähteenkorva and Pekkarinen 2008, 101-102.

develop relations with the East in a way that would involve state authorities as well.²⁰

Despite this Western emphasis in the late 1940s and early 1950s, the 1948 treaty with the USSR also contained a clause insisting on the development of economic and cultural relations with the Soviet Union: the states were said to have “*decided to work in the spirit of cooperation and friendship to continuously develop and strengthen their economic and cultural ties*”. Although private organizations linked to the communist movement managed the bulk of these renewed contacts, there was a general atmosphere in which the Finnish government adopted parts of the Soviet rhetoric and jargon on international cooperation, peace and understanding amongst nations.²¹ As Marek Fields aptly summarizes: “*Although Finland’s inclination to the West was strong, a large variety of cultural events and ceremonies, together with the overall official policy, were more or less geared to praising the warm friendship the country had with the Soviet Union, making the situation somewhat confusing to both the Finns and Western observers*”. Concretely however, most of cultural relations with the East were at the time coordinated by private organizations emanating from the communist movement.²²

2.1.2 *Supporting a New Neutrality from Stalin’s Death to the CSCE, 1953–1975*

Immediately after the war, culture was thus seen by the Finnish leadership as one of the tools Finland should use to extract itself from the war’s shadow and stabilize its international position especially towards the West. Domestic resistance in Finland as well as the volatility and intransigence of Soviet policy under Stalin complicated the development of state activities in the cultural field. Meanwhile, contacts with the West re-emerged more or less spontaneously.

The death of Stalin in 1953 seemed to herald a period of change that opened possibilities for Finland to explore new options in its relations with both East and West and to stabilize an interpretation of its 1948 deal with Moscow.²³ One of the first results of this change was the possibility for

²⁰ Perna 2002, 80-85; Melgin 2014, 192-195.

²¹ Mikkonen 2019, 26-27.

²² Fields 2015, 15.

²³ Crump and Erlandsson 2020, 173-174.

Finland to approach a number of international organizations, and to channel the Finnish leadership's desire for reintegration in global networks through multilateral cultural relations. The Soviet Union withdrew its objection to Finland's accession to the Nordic Council, and Finland benefited from the package deal found in 1955 between the United States and the Soviet Union over the accession of Eastern European Countries to the UN. Inside Finland, the decade between 1955 and 1965 saw an improvement of the state's capacities to act in international cultural relations and to control also cultural relations with the East.

While the death of Stalin meant a liberalization of Finland's relations with the Soviet Union, it was also followed by steps in the rapprochement with Moscow and the adaptation of Finnish society to the Cold War. A new pattern of Finland's geopolitics came about through a succession of crises between 1958 and 1961, their timing a function of the state of the Cold War, bilateral relations between Finland and the Soviet Union, and Finland's domestic politics. The Fagerholm government had been criticized in Moscow for its perceived aloofness towards the Soviet Union and Finnish communists, and crises of the late 1950s–early 1960s, while overdetermined by the context of the Berlin crisis and the Cuba crisis, also saw the Soviet Union test Finland's commitment to their special relationship. Moscow reminded the Finns of Soviet influence not only on Finland's foreign policy but also on its domestic developments, that had to be kept within certain bounds. Elected in 1956 by the slimmest of margins, the successor of Paasikivi, Urho Kekkonen, interpreted those crises as a warning call, using them to justify a closer alignment with Soviet positions and a stricter control over domestic developments as the only way for the country to continue its contacts with the West. At the same time, he managed to use these crises to strengthen his position as the guarantee of good contacts with the Soviet leadership. Re-affirming good relations with the USSR, he went beyond Paasikivi's and Fagerholm's friendly containment-like policy and spoke for increased proximity between Finland and the Soviet Union. While Paasikivi had walked a fine line between a rhetoric of friendship with the USSR and conservatism at home, international concessions and resistance especially to domestic communism, Kekkonen more readily embraced the situation, insisting on the necessity to pacify relations with the Soviet Union and welcome the communists in government as part of a policy of neutrality. In doing so, he secured his position and that of his political party, the Agrarian League, as the centre of Finland's public life for the next 25 years, and imposed a move to a policy

using more active cooperation with Moscow to allow for increased economic, cultural and political contacts with the West. State authorities became the relays of this policy, in a context where an extensive welfare state emerged in Finland and the Soviet Union started to develop technical cooperation with the agencies of this developing welfare state. Economy and politics became increasingly intertwined: good relations with the USSR allowed cautious participation in Western commercial and economic integration, which contributed to steady economic growth and the development of welfare state provisions and dirigist policies especially in the 1960s. The development of public institutions and the extension of the state's reach also meant the stabilization in Finnish society of a certain way to think Finland's place in the world and international relations: inside the state apparatus, all organizations had to become aware of and promote the necessities of a special relation with Moscow, and contribute to its success under presidential coordination.

In this context, Kekkonen knew how to resist the most aggravated Soviet pressures, but he used also the situation for domestic political advantage, and left a context in which speech and acts were scrutinized in relation to the official foreign policy line: in order for the country to be able to fulfil its Western destiny, there had to be as little friction as possible in its relation with the East. By the 1960s, while Finland had tried to showcase a neutrality that would operationally be the equivalent of older European neutralities, its position remained ambiguous due to strong Soviet influence.²⁴ Finland's situation did not go unnoticed abroad, as many observers in the United States or Britain wrote about Finland "*disappearing from view*" or becoming a people's democracy.²⁵ The Finns thus had to work to promote abroad a certain understanding of their neutrality policy, which they presented in their contacts with Western countries as a policy of careful equilibrium between East and West born of the hardships of the war.

This necessity to convince foreigners of Finland's neutrality policy but also of the country's steady economic development placed renewed pressure on cultural propaganda and the state-led promotion of Finland's image abroad, in a context where the state administrations were increasingly able and willing to take on these tasks. This was particularly visible in the early 1960s, following the 1961 "crisis of the note" during which the

²⁴ Kansikas 2019, 83-104.

²⁵ Villaume et al. 2016, 268-270.

Soviet Union used pressures to influence Finland's domestic policy, or after the 1961 FINN-EFTA treaty making Finland an associated member of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). Finland's image promotion in the Western countries became then an essential part of Finland's foreign policy.²⁶ A committee led by the diplomat Max Jakobson wrote a report on the question in May 1961, where the promotion of Finland's image and its foreign cultural relations were described as a primary diplomatic and political concern, a guarantee that the Western side of Finland's geopolitical balance would hold.²⁷

After the Cuba crisis in 1962, détente and the easing of relations between East and West also provided a context in which cultural propaganda was easier for the Finns: it offered the possibility to think in less dramatic terms the country's international contacts, including its cultural relations, with both East and West. In a context where relations between blocs warmed up, neutrality could finally play out as an identity and as a foreign political position, making the rhetoric forced on Finland by its position as a neighbor of the Soviet Union into an actual foreign policy line. The country had changed in economic and social terms,²⁸ its population growing, becoming more urban, more prosperous, gaining more leisure time and thus spontaneously engaging in more international cultural contacts. The economy slowly moved from bulk products, agriculture and the exploitation of resources to an industrial and soon service economy. A functioning and wide welfare state developed, with the establishment of corporatist measures of social negotiations. Barter trade with the East, set in the first years of the Cold War, did not stop a movement of economic and commercial integration with Western markets facilitated by a series of free trade treaties with various trade blocs: the EFTA in 1961, and the EEC in 1973.

For a generation who had lived the war, the reknitting of relations with Russia and détente seemed like genuine opportunities to pacify the country's foreign relations and to exert social, cultural and political reform. Both good contacts with the East and familiarity, engagement with the West could be construed together as the most desirable situation for

²⁶ Jakobson 1980, 39–46.

²⁷ UMA, Box 19 A *Tiedotustoiminta 1956*, PM, *Tiedotustoimintakomitea*, 28 March 1961, Max Jakobson, annex 1, *luonnos*; *Idem*, file *Komitea ulkomaille suuntautuvan tiedotus- ja valistustoiminnan kehittämiseksi ja tehostamiseksi*. Asetettu 28.6.1956, PM, *Yhteenveto tiedotustoimintakomitean mietinnöstä*, 26 May 1961, Max Jakobson.

²⁸ Ojala et al. 2006, esp. 127–164.

Finland—despite the tensions it imposed on the country and the risks it contained as each word and action had to be weighted on the scale of relations with Moscow. Starting in the late 1950s, a new generation also arrived, marked both by the Cold War, World War II and the development of a welfare state building new state agencies and opening the possibility of a democratic middle way between capitalism and socialism. This generation was more inclined to live up to the promises and rhetoric of neutrality and détente, carrying with them a strong rhetoric of postwar reconstruction, peaceful international relations and expansion of the state's position in society.

This context had an effect on the way cultural international relations were conceived and linked to domestic developments. In his writings of the late 1950s, when he worked as the secretary of Prime Minister J.V. Sukselainen, Kalervo Siikala mixed Finland's reconstruction, the extension of the state's influence and peaceful relations with the Soviet Union into a programme aiming at extracting the country from its pre-war jingoistic foreign policy. He described the social-democrats of the Fagerholm variety as “fascists” eager to topple these efforts and opposed to putting relations with the Soviet Union on a better quill than before. In cultural terms, this meant efforts to support neutrality and a programme of peace and understanding amongst nations, where the state had to expand to control most organizations engaged in cultural exchanges.²⁹ Neutrality gave the 1950s–1960s generation a focus for what they saw as a project combining a modernized nation and a pacified foreign policy. For someone like Siikala, cultural nationalism, friendlier relations with the USSR in the name of peace, and friendly relations with the West could be mixed into a policy of neutrality.³⁰ In this context, cultural diplomacy was an opportunity to modernize the country in its new geopolitical situation.

²⁹These positions are affirmed in various documents in KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box *Aineistoa 1958-1962: pääministeri (Sukseläinen ja Miettunen) sihteeri, Paasikivi-seura, Urho Kekkonen 60 v päivä, Suomen keskustapuolue, Unesco ja Suomen Unesco-toimikunta*.

³⁰When necessary, Siikala knew how to use Finland's wartime sufferings as a response to foreign criticisms of Finland's international position and cosy relations with the Soviet Union. His 1968 response to an editorial in the *New Statesman* is a good example, where he reminded the editor that “*having somehow managed the Winter War and its aftermath with the Russians on our own, with sympathy and old clothes from the West, we now do quite well with them in peace*” (KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box *Aineisto 1957-58 ja 1962-69*, Kalervo Siikala to the editor of the *New Statesman*, 16.5.1968).

After the mid-1960s and especially in the 1970s, these premises evolved once more. The policy of neutrality as a way to balance between East and West became criticized more and more vocally by the New Left, and then by a Soviet-leaning radical Left on the lookout for traces of anticommunism and “Western tendencies” in the public debate, especially in cultural matters. A more radical vision of relations with the Soviet Union and of domestic politics gave a more radical tinge to the cultural debate.³¹ The social-democratic party moved towards Kekkonen and a policy taking at face value Soviet promises of international pacification. Youth organizations and a younger generation of administrators also broadened their horizons beyond the East-West divide, towards multilateralism, development aid, and cooperation with the Global South.

For this younger generation, the Soviet Union was not anymore an overbearing partner to be accommodated or the guarantee of Finland’s change towards a more pacified foreign policy: it was a natural part of Finland’s environment, presenting a social model they could relate to, and carrying a rhetoric of peace, international opening and cooperation they largely shared and that corresponded to the rhetoric of multilateral organizations like UNESCO they actively participated in. While some of them piggybacked this rhetoric for the accomplishment of their own agenda and the pursuance of their own careers, some also embraced it as a part of their environment, notwithstanding accidents such as the repression of the Prague Spring in 1968. Neutrality was reinterpreted as a policy of bridge building between East and West, and Finland championed various international attempts, mostly originating from the East, at fostering international dialogue and peaceful coexistence. The goal was, in the context of détente and until the mid-1970s and the CSCE conference in Helsinki, to use Finland’s means to actively contribute to a deflation of tensions in Europe.

This was particularly visible in the process towards the creation of the CSCE in 1975. The events of Prague 1968 had been a disappointment to Kekkonen and other Finnish leaders, who saw it as a potentially fatal blow to détente, a possible return of the USSR to its Stalinist demons. Kekkonen was thus quick to seize the opportunity waved by the Soviet Union in the autumn of 1968 for a European conference aiming at a Europe-wide treaty. Finland became one of the most active advocates of such a conference, eventually landing the organization of the negotiations

³¹ Crump and Erlandsson 2020, 180-181.

and final conference of the CSCE in Helsinki in 1972–1975. The whole process was seen by Finland's authorities and foreign policy apparatus as a resounding success, bringing forward an image of Finland as an international problem-solver, mediator, and fosterer of European collective security. Organizing the conference in Helsinki gave the Finns an occasion to showcase their neutrality to the world.³² At the same time, however, tensions with the USSR slowly came back in the 1970s, with several episodes where the Soviet embassy in Finland interfered in Finnish domestic politics and supported the most radical fringe of the leftist movement.

2.1.3 *Neutrality as a State-Led Effort to “Break the Circle of Fear and Hate”*

Neutrality, as it became the centre of Finland's foreign policy, was also the object of internal debates: in order to keep the country in this position, the Finnish leadership needed to persuade the population as well to speak and act “neutral”. That meant caution but also an involvement in and a pedagogy of international relations, with the hope to extract Finland from what was perceived as the parochial nationalism of the interwar period. Finland could not remain the peripheral, conservative society it used to be: it had to rise to its role as a neutral bystander in the international arena, which meant understanding international relations but also participating at the highest level in these relations. This need for open and realistic international contacts showed in the writings of several of the most important managers of Finland's cultural diplomacy in those years. It corresponded also with a certain position in domestic politics, namely the part of the political spectrum located between the right of the social-democratic party, the centrist Agrarian league and a limited liberal part of the conservative right. They could embrace good relations with the Soviet Union for reasons ranging from personal advantage to ideological conviction, and at the same time lay an emphasis on Finland's national culture and the necessary rejuvenation of the country's contacts with the West.

This Finnish neutral *Sonderweg* was described as a necessity to keep the balance even between considering the USSR and opening up towards the West, refining and affirming national identity and emphasizing

³² Makko 2016, 55-75.

international outreach and knowledge of international relations.³³ Juhana Aunesluoma and Johanna Rainio-Niemi have convincingly argued that Finnish Cold War neutrality, if it corresponded to the necessities of a geopolitical position and was for the most part a pragmatic discourse used to placate the Soviet Union and allow for relations with the West, also became an important part of the country's identity, that had to be defended in the eyes of foreign but also domestic audiences and eventually became meshed with the Finns' self-image.³⁴ This narrative changed and evolved, but neutrality in Finland became a set of values and actions, useful in a certain situation but also invested with meaning.

In several declarations and speeches along the years, Kekkonen himself brought forward a vision of national culture that aimed for a synthesis between the traditional national culture, a rapidly modernizing society, and the necessities of the country's foreign policy line. New relations with the USSR were promoted as an effort to "*break the circle of fear and hate*" that had characterized relations with the Soviet Union in pre-war times,³⁵ while old cultural traditions were presented as signs of the nation's resilience, of its attachment to the long-term aspects of national survival in different international situations. The war was presented in Kekkonen's speeches as a trauma Finland had to walk away from through the construction of peaceful relations with the Soviet Union and the world.³⁶ The 1944 defeat should not be seen as a depression but as the possibility to rebuild Finland's position in the world.³⁷ Nationalism and cultural identity had to develop in this context, without the aggressiveness of times past but

³³ See, for example, KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box *Aineistoa 1957-58 ja 1962-69, Suomen UNESCO-toimikunta, Yleisradio/Suomen televisio, Opetusministeriö/Kansainvälisten asiain osasto*, article draft "*Syyskuun 25.päivän puhe*", october 1961. In this article, Siikala insists that, like Kekkonen, all Finns should understand that cooperation with the USSR is not an exception in Finnish history but a necessity imposed on Finland by its geopolitical position. It is the only way in this situation to be left free to manage also contacts with the West. He quotes Kekkonen writing: "*We can be particularly happy that our Eastern policy, based on trust, gives us the capacity to keep up and develop good relations with the West, with which we are linked by historical links and with which we share so much in terms of our ways of life*". Translated from Finnish.

³⁴ Aunesluoma and Rainio-Niemi 2016, 51–78.

³⁵ Kekkonen 1967, 249. On Kekkonen's rhetoric and his insistence on long-term Finnish cultural resilience, see Puro 2018, 122–132.

³⁶ Kekkonen 1967, 424–426.

³⁷ *Presidentin puhe, Helsinki-konsultatioiden avauspuhe 1972*: <https://www.doria.fi/handle/10024/7426>

with a renewed sense of certainty born of wartime survival and postwar reconstruction.

Finally, neutrality was emphasized as a function of self-restraint, cautiousness and an understanding of the overall situation in which Finland had to work. This self-discipline was considered by Kekkonen and Finland's leadership as necessary, and Kekkonen opposed it to the "*politics of protest*" he saw elsewhere.³⁸ Culture thus became part of a rhetoric on the national self formatted for the Kekkonen era.³⁹ In a text from 1963, Siikala describes the re-election of Kekkonen in 1962 as an ideological fight between those ready for a policy of pacific relations with the Soviet Union and a modernized Finland, and those attached to a policy of confrontation, that he describes in the harshest possible terms. To him, Kekkonen continued the Paasikivi line, ensuring that it would not be a "passing, opportunistic second-best solution based on weakness, but a durable, concretely and ethically sustainable solution to the problem of relations between a small country and its great power neighbour".⁴⁰

In thinking about international cultural relations, the civil servants implicated in Finland's cultural diplomacy thus clearly considered it in the context of accompanying the country's foreign policy evolutions. In a text written in 1960, Oittinen insists on the necessity for international relations to spread understanding, fight prejudices and develop education and communication between nations.⁴¹ Wars are avoided not only through political and economic means but also through cultural communication and the spread of education.⁴² In a 1962 text, Oittinen defined the work of a new generation as the development of pacified cultural relations: while "*Finland is vividly conscious of its position and of the importance of its foreign policy line in terms of security and independence*", the USSR also "*knows that Finland does not want anything else than to live in peace outside*

³⁸ *Presidentin puhe, Eduskunnan avajaispuhe 1961*: <https://www.doria.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/10071/TMP.objres.4193.html?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

³⁹ See Aaltola 2003; Alvesson and Spicer 2011.

⁴⁰ KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box *Opetusministeriö*, Article text, "Kamppailun tilinpäätös", *Keskitei* 9/63. Translated from Finnish.

⁴¹ KA, R. Oittinen fund, file 17, *YK Unesco, Artikkeleita 1958-1963*, Article draft for *Kulttatajaian lehti*, December 1960.

⁴² KA, R. Oittinen fund, file 17, *YK. Unesco, Artikkeleita 1958-1963*, text draft for UNESCO's newsletter, 1958.

of the quarrels of great powers and guaranteeing that its territory will not be used for an aggression against the Soviet Union”.⁴³

This rhetoric of Finland’s development in a more peaceful direction can be found distributed across a wide spectrum of protagonists under review in this book, from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to the Ministry of Education, and increasingly so in the 1960s. In his papers, Siikala writes at length about Finland’s neutrality, describing the country as a bridge between nations. The mirror image was often the war and pre-war years, considered as times of upheaval and uncertainty. For Finland, cultural diplomacy was thus the only common-sense thing to do. Siikala emphasized this rhetoric strongly in a 1978 lecture in London, reflecting on the relation between culture and diplomacy,⁴⁴ describing the increasing role of the Finnish state in that process of pacification.

In a 1979 speech, Siikala emphasized the role a small state such as Finland and its cultural relations can have in the pacification of international relations.⁴⁵ For him, to demonstrate the neutrality of the country to foreigners was the continuation of an internal process through which the Finnish administration looks for a middle way between the extreme-left and the conservative anti-Soviet fringe. Siikala sees Kekkonen as the incarnation of this middle-way, who acts and works as a bridge between blocs.⁴⁶ He criticizes in extremely strong terms the “*big-mouthed heroes*” who would endanger through their comments and reactions this fragile equilibrium and the president who guarantees it.

This view mixing cultural connections, domestic developments and the geopolitical position of neutral Finland is also clearly on display in the documents of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the activities of Finland’s cultural attachés. In a situation where Finland’s neutrality remained

⁴³ KA, R. Oittinen fund, file 17, *Puheita Unescoon ja YK:hon liittyvissä tilaisuuksissa, 1958-1971*, untitled speech draft, 5.4.1962. Translated from Finnish.

⁴⁴ KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box 1960-1970 *luku kirjoituksia, esitelmiä. Keskustapolitiikka, Taide- ja kulttuuripolitiikkaa, kansainvälisetä yhteistyötä*, Speech text “A Public lecture to mark the Anniversary of Finland’s independence”, 5.12.1978.

⁴⁵ KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box 1960-1970 *luku kirjoituksia, esitelmiä. Keskustapolitiikka, Taide- ja kulttuuripolitiikkaa, kansainvälisetä yhteistyötä*, text draft “Suomen rooli lievennyksen ja aseistariisunnan edistämisessä. Puheenvuoro rauhanpuolustajien konferenssissa”, 21.4.1979.

⁴⁶ KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box *Aineistoa 1957-58 ja 1962-69, Suomen UNESCO-toimikunta, Yleisradio/Suomen televisio, Opetusministeriö/Kansainvälisten asiain osasto*, Article draft, “Presidentti Kekkonen tärkeimmät puheet: Sysykuun 25. 1961 päivän puhe”.

ambivalent due to the strong role of the Soviet Union,⁴⁷ cultural relations were seen also by diplomats as one of the means to strengthen the country's image and develop relations beyond the East,⁴⁸ easing international relations, especially in the 1960s. The focus of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' Press Bureau's action had to be on state-led international communication and efficient image diplomacy, while coordination with other actors needed to be maintained as smoothly and consensually as possible.⁴⁹ Jakobson's 1961 report thus reasserted the general notion that information directed towards foreign countries and its funding should remain within the duties of the state: only the state could guarantee continuous funding and a network of envoys that could spread information, control its coherency, and provide feedback.

2.1.4 A "Finlandized" Cultural Diplomacy?

The question of the sincerity of Finland's relations with the USSR and of Soviet pressures on Finland's domestic politics in the 1970s have translated into a debate on "Finlandization". Were cultural relations and a specific rhetoric linked to cultural diplomacy also parts of a process through which Finland kowtowed to the USSR under a president concentrating all powers in the name of stability and relations with the USSR? Was the rhetoric of world peace and internationalization just a prop to cover an ideology force-fed by Soviet overseers or a lever in the hands of certain political forces and individuals to ensure their stay in power?

The debate was already going on in the 1970s, forcing Finnish cultural diplomats to address it. At the end of a 1978 presentation, Siikala pondered whether cultural cooperation had been appeasement of an "*ideologically expansive*" Soviet Union, a betrayal of Finland's democratic values.⁵⁰ He answered by emphasizing economic relations, which had an effect on Finland's wellbeing and would not have developed without improved cultural, scientific and intellectual relations with the East. Improved relations had also appeased domestic politics: the communists had been admitted back into the political fold without much consequences. Finland was still

⁴⁷ Kansikas 2019, 83–104; Aunesluoma and Rainio-Niemi 2016, 51–78.

⁴⁸ Clerc 2015, 145–171.

⁴⁹ Jakobson 1980, 39–46.

⁵⁰ KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box 1960-1970 luku kirjoituksia, esitelmiä. *Keskustapolitiikka, Taid- ja kulttuuripolitiikka, kansainväliset yhteistyötä*, Speech text, "A Public lecture to mark the Anniversary of Finland's independence", 5.12.1978.

a democratic country and a market economy. Siikala also emphasized the way socialism in the USSR had become a concrete thing for the Finns, something they could judge on the merits instead of through ideological lenses, due to their proximity with it and the empirical contacts they had with the USSR.

In more private texts, Siikala describes the Cold War as it stabilized with the death of Stalin first of all as closure from the catastrophe of World War II, which had ended in defeat and with Finland associated to the group of Nazi Germany's former allies. The work done by Paasikivi and Kekkonen was a process of stabilization, during which "*domestic conditions slightly stabilized in the early 1950s and the sails of foreign policy, full of the winds blown by the 1948 treaty and its introduction, pushed us out of the troubled waters of great powers' quarrels*".⁵¹ This was welcome both in terms of foreign and in terms of domestic policy. The long-term civil servant of the Ministry of Education Margaretha Mickwitz insisted, for example, on the necessity to reknit the links between Finland and the cultural group to which it was felt to belong: the Nordic Countries and more generally the group of Western European democracies. Reasserting Finland's position in this group after World War II and in the ambiguous circumstances of the Cold War was for her an essential part of Finland's cultural diplomacy.⁵² "Finlandization" was before everything the successful reconstruction of Finland's international status and contacts after World War II.

In an article for the intellectual review *Kanava* in 1976, Siikala described Finland's cultural diplomacy as an evolution from postwar reputation management to the CSCE and participation in global cultural relations.⁵³ Most of the process was directed towards the West since it was there that the reputation of Finland and its export markets were in danger. Making Finland known in the Soviet Union was a different kind of process, led from the top of the political echelon. On both sides, the emphasis had to be on a modern and democratic Finland: force-feeding foreigners the same nationalist narrative that had been a staple of pre-war publications seemed ill-suited to a new international context where the Soviet Union

⁵¹ Siikala 1978, 351-352. Translated from Finnish.

⁵² Interview with Margaretha Mickwitz. Transcript held by the author.

⁵³ KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box 1960-1970 luku kirjoituksia, esitelmii. *Keskustapolitiikka, Taide- ja kulttuuripolitiikka, kansainväliset yhteistyöt*, Article draft, *Kansainvälisten kulttuurisuhteidemme kehityspiirteitä. "Suomen tunnetuksi tekemisestä ulkomailla" ETTYKin kolmanteen koriin*, 18.2.1976.

dominated every aspect of Finnish foreign relations.⁵⁴ On the other side, the Finnish state took upon itself to develop official cultural relations with the Eastern bloc and other aspects considered as important for geopolitical reasons, but that couldn't be left to the spontaneous flow of Finland's cultural relations.

For someone like Siikala, the 1970s were thus not moments of submission to the USSR but moments when Finland's involvement in international cultural debates reached a plateau, good relations with the USSR allowing for renewed relations with the West. In the build-up to the Helsinki conference, international cultural relations also acquired new meanings as a part of Finland's involvement in the CSCE: a wider, more democratic vision of culture emerged, and an increasing involvement of the state in the cultural field.⁵⁵ International cultural relations had become the focus of a sizeable public sector, but it was the CSCE that brought this sector into view, especially education and culture, cooperation in the field of sciences and technology, and the role of the media. "Culture" had been defined anew globally as more than the elite artistic and intellectual contacts of the pre-war world, and Finland could play a role in these new relations as a bridge: "*Finland is, thanks to the peaceful policy of neutrality and wise decisions of its state leadership, a trailblazer in these fields (cultural exchanges and education). Especially in the building of relations between countries representing different social, political and economic systems*". On this basis, our group of cultural diplomats emerged from the Cold War convinced they had given nothing important to the Soviet Union, while at the same time preserving and even developing essential forms of cultural cooperation in the Cold War context.

Siikala affirmed also strongly that international cultural relations were for a country such as Finland an essential part of international dialogue. Culture was not anymore separated from politics and statecraft *per se*, as "*cultural relations have become the fourth dimension of foreign policy, with political, military, and economic relations*".⁵⁶ The dominant idea was to organize a peaceful coexistence between the blocs, something that could

⁵⁴ In 1948, debates surrounding the publication of a book by the Finnish civil servant Arvid Enckell, *Democratic Finland*, showed a will in the Press Bureau to tone down the nationalism and especially the anti-Soviet tone of previous publications (see documents in UMA, Box 19 G., file *La démocratie en Finlande, Tri Arvid Enckell'in käsikirjoituksen julkaiseminen*).

⁵⁵ Siikala 1976, 15-20. Translated from Finnish.

⁵⁶ *Idem*, 36.

be achieved only with the help of cultural relations. In cultural diplomacy terms, the conference of Helsinki was thus seen as the high-water mark of an effort to modernize Finland, its foreign policy, its culture and its image abroad.

Siikala's book contained also a wrap-up of those principles Finnish cultural diplomats approached the CSCE negotiations with.⁵⁷ He emphasized the political nature of international cultural relations, the necessity to participate and show a certain image of the country, and the development of Finnish culture through contacts with increasingly complex multilateral organizations. Siikala's vision went beyond the pragmatic damage control of the 1950s: more exchanges, more freedom of movement and more exchange of information between people meant a new role for cultural relations in the strengthening of peaceful relations in the world.⁵⁸ Beyond the rhetoric, results were disappointing from this point of view, as Anna Salonsalmi suggests: in Budapest in 1985, the final document of the cultural forum remained unsigned by participants. Only in Vienna in 1986–1989 did the follow-up meeting accept a final document on cultural relations and cultural treaties and the creations of cultural institutes across the bipolar divide.⁵⁹

2.2 “MAKE SURE THAT WE GET WHAT WE NEED FROM OTHER COUNTRIES”: THE EMERGING WELFARE STATE AND FINLAND'S CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC MODERNIZATION

2.2.1 *Cultural Policy and the Welfare State*

While geopolitics and neutrality were dominant aspects of the Finnish state's involvement in international cultural relations, another strong incentive was the development of a welfare state and the perceived necessity to open Finland to the world in order to make it a more developed country. In 1959, the professor Aulis Joki emphasized this in a speech for

⁵⁷ *Idem*, 46-50.

⁵⁸ A point Siikala emphasizes in an article for *New Perspectives*, 3/76, “Role of Public Opinion in Implementing Helsinki Agreements”.

⁵⁹ Salonsalmi 2008, 20-21.

a seminar on Finland's cultural policy,⁶⁰ where he underlined that the Finns haven't yet woken up to "*the incredibly quick development of international cultural cooperation*". Staying apart from this development would mean becoming a cultural backwater, something a small country with reasonable ambitions for its cultural development could not allow. Joki concluded: "*we need in all the important sectors of our society a strong will to participate in international cultural contacts*". Ten years later, a report by the Department of International Affairs in the Ministry of Education stated in the same way that "*the planification of change has to follow global trends and to adapt these to Finnish conditions*".⁶¹ Starting in the 1950s, the Finnish state developed a strategy for national planning in culture, the arts and education, and one can observe the emergence in Finland of a state-led cultural policy linked to politics—not only Cold War politics but also considerations linked to the development of the population, national identity and the construction of the welfare state as an egalitarian project. Besides geopolitics, this constitutes a second important element of context in our study of Finland's cultural diplomacy.

Cultural subsidies from the beginning of the 1900s had supported a limited number of artistic activities. Those were chosen mostly amongst art forms considered as representatives of the nation and supportive of the national project. Public support for the arts was rooted into the nineteenth century's national movement that revolved around a strong effort to build a homogeneous, majoritarily Finnish-speaking national culture. This process supposed the development of a national literature, national visual arts, theatre and so on. It was important to bring Finnish to the level of a "civilized language" and the Finns to the level of a "civilized people", also through science and scientific endeavours. University creations across Finland in the 1920s, or the first Finnish Nobel price, given in 1939 to the writer Franz Eemil Sillanpää, were important milestones in this process, originating mostly in private initiative. The University of Turku, for instance, was created in 1920 as the result of what would be called today a crowdfunding effort: a national subscription and various private financial supports, for example a gold nugget found in Klondike by two Finnish

⁶⁰ OPMA, Jaakko Numminen fund, Box *Kulttuuripoliittikka*, transcript, *Suomen kulttuurirahaston kulttuuripoliittiset neuvottelupäivät, Organisaatiojaosto*, 22.1.1959.

⁶¹ OPMA, Jaakko Numminen fund, Box *Kansainvälinen kulttuurivaikto, yhteistyö, 1969, 1972, PM, Kansainvälinen kulttuuriyhteistyö 1969*, Kalervo Siikala, 29.1.1969. Translated from Finnish.

prospectors, were used to prop up the first entirely Finnish-speaking university in Finland.⁶²

The development towards a state-funded cultural policy was hastened by the context of World War II. During the war, organizations were created under the direction of the Finnish government in order to manage most aspects of Finland's cultural and image relations with the world. The arts and culture, and organizations interested in international cultural cooperation, were marshalled for wartime propaganda and moral support. Finland presented itself as a country first attacked in 1939 and then either defending Western civilization and its independence or pushed to war by adverse circumstances. After the war, despite the will for more coordination in cultural activities, a distinct unwillingness to sustain this kind of state-led wartime organization in front of Soviet criticisms limited the state's intervention. In December 1944, the Finnish government closed the organization responsible for wartime propaganda. The 1947 Paris treaty forbade "war propaganda" and propaganda critical of the USSR, and the government created a new, smaller organization called the government's communication centre (*valtioneuvoston tiedotuskeskus*).⁶³ Melgin emphasized the way Finnish organizations of public relations specialists, who were mostly composed of veterans of wartime propaganda, helped the government to reconstruct its image diplomacy especially towards the West under the Soviet authorities' radar. Things were first organized on an *ad hoc* basis, between a limited amount of existing public agencies and private organizations.

This situation was considered as inadequate, and the question of the state's involvement in cultural policy and thus in cultural relations with the world was actively discussed from the war to the 1960s, with opinions voiced for a stronger involvement of the state in cultural policy. Jaakko Numminen, in a report written in 1964, summarized the case for such a state-led coordinated cultural policy,⁶⁴ where public actors (the state, but also municipalities) would manage a cultural policy similar to what Finland

⁶²The University of Helsinki was still in 1920 the only university of the country, but it was a bilingual university (Swedish-Finnish). The creation of the University of Turku in 1920 is thus to be understood not only in the context of local developments in the town but also in the context of the language quarrel between Finnish- and Swedish-speakers. See Vares 2020.

⁶³Melgin 2014, 155-160.

⁶⁴Numminen 1964, 9. Translated from Finnish.

was developing in its social policy.⁶⁵ Like Siikala, Numminen regretted the lack of state engagement in cultural relations and cultural policy. Both pleaded for more resources and power to be given especially to the Ministry of Education: while most international affairs would be seen as belonging to the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, culture was seen as too complex and too dependent on domestic developments to be managed by diplomats alone.⁶⁶ These developments were justified not only by the needs of Finland's cultural and educational progress but also by international developments: Numminen and Siikala insisted in their writings on the risk for Finland to be left aside of international cultural developments if it did not adapt and strengthen the state's cultural policy.

The development of Finland's cultural diplomacy is inextricable from this increasing state involvement in cultural policies, replicating at the Finnish scale a broad European movement towards state-led cultural policies.⁶⁷ In fact, the definition and the development of Finnish cultural diplomacy is an aspect of this expansion of the Finnish state's remit towards a stronger coordination of the cultural field. The Finnish state during the 1950s–1970s created or developed several institutions dealing with cultural, artistic and educational affairs, and controlled through finances a growing host of private organizations, societies, institutions and associations involved in cultural affairs. A growing field of cultural affairs was thus slowly absorbed in the public sphere, international aspects constituting a shared terrain between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education.

Development of a Finnish cultural policy went hand in hand with the development of Finland's welfare state. Although Peter Katzenstein's

⁶⁵ Ahponen 1994, 105. Pekka Kettunen and Hannu Simola's edited volume describes well this evolution in the domain of science, culture and education. Starting in the early 1960s, Finland witnessed an expansion of the public sphere to coordinate civil society directly or through a variety of middle-ground organizations, with in the background an egalitarian project of social and cultural improvement. After the 1980s, the mood changed towards less public regulation, an insistence on liberalization and market forces, competition and competitiveness, individual performance, liberty of choice and the support of "excellence" (Kettunen and Simola 2012). Marja Alestalo wrote in the early 1990s about this growth of state activism in Finland in cultural and scientific policies. She described the way a welfare ideology was adopted in science policy, working to define socially relevant scientific activities and promoting them, and both expanding and nationalizing the university system as a means of reaching equality of educational opportunities: Alestalo's 1993.

⁶⁶ Numminen 1964, 9–10.

⁶⁷ Chaubet and Martin 2011; Ahponen 1994, 97–118.

reflections on democratic corporatism apply well to Finland,⁶⁸ Johanna Rainio-Niemi described the development in Finland of a specific brand of democratic corporatism that formed a backdrop to the development of a specific cultural policy.⁶⁹ By the mid-1960s, there existed a consensus on entire chunks of political life, and especially on the country's foreign policy. Economic prosperity had to be developed in order to build the groundwork for a consensual social order, a modernization of society, and the foreign relations of the country had to be stabilized in order to adapt to the new geopolitical context. Both the welfare state and the obligations born of the special relations with Moscow pointed in the same direction: an expansion of the state's control on society and the market. This happened despite deep resistances that continued to mark Finnish politics and industrial relations up until the 1980s: administrative centralization and state intervention, as well as Kekkonen's foreign policy line, were never entirely unopposed, and state agencies were never the only protagonists, for example in cultural matters.

This link between the development of a cultural policy and the development of the welfare state is also emphasized by Pertti Alasuutari.⁷⁰ He describes the way in which 1960s Finland started to consider also cultural policy as part of the state's democratic welfare state policy. The state contributed to the cultural field through grants, infrastructures, the creation of institutions and nationalizations, for example, the nationalization of private-owned universities in the 1970s. An important question became the necessity to reach equality of social and regional chances in the consumption of cultural goods, as part of a policy of national enlightenment.⁷¹ In 1968, the reform of the Basic school system was a good example of this development: the Finnish state, after a long political debate, took in charge of the system of basic schools, including private ones dating from the development of education institutions in the nineteenth century, and created a state-funded system of public elementary schools.⁷²

This development happened in connection with the development of the Ministry of Education as a strengthened administrative entity managing an expanding brief of cultural policy.⁷³ In 1922, when the former

⁶⁸ Katzenstein 1985, 80 et al.

⁶⁹ Rainio-Niemi 2008.

⁷⁰ Alasuutari 2017, 282-283; Ahponen 1994.

⁷¹ Alasuutari 2017, 396.

⁷² See Okkonen 2017.

⁷³ Kangas and Sokka 2011, 222.

department for Ecclesiastical affairs of the Finnish Senate became a Ministry of Education, its brief was limited and mostly dealt with education and schools.⁷⁴ But with the war and the development of state policies after 1945, the ministry changed in the 1950s–1960s. Up until 1963, the main administrative leader of the Ministry of Education was State Secretary Arvo Salminen, a conservative figure who aimed at saving money and avoiding the accession to the Ministry of younger, more leftist administrators.⁷⁵ His departure opened up the Ministry, which in 1966 had already 60 employees, and about 150 in 1972.⁷⁶ The Ministry developed into a stronger administrative machinery, where the responsibilities and power of single administrators to influence and manage specific technical aspects became greater than before.

This development went hand in hand with the assignment of new tasks to a developing welfare state with a strong rhetoric of national cultural development. At the end of the 1960s, this national rhetoric was present in all general discussions regarding the development of culture and of the Ministry. In the 1970s, definitions of culture emphasized by UNESCO also found an echo in Finland, for example, in the 1974 discussions of a law on municipal cultural activities. The place of culture in democracy was emphasized, as well as the importance of international cultural contacts.

Therefore, while schools and education had already become a state matter in the interwar period, culture, science and the arts in the largest possible sense became an administrative matter, a state affair managed by specific public policies, growing budgets and administrative organizations only after the 1940s. Cultural policy became an integral part of the welfare state, integrated in notions of governance, technocratic planification, administration and culture as a tool to modernize and develop society. An important aspect of this development is its link with Finnish nationalism. Anita Kangas and Sakari Sokka insist on this vision of Finland's cultural policy as a way to strengthen the nation and enlighten the country's

⁷⁴While Finland was an autonomous Grand-Duchy of the Russian empire, from 1809 to 1917, its main administrative body was a Senate dealing with technical matters internal to the province.

⁷⁵Kettunen and Simola 2012, 68.

⁷⁶Heikkilä 1990.

population.⁷⁷ The goal was to democratize culture through increased public coordination and to use public power to support the arts as an essential and coordinated expression of the national self.⁷⁸ In the 1960s, in particular, the development of the welfare state emphasized the building of a “civilized state”, which also strengthened public coordination in the cultural field. The formerly limited role of the state, mainly as the patron of the arts, began to expand in the 1960s as a coordinating force for cultural policy. When in 1953, the Finnish government proposed cutting 13% of the state budget for culture and education, the debate that followed was strongly framed in terms of national improvement and Finland’s civilizational rank amongst nations: culture and education were presented by the defenders of their budget as matters of national life and death.⁷⁹

Marja Jalava also shows how during the 1960s–1970s, this process corresponded with the arrival in Finland of the idea of human capital—what was mostly a national cultural process became also an economic one, once culture and education were recognized as ways to improve the productivity of workers and the economic competitiveness of the country. Jalava frames the 1950s–1960s culture discussion in Finland into new economic and social developments:⁸⁰ as the level of added-value rose in Finland’s industrial products, the competitive edge of the country could not anymore be only low costs and comparative advantages. The discussion on raising the level of human capital arrived, around the late 1950s, adding economic preoccupations to the reflections on national culture. By the mid-1960s, most were convinced that higher education was an investment, and the idea of equality came on top of that. Sustained growth through better education was considered as essential to create a welfare state and equality.

Education and culture became much larger preoccupations in these times: national cultural construction and considerations linked to the “level” of national culture, economic considerations and human capital, considerations of immaterial goals, unselfish self-development of the

⁷⁷ Kangas and Sokka 2011, 215–240. Kangas and Sokka remind their reader that the Finnish Senate in 1860 opened for the first time a budget for subsidies to fine arts in Finland, presenting it as a way to support culture that would contribute to the national prestige and the national development.

⁷⁸ Kts. esim. Kangas 2001, 57–78; Häyrynen 2006; Ahponen 1994, 105; Perna and Tiitta 2007; Kangas and Sokka 2011, 222.

⁷⁹ Kettunen and Simola 2012, 71–72.

⁸⁰ Jalava 2012, 40–50.

population, equality of chances, mental and social health, aspects of access to cultural consumption goods, and finally political elements linked to the peace and cooperation rhetoric of contacts with the USSR. Finnishness was based on the feeling of a lack of something, a lack of the sophistication of “higher” nations, which pushed the state to support the acquisition from abroad of certain cultural traits and knowledge. This also explains the specific cultural, identity-driven angst about the national image abroad that is at the heart of Finland’s efforts in public diplomacy.

Finally, this development of state-led and state-funded organizations of cultural policy had a geopolitical aspect: in the context of a tightening official policy line, there was a need to bring the main private or semi-private organizations dealing with Finnish-Soviet cultural relations and other important aspects of international cultural relations under the control of the state. Simo Mikkonen gives a good example of that when he describes the slow movement of the Finland-Soviet Union Society towards the sphere of public funding and public coordination, and its evolution from a political organization considering cultural relations with the USSR as a branch of political activism into a cultural organization to which the state devolved certain missions. Despite the interest of its Finnish organizers for wider cultural and technical relations, the Society had been for most of the 1950s seen by the Soviet Union as an arm of Stalinist cultural propaganda. During détente and in the context of larger changes in the Soviet propaganda structure, it was allowed to become more cultural and to coordinate increasingly its activities with the Finnish state.⁸¹

This vision of cultural development was also linked to the evolution of education and scientific contacts with the world. Cultural relations especially with the West were essential both for the stabilization of Finland’s international position and for the cultural and pedagogical development of its society. In 1949, Auli Joki summarized things by saying that “*we must make sure that we get what we need in cultural terms from other countries*”.⁸² This was connected to a renewed importance after the war given to democratic access to knowledge and education as well as the renewal of education methods and its contents.⁸³ In 1970, a report by Anja Stenius for the Ministry of Education defined the role of

⁸¹ Mikkonen 2015, 109-131.

⁸² OPMA, Jaakko Numminen fund, Box *Kulttuuripoliittikka*, transcript, *Suomen kulttuurirahaston kulttuuripoliittiset neuvottelupäivät, Organisaatiojaosto*, 22.1.1959.

⁸³ Autio and Heikkilä 1990, 15-18, 59-71, 80-82.

international contacts in education as the establishment of peaceful notions about other nations that would guarantee peace and cooperation between nations.⁸⁴ The best summary of this point, however, is found in a 1963 report, where the Finnish UNESCO committee wrote:

*The primary basis for our activity is Finland's active interest in international cooperation in various fields of cultural and economic life and social activity. Only through developing this interest for international relations can we obtain a truly effective and widespread exploitation of the opportunities opened up to Finland. On the other hand, it is important for the cultural development of our country that Finland monitors international developments in the field of education, science and culture as closely as possible. This requires not only an interest for international affairs, but also a well-functioning connection.*⁸⁵

2.2.2 *The Finnish Elite and International Cultural Cooperation Between Tradition and Modernization*

The creation of a cultural policy with an international dimension naturally brings the question of what kind of cultural exchanges the state would wish to support. Regular reports criticized the paternalistic tone of cultural support and the barriers between high and popular culture, but Finnish coordinators of this policy generally retained a conservative vision of what kind of culture was useful, appropriate and worthy of public support. Criteria of accessibility, equality and high artistic or cultural quality were retained for public financing and support. Already in the late 1940s, the head of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' Press Bureau, Heikki Brotherus, had insisted on the need to curate global cultural trends for the people, in order to prevent "*our new global civilization from becoming a civilization of salesmen and film stars*".⁸⁶

If the development of this cultural policy is the result of activity by the Finnish state, it is also linked to the conception by postwar Finnish cultural and intellectual elites of their role as the careful curators of international

⁸⁴ OPMA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta* fund, Box 2, 841 *Laajennetun toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat), ja sen jaostojen kokoukset, 1965-1976*, PM, *Kansainvälinen kasvatus*, Anja Stenius, nd, 1970.

⁸⁵ OPMA, Jaakko Numminen fund, Box *Kansainvälistyminen 1982, 1988-92*, File *Suomen U-TMK Kertomukset 1957-1997 + Suunnitelmat*, yearly report for the year 1963, Helsinki 1964. Translated from Finnish.

⁸⁶ Brotherus 1984, 200. Translated from Finnish.

cultural trends for the Finnish people: the new culture of a new Finland had to be of the highest quality, and contribute to peace and understanding among nations. Like Lipponen, Hiski Haukkala writes about the ways the Finnish elites “*internationalized Finland*”—a notion that remains strong in interpretations of Finland’s national development and still today shapes the self-perception of Finland’s economic, political and cultural elites.⁸⁷ In a peripheral country, Marja Jalava has emphasized this role of elites in the transmission of transnational knowledge and their self-definition as aggregators and reenactors of desirable foreign cultural forms for a wider domestic audience.⁸⁸ The cultural, political and civil service elites saw as their primary function the merging of international norms in the national culture, the “domestication” of international trends.⁸⁹ This is well-illustrated by a speech Paasikivi gave already in 1937,⁹⁰ where he called for the coming of a new national poet, able to make sense of modern evolutions and to include those in a wide “national synthesis” able to foster a sense of belonging in the people without disconnecting it from the world.

In her work, Johanna Rainio-Niemi insists on the fact that, in the frame of this narrative, economic and social policies became tools used to refashion the country and its image in the eyes of both domestic and international audiences.⁹¹ State policies were seen by their managers (politicians, civil servants, cultural leaders etc.) as ways to change Finnish society, both in its workings and in its image. There was a link between the nature of the country, its image abroad, and the way the Finns perceived it. For some Finnish authorities, modernizing the country and its image was a desirable consequence of the organization of foreign cultural relations: foreign examples and influences brought incentives for change and modernization, which the Finnish self-defined elites were supposed to bring to realization.

Another part of this role was convincing the people to accept the geopolitical situation of Finland as a neighbour to the Soviet Union. As

⁸⁷ Haukkala 2020, 32-33. A theme also developed at length in various publications on the Finnish national movement and its foreign dimensions. See, for example, Klinge 1997.

⁸⁸ Jalava 2012, 13.

⁸⁹ See Alasuutari and Qadir 2013.

⁹⁰ Siikala 1960, 8.

⁹¹ Rainio-Niemi 2008, 92.

Alasuutari emphasized, this process was supposed to involve the entire society into a certain atmosphere, certain ways of doing things:⁹²

The rhetorical patterns imposed by the context of the foreign policy line did not impose itself only on political decision-makers. It also trickled into the behaviour of the people and public opinion, both of which had, after the hate of war times and pre-war times, and despite the propaganda of the Western capitalist countries, to give in to true friendship (with the Soviet Union) and Finland's foreign policy line.

Many were quick to deny after 1990 the reality of this Cold War order, and to emphasize the necessity of the hour that pushed them to adapt to a certain rhetoric. This is not without merits: for most postwar Finns, the official foreign policy line and relations with the Soviet Union were a natural context in which to act, lip-service paid to the power of the hour more than ideology they would share wholesale. It left Finnish foreign policy and Finnish society with a lot of ground to cover beyond relations with the Eastern bloc. For most Finns of the postwar generation, what we could describe as a form of speech imposed by the USSR and parroted by an indoctrinated population was mostly rhetoric, repeated as much as was politically useful but lacking in conviction, a part of the scenery mostly unreflected upon. For some, it could also be the expression of a genuine desire for stabilization, peace, a new relation with the world, a rejection of the war. In any case, for the state's authorities this rhetoric was essential as a background to the country's relations with the Soviet Union.⁹³

In this context, the role of Finnish elites was not only concrete but also symbolic leadership, and it exerted strong demands: the elites, and especially state administrators, had to pick and choose the right cultural elements, and the state had to organize, finance and coordinate this process. The role of the people was on the other hand to make itself available, to share the consensus and to educate itself.⁹⁴ This vision was not only one for Finland's conservative cultural milieu: the social-democratic left's cultural project, for instance, was based on the same premise of a pedagogical duty for the elites and a duty to educate themselves for the people. A vocabulary of cultural activation, participation and inclusion developed in

⁹² Alasuutari 2017, 240-241. Translated from Finnish.

⁹³ Pia Koivunen showed that in her study of Finnish participants in the Soviet-sponsored 1940s–1950s Peace festivals: Koivunen 2020.

⁹⁴ Alasuutari 2017, 242-244.

committees and institutions, which was both encouraging and insistently pushing an idealized national community into a certain direction. The reforms wrought by the welfare state broadened the duty given to citizens to educate and develop themselves to new areas.

This duty had to focus on a certain kind of culture, defined by the state around the canon of “high” or useful culture. State support had to go to useful and civilizing scientific, cultural and artistic activities.⁹⁵ American modern art and pop culture were often pitted against European artistic traditions preserved in Germany, France, Italy, Sweden and Great Britain but also the USSR. This also influenced the definition of what forms of Finnish culture were fit for foreign exposure. Alasuutari described the emergence of an “official art” (*edustustaide*), supposedly fit to represent the nation abroad and emphasized as the country’s calling card.⁹⁶ This didn’t necessarily mean the research of pure, national, Finnish motives at all costs: part of the process was also trying to prove that the Finns could as well as others interpret the classical artistic and scientific trends of their time, prove that the country could be part, in its own language, of these trends, and even contribute to them.

Since the postwar period brought the rise of pop culture also in Finland,⁹⁷ notions of arts and culture became split between state-sponsored culture, seen as useful, enlightening, and the rest.⁹⁸ Paradoxically, the torch of fighting against cheap, Americanized pop culture passed from the conservative cultural generation of the 1940s to a part of the 1970s radical leftist generation. The massification of culture and the alleged simplicity of American pop culture, its cheap commerciality, were seen as impediments to the cultural elevation of the people towards more sophisticated forms of culture and arts.⁹⁹ Matti Klinge, in his memoirs, illustrates these aspects as part of a general discussion on culture that irrigated also the activities of Finnish cultural diplomats.¹⁰⁰ To Klinge, rejecting international trends was not an option, but neither was the sheepish acceptance of cheap American pop. The balance had to be found through a European culture susceptible to mix national cultures and high European cultural trends. For others,

⁹⁵ Jalava 2012, 29.

⁹⁶ Alasuutari 2017, 278; Melgin 2014.

⁹⁷ For a summarized brief on Finland’s cultural development including pop culture, see Kaartinen et al. 2016.

⁹⁸ Alasuutari 2017, 309.

⁹⁹ Alasuutari 2017, 281.

¹⁰⁰ Klinge 2014, 144, 157, 240, 359-361.

the solution was a “democratization” of high culture, bringing it to the people through state-sponsored forms of high culture.

Reflecting on the period, Klinge presents the rapid internationalization of the 1950s–1960s as an ambiguous process.¹⁰¹ The social groups arriving to power in the 1960s–1970s came from outside the country’s traditional cultural elites, and brought with them different tastes and less reverence for, knowledge of and interest for the high culture people like Klinge were looking for overseas. There were differences as to what kind of culture people would seek through their international contacts, and even more so there was a discussion as to what type of culture the state should encourage them to pursue through international contacts. During the discussions of the Brotherus committee in 1952, the diplomat and Foreign minister Carl Enckell emphasized the need for Finland, as a peripheral country, to find its place within “classical culture”, and to reject shallow American pop culture.¹⁰² By an interesting coincidence, these conservative cultural notions tended to match with the cultural programme of the worker movement’s leaders, which insisted on high culture and educative, formative, civilized cultural hobbies, as well as with the cultural discourse of the Soviet Union, which condemned the frivolity and materialism of American culture.

These same debates appear at the highest levels of the Finnish state. The group formed by Kekkonen in 1965 to reflect on changes to Finland’s university policy in order to develop the international competitiveness of the country is described thus by Marja Jalava: “*In the conservative academic circles of Finland, it was still relatively common to despise the USA for its vulgar commercial mass culture and barbarity thought to have a degenerative influence on age-old European Bildung traditions*”.¹⁰³ This is particularly true of the late 1940s and 1950s, when the cultural elites were old guard types emphasizing a Finnish national culture that should express itself as a version of European high culture. After the 1960s, this *Bildung*-based discourse will be in part continued by the leftist criticism of the United States as a cultural backwater compared to a USSR insisting on high culture.

However, Marek Fields emphasizes through the example of literature and the activities of the Finnish-American Society’s local branches the

¹⁰¹ Klinge 2014, 338.

¹⁰² Brotherus 1984, 128.

¹⁰³ Jalava 2012, 64.

degree to which American culture was promoted and met with enormous interest and reception amongst Finnish audiences. The environment was considered by American cultural promoters as exceptionally fertile already in the late 1940s, and American culture, especially pop culture, came to dwarf Soviet cultural efforts and were more evenly distributed in time.¹⁰⁴ The situation changed in the 1960s–1970s, when under the influence of political elements such as the Vietnam War, the tone towards the United States became more critical. However, the domination of Western pop culture left Finland's cultural diplomats uneasy, less because of any systematic kowtowing to the Soviet Union than because of their instinctive disdain for cheap American pop culture as unfit for the project of national development they had in mind.

2.2.3 *Foreign Seeds and the Cautious Fertilization of Finnish Culture*

Finland's cultural diplomacy was also conceived by its protagonists as an extension of debates on the Finnish nation and on Finnish identity. In 1960, Siikala already dedicated some pages of his book to the idea of a cooperative cultural dialogue with the world and Finland's place in it.¹⁰⁵ The term he used then was “cultural foreign relations”, which he thought necessary to extract Finland of its perceived feeling of cultural inferiority regarding wider and more developed cultures. Describing the construction of a national identity through the work of poets, painters, artists and composers, he described Finland's idiosyncratic culture as linked to a specific place in which it developed. But he also saw a need for “*foreign seeds*” that “*men and women full of application, enthusiasm and devotion*” would plant on Finnish soil. This fertilization of Finnish culture was, from Siikala's point of view, the role of the state and of a slowly developing “cultural foreign policy”. For Siikala, this cultural foreign policy had to carry dividends in terms of the modernization of Finland's culture and society. In 1968, Siikala summarized the idea: international relations are a chance for Finland to develop its innovation capacity, to “*renew itself by*

¹⁰⁴ Fields 2015, 209-220; Mikkonen 2019.

¹⁰⁵ Siikala 1960, 139-142. Translated from Finnish.

adapting cleverly and independently other countries' experiences and international incentives".¹⁰⁶

This idea finds its roots in Finnish discussions about the welfare state and ways through which the population had to be convinced to support a consensus on certain basic elements of political and social relations.¹⁰⁷ Some of these elements are linked to the country's ambiguous geopolitical position: the writer Matti Kurjensaari described Max Jakobson telling him that the Finns themselves had to be convinced they were "really" neutral before foreigners could be convinced.¹⁰⁸ Matti Klinge, in his memoirs, presents neutrality as an essential trait that must be internalized by the Finns and also acted upon in terms of cultural relations, allowing a pacification of their relations with the USSR and thus the opportunity of open relations with the West.¹⁰⁹ For him and for Siikala, these views are naturally rooted in the seminal experience of the war.¹¹⁰ Neutrality provided a focus for domestic cohesion, a facet of nation building, a way to cohere the nation and to provide it with a pacified purpose.¹¹¹ This appears clearly in Rainio-Niemi's study of Finland's policies of "spiritual national defence" developed after the early 1960s.¹¹² The development of cultural diplomacy and cultural relations found its place in these efforts to build an internationalized, modernized, neutral and coherent nation. It had to embrace a sober "national realism", reject wartime conservatism and jingoism, domesticate foreign cultural trends, especially coming from the West, in the modernization of its own culture, and strengthen cultural relations with the Eastern bloc. That would contribute to keep Finland away from twin dangers: blind opposition to the USSR or complete submission to

¹⁰⁶ KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box *Aineistoa 1957-58 ja 1962-69, Suomen UNESCO-toimikunta, Yleisradio/Suomen televisio, Opetusministeriö/Kansainvälisten asiain osasto*, letter to Johannes Virolainen, 20.4.1968. Translated from Finnish.

¹⁰⁷ Rainio-Niemi 2008, 252, 263–326.

¹⁰⁸ Kurjensaari 1969, 211.

¹⁰⁹ Klinge 2014, 24–25.

¹¹⁰ Siikala 1960, 8–9.

¹¹¹ Crump and Erlandsson 2020, 179.

¹¹² Rainio-Niemi 2014.

Soviet pressures, shrivelling of its national culture or entire submission to international cultural trends.¹¹³

All these elements appear in the part of Finland's cultural diplomacy dealing with internationalization and aiming at "teaching" international contacts to the Finns. Cultural diplomacy, exchanges and dialogue could be used as a tool to maintain contact with the Western world and also to change Finnish society in a more open, international direction:¹¹⁴ to get rid of old-fashioned nationalism, to improve education and research, to open up society and the arts, to reform the country and its culture, to change the image of the country abroad. In 1976, Siikala wrote after the CSCE negotiations that Finland needs fruitful international cultural dialogue in order to develop its national culture.¹¹⁵ The aim was nothing less than a remodelling of Finnish culture mixing idiosyncratic elements and foreign influences, an improvement of the Finns' knowledge of international relations, to avoid the threat of provincialism and isolation. This was the background to a more constructive policy where Finland could knowingly set itself in-between East and West, as a mediator between the West, its natural family, and the East. These arguments are mobilized in order to get more resources for the conducting of cultural diplomacy, the organization and coordination of cultural relations.¹¹⁶ In a 1966 book, Siikala emphasized the optimism of the period, wrote admiringly of Kennedy, and envisaged a future of appeased international relations where Europe would

¹¹³KA, Reino Oittinen fund, file 6, *Kasvatus kansainvälisyyteen (1961-1964)*, Text draft, *Kansanopisto-lehti*, November 1964. Siikala describes the second dilemma in striking terms, writing that state coordination of cultural policy is the only way to prevent Finland from becoming, either a traditionalist open air museum or a "circus tent of cosmopolitanism, where the peasants of faraway villages would gaze with open mouths at foreign marvels, without being able to use them in their own spiritual elevation" (KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box *Aineistoa 1957-58 ja 1962-69, Suomen UNESCO-toimikunta, Yleisradio/Suomen televisio, Opetusministeriö/Kansainvälisten asiain osasto*, Speech for UKAN, Lappenraanta, 5.8.1969.) Translated from Finnish.

¹¹⁴This was also linked to Finland's participation in UNESCO and an adaptation of UNESCO's rhetoric of pacification through the development of international relations and through education programmes for international understanding. This is well emphasized by Marjatta Hietala in a study of the adaptation of UNESCO's internationalization discourse in Finnish school textbooks: Hietala 1982.

¹¹⁵Siikala 1976, 46-50.

¹¹⁶See, for instance, his development of these arguments in KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box *Aineistoa 1957-58 ja 1962-69, Suomen UNESCO-toimikunta, Yleisradio/Suomen televisio, Opetusministeriö/Kansainvälisten asiain osasto*, Memo on cultural relations, 12.10.1967; *Idem*, Radio speech, "*kansainvälisyys ja huomispäivä*", 1.3.1967.

repay its debt to the people it had enslaved through colonialism.¹¹⁷ For Finland to take its place in this movement, it had to get rid of its tendency towards pessimistic isolationism, Russophobia and nationalistic jingoism.

Oittinen as well insisted on the necessity for the Finns to shed away their inferiority complex and to open up to the world, on the role of exchanges and personal contacts for the youth, women and workers. While Siikala spoke of the national group in general terms, workers were never far in Oittinen's speeches, as international cooperation was for him a continuation of pre-war cooperation inside the International Labour Office and the workers' international.¹¹⁸ The themes of education and cultural work constituted the source of a moderate leftist and internationalist vision of cultural diplomacy that overlapped with a lot of Siikala's more conservative vision of national development.¹¹⁹ Kalevi Sorsa, writing in 1969 during his period working for UNESCO in Paris, emphasized the necessity to spread an internationalizing ethos to the Finnish youth and especially worker youth. The goal was to foster understanding and a better comprehension between nations and races, educating workers and youth to peace and humanist values.¹²⁰ This meant changes in Finland as well, which cultural diplomacy could help to usher. In a period that most of these protagonists described as one of cultural upheaval, cultural diplomacy under the aegis of the state would open the possibility of a synthesis between old and new, East and West.

In other circles of Finnish society, the balance to be found between foreign and domestic cultural trends was to be set in a different pattern. Annamari Sarajas, a professor in literature at the University of Helsinki and a figure of the conservative cultural milieu in Finland, wrote for instance at the beginning of 1962 about the necessities of developing a truly

¹¹⁷ *Maaailmanparantajan matkakirja* 1966.

¹¹⁸ KA, R. Oittisen fund, File 17, *YK. Unesco, Artikkeleita 1958-1963*, Speech draft for UN day, 24.10.1962. For the participation of Nordic politicians and especially Finns in the ILO, see Kettunen 2013, 210-230.

¹¹⁹ For example, his speech *Aikuiskasvatus ja poliittinen barkinta*, Lahti, 18.6.1963, where he mixes the construction of a new cultural project for Finland, collective identity, international organizations and international work. See also the same themes in KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box *Aineistoa 1957-58 ja 1962-69, Suomen UNESCO-toimikunta, Yleisradio/Suomen televisio, Opetusministeriö/Kansainvälisten asiain osasto*, Speech for the association of Finnish lecturers abroad UKAN, Lappenraanta, 5.8.1969.

¹²⁰ Työväen arkisto (TA), Kalevi Sorsa fund, File 92, *1969:16, Unesco 1954-1965*, undated report, "Kansainvälisestä kasvatuksesta, Helsingin opiskelijain YK-yhdistys ja Unesco-yhdistys".

Finnish culture:¹²¹ before reaching out towards the world, the new generation had to be tethered to the cultural heritage of their own nation. The “*international idea of peace, the United Nations, development aid and racial equality*” could be accepted only if one did know and research one’s own nation’s culture. In 1989, the sociologist Erik Allardt described the way foreign cultural influences in Finland had been written about from a rather negative point of view.¹²² In a recently industrialized country that passed almost without delays from a rural society to an information technology, demands for homogeneity have been strong in response to quick changes.

This shows how, for a small state at that time, cultural diplomacy was also a facet of a difficult debate about modernity, a way to organize cultural relations in a new world, to adapt oneself to new international ways, a part of the research for a national cultural synthesis. This synthesis has to go between the desire for isolation of the elders and traditionalists, and the desire for cultural deconstruction of the cultural radicals. In 1964, Siikala made things clear,¹²³ writing that Finnish culture should not fear increasing international cultural relations but on the contrary seize on them to modernize itself. This demands resources to better the Finns’ level in foreign languages and improve their knowledge of foreign countries through exchanges and contacts. Lager louts speaking only Finnish in Ibiza were bad publicity for Finland and bad education for the cultural elevation of the Finnish people: tourism had to be rethought in order to emphasize cultural quality. Finally, more foreigners had to be brought to Finland in order to be able to see for themselves the place and its inhabitants.

The modernizing ethos of Finland’s cultural diplomacy and the idea of the Finnish state and elites as drivers of the people’s cultural edification brings us back to debates about what culture would be worthy of state support and should be emphasized by the Finnish elites and civil servants. Meant as a process curating cultural contacts and forms of expression that would “develop” and “activate” the people, cultural policy had become a part of the Finnish welfare state’s approach to state-supported wellbeing. In a country where culture not only refers to arts, science or cultural

¹²¹ Klinge 2014, 144.

¹²² In his contribution to Suhonen 1989, 22.

¹²³ KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box *Aineistoa 1957-58 ja 1962-69, Suomen UNESCO-toimikunta, Yleisradio/Suomen televisio, Opetusministeriö/Kansainvälisten asiain osasto*, Article text, *Kulttuurisubteet ja kansainvälinen vuorovaikutus*, June 1964.

productions but also and mostly to a national identity, the idealized ways of life it should entail, and the level of development it should attain, the Finnish cultural and political elites saw it as their duty to curate foreign cultural trends for the people.¹²⁴ Pirkkaliisa Ahponen describes the same process, an evolution through which cultural policy developed in Finland out of a will to organize the cultural expressions of society, with in mind the goal of raising the people's level of civilization and level of artistic production, as well as the creation of artistic and cultural productions susceptible to strengthen the national feeling. The comparison with foreign countries was used as an incentive to insist on necessary societal changes in the country, justified by external pressures coming variably from the East or West.¹²⁵

Essential to this discourse was a vision of Finland as a peripheral, isolated country that had to be opened culturally by its elites, following certain ideas and developments that would steer it away from cheap pop culture.¹²⁶ Here too, the counter-example was often US cheap, consumerist pop culture. English-language pop songs and cosmopolitan merchandising was not the internationalization Finnish cultural diplomats of the 1940s-1960s wanted. In order to develop the national mind, one has to emphasize teaching, education, research and high-level culture. This dilemma and the balanced solution that is necessary to it, between opening and the preservation of national languages and identities, is at the heart of several texts by Siikala and others.¹²⁷ A parliamentary committee on artistic activities, for example, emphasized in 1965 the unwanted consequences of unbridled international contacts that brought low-quality, consumerist cultural products to Finland.¹²⁸ The writer Arto Paasilinna was one of those who criticized “*television gazers, who lap up anything*

¹²⁴ Alasuutari 2001, 157–184.

¹²⁵ The most well-known example of this is the philosopher Pekka Kuusi's 1961 book *60-luvun sosiaalipolitiikka*, where he justifies a strong, growth-oriented social policy in those terms: “*If we are to live our lives in-between Sweden and the Soviet Union, two growth-oriented and growth-capable countries, we are doomed to grow*” (Kettunen and Simola 2012, 14, 25–62).

¹²⁶ KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box *Aineistoa 1957-58 ja 1962-69, Suomen UNESCO-toimikunta, Yleisradio/Suomen televisio, Opetusministeriö/Kansainvälisten asiain osasto*, Text draft for a radio appearance, 1969.

¹²⁷ KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box *Aineistoa 1957-58 ja 1962-69, Suomen UNESCO-toimikunta, Yleisradio/Suomen televisio, Opetusministeriö/Kansainvälisten asiain osasto*, Extract from the book *Itsenäisyyden näköaloja*: Kalervo Siikala, *Lippumme, patsaamme, tulevaisuutemme*.

¹²⁸ Komiteanmietintö 1965 A:8.

coming from abroad, and accept wholesale anything coming from the US, or Germany, because it is the will of the masses, it is cheap and contemptible".¹²⁹ In 1985, the Finnish writer Olli Jalonen described the way in which "*cheap stuff from abroad*" was criticized and "*national cultural autarchy*" emphasized still way into the 1960s:¹³⁰ for the cultural diplomats we study, it was essential to find a middle ground between opening up the country and preserving the high quality of its culture. Oittinen manifests the same interest for high cultural production out of a concern for education and cultural diversity amongst the working class. In this context, the duty of the state and of its cultural diplomacy was to exert a measure of control on the culture coming in.

Like in most aspects of Finland's Cold War society, this frame of Finnish cultural diplomacy was rooted in domestic developments but also had geopolitical aspects to it. The USSR could appear in the context of the Cold War as a counter to American mass pop culture, and this feeling that at least the Soviets appreciated high culture sedimented over long period of time also among people with experience of the Eastern bloc.¹³¹ Siikala's 1976 book was also a plaidoyer for a certain form of culture, linked to a national project of bettering the Finnish culture and protecting it against low cultural quality: "*next to the avant-garde of modernization and liberalization and next to those who work for serious cultural work have appeared sleazy (niljakkaita) merchants and disgusting copycats, whose only goal is to earn easy money through cheap rebellion and stupid eroticism*".¹³² American culture was important, but state-supported cultural imports to Finland had to concentrate on high-quality culture and possibilities for exchanges and study periods.¹³³ A new, modernized Finnish society should be given high-quality dreams, a culture of the highest calibre to share with the world and to contribute to with its own production. The role of the state was to enrich the national culture and to avoid the brutality and vulgarity

¹²⁹ Quoted in Jalonen 1985, 181. Translated from Finnish.

¹³⁰ *Idem*, 117-118. Translated from Finnish.

¹³¹ A sentiment clearly expressed for instance by the retired diplomat Mikko Pyhälä in his memoirs (Pyhälä 2016, 286): describing the end of the Cold War, Pyhälä regrets the Americanization of Eastern European and Russian culture that followed, with theatres and opera houses closed and the field generally shrinking.

¹³² Siikala 1976, 10. Translated from Finnish.

¹³³ Siikala emphasizes these points in an interview for the main Finnish daily: *Helsingin Sanomat*, 12.3.1969, "Yhdistäkö dollari Euroopan kulttuurin".

that would result if cultural exchanges were to be dominated by commercial incentives.

2.3 FROM IMAGE PROMOTION TO DEVELOPMENT AID: CULTURE IN THE SERVICE OF PRAGMATIC AIMS

2.3.1 *Differences in Rationale and Emphases Between Ministries*

In 1968, Kalevi Sorsa wrote a lengthy memorandum for Finland's UNESCO committee dealing with the intentions of Finland in cultural European cooperation, where he mentioned in passing a lack of interest amongst diplomats for the cultural aspects of international relations.¹³⁴ In a context marked by the strong development of a domestic cultural policy and its spilling over into international relations, the field of cultural diplomacy was a divided territory between the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, its more traditional overseer, and the Ministry of Education, whose role became more important. Turf wars between ministries reveal also differences in the conceptions of cultural diplomacy in Finland as part of Finland's foreign policy, from more idealistic to more pragmatic conceptions.

In his dealings with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Siikala insisted on several occasions on the differences he saw between a cultural diplomacy meant as an extension of foreign policy and a cultural diplomacy meant as an extension of cultural policy. He defended adamantly the latter version of cultural diplomacy, as he stated in numerous documents, maybe most clearly in 1978 when talking about culture to a British audience: "*I shall decipher the word as meaning education, science and scholarship, and the arts. Cultural policies are the public measures that deal with these branches of human endeavour and cultural diplomacy is the international aspect of these public measures*".¹³⁵ Culture specialists, situated in the Ministry of

¹³⁴ OPMA, Unesco-arkisto fund, Series 8, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 1a, Yleiset asiakirjat, 1955–1976*, file 81, *Yleiset asiakirjat*, PM, *Eurooppalainen yhteistyö Unescon puitteissa*, 21.10.1968, Kalevi Sorsa.

¹³⁵ KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box 1960–1970 *luku kirjoituksia, esitelmää. Keskustapolitiikka, Taide- ja kulttuuripolitiikka, kansainvälisetä yhteistyötä*, Draft, "A Public lecture to mark the Anniversary of Finland's independence", 5.12.1978. See also Lähtenmäki 1969, 116-129.

Education, should have the main role in the management of these affairs over generalists situated in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

In the same presentation, he insists on the newcomer status of cultural affairs in diplomatic relations, but defends their full inclusion into the foreign political practices of modern states. States should establish institutions able to coordinate and support cultural relations, and do it according to the logic of their own cultural developments and cultural international exchanges, not only geopolitics. In the postwar world, cultural relations should aim at peaceful international relations and dialogue, not only at peddling the state's propaganda, selling cheap "cultural exports" or satisfying what he calls national arrogance. Most protagonists located inside the Ministry of Education would lay the same emphasis on cultural diplomacy as a scientific, cultural, artistic dialogue with foreign audiences naturally meant to be managed at least in part by the Ministry of Education.

In a 1969 book, on the contrary, the diplomat and head of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' Press Bureau Matti Tuovinen insisted on the policy aspects of cultural and public diplomacy, the need for coordination and control, and rooted the promotion of a specific image of the country abroad into a broad variety of policy reasons. If Siikala insisted in several publications on the necessity to reject what he called a French model of cultural diplomacy, where culture is used mostly as a tool for foreign policy and cultural relations are managed by diplomats,¹³⁶ his colleagues in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs considered cultural relations overseas, especially as they incarnate in potentially political affairs (relations with the Soviet Union, activities in international organizations, national image of Finland as a neutral country, negotiations of cultural treaties etc.), as mostly an extension of foreign policy.

The negotiations of cultural treaties with Eastern European countries give good examples of the frictions existing between the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the president and the Ministry of Education. The treaty with Bulgaria, for example, was mentioned in passing during a visit in Finland of the Bulgarian Prime Minister. Kekkonen supported it as a way to buff contacts with Eastern Europe without too much engagement. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs executed the president's instructions, but the Ministry of Education complained about the lack of actual cultural contacts and the reciprocity of the treaty, which might mean hidden costs in

¹³⁶ Clerc 2017, 87-100.

its possible implementation.¹³⁷ Diplomats answered that something had to be done but that the treaty was a necessity: culture was a set of means to a set of ends, and should be used instrumentally in order to prop the country's general foreign policy, and demonstrate friendship at a low political cost. The obvious idea behind that was that culture is one of these value-free ways in which Finland can participate in international relations and in the international organizations without provoking a reaction from the Soviet Union, a neutral ground for diplomatic relations and contacts.¹³⁸

This tug of war between ministries shows the way in which, despite the existence of a broad canvas of intentions widely shared within the Finnish civil service, different schemes could be considered with various levels of enthusiasm by different civil servants in different institutions. The characters emphasized in our introduction nicely represent these varieties of backgrounds. Siikala might be the most idealist, his speeches and activities full of notions linked to the pacification of Finland's domestic and foreign policy as well as international relations. For him, cultural diplomacy was not only foreign policy but also a way to move the cursors of Finnish society away from their wartime pattern. Jakobson, the diplomat, might emphasize mostly the role of cultural relations as props for neutrality, the country's image and its commercial fortunes. Due to his own personal experience, he might see cultural diplomacy also as a way to get Finnish youth to circulate in the world—for Jakobson, especially the Western world—and learn its ways. For Oittinen, a social-democrat bearing the memories of pre-war internationalist cooperation and whose career's highlights included Finland's accession to UNESCO and the reform of the Finnish school system, international cooperation mostly meant fostering education, scientific and technological exchanges, with an emphasis on the youth and the working class.

Numminen, the conservative civil servant, whose career was dominated by the cultural, scientific and educational arms of a developing Finnish welfare state, might consider Finland's cultural diplomacy through his visions of what a "civilized state" (*sivistysvaltio*) should be, as well as the most concrete aspects of cultural relations, from trade to scientific and cultural exchanges, the promotion of Finland's culture overseas through

¹³⁷ Look at correspondence in: UMA, Fund 46 E, Box *Yleistä, maittain: -Englanti, 1951-...*, File *Bulgaria. Kaikenlaisten oppiainvojen ja tutkintojen vastavuoroinen tunnustamisopimus Suomi-Bulgaria*.

¹³⁸ Melgin 2014, 220.

exhibitions or publications and the development of cultural institutions between the domestic and the international context.¹³⁹ For all of them, these relations would be mostly focused on the West, as cultural relations with the East followed a different logic, less administrative and more political, involving other institutions than the ones they had under their control. But none of them would consider East and West as mutually exclusive: Finland's cultural diplomacy, as much as possible, would be considered in the frame of Finland's geopolitical position as an opportunistic effort to foster relations with both East and West. For all of them as well, cultural diplomacy was a part of a broader effort to master and control the pace of change and modernization in postwar Finland. As late as the 1950s and 1960s, alignment between different goals was actively sought.

2.3.2 *Finland's Image Promotion Through Cultural Means*

In 1952, in a report on the Finnish government's publication activities abroad, the former journalist and diplomat Urho Toivola expressed a widely shared feeling on Finland's situation: "*I would like to emphasize that Finland is today more isolated than it was before the war. Thus, communication towards foreign audiences has a more important role than it had before*".¹⁴⁰ An incentive shared between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs for the strengthening of cultural contacts overseas was their conception of cultural contacts as a way to define and promote abroad a certain image of Finland. If this effort was often designated as propaganda before the 1960s, it was referred to in colloquial conversations with a convenient byword: "Finland-image", *Suomi-kuva*. The word had the same signification than its Swedish equivalent, *Sverige-bild*, and referred to a host of activities aiming at promoting certain images of the country abroad. Protagonists in the Ministry of Education and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs referred early on to their "international communication" efforts to designate this image promotion work.¹⁴¹

Immediately after the war, the necessity to renew Finland's image abroad was emphasized as a part of the process moving Finland away from

¹³⁹ These differences appear, for example, in Numminen's memoirs, where he highlights Siikala's role in Finland's cultural diplomacy, despite what he describes as Siikala's grandstanding and idealism (Numminen 2020, vol 2, 159-162).

¹⁴⁰ UMA, Box 19 A, *Tiedotustoiminta, Yleensä*, PM, *UV Toivola, 1952, Suomea esittelevistä julkaisuista*, 22.11.1952. Translated from Finnish.

¹⁴¹ See Clerc 2015, 145-171.

the war. Most of the material produced before 1939 was considered by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs as useless: it was too old and too hostile to the USSR. The new material would have to concentrate on Finland's democracy, reconstruction efforts after the war, tourism, the economic life of the country, and cultural sites and productions: churches, music, landscapes and towns. Discussions in 1948 concerning the edition of Arvid Enckell's book on Finland's democracy give a good idea of this desire for modernization and a new take on Finland's image.¹⁴² Another example is the debate over the re-edition in 1950 of the book *Finland Today*, printed in 1948. The pictures in particular provoked some debates, with the embassy in Washington and the Ministry insisting on the necessity to present modern pictures of Helsinki, with happy people in the streets dressed in the latest fashion. Finland's image promotion also had an important role in supporting the country's foreign policy line: in the 1970s, the emphasis was on fighting against the use of the term "Finlandization" to designate Finland's international position.¹⁴³ Credibility was an essential resource for Finland's foreign policy during the Cold War, and it meant constant work to monitor and refine Finland's reputation.

This feeling of urgency remained during the entire period under scrutiny. In 1969, in the proceedings of a seminar linked to Finland's image in the world, the Foreign Minister Ahti Karjalainen strongly emphasized the importance of reputation for a small state. Karjalainen described quick developments during the late 1960s in the public coordination of these activities, from participation in international organizations and cultural treaties to the coordinated presentation of Finland's scientific, cultural and intellectual achievements.¹⁴⁴ One important point was the teaching of Finnish abroad, in Siikala's terms the most idiosyncratic export Finland had to offer.¹⁴⁵

If it shows especially in the papers of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs as an essential part of selling Finland's neutrality and industrial products to the world, this role of cultural relations for the promotion of Finland's image abroad is widely expressed in official papers throughout the 1940s–1970s as one of the reasons Finland should find its place in international cultural cooperation. More than the contours of this image, the

¹⁴² See Lähteenkorva and Pekkarinen 2008, 49–50.

¹⁴³ Lähteenkorva and Pekkarinen 2008.

¹⁴⁴ Karjalainen 1969.

¹⁴⁵ Lähteenkorva and Pekkarinen 2008, 52.

main worry for the Finns was the lack of any notions related to Finland amongst foreign audiences. The translator and writer Jaakko Ahokas, who amongst many other things worked in the 1950s–1960s for the Ministry for Foreign Affairs as a translator, wrote in 1968 in *Uusi Suomi* an article deploring the lack of contacts between Finland and the world. Communication activities had to be developed in order to promote a modern image for Finland. If the official communication activities of the Finnish state have improved, Ahokas writes, the country's cultural and image policy should be coordinated by a state-funded body.¹⁴⁶

As time passed, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in particular tended to see cultural relations mostly from the point of view of media relations and the communication of a positive image of Finland to foreign audience, for economic and foreign political reasons. Cultural relations were described, for example, in the 1961 report of the Jakobson committee as a necessary part of the country's foreign policy line.¹⁴⁷ Cultural exchanges coordinated by the state were seen as a part of the state's efforts to refine the image of the country overseas as a modern country that had changed from the interwar period. This new country was pacific in its relation with the USSR, more prosperous, more open to the world. It had a developing and strengthening welfare state.

In the 1960s, the Finnish state's efforts at "international communication" were situated mostly in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, as parts of an effort promoting neutrality and developing trade. But parts of these efforts were also linked to a will to make the image of the country correspond with the contours of its rapidly changing postwar society. In 1969, the head of the Minister's Press Bureau Matti Tuovinen delivered a long analysis of his work for a conference organized by the University of Turku.¹⁴⁸ He concentrated on the nature of communication as both informational (inform about the nature and evolutions of Finland's official activities) and influential (trying to influence others' vision of Finland). He emphasized the need to rid Finland of old notions which had plagued its public image abroad since the war and placed it in the same group as the countries of Eastern Europe. A small state, Tuovinen emphasized, uses

¹⁴⁶ Quoted in KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, file *Aineistoa 1957-58 ja 1962-69, Suomen UNESCO-toimikunta, Yleisradio/Suomen televisio, Opetusministeriö/Kansainvälisten asiain osasto*, copy of a letter to Matti Tuovinen, 9.4.1968.

¹⁴⁷ Clerc 2015.

¹⁴⁸ Lähteenmäki 1969, 32-44.

communication first of all to make itself known, while bigger states have “*wider intentions*” such as the spreading of ideologies or imperialist ambitions. He reminded the reader of the commercial and economic elements behind cultural relations and the communication of a good image of Finland: giving the image of the country as a reliable, serious international player also enhances its commercial attractiveness.

In 1976, Kalervo Siikala brought forward the same necessity to improve Finland’s image abroad through an emphasis on cultural diplomacy.¹⁴⁹ Describing the field of “international communication” as scattered across a wide swath of private and public agents, he underlined the importance to keep contacts with different groups of “specialized audiences”. However, he also presented the way in which Finland’s cultural diplomacy, that started after 1944 from a need to “make Finland known to the world”, has developed into a wider process of cultural and educational cooperation, both bilateral and multilateral.

After the 1966 creation of the Department for International Affairs in the Ministry of Education, image promotion and cultural relations became more clearly separated in administrative terms. The first one went more clearly to the Press Bureau of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the second more clearly to the Ministry of Education. But they remained difficult to entangle for a country where all international relations were considered a part of the promotion of its international image. While information and people would flow freely, Siikala also hoped that each Finn abroad would become a potential ambassador for his or her country.¹⁵⁰

2.3.3 *Culture as the Handmaiden of Trade and a Channel for Development Policy*

An element that enjoyed wide support in both the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education was the importance for cultural

¹⁴⁹ Siikala 1976, 219-220.

¹⁵⁰ Efforts were made then to, for example, brief students and researchers sent abroad on the promotion of Finland’s image. See for example KA, *Suomen UNESCO-toimikunta* Fund, Box 540 19:23, ks 9, *Suomen oloja käsitteleviä monisteita ja painotuoteita*, booklet *Suomen ylioppilaskuntien liitto: Tiivistä tietoa Suomesta. Tiedotuspäivät ulkomaille lähteville stipendiaateille ja asiantuntijoille*, Helsinki, Kouluballituksen kokoushuone, 7-8.4.1959. Siikala stated elsewhere that “...the main responsibility for building an image of Finland lies with each protagonist in the field of culture” (KMA, Kalervo Siikala, Box *Aineisto 1957-58 ja 1962-69...*, PM, *Virallinen kulttuuripolitiikka ja Suomen kuva ulkomailla*, n.d). Translated from Finnish.

contacts to result in economic and trade benefits for the country.¹⁵¹ In his PhD thesis dealing with cultural relations between Finland and the Soviet Union, Ville Pernaa emphasized the way economic and trade aspects were presented as essential elements in the presentation of cultural diplomacy, especially in discussions with the Finnish Parliament. They were essential in framing cultural diplomatic activities towards the Finnish Parliament, in Finland the main instrument of budgetary power, which held a generally stingy attitude to costs and funding.¹⁵² Another direction in which this kind of framing was essential was the private sector, and especially companies, which the Finnish state tried to associate to activities linked to the promotion of Finland's image abroad.¹⁵³

While cultural relations were seen as important for neutrality, national identity and increasingly as a part of a developing welfare state, concrete, pragmatic reasons for the development of this cultural diplomacy had to be regularly emphasized in public discussions with Parliament and private actors. In several publications scattered through the period studied here, protagonists emphasized the concrete advantages Finland could get from international cultural contacts. Siikala in 1976 pointed the way artistic productions were also “trade goods”, parts of the country's economic activity and elements especially of its export activities, including the commercial exchanges Finland had with the Soviet Union.¹⁵⁴ This was especially the case with Finland's industrial artisanship, from design to architecture, which was described as both an artistic endeavour and an economic activity susceptible to result into better trade and exports. Public activities came in the tail of the international activities of companies in the sector: after the war, these companies aimed first at Sweden and then at the rest of Europe for their development.¹⁵⁵ This insistence on concrete, financial gains from cultural relations was linked also to the role in the early Cold War of private protagonists in the development of cultural contacts between Finland and the world.¹⁵⁶ It extended to discussions about

¹⁵¹ Melgin 2014, 168-172.

¹⁵² On the attitude of the Finnish Parliament towards the development of Finland's public policy towards science, culture and education, see Pernaa and Tiitta 2007.

¹⁵³ For examples of the ambiguous relation between the Finnish private sector and Finland's public and cultural diplomacy activities, see Clerc 2015.

¹⁵⁴ Siikala 1976, 30-31.

¹⁵⁵ Melgin 2014, 170-172.

¹⁵⁶ Melgin 2014, 168-171.

the cost of cultural policies and the cost of participation in international cooperation.

In 1976, Siikala and the Ministry of Education organized a seminar on “cultural exports”, meant to consider the monetization of cultural relations,¹⁵⁷ under the form of either the direct selling of artistic and cultural products or indirectly through supporting the opening of new markets. For Finnish civil servants, trade would be facilitated by promoting certain images of Finland as a worthy country producing reliably good products. If Siikala used in this presentation the term “cultural exports” in the sense of actual exports of cultural products, the ambivalence often shone through. In his book published in the same year,¹⁵⁸ he used the term in the sense of the export of Finnish culture, language and scientific achievements. But he also emphasized that Finnish “culture” was still strongly import-based: the world taught Finland more than Finland taught the world.

A developing aspect of Finland’s cultural diplomacy was also the role of cultural, scientific and educational cooperation in the country’s participation to development aid efforts that started and developed in the 1960s. A good number of cultural diplomacy’s protagonists linked development work to Finland’s cultural outreach, internationalization and a kind of international duty to fulfil. This aspect is emphasized in publications as a way for Finland to participate in global relations, burden-sharing and the construction of peace and understanding in the world. In 1976, Siikala wrote how “*Finland managed through hard work to develop its production and its culture. This brings also a duty to help those poorer and less developed than Finland. Hence the need for its youth to become more acquainted with others, because it helps to build the foundations of an international organization based on peace and understanding*”.¹⁵⁹

In strong words, Siikala defended cooperation with the Global South as a part of the change he wanted to usher in Finland through the development of international cultural relations: “*Those who consider development work as useless banter are neurotic navel gazers, whose selfish and arrogant positions make the intellectual atmosphere of our country so heavy*”. The choice to be made is not between the development of one’s own country

¹⁵⁷ KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box 1960-1970 luku kirjoituksia, esitelmiä. *Keskustapolitiikka, Taide- ja kulttuuripolitiikkaa, kansainvälisetä yhteistyötä*, Speech draft, *Suomen kulttuurin vientiseminaari: kuinka tästä eteenpäin?* Kalervo Siikala, 13.3.1976.

¹⁵⁸ Siikala 1976, 219-221.

¹⁵⁹ Siikala 1976; Virtanen 2013.

and development aid—both have to be considered together as contributions to a peaceful international development.¹⁶⁰

A significant portion of Finland's official development activities was thus cultural activities, channelled through UNESCO: in the 1960s, the organization had turned its activity strongly towards the Global South and aid to developing countries. Finland participated in this turn, organizing for instance in 1964 a Finnish-African conference in Helsinki.¹⁶¹ In 1970, in a speech for the national broadcaster *Yle*, Siikala described the rise of development aid concerns in UNESCO and presented it as a natural and welcome development.¹⁶² The organization had moved under the influence of decolonized countries from a forum of developed countries destined to emphasize a humanist global culture, to an organization turned mostly towards concrete realisations in the Global South, especially the development of education campaigns. Siikala wrote that Finland participated in that through its modern and well-performing education model that could easily outmatch the old French and British models present in former colonies. This remained a staple of Finland's vision of UNESCO throughout the 1970s: in 1979, a report of the Ministry of Education stated that strengthening contacts in UNESCO was a much cheaper and effective way than reciprocal cultural treaties to develop cultural contacts with developing countries.¹⁶³

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¹⁶⁰ KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, *Aineistoa 1957-58 ja 1962-69, Suomen UNESCO-toimikunta, Yleisradio/Suomen televisio, Opetusministeriö/Kansainvälisten asiain osasto*, 1969, draft of a text to be broadcast on the radio.

¹⁶¹ OPMA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta* fund, Box 5, 842 *Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat liitteineen, 1964-1965)*, PM, *Suomalais-afrikkalainen tutkimus- ja yhteistyökongressi Helsingissä 5-7.10.1964*, nd.

¹⁶² KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box *Aineistoa 1957-58 ja 1962-69, Suomen UNESCO-toimikunta, Yleisradio/Suomen televisio, Opetusministeriö/Kansainvälisten asiain osasto*, speech draft, 9.3.1970, Kalervo Siikala.

¹⁶³ OPMA, Jaakko Numminen fund, Box *Opetusministeriö, Kulttuurisopimuspolitiikka, 1979-1984*, PM, *Suomen kulttuuripolitiikka 1980-luvulla*, Ministry of Education, Department of International Affairs, 4.10.1979.

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Developing State Agencies and Centralizing International Cultural Relations

International cultural relations demand, to be conducted at their current volume, to be funded with money mostly coming from the state. This is the reason why the administrative and organizational structures of our international cultural relations have strengthened, at the same time as our national cultural administration.

—*Kalervo Siikala, 1976* (Siikala 1976, 36. Translated from Finnish.)

The administration of technical matters demands the decentralization of international relations, but we need to identify and manage the risks involved. In an international environment, certain foreign political angles have to be taken into account in technical matters. In certain cases, foreign political control may remain insufficient or lack altogether.

—*Report of the committee for the development of Finland's Foreign Service, 1969* (Quoted in Niemi 1977, 210. Translated from Finnish.)

Ideas and incentives described in this book's first chapter can be traced as the background of institutional changes and debates on the structure of state agencies and coordination of the field of private organizations. A process of institutionalization of Finnish cultural diplomacy happened in parallel with the expansion of the activities and sphere of influence of the Finnish state, and the emergence of a new balance between the Ministry

for Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education. This process is well advocated by Kalervo Siikala in 1968. In a long plaidoyer to the Finnish Minister for Education Johannes Virolainen, Siikala defended a state-funded cultural policy with an ambitious international outreach. He emphasized the developments that had happened since the war in Finland's international contacts and criticized what he saw as a Finnish cultural field still locked under hierarchical, conservative private cultural organizations, dominated by conservative elites, old-fashioned institutions, and defiance towards the Eastern bloc. The role of the state was to change that for the good of Finnish society. Siikala wanted a new, dynamic, open and democratic cultural policy, with a stronger role for the Finnish state to coordinate private organizations and steer their activities towards the country's official foreign policy line and the goals of Finland's developing welfare state. It had to emphasize the interest of the youth and young people, who wanted to get rid of old hierarchies, and adapt cultural policy to a geopolitical context dominated by Soviet influence. Siikala stopped short of proposing a fully state-controlled cultural field, but demanded better instruments to coordinate private initiatives by public resources: "*cultural life has to develop its own organic way and find its own direction*", he wrote, although it had to do so "*in those limits set by the possibilities and needs of society and economic life*".¹ In an environment dominated by ideas of cultural reform and the influence of a new radical left, the Ministry of Education should be given the possibility to lead the cultural field. The problem was also political: to maintain good relations with the USSR demanded stronger state coordination also in cultural matters.

For Siikala, Numminen or Oittinen, emphasizing cultural relations was about no less than the controlled cultural modernization and democratization of the country, its reinsertion in international cooperation systems and the development of peaceful relations between nations. For diplomats, on the other hand, cultural diplomacy appeared as a set of practices prolonging foreign policy and supporting it. For politicians, it was an endeavour with economic and commercial implications, but also an identity-based attempt at developing Finland's image abroad. These patterns of discussions, these desires projected on cultural diplomacy and

¹KMA, Kalervo Siikala Fund, Box *Aineistoa 1957-58 ja 1962-69, Suomen UNESCO-toimikunta, Yleisradio/Suomen televisio, Opetusministeriö/Kansainvälisten asiain osasto*, letter, Siikala to Johannes Virolainen, 20.4.1968, *Kulttuuri-ideologia ja kulttuuripoliittikka*. Translated from Finnish.

these goals given to cultural diplomacy developed in an administrative arena marked by considerable evolutions and dominated by strong personalities.

3.1 “TO SHOW THE MUSE HER PLACE”: THE 1940s–1950s BETWEEN WARTIME CENTRALIZATION AND ADAPTATION TO UNESCO

3.1.1 *Culture as Part of the Evolutions of Postwar Finland’s Foreign Policy Management*

As Jukka Nevakivi and Timo Soikkanen have described it, the postwar era in Finland was a period of changes in the management of foreign policy, including the country’s foreign cultural relations.² Finland’s diplomatic apparatus diversified and expanded: the network of embassies developed slowly outside of Europe, and the development of technical attachés bore witness to a diversification of the tasks managed by these diplomatic networks. At the same time, the management of foreign policy increasingly concentrated around the president, especially relations with the USSR:³ as Soikkanen emphasized, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs became in the late 1950s “*the President’s ministry*”.⁴ Kekkonen’s general line and especially necessary contacts with Moscow created a frame in which most foreign contacts were evaluated and considered. The president’s reliance on personal relations of loyalty and trust meant that he involved himself in the minutia of diplomatic relations, deciding for example on single nominations or the management of certain important diplomatic posts.

On the other hand, entire fields of activities were considered by the president as less important and left for the administration to manage: apart from a few specific aspects, culture was such a field, where routine cultural cooperation was left for the administration to manage on a daily basis. While matters considered politically sensitive were kept on an axis between the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the president, lots of things were allowed to sip through the cracks and be managed in other ministries or

² Nevakivi 1988, 197-324; Soikkanen 2003.

³ Jyränki 1981, 240-242.

⁴ The former diplomat Klaus Törnudd wrote: “*Kekkonen got into the habit of managing foreign policy directly with the level of civil servants, effectively bypassing his ministers and managing foreign policy on his own*” (Mansala and Suomi 2003, 352). Translated from Finnish.

even by the private sector through various coordination mechanisms: exchange programmes, the organizations of art exhibitions, trade promotion activities and the teaching of Finnish abroad are examples of activities in which active private organizations were involved.

The first postwar laws dealing with the division of labour between ministries made it clear that the Ministry for Foreign Affairs retained a monopoly on the management of foreign relations: other administrations had to inform the Ministry of their dealings with foreign entities, and diplomats strictly controlled delegations sent to technical conferences abroad.⁵ The 1950s Finnish diplomatic corps was also made of people retaining a traditional view of their function, emphasizing political and symbolic aspects, which they saw as essential to the nation's interests but also to its international standing. Finnish diplomats saw themselves as experts in foreign relations, gatekeepers between their country and the world, and translators of global trends into Finland. In the most important embassies, one would find by the end of the 1960s a Press attaché dealing mostly with public relations and the monitoring of foreign media. The development of cultural relations was, however, for the most part managed by diplomatic staff, often the ambassador himself, lagging behind whatever bilateral private efforts existed.

The 1950s brought an increase in Finland's international contacts, as a consequence of the postwar increase of international activities in Europe generally. This increase focused not only on political relations, the main remit of ambassadorial and diplomatic staff, but also on technical relations: cultural contacts, economic and trade affairs, consular matters linked to movements of population, commercial relations and so forth. Finland's slow economic integration in European markets also contributed to this development. Despite remaining outside of the Marshall plan, Finland had shown as early as 1947–1948, and again in 1957–1958, an interest in Marshall Plan funds for rebuilding postwar Europe, which were administered by the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC). Some 20 years later, in 1967–1968, Finland finally applied, successfully, for membership of the OEEC's successor, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).⁶ Finland's economic dependence on exports to foreign markets pushed it to integrate in developing European market blocs through two free-trade agreements, the 1961

⁵ Götz 2005, 263–279; Soikkanen 2008, 44–46; Clerc, Glover & Jordan 2015.

⁶ Paavonen 2004, 85–109.

FINN-EFTA treaty and a free trade treaty with the European Communities in 1973. At the same time, it participated in a number of attempts aiming at structuring economic and political relations between the Nordic countries.⁷ These developments forced diplomats to admit “experts” as parts of Finland’s official foreign contacts.

Finland’s foreign relations also changed with its growing involvement in international organizations. One of the most important changes was Finland’s accession to the UN. While Paasikivi wasn’t enthusiastic, Kekkonen saw the risks but also the opportunities offered by the organization to a neutral country. Finland’s accession to the UN in 1956 was seen by many diplomats as a victory for Finland’s international standing, although it was not unproblematic: a few years into their membership, the Finns had to find difficult compromises in their reactions to the Suez crisis in 1956 and to UN’s criticism of the crushing of the Hungarian uprising in 1958. In his correspondence of the time, Kekkonen expressed bitter regrets about joining the UN “*too early*”.⁸ The membership was however seen by most diplomats as a stabilizing influence in Finland’s foreign relations, and it had an effect on Finland’s technical relations with the world by opening to it several avenues of concrete relations especially with the West.

In these debates, the arts, science and culture were scattered between the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education. They had a presence in Finland’s official diplomacy, especially through the cultural activities of embassies and other representations, and as a part of the country’s image diplomacy—a variety of activities through which official Finland worked to develop and shape the image of the country amongst foreigners.⁹ Despite the absence in most Finnish embassies of cultural attachés, embassies and especially ambassadors supported artistic productions, exhibitions, concerts, spectacles, conferences and others, as part of their representation and public relations duties. In a Finnish ambassadorial network mostly centred on Europe, most ambassadors doubled as cultural attachés, a process they considered the natural extension of their representation activities. Private and semi-autonomous organizations and interest groups, coordinating their activities with ministries through personal contacts or not at all, were especially important in trade and tourism

⁷ A question well-summarized in Sonne 2007.

⁸ Quoted in Suomi 1992, 66-67.

⁹ Clerc 2015, 145-171.

promotion, artistic contacts and scientific cooperation. Finnish universities, which were up until the 1970s private organizations, worked after the war to rebuild their international contacts outside of any public coordination.

The increasing volume and complexity of Finland's international contacts brought a functional decentralization through which important decisions were moved from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs towards technical ministries, and away from the political hierarchy deeper in the administrative organization of these ministries.¹⁰ At the same time, private interests were brought towards the state through funding, networks, devolution of important tasks or multiparty committees dealing with strategically important matters. These committees and the system of funding were used to bring private interests to consider more closely the position of the state in their dealings with foreign entities. As Finland's future foreign minister Kalevi Sorsa wrote in 1967, a compromise had to be found between spontaneity and state control. Academic, artistic and cultural liberty had to be the rule, but culture also had to be coordinated by the state: "*Cleio cannot do everything on her own. The state has to create a programme for the internationalization of education. It has to show the muse her place*".¹¹

3.1.2 *The First Postwar Committees and Institutions in the Shadow of Wartime Propaganda*

There remained a dilemma between state coordination and development of Finland's international cultural contacts, the lack of public resources to do so, and the preservation for various reasons of strong private agents managing important aspects of international cultural relations. Part of the resistance to strong state coordination came from a certain feeling of estrangement from the state: the business milieu could feel strong suspicion towards Finland's cosy relation with Moscow and the potential power of the communists in the country's political life and institutions, while on the contrary communist organizations managing relations with the USSR could want to keep their distance from the Finnish government before the late 1950s and Kekkonen's arrival in power. Another problem in the first

¹⁰Niemi 1977, 204-219.

¹¹OPMA, *Unesco-arkisto fund*, Box 8, 14a, *Lähetetyt kirjeet ja lausunnot (toimkinuta) 59-68, PM, Kansainvälisen kasvatuksen tarve ja koulujemme nykyiset ulkomaiset kosketukset*, nd (1967?). Translated from Finnish.

postwar decades was the rejection of strong state coordination because of the painful memories of wartime centralized propaganda.

War years in Finland had seen considerable concentration of cultural relations overseas around state organizations that had managed censorship, propaganda, communication and cultural relations, and a concentration of private efforts mostly on Germany.¹² That organizational setting was dismantled in 1944–1945 under the pressure of the Soviet Union. Most of the conversation following the war revolved around finding the best ways to rebuild a state organization able to coordinate and accompany the resurgence of cultural contacts with the world, and also promote a certain image of Finland abroad in the frame of the country’s neutrality policy. When a 1945 committee demanded a more efficient national communication and a more active use of culture in order to rebuild Finland’s foreign contacts, the leftist members of the committee expressed their unwillingness to come back to a concentration of “*the state’s communication and propaganda activities*” into a single centralized organization that would risk domination by conservative cultural elites.¹³ The same debate took place in Parliament and in state committees, groups of experts and political leaders charged with dealing with specific questions.¹⁴

Reflections on Finland’s cultural contacts and image promotion abroad developed also outside of the public sphere, in tiny circles where some of Finland’s cultural, economic and political wartime elites mingled with civil servants and planned coordinated public actions. Communication professionals gathered after 1944 into an organization called *Tiedotusmiehetry*¹⁵, that worked with a host of ministries and state organizations, meeting regularly and coordinating their efforts.¹⁶ In the years 1947–1958, most of these meetings concerned themselves with the improvement of Finland’s image abroad. On the other hand, the Finland-Soviet Union Society, created in 1944 with the avowed intention to better Finnish and Soviet cultural contacts, grew into a mass organization. The autumn of 1945 saw a number of delegations and visits between Finland and the Soviet

¹² Melgin 2014.

¹³ Komiteamietintö Mon. 1945:32, *Valtion tiedotustoiminnan uudelleen järjestämistä*, 27.

¹⁴ On the role of state committees as drivers of reflections on state policy and instruments of consensus building in postwar Finland, see Rainio-Niemi 2008, 194–202, 326.

¹⁵ Melgin et al. 2012, 40–70; Herlin 1993, 212.

¹⁶ Melgin 2014, 158–159.

Union.¹⁷ The Society worked in a context where, despite the Left's electoral successes and the necessities of relations with the USSR, large segments of the population still saw cooperation with the USSR as at best a necessary evil to be carried through without too much enthusiasm, and at worst an anti-patriotic endeavour paving the way for the loss of national independence.¹⁸

Faced with these active private organizations, the management of cultural international relations in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education revolved around limited *ad hoc* institutions.¹⁹ In the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the management of cultural relations was mostly linked to the promotion of Finland's image abroad in a postwar context. This effort was coordinated by embassies and in Helsinki by the Ministry's Press Bureau. In a 1949 report, the head of the Bureau, Heikki Brotherus, described its tasks as following the foreign and domestic media, preparing communiqués and retractions, commenting on the news and managing relations with the media both in Finland²⁰ and through Finnish embassies and a limited network of press attachés.²¹ However, the Press bureau was also supposed to, in Brotherus' terms, "*monitor the interests of the Finnish cultural scene abroad*" and to work as an in-betweener with foreign cultural organizations. In 1949, the Bureau comprised a bit less than 20 persons, scattered between an international press room at the Hotel Kämp, in the centre of Helsinki, and the Bureau's offices in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Its resources were described as helplessly insufficient, and Brotherus emphasized especially the need for more resources and a better centralization of efforts.

¹⁷ *Idem*, 159-163.

¹⁸ On UNESCO's rhetoric, see Duedahl 2016.

¹⁹ Brotherus 1984, 132-140.

²⁰ Finland's main press agency *Suomen Tietotoimisto* worked in close cooperation with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. In exchange for financial support, the agency produced more or less official content especially destined to foreign audiences: Jussila 2006.

²¹ UMA, Box *Luettelo muistioista 48-50*, PM, *Ulkoasiainministeriön sanomalehtiasiantoinmisto*, 3.8.1949, Heikki Brotherus. The Finnish network of press and cultural attachés developed slowly after 1944. In 1950, there were only 3: C.O. Frietsch in Washington, Antero Vartia in London, Yrjö Kaarne in Stockholm. In 1963, Finland had press attachés in London, Moscow, Paris, Stockholm, Washington and Cologne (for the activities of press attachés in Washington in the late 1950s, cf. Jakobson 1980, 44-46).

Centralized coordination was also discussed in the spheres of economic information and trade promotion abroad.²² During the late 1940s, the Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Ministry of Transportations and Public Works brought into their orbit a group of committees and organizations working on public funds to manage trade and tourism promotion.²³ Both ministries also developed in-house agencies to strengthen Finland's image as a country of origin for goods, a place to invest, and a tourism destination: the Ministry of Trade and Industry in the early 1950s founded an office for "export development" and a coordination committee to manage commercial exhibitions abroad (*Suomen vienninnäyttelylautakunta*). In some economic sectors—for example, design—public and private actors worked together on campaigns and exhibitions abroad.²⁴ A committee set up in 1945 under Matti Virkkunen, the head of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' Trade Policy Department, asked however how could state authorities better coordinate the work of these private actors with Finland's foreign policy line and general interest.²⁵ This strong drive for centralized state coordination in the years 1948–1950 did not go down well with some actors, and Virkkunen's committee report also contained protests against state-led centralization.²⁶

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs' Press Bureau produced two reports in 1948–1949 to reflect on the need for coordination in Finland's cultural

²² UMA, Box Fb 58, 41958 E3, *Taloudellisen tiedonantotoiminnan organisoiminen, ohjeet, file Ohjeet taloudellista tiedotustoimintaa varten, 1937-1950 I*, letter, Ragnar Smedslund to E.O. Raustila, 17.7.1950.

²³ The Finnish Tourist Association (*Suomen matkailuyhdistys*) and the event organiser Finnish Fairs (*Suomen Messut*) are good examples of such organizations. See documents in UMA, Box 5 E 9, 1948-1949-1950 and in KA, *Kauppa- ja teollisuus ministeriö fund, Kauppaosasto, Box Hi 1, Matkailu 1947-1972*. Cf. UMA, Box 19 A *Tiedotustoiminta 1956*, file *Tiedotustoimintakomitea: Komitea ulkomailla suuntautuvan tiedotus- ja valistustoiminnan kehittämiseksi ja tehostamiseksi: asetettu 28.6.1956*, PM, *Suomen matkailuyhdistys*, 11.10.1956, Jorma Tolonen. On Finnish Fairs, see Valkonen and Valkonen 1994.

²⁴ Davies 2002, 101–16; Melgin 2014, 172–4.

²⁵ UMA, Box 19 A *Tiedotustoiminta 1956*, file *Tiedotustoimintakomitea: Komitea ulkomailla suuntautuvan tiedotus- ja valistustoiminnan kehittämiseksi ja tehostamiseksi: asetettu 28.6.1956*, PM, *Kaupallinen tiedotustoiminta*, July 1946; *Idem*, file *Ulkomaankaupan tiedotuskomitean mietintö*, Report draft, *Ulkomaankaupan tiedotuskomitea mietintö*, 4.12.1946; *Idem*, Final report, 12.3.1949.

²⁶ UMA, Box 19 A *Tiedotustoiminta 1956*, file *Tiedotustoimintakomitea: Komitea ulkomailla suuntautuvan tiedotus- ja valistustoiminnan kehittämiseksi ja tehostamiseksi: asetettu 28.6.1956*, PM, *Eriävä mielipide*, 23.3.1949, Jaakko Kahma.

contacts and image promotion,²⁷ both informed by a survey among ambassadors asking them to assess the country's official information efforts.²⁸ Both these documents affirmed the necessity to move on from what was described as the Bureau's impotence and to achieve a better coordinated image and cultural policy. How could Finland avoid being lost in a "grey zone" between blocs and develop once again its cultural contacts? The only organization interested in doing this properly seemed to be the state, but how could it coordinate with so little resources the sprawling world of organizations, offices, societies and private businesses that had taken on Finland's international cultural relations?

In the Ministry of Education, administrative support for international cultural relations was limited by the structure of the Finnish state's post-war involvement in culture. Elina Melgin has described how limited state support for cultural activities was before the war, and how it consisted mostly of subsidies for artistic projects, exhibitions, publications and other short-term efforts.²⁹ The main agents were private or non-governmental, and the main criteria for public funding were linked to the perceived interest of the artistic and cultural endeavours for Finland's national project and Finland's image abroad. During the war, however, the entire system of cultural and image relations came under the aegis of the state and of certain organizations meant to coordinate wartime propaganda. In the last years of the war, most affairs linked to international cooperation in the Ministry of Education were managed by a single civil servant, administrative secretary Antti Inkinen.³⁰ After the war ended, Finland's isolation and travel difficulties limited Inkinen's possibilities to act.

Autio and Heikkilä emphasize the ministry's lack of resources that pushed it, for instance, to cancel participation in international conferences by fear of giving too bad an image of the country, and a strong unwillingness to commit scarce resources to international cultural contacts. Lack of language skills in French and especially English made international

²⁷ Nevakivi 1988, 269–273; UMA, box 5 E 9, 1949, PM, *Ulkoasiainministeriön sanomalehtiasiaintomisto: tehtävät—organisaatio—uudistustarpeet*, 3.8.1949, Heikki Brotherus; *idem*, PM, *Ulkoasiainministeriön sanomalehtiasiaintomiston toiminnasta, v. 1946-1948*, 17.6.1948, Lauri Hjelt.

²⁸ UMA, Box 19 G 1948, circular letter 39/1948, 3.9.1948, and materials received from various embassies.

²⁹ Melgin 2014.

³⁰ Autio and Heikkilä 1990, 67–68.

cooperation even more difficult, forcing the ministry to adopt a passive position. In 1947, the country had reached back the numbers of student and researchers exchanges it had in 1938, with the ministry mostly observing the situation.³¹ Retiring, Inkinen was not replaced and it was decided to manage international cultural relations through *ad hoc* expert committees inside the ministry managing specific tasks (exchanges, subsidies, scientific contacts etc.). Oittinen, who had by then become Finland's minister of Education, was interested in international contacts but it was difficult to secure resources. Well into the 1950s, "cultural propaganda" and cultural relations remained stranded in-between the Press Bureau, the Ministry of Education and various private actors and organizations.³²

A governmental committee led by professor Erik Lönnroth was created in October 1948 to study the position of culture and the arts in the country's foreign relations, the development of "*intellectual exchanges and the improvement of scientific and artistic cooperation with other countries*", especially with those countries in which Finland had most to gain from a development of its national image. Made of intellectual and administrative figures, the committee was leaning towards the West at a moment when the communists were expelled from government after the signature of the Finno-Soviet treaty in May 1948. The exception was Sylvi-Kyylikki Kilpi, head of the Finland-Soviet Union Society and the only communist voice in the committee. Ready in spring 1949, the committee's report emphasized the necessity to open avenues of cooperation with the West, and reaffirmed the leading role of the Finland-Soviet Union Society in cultural contacts with the Soviet Union. It showed how the field of cultural relations was a mess of organizations and institutions managing these relations. Due to the crash in the value of the Finnish mark, state assistance had stagnated, isolating even more Finland from the world and depriving the Finnish state from the possibility to coordinate efficiently the international contacts of cultural, artistic and scientific protagonists. Without quick action and resources, Finland's international cultural relations will not be brought back to what the committee calls "*a level worthy of our quality*". That would work through a combination of state action, state coordination and subsidies to cultural organizations: friendship societies, cultural societies and so on. Reactions in the press to these proposals were

³¹ Komiteamietintö, Mon. 1949: 9, *Suomen ulkomaisia kulttuurisubteita tutkimaan asetettu komitealta*, 5.

³² Brotherus 1984, 134.

mostly positive, emphasizing especially the need for a more efficient promotion of the national image—by far the main preoccupation linked to Finland’s international cultural relations in the late 1940s.³³

Another attempt to reach state centralization was conducted by groups located outside the public sphere and in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, developing in the late 1950s around the possibility to create in Finland the equivalent of the Swedish Institute. Discussions about the creation of a “Finnish Institute” grew and then fizzled away in circles emerging mostly from wartime administration. These centralizing voices came from organizations in contact with the Ministry of Trade and Industry and from an organization of public relations specialists, *Tiedotusmiehet ry.*³⁴ Initiatives between 1945 and 1949 centred on informal groups like the group created in July 1949 around the ethnologist and political activist Lauri Puntila, a close collaborator of Kekkonen. Puntila considered that, in order to salvage Finland’s level of culture from the decadence it had suffered after the war, it was necessary in particular to strengthen the role of cultural attachés in Finnish embassies. The left saw this as an attempt to clean embassies of the little leftist diplomatic personnel brought in after the war, and the debate focused on the ambassador to France Johan Helo. Puntila also suffered from his reputation as the former leader of Finland’s censorship bureau during the war.³⁵ Other members of this circle came from the arts (theatre director and writer Arvi Kivimaa), the academic world and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (diplomat Heikki Leppo).³⁶

In January 1956, President Paasikivi asked the government to think the matter through, and a seminar was organized in April 1956. Arvi Salminen, from the Ministry of Education, participated alongside the representatives of various ministries (Education, Trade and Industry) and export organizations.³⁷ In his intervention, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs’ First Secretary, Richard Seppälä, concluded that “*efficient commercial*

³³ “Suomen ulkomaisten kulttuurisuhteiden kohentaminen vaatii nopeita toimenpiteitä”, *Helsingin Sanomat*, 29.5.1949.

³⁴ Melgin et al. 2012, 40–70; Herlin 1993, 212.

³⁵ Melgin 2014, 194; KA, L.A. Puntila fund, Box 221, Speech, *Kulttuuriedustajat, puhe*, 10.7.1949.

³⁶ See the documents of the committee, including its final report, in KA, L.A. Puntila fund, box 577, *Tieteellisen tutkimuksen organisaatiokomitea, Suomen Instituutti*.

³⁷ On Salminen’s role in discussions about the creation of a Finnish Institute as a coordinating entity for private and public image promotion efforts, see Lähtenkorva and Pekkarinen 2008, 101–102.

advertisement has nowadays to be cloaked under cultural advertisement. The promotion of exports demands that cultural relations be strengthened".³⁸ To do that, the seminar proposed the idea of an all-encompassing Finnish Institute coordinating the many threads of image policy. Pushback came especially from private interests that expressed mitigated support for the idea of a Finnish Institute replicating the state-funded Norwegian model.

In June 1956, these considerations were passed on to a "*committee for the development and strengthening of information and enlightenment activities aimed at foreign countries*", organized under the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and led by the career diplomat and former wartime "communication officer" Ralph Enckell.³⁹ This group included a number of members of the Salminen's group: Salminen himself, but also Kivimaa and the historian and writer Eino Suolahti. The committee's difficult mandate was well summarized by Enckell in the opening words of their first meeting: Finland's information work had to be made more coordinated and efficient, without it turning into an official monopoly that would smack of propaganda.⁴⁰ Things however proceeded very slowly. In early 1958, the new head of the Press Bureau, Osmo Orkomies, who had worked in wartime propaganda before becoming press attaché in Stockholm and ambassador in 1944, still defended the idea of a Finnish Institute.⁴¹ He reminded everybody that, while "international information" had to combine public and private efforts, its importance to the national interest demanded that the state would retain the main coordinating function.

The committee mapped the potential field of "international information", surveyed its actors' activities and resources and tried to sell the

³⁸ Lähteenkorva and Pekkarinen 2008, 102-103; UMA, Box 19 A *Tiedotuskomitea 1956*, file *Komitea ulkomaille suuntautuvan tiedotus- ja valistustoiminnan kehittämiseksi ja tehostamiseksi: asetettu 28 6 1956, I, PM, Suomen koskevan ulkomaille suuntautuvan tiedotus- ja valistustoiminnan kehittäminen ja tehostaminen*, 12.4.1956, Yrjö Kaarne. Translated from Finnish.

³⁹ On the organization of this committee, see UMA, Box 19 A *Tiedotuskomitea 1956*, file *Komitea ulkomaille suuntautuvan tiedotus- ja valistustoiminnan kehittämiseksi ja tehostamiseksi: asetettu 28 6 1956, I, Valtioneuvoston pöytäkirja, joka laadittiin ulkoasiainministeriön esittelystä*, 28.6.1956.

⁴⁰ Lähteenkorva and Pekkarinen 2008, 102.

⁴¹ UMA, Box 19 A *Tiedotuskomitea 1956*, file *Komitea ulkomaille suuntautuvan tiedotus- ja valistustoiminnan kehittämiseksi ja tehostamiseksi: asetettu 28 6 1956, I, PM, Lähetysneuvos Osmo Orkomiehen alustus Suomen Ulkomaankauppaliiton neuvottelutilaisuuden Suomen tiedotustoiminnan ulkomailla*, 12.3.1958.

project of a Finnish Institute.⁴² The impetus clearly came from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, as a way to complement the work of the Press Bureau and maybe attract new resources.⁴³ Reactions were not entirely positive: in March 1958, the country's main daily, *Helsingin Sanomat*, set the tone by denouncing a “*useless organization*”.⁴⁴ Finland already had dozens of organizations managing trade promotion and cultural relations, wrote the article: why not let them do their work? Faced with these critics, proposals for a Finnish Institute faded away in the late 1950s.⁴⁵ In the late 1950s, the effort for a state-led entity coordinating private and public efforts at cultural relations and image promotion abroad had reached its high-water mark. Finland's accession to UNESCO, Kekkonen's arrival in power and détente, however, brought a different context and started a process of institutional consolidation around Finland's international cultural relations.

3.1.3 *The Emergence of a UNESCO Committee in the Ministry of Education*

This postwar effort at centralization on the Swedish model, aiming at a better coordination of Finland's image and cultural relations, hadn't succeeded by the end of the 1950s. But the idea that cultural relations should be planned and coordinated by the state in order to yield more results in terms of strategic advantages for the country remained alive, alongside a general will to institutionalize the process. Siikala describes a process through which most of the resources were given to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and its Press Bureau, the rest of the organizational field being left to fend alone. Loose coordination was managed by personal contacts and a series of enlarged committees gathering all parties involved, both public and private.⁴⁶ Finland's accession to UNESCO, however, gave state agencies an important tool to make themselves indispensable in

⁴² See transcripts of proceedings in UMA, Box 19 A *Tiedotuskomitea 1956*, files *Komitea ulkomaille suuntautuvan tiedotus- ja valistustoiminnan kehittämiseksi ja tehostämiseksi, pöytäkirjat and Tiedotustoiminnankomitean pöytäkirjat*.

⁴³ *Idem*, PM, *Ulkomaille suuntautuvan tiedotustoiminnan tehostaminen*, 24.4.1960, Max Jakobson, Annex 1, *Luonnos Suomen Instituutiksi*.

⁴⁴ “Tarpeeton laitos”, *Helsingin Sanomat*, 16.3.1958.

⁴⁵ UMA, Box 19 A *Tiedotustoiminta 1956*, PM, *Tiedotustoimintakomitea*, 28.3.1961, Max Jakobson.

⁴⁶ Siikala 1976, 327-330.

international cultural contacts. This will be the first step of a division of labour between the Ministry of Education, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and various organizations in civil society dealing with cultural international relations.

Finland had been an observer in UNESCO since the beginning, and Reino Oittinen, even before becoming the minister of Education, was an important proponent of Finland's full accession. Already in 1947, he emphasized Finland's accession as an important step towards a more modern cultural life in Finland, better international cultural and scientific relations, and a stabilization of Finland's international position and international image. In a report on the subject, he concluded: "*the spirit of UNESCO matches perfectly the Finnish conception of a democratic life, and spiritual support coming from UNESCO would be an important support for our country's spiritual development*".⁴⁷ Oittinen proposed the creation of a national intellectual committee that could already be in touch with UNESCO. Finland should consider entering UNESCO at the same time as it considers entering the UN, negotiating entrance fees and creating a national committee able to manage relations with UNESCO.

In 1949, the Lönnroth committee also proposed to strengthen Finland's links with UNESCO.⁴⁸ The committee's proposal was seen with caution at the top of the Finnish state: Paasikivi did not want to complicate relations with the USSR. There was a need to progress slowly and cautiously, through the construction of discrete institutions: in November 1951, the government of Urho Kekkonen created the committee for international cultural affairs (*kansainvälisen kulttuuriasiain toimikunta*) at the Ministry of Education to deal with technical matters involved in international cultural relations.⁴⁹ Oittinen was made the head of this committee that aimed to manage the relations with international cultural organizations and to work as an advisor to other Finnish organizations and ministries. Members were mostly conservative university personalities,

⁴⁷ KA, R. Oittisen fund, box 17, *Unesco yms...*, File *Unesco, perustamiseen liittyviä asiakirjoja yms*, PM, *Kirjeitä Unescoon liittymiseen aiheuttamisesta velvollisuuksista, eduista ja oikeuksista vuodelta 1947*, Kauniainen, 12.6.1947. The Finnish former diplomat and Foreign Minister Rudolf Holsti had sent Oittinen the founding treaty of UNESCO from London, where he lived in exile after the war: KA, R. Oittisen fund, Box 17, file *Unesco: peruskirjan käänös v. 1946*. Kiuru 1995, 23-24. Translated from Finnish.

⁴⁸ Komiteanmietintö Mon. 1949: 9, *Suomen ulkomaisia kulttuurisubteita tutkimaan asetelta komitealta*, 11.

⁴⁹ Siikala 1976, 327-328.

some with a past in Finland's wartime propaganda machinery, and the left criticized the organization severely in Parliament.⁵⁰ The committee's papers spell its tasks as writing reports on aspects linked to international cultural relations, dealing with things linked to UNESCO, facilitating contacts between domestic organizations and foreign or multilateral agents, answering to the queries of foreign countries and international organizations as to the education and cultural conditions in Finland. Finally, the committee managed the preparation of exchange students and researchers leaving for foreign countries, organizing yearly preparation days for these exchange students. The committee also managed a small series of grants given by foreign countries to Finnish students. Its secretary participated in various discussions and meetings with organizations or countries, especially Nordic countries.

This modest work aimed at reintegrating the Finnish state into international cultural relations without entering UNESCO. The context was also marked by the coming Helsinki Olympics in 1952 that were supposed to act as a reputation booster for Finland. This was seen as a smaller version of the Swedish institute, susceptible to coordinate activities but less visible. Situated in the Ministry of Education, it was supposed to deal mostly with the most technical aspects of cultural relations and what the papers called cultural propaganda. The critics were not completely wrong in saying that the body was a detour towards UNESCO without accession: there were approaches from UNESCO for Finland to join, but two things seemed to influence the decision not to answer those: first of all, the state of international affairs before the death of Stalin, and second, the financial price of accession.⁵¹

The situation changed in the mid-1950s, when Finland got the possibility to become a member of the UN and to enter UNESCO. Already in February 1952, the committee for international cultural affairs considered

⁵⁰Members were Oittinen, Axel Grönvik, Arvi Hautamäki, Aarre Heinonen, Eino Jutikkala, Heikki Leppo, with as deputies Göran Stenius, Pekka Myrberg, CA Nordman and L.A. Puntila. Alfred Salmela replaced Oittinen for 3 months in 1955. See OPMA, *Unesco-arkisto* fund, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 1a, Yleiset asiakirjat, 1955-1976, 81, SUTin perustamiseen liittyviä materiaalia*, PM, *Kansainvälisten kulttuuriasiain toimikunnan toimintakertomus vuodelta 1955*.

⁵¹Virolainen 1984, 204-205; Autio and Heikkilä 1990, 70-73; Siikala 1976, 46 et s.

in a meeting Finland's membership in UNESCO.⁵² It advised the ministry in strong terms to start the necessary procedures for Finland to join the organization. The report underlined UNESCO's growing role in the "spiritual exchanges" of nations. It aimed at giving all members of the UN the rights, laws, human rights, human basic freedoms and respect, irrespective of race, gender, language and religion. At the same time, the report insisted that to preserve the specificities of each country and their educational and cultural systems, the organization could not get involved into the domestic systems of each country. The report concluded by recommending Finland's accession to UNESCO, underlining the possible transfer of knowledge to Finland and the demand for Finnish experts in UNESCO, which would be a good way to promote a positive national image. Participating in the work of this organization was deemed especially important for a small state: next to these advantages in terms of cultural activities and transfer of knowledge, the sum to pay to enter UNESCO was presented as a small problem.

In the early 1950s, the Ministry of Education thought about a new phase of relations with UNESCO^{53,54} and insisted on the necessity to put resources on the development of relations with UNESCO.⁵⁵ In April 1955, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs gathered a series of arguments for and against joining UNESCO as the situation regarding USSR and the UN seemed to be on its way to a solution. Left to enter the organization, Finland would access information managed by UNESCO, participate in courses and events organized, promote its image internationally, spread knowledge of Finnish literature and arts and get technical help from UNESCO. René Maheu was in Finland in July 1952, where he met Oittinen and praised Finland, encouraging the country to join UNESCO. In August, the Ministry of Education sent a letter to the

⁵² OPMA, *Unesco-arkisto fund*, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 1a, Yleiset asiakirjat, 1955-1976, 81, SUT:n perustamiseen liittyviä materiaalia—historia*, PM, *Kansainvälisten kulttuuriasiaain toimikunta Opetusministeriölle, UNESCO: Suomen jäsenyys*, 11.8.1952.

⁵³ OPMA, *Unesco-arkisto fund*, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 1a, Yleiset asiakirjat, 1955-1976, 81, SUT:n perustamiseen liittyviä materiaalia—historia*, *Ulkoasiainministeriö*, PM, *Suomen jäsenyys Unescossa*, addendums A and B, Tauno Sutinen, 1.4.1955.

⁵⁴ OPMA, *Unesco-arkisto fund*, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 1a, Yleiset asiakirjat, 1955-1976, 81, SUT:n perustamiseen liittyviä materiaalia—historia*, PM, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta. Muistio sen kokouksesta, tehtävistä ja kustannuksista*, nd.

⁵⁵ OPMA, *Unesco-arkisto fund*, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 1a, Yleiset asiakirjat, 1955-1976, 81, SUT:n perustamiseen liittyviä materiaalia—historia*, Letter, *Lähettiläs Helo Pariisista ilmoittaa 19.8.54 ulkoasiainministeriölle lähettämälläään kirjemällä seuraavaa...*

Ministry of Foreign Affairs using the same arguments, also with the notion that “*the continuous development of our national culture is possible only through fruitful international exchanges*” and that “*Finland’s membership in UNESCO could influence the work of the organization and bring it more in directions that are more useful for our country*”. Arguments against were also listed, and they were almost without any exceptions linked to the cost of entry or to the financial management of the organization’s budget – Soviet opposition was not mentioned anymore. The report underlined also the potential of UNESCO for divisions between East and West, emphasizing for example the debate about Spain’s membership. But they underlined also that the Eastern bloc had returned in 1954 to UNESCO. In 1955, the Academic Advisory Board of the Finnish Education Association (*Suomen Kasvatusopillisen yhdistyksen tutkijaneuvosto*) also produced a report on the same subject,⁵⁶ and other documents emphasized that joining UNESCO would mean a more efficient management of international cultural affairs and the possibility to acquire important technical knowledge.

Although Finland did apply for the UN in September 1947, disagreements between the great powers in regard to the admission of new members forced Finland to wait until a package deal between the US and the USSR resolved the issue in December 1955.⁵⁷ Once the geopolitical hurdle was cleared, the Ministry of Education did not lose time. In January 1956, Oittinen’s committee for international cultural affairs organized one of its last meetings on the question of UNESCO accession.⁵⁸ After reading a report on the subject, the committee decided that, since Finland had joined the UN, the country was now free to join UNESCO as well. Finland signed the UNESCO charter on 10 October 1956, and the Finnish Parliament gave its unanimous consent. The committee for international affairs was dissolved in June 1957, with a UNESCO committee created in February 1957 inside the Ministry of Education with the same budget,

⁵⁶ OPMA, *Unesco-arkisto fund*, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 1a, Yleiset asiakirjat, 1955-1976, 81, SUT:n perustamiseen liittyviä materiaalia—historia*, PM, *Suomen kasvatusopillisen yhdistyksen tutkijaneuvoston lausunto Suomen liittymisestä Unescon jäseneksi*, Kansainvälisten kulttuuriasian toimikunta, 28.3.1955.

⁵⁷ Hanhimäki 1997, 49, 189.

⁵⁸ OPMA, *Unesco-arkisto fund*, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 1a, Yleiset asiakirjat, 1955-1976, 81, SUT:n perustamiseen liittyviä materiaalia*, PM, *Kansainvälisten kulttuuriasian toimikunnan kokouksesta tammikuun 23 päivänä 1956*.

the same personnel and globally the same tasks.⁵⁹ The UNESCO committee was presented as an organization aiming to develop relations with UNESCO and to promote Finland's culture abroad. The UNESCO committee gathered representatives from the main organizations dealing with international cultural relations: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finances, the media, the organizations of people's education, the universities, the artistic world (Arvi Kivimaa, present in several other committees at the time) and so forth.⁶⁰

Finland's national UNESCO committee was from the start considered as a state institution. It was not only seen as a coordinating body for relations with UNESCO but also as a general coordinating body for the most technical aspects of Finland's cultural relations with foreign countries. The rules of the committee say that the role of the committee is to work as the Finnish state's main coordinating body in the relations between UNESCO and Finland, to give assessments on things linked to UNESCO, to prepare declarations and participation in UNESCO meetings, to publish and manage the stipend programmes and other forms of technical cooperation organized by UNESCO, to coordinate expert work around UNESCO. Amongst its tasks is also inscribed the promotion of UNESCO's image and work in Finland. The point is not only to advertise the possible programmes and stipends given by UNESCO but also clearly to promote UNESCO's values and worldview. All this work should happen according to the committee's status in cooperation with other Nordic Countries. The Finns had a permanent liaison person in Paris with UNESCO, who is generally the cultural attaché of the Finnish embassy in Paris. The committee had also an extended advisory board called an enlarged commission, made of 25 civil society personalities helping its work. In the decree creating the committee, the Ministry stated that the committee must present to the relevant ministries all matters linked to politics and the widest matters of principles.⁶¹

⁵⁹ OPMA, *Unesco-arkisto* fund, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 1a, Yleiset asiakirjat, 1955-1976, 81, SUTin perustamiseen liittyviä materiaalia*, Letter, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta OPMlle, Suomen Unesco-toimikunnan johtosääntö*, RH Oittinen, 23.8.1957; OPMA, *Unesco-arkisto* fund, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 1b, 83, Toimintakertomukset ja suunnitelmat, 1957-1977, PM, Kertomus Suomen Unesco-toimikunnan toiminnasta v 1957, 7.2.1958.*

⁶⁰ OPMA, *Unesco-arkisto* fund, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 1a, Yleiset asiakirjat, 1955-1976, 82, PM; Toimikunnan jäsenten nimitykset...*, 57-68, List of participants, nd.

⁶¹ OPMA, *Unesco-arkisto* fund, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 1a, Yleiset asiakirjat, 1955-1976, 81, Yleiset asiakirjat, PM, Asetus Suomen Unesco-toimikunnasta, 11.3.1966.*

The committee quickly became the centre of Finland's cultural diplomacy planning and managing. In a letter to the ministry in 1961, the committee emphasized that one of its specific tasks is to “*specifically take care of the various bilateral stipend programs between Finland and other countries, as well as taking care of and preparing those researchers and students who would either arrive to Finland or leave Finland as recipients of state or international mobility grants*”.⁶² The letter emphasizes that the committee has had to manage many other things that are linked to Finland's international cultural relations and also to the promotion of Finland's image abroad. The letter contains a memo that proposes more resources for the committee and the split of the committee's activities into three domains: UNESCO matters, communication and cultural propaganda, stipends. For the stipend programmes, the goal was to develop from what the document describes as a “minimum level”. The development would touch those programmes open to Finns by foreign governments or the UNESCO, and their development. A part of this development is linked to the image promotion work: organizing conferences and seminars for the foreign students that would come to Finland and for students that leave for the world.

Oittinen became the head of the UNESCO committee in February 1957, when it was created. The committee was given international stipends to manage, and its status stabilized in domestic politics, as even the left accepted its existence. According to Sakari Kiuru, who worked as the UNESCO committee's chairman from 1963 to 1986, the ministry left the committee free to act despite the control of the Department of international affairs after 1966. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs would mingle in their affairs only if matters touched the bipolar conflict.⁶³ UNESCO matters were managed in Paris either through Finland's representation with the OECD or through the Finnish embassy, where Finland's permanent representative with UNESCO was located.

Criticisms towards the committee focused on division of labour with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the bureaucracy of stipends. The feeling of a certain delay to catch up on the world's cultural development, a desire to show up Finland's cultural and scientific and artistic activities,

⁶² OPMA, *Unesco-arkisto* fund, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 1a, Yleiset asiakirjat, 1955-1976, 81, SUT:n kehittäminen*, PM, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta opetusministeriölle*, 21.2.1961; addendum, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunnan kehittäminen*, 7.2.1961, Kalervo Siikala.

⁶³ Kiuru 1995, 17.

and a geopolitical will to appear as an active member of international organizations are most important in the justification of Finland's activities in UNESCO. In 1959, the linguist Aulis Joki underlined how Finland must “*catch up on the delay we have compared to those countries which were members of the UNESCO from the beginning*”.⁶⁴ This was particularly clear in education policy, as mentioned in Kekkonen's 1965 speech. Marja Jalava insists on the fact that education policy was discussed through international examples, as a way to strengthen the role of the state in education: international contacts and international organizations were supposed to help this development, to provide the state with levers used to unblock society's educational and scientific organizations.⁶⁵

3.2 TOWARDS A “*CULTURAL FOREIGN POLICY*”: EMERGENCE AND STABILIZATION OF AN INSTITUTIONAL FIELD IN THE 1960S–1970S

3.2.1 *The 1961 Jakobson Report and a New Blueprint for State Coordination*

In the late 1950s, most of Finland's official cultural diplomacy was thus channelled either through the Press Bureau of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs or through the UNESCO committee in the Ministry of Education.⁶⁶ The Press Bureau was mostly involved in the organization of Finland's official public relations towards foreign countries and in the promotion of Finland's image abroad, diplomats and attachés providing the same support service to cultural organizations abroad that trade attachés and consuls provided to companies. In cooperation with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finland's UNESCO committee managed relations with UNESCO, developed Finland's cultural relations with foreign countries and dealt with several technical aspects of international cultural relations such as the organization of some stipend programmes for students and researchers. Other offices in the Ministry of Education dealt with more specific tasks:

⁶⁴ OPMA, Jaakko Numminen fund, Box *Kulttuuripolitiikka*, transcript, *Suomen kulttuurirahaston kulttuuripoliittiset neuvottelupäivät, Organisaatiojaosto*, 22.1.1959. Translated from Finnish.

⁶⁵ Jalava 2012, 67, 91.

⁶⁶ OPMA, Jaakko Numminen fund, Box *Kulttuuripolitiikka*, transcript, *Suomen kulttuurirahaston kulttuuripoliittiset neuvottelupäivät, Organisaatiojaosto*, 22.1.1959.

support exhibitions in the architecture and industrial design fields, organize artists' tours, work to promote the teaching of Finnish abroad and so forth. There remained a large number of non-governmental organizations dealing with science, culture and the arts in contact with foreign countries, and with which official agencies acted mostly as facilitators. Friendship societies were especially important, with some of those specifically linked to either the West or the East of the bipolar divide: Pohjola-Norden with the Nordic Countries, the Finland-Soviet Union Society with the Soviet Union, the Finland-USA Society with the United States, and so on.⁶⁷ Among those, the Finland-Soviet Union Society appeared as the most important, dominating the field of cultural relations with Finland's most important international partner.

While by the early 1960s the idea of a Finnish Institute had largely receded in the background, dispersion of efforts and lack of public-private coordination were still considered problems to be solved in order to reach more efficiency in Finland's international action. Crises with the USSR in the early 1960s convinced many that Finland's external relations had to be managed more efficiently: the 1961 crisis of the note especially brought forward the problem of Finland's image abroad. The East has to be convinced of Finland's innocuity and loyalty, while the West has to be convinced of Finland's neutrality and of the country's economic development and civilized, Western quality. The term "cultural diplomacy" was not used, but the Finns used a rhetoric of strengthening and improving state coordination over Finland's cultural relations with foreign countries. Culture had to be used more efficiently to better the image of the country and to get the Finns themselves to open up culturally both towards the East and the West.

These questions were dealt with in a report by the Ministry for Foreign affairs published in May 1961 under the coordination of the head of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' Press Bureau, the diplomat Max Jakobson.⁶⁸ Like every other report published in official circles since 1944, Jakobson's 1961 report insisted on the necessity of state coordination in cultural

⁶⁷ OPMA, Jaakko Numminen fund, Box *Kulttuuripoliitiikka*, transcript, *Suomen kulttuuri-rahaston kulttuuripoliittiset neuvottelupäivät, Organisaatiojaosto*, 22.1.1959. Translated from Finnish.

⁶⁸ UMA, Box 19 A *Tiedotustoiminta 1956*, PM, *Tiedotustoimintakomitea*, 28 March 1961, Max Jakobson, annex 1, *luonnos*.; *Ibid*, file *Komitea ulkomaille suuntautuvan tiedotus- ja valistustoiminnan kehittämiseksi ja tehostamiseksi. Asetettu 28.6.1956*, PM, *Yhteenveto tiedotustoimintakomitean mietinnöstä*, 26 May 1961, Max Jakobson.

relations and especially image promotion abroad. It was deemed essential for the country's diplomatic position, its cultural self-definition, its image as an attractive place for business and tourism, and the reputation of its export industries.⁶⁹ The necessities of Finland's Cold War position made the organization of "*systematic and continuous information*" an obvious part of the state's purvey: only the state could guarantee continuous funding and a network of envoys that could spread information and coordinate activities. This said, the report dispatched the idea of a Finnish Institute, noting the unwillingness of business circles to provide funding, the impossibility of creating dedicated foreign networks for this new organization, and the fact that many things would anyway remain in the hands of expert organizations (e.g. the Ministry of Education).

The solution proposed by the Jakobson report was one of soft coordination in the context of tight elites and good personal connections. While the Press Bureau would act as a discrete political control, technical activities—cultural relations, stipends, trade promotion—would be left to private agents and specialized ministries. This system, where each actor would be left to fulfil whatever "function" it performed best under a general architecture of coordination by the government, would bring flexibility. It would be based on state funding as well as informal and personal contacts inside a small cadre of civil servants and society personalities. In terms of organization in the ministries, the report highlighted specific tasks for the various organizations already existing. The UNESCO committee was described as the main organization for the development of concrete cultural relations with foreign countries and foreigners, while the Ministry for Foreign Affairs would deal mostly with image promotion and will provide the main foreign political line. The UNESCO committee would also work to "*improve in Finland the realization of UNESCO's program*" which contained improvements in the education of Finnish pupils towards international matters as well as UNESCO's goals and principles.⁷⁰

The Jakobson report aimed at ending a period of perceived passivity in Finland's official international cultural relations and image promotion. Membership in UNESCO and the organic development of cultural

⁶⁹ See UMA, Box 19 A *Tiedotustoiminta yleensä*, File *Ulkoasiainministeriön tiedotustoiminta, 1960, 1961, 1962, 63, 64, 65, Vuosikertomus Suomen ulkomaantiedotustoiminnan lautakunnan toiminnasta vuodelta 1963, 31.12.1963*, Matti Tuovinen.

⁷⁰ See a reminder in OPMA, Box *Kansainvälisten kulttuuriasiain toimikunta, 1952-1963*, PM, *Stipendiasiaain toimikunta, Vuosikertomus Suomen Unesco-toimikunta/Opetusministeriön kansainvälisten stiepediasiaain toimikunta, 1962*, Helsinki 1963.

relations with both East and West were perceived as good incentives for a more robust state coordination of cultural relations and image promotion.⁷¹ This process was also supported by strengthened financial commitments: the UNESCO committee's budget more than doubled in 1962, reaching 8.5 million Finnish marks from its 1958 budget of 2 million. Taking into account resources from other sources and special programmes, the committee worked with a total of roughly 17 million Finnish marks. These funds allowed the committee to get two new employees and to move to new facilities.⁷² The Press Bureau's resources also doubled in 1962 and its activities stepped up. One of the report's demands, however, the creation of two more press attachés—one in Africa, presumably in Cairo, and the other in India—would not be implemented before the 1970s and the rise of development aid and especially trade relations with the Global South.⁷³ Jakobson's proposals seemed also to hit the right chord with the powerful timber and paper producers, while some private organizations would still reproach Jakobson for his state-centred viewpoint, most were satisfied that state-led coordination would be organized through consensus seeking and networks.⁷⁴

⁷¹ Siikala 1969, 88-94.

⁷² OPMA, Box *Kansainvälisten kulttuuriasiain toimikunta, 1952-1963, Stipendiasaiain toimikunta*, PM, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta/Opetusministeriön kansainvälisten stiepediasaiain toimikunta, Kertomus vuodelta 1962*, Helsinki 1963; OPMA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta* fund, box 3, file 842 *Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat liitteineen) 1958-1960*, PM, *Esitys Suomen Unesco-toimikunnan toiminnan suuntaviivoista v 1958, 7.2.1958*, Oittinen, Siikala. In total, 17 million Finnish marks at 1962 rates is equivalent of a bit less than 400,000 euros at 2021 rates. Total state expenditure for Finland in 1962 was 187 billion Finnish marks, a bit more than 4 billion euros (Department of Commerce, *Overseas Business Reports, Economic Developments in Finland, 1962*:

<https://books.google.fi/books?id=5GAKKtfziyUC&printsec=frontcover&hl=fr#v=onepage&q&f=false>).

⁷³ UMA, Box 19 A *Tiedotustoiminta yleensä*, File *Ulkoasiainministeriön tiedotustoiminta, 1960, 1961, 1962, 63, 64, 65*, PM, *Ulkomaille suuntautuva tiedotustoiminta 1962*.

⁷⁴ UMA, Box 19 A, *tiedotustoiminta 1956*, Letter, Erik Serlachius to Max Jakobson, 10.5.1961; *Idem*, PM, *Eriitä ajatuksia ulkomaista subdetoimintaa koskevasta muistiosta*, 29.4.1961, unsigned; *Idem*, Letter, Reino Routamo to Aarne Karhilo, 8.4.1961.

3.2.2 *Changes in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs After the Jakobson Report*

The Jakobson committee came at the right time: it gave its report in the context of the Berlin crisis, only a few months before the USSR sent Finland a diplomatic note proposing military consultations (triggering the so-called “crisis of the note”), and a bit more than a year before the Cuba missile crisis. The necessity to use all means to stabilize Finland’s international positions in these difficult times could not be overemphasized. Image promotion seemed extremely important, and cultural relations appeared as one of the rare domains in which Finland could develop peaceful relations with all international parties. The committee was also able to take stock of five years of UNESCO membership and the postwar spontaneous growth of Finland’s international cultural contacts. This growth showed in the correspondence of the Ministry of Education, but also quantitatively, for example, through the number of stipend recipients leaving Finland, or the number of items registered through the system of classification for administrative acts related to foreign affairs in the Ministry of Education. Built in 1958, this system registered 62 items in 1963, 132 in 1965 and 236 in 1967—a bureaucratic testimony to the rise of international matters in the Ministry’s work.⁷⁵ The spontaneous growth of cultural relations translated into similar growth in those parts of cultural relations managed by the state, especially relations with UNESCO and stipend programmes.

In the 1960s, one can observe increased coordination of private organizations by public agencies, and a shifting division of labour between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Kalervo Siikala in his 1960 book interpreted that growth as a shift from what Siikala called the “*haphazard movement of cultural stimuli from one country to the other*” towards a better coordinated “*cultural foreign policy*” coordinated by new institutions—a shift he encouraged and wanted to strengthen.⁷⁶ The 1960s will thus show a process of institutionalization, strengthening the presence of the state in the management of certain aspects of Finland’s international cultural relations, and at the same time searching for a new repartition of tasks between the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education: in the spirit of the Jakobson committee, the

⁷⁵ Autio and Heikkilä 1990, 83-85.

⁷⁶ Siikala 1960, 139.

management of technical aspects of cultural relations would be monopolized by the Ministry of Education, while questions of image promotion and communication will be given mostly to the Press Bureau, under the leadership of Max Jakobson up until 1962, and then under Matti Tuovinen.⁷⁷

In 1962, when Jakobson left the Press Bureau to become the head of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' Political department, Tuovinen worked to change his personal networks into mechanisms of coordination across private and public spheres. Tuovinen also took advantage of his links with the president and the tension born of international crises to convince a variety of protagonists to join in this effort.⁷⁸ He joined the boards of tourism and trade promotion organizations, of the association of Finnish lecturers abroad, and of other organizations involved in relations with foreign audiences.⁷⁹ Tuovinen also had close contacts with specialized ministries in both trade promotion and cultural relations, and continued Jakobson's work of relations with foreign diplomats and journalists. Two committees were especially important in this coordination throughout the early 1960s: the Finnish Board for International Information (*Suomen ulkomaantiedotustoiminnan lautakunta*) created in 1962,⁸⁰ and an enlarged committee created in April 1963 and bridging the gap with the private sector, the Finnish Advisory Committee for International Information (*Suomen ulkomaantiedotustoiminnan neuvottelukunta*).⁸¹

These loosely institutionalized networks of coordination were mostly used for the organization of campaigns, such as the 100th anniversary of Jean Sibelius' birth and the celebrations of 50 years of Finland's independence in 1967.⁸² The goal was also to develop a culture of communication

⁷⁷ Siikala 1969, 162.

⁷⁸ Tuovinen spent his entire career close to Kekkonen, loyal to a towering figure he knew personally and who had recruited him in the 1950s (Suomi 2012, 7–11).

⁷⁹ Frick and Merke 2011; Raanamo and Tuomikoski 1997.

⁸⁰ UMA, Box 19 A *Tiedotustoiminta yleensä, Vuosikertomus Suomen Tiedotustoiminnan komitea v. 1962*, 28 December 1962, Matti Tuovinen; KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box *Aineisto 1957-58 ja 1962-69...*, PM, *Suomen ulkomaantiedotustoiminnan lautakunnan vuosikertomus vuodelta 1965*, Tuomo Tammi, Matti Tuovinen.

⁸¹ UMA, Box 19 A *Tiedotustoiminta yleensä*, File *Ulkoasiainministeriön tiedotustoiminta, 1960, 1961, 1962, 63, 64, 65*, PM, *Vuosikertomus Suomen ulkomaantiedotustoiminnan neuvottelukunnan toiminnasta vuodelta 1963*, 31 December 1963, Matti Tuovinen.

⁸² KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box *Aineisto 1957-58 ja 1962-69...*, PM, *Suomen ulkomaantiedotustoiminnan lautakunnan vuosikertomus vuodelta 1965*, Tuomo Tammi, Matti Tuovinen.

and public relations in the Finnish state, in cooperation with the same PR specialists who had been active during the discussions on a Finnish Institute.⁸³ Finnish delegations to UNESCO were mostly monitored and instructed on political questions by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' political department, which also managed the most political aspects of negotiating a growing portfolio of cultural treaties.

Another important aspect of the role of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs is the role of the diplomatic network and especially press and cultural attachés. The 1949 committee had already advised to develop the network of cultural attachés, demanding the creation of posts in Moscow, Paris, Washington and London.⁸⁴ These would have to take in the cultural relations work that was often done by the ambassadors themselves. In 1959, Joki insisted in the same way on cultural attachés,⁸⁵ describing a system in which only Stockholm, Paris, London, the Finnish consulate in Köln and Washington had press attachés. Paris, due to French cultural policy and to the presence of the UNESCO headquarters, was considered an essential post for cultural matters. London on the other hand was seen more important in terms of image promotion, monitoring of the press and commercial affairs. Finland was also short of diplomats or journalists with robust language backgrounds, and domestic politics easily crept into the nomination processes. The press and cultural attachés were mostly involved in following the local media, gathering and spreading material, promoting Finland's image. Cultural work such as exhibitions, concerts and the facilitation of scientific contacts came after that image promotion work. A scarcity of dedicated resources meant that the press and cultural attachés did roughly the same work, and in most of Finland's embassies, the ambassador himself would manage image and cultural aspects.⁸⁶

⁸³ KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box *Aineisto 1957-58 ja 1962-69...*, PM, *Suomen ulkomaan-tiedotustoiminnan lautakunnan vuosikertomus vuodelta 1965*, Tuomo Tammi, Matti Tuovinen.

⁸⁴ Despite its being a division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Press and Culture Bureau's employees were still kept at arm's length by other diplomats. They were not considered members of the *carrière*, and after 1945 the Bureau's directors rose from the ranks of its press attachés. However, both Max Jakobson (Head of the Bureau from 1958 to 1962) and his successor Matti Tuovinen (1962–72) climbed the ladder to become Directors of the Ministry's Political Department.

⁸⁵ OPMA, Jaakko Numminen fund, Box *Kulttuuripoliitiikka*, transcript, *Suomen kulttuurirahaston kulttuuripoliittiset neuvottelupäivät, Organisaatiojaosto*, 22.1.1959.

⁸⁶ UMA, *Luettelo muistioista 48-50*, PM, *PM suunniteltujen sanomalehtiavustahien tehtävistä*, 29.8.1949, Heikki Brotherus.

3.2.3 *The Jakobson Report's Effects in the Ministry of Education and the Creation of a Department of International Affairs*

In terms of the development of cultural relations, most technical things would thus start in the early 1960s to concentrate in the Ministry of Education. There, the main debate was linked to the role of the UNESCO committee and the necessity to build new institutions. In December 1964, a report by Matti Tuovinen and Mikko Immonen thought through the question.⁸⁷ It considered that image promotion had been dealt with through the strengthening of the Press Bureau, but cultural relations should also be coordinated more efficiently, for reasons linked to the country's foreign policy and cultural and scientific development. The report highlighted that, while most of these relations happened without an intervention of the state, the state had a role in "*the financial support of projects, the coordination of activities and mediation between various organisations*". The state also managed specific things such as activities deviated from cultural treaties or stipend programmes, in which it was the main protagonist. According to the report, this activity was bound to develop and the state should coordinate more efficiently its activities.

The report underlined two things: the fact that most of these contacts were managed at the Ministry of Education, and the fact that the UNESCO committee and the host of smaller, expert organizations involved (the committee for stipends, the Finnish chapter of the Nordic committee for culture, the committee for Soviet-Finnish cultural relations, the committee for Soviet-Finnish scientific and technical cooperation etc.) were unable to manage all these developments alone. To improve this situation, the report proposed the creation of an international department inside the Ministry of Education to coordinate the work of specialized expert committees, built on the basis laid by the UNESCO committee.

In 1965, the UNESCO committee reacted to this proposal by aligning with the conclusions but also demanding that some specialized expert committees would retain a measure of autonomy. Administrative centralization of the management of international cultural relations was a worthy goal, but the committee complained about the possible loss of specialized

⁸⁷ OPMA, *Unesco-toimikunta fund*, Box 5, 842 *Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat liitteineen, 1964-1965)*, PM, *Valtioneuvostolle, Suomen ulkomaantiedoitus toiminnan lautakunnan puolesta*, Matti Tuovinen, Mikko Immonen, 15.12.1964.

expertise.⁸⁸ But the affirmed goal of the ministry was in 1964 to concentrate on the coordination of international cultural affairs: the minister of Foreign Affairs Ahti Karjalainen and Prime Minister Johannes Virolainen agreed on that, as well as the Ministry of Education's chief of staff Jaakko Numminen.⁸⁹ All of these were members of Kekkonen's political group, and their planification happened in the context of a solidification of state institutions in service of the official foreign policy line and Finland's neutrality. Oittinen, a social-democrat, left the direction of the UNESCO committee in 1964.⁹⁰ Autio suggests that Oittinen was critical of the new reform, considering it as too politically motivated, and as a social-democrat his relations with a government dominated by Kekkonen's party were not good. In the Ministry, his successor was easy to find: Kalervo Siikala was a figure in Kekkonen's party, well-connected with government officials and politicians. He had worked in the UNESCO committee for some years, and was also a member of the Paasikivi-seura, a well-connected and well-known think tank.⁹¹ Kalevi Sorsa, a social-democrat and at the time also a UNESCO employee in Paris, came to Helsinki hoping for the job on Oittinen's advise, but was not considered.⁹² Siikala, described as an ambitious and active character, managed to centralize most international activities of the Ministry of Education under his administrative jurisdiction.

On these bases, a new institution was created in January 1966 as part of a larger administrative reform of the Ministry of Education: the Department of International Affairs.⁹³ This was the first ministerial department in the Finnish government dedicated to international affairs outside of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.⁹⁴ According to the decree creating it, the department was created to manage the relations with UNESCO, cultural cooperation with Nordic countries, the Soviet institute, cultural

⁸⁸ OPMA, *Unesco-toimikunta* fund, Box 5, 842 *Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat liitteinen, 1964-1965)*, PM, *Pöytäkirja ja esityslista*, 4.2.1965; OPMA, Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund, Box 5, 842 *Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat liitteinen, 1964-1965)*, PM, *Suomen ulkomaisen kulttuurivaihdon ja kansainvälisten kulttuurisubteiden hallinnon organisaatio*, RH Oittinen, nd (1965?); Autio and Heikkilä 1990, 72.

⁸⁹ Numminen 1964, 32-33.

⁹⁰ Autio and Heikkilä 1990, 72.

⁹¹ Skyttä 1980, 334.

⁹² Bläfield and Vuoristo 1985, 21.

⁹³ OPMA, *Unesco-arkisto* fund, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 1a, Yleiset asiakirjat, 1955-1976, 81, Yleiset asiakirjat*, PM, *Asetus opetusministeriöstä, annettu 28.1.1966, Kansainvälisten asiain osasto*.

⁹⁴ Numminen 2020, vol 2, 158-159.

treaties with other countries, and other forms of international cooperation in the field of culture. The creation of this new department was emphasized publicly as a sign of Finland's commitment to stronger international cultural relations.⁹⁵ The UNESCO committee, as we saw, was not enthusiastic about these changes. Ilmo Hela, who became the secretary of the committee after Oittinen, insisted in a long memorandum on the necessity to retain relations with UNESCO as a distinct part of the whole mechanism,⁹⁶ but eventually the committee was included in the Department for reasons of coherence in the administrative organization. Eventually the coordination of work between the two organizations was smoothed, like often in Finland, through personal links. After 1971, Siikala combined his task as the director of the Department with the task of secretary-general of Finland's UNESCO committee.⁹⁷ The department was put in charge of relations with UNESCO, international stipends, cultural relations with the Nordic Council, and the management of cultural treaties with the Soviet Union (1960), Hungary (1959), and Poland (1960).

The Department had to work within the confines of a division of labour between ministries: relations with foreign countries were still the brief of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, while the Ministry of Education retained "*the organization of Finland's participation in international cultural cooperation*".⁹⁸ The Department managed a number of specialized organizations meant to organize cultural relations with various countries. The most significant was the Soviet Institute, a cultural centre the Ministry of Education had absorbed in the mid-1960s and that managed cultural relations with the Soviet Union, stipend programmes and a library of Slavic studies.⁹⁹ The Institute was not only a cultural entity, but it had also a strong political potential, which made its status and prerogatives a bone of

⁹⁵ Hannu Alenius mentions the creation of the department in his concluding remarks at the 1966 Unesco meeting (KA, Unesco-toimikunta fund, file 15, *Yleiskirjeenvaihto (1965-1966)*, PM, *Unesco 14. Kokous, Pariisi 25.10-30.11 1966, Suomen valtuuskunnan raportti*).

⁹⁶ OPMA, *Unesco-arkisto* fund, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, Ia, Yleiset asiakirjat, 1955-1976, 81, Yleiset asiakirjat*, PM, *Suomen Unesco-toimikuntaa koskva asetustuonnos*, Helsinki, 11.2.1966, Ismo Hela.

⁹⁷ OPMA, *Unesco-arkisto* fund, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, Ia, Yleiset asiakirjat, 1955-1976, 81, Yleiset asiakirjat*, PM, *Opetusministeri ulkoasiainministeriölle*, Meeri Kalavaen, Pirkko Mela, 11.2.1971.

⁹⁸ Oksanen 2016, 495-507. Translated from Finnish.

⁹⁹ Perna 2002.

contention between Finnish authorities, Soviet representatives and the Finland-Soviet Union Society.

Another significant organization for cultural relations in the Ministry of Education was the committee managing relations with the Nordic countries.¹⁰⁰ The matter was not only cultural, but very much both domestic and foreign political. Domestically, relations with Sweden were always sensitive in a country where the language quarrel between the Finnish-speaking majority and the Swedish-speaking minority was always simmering under the surface. In foreign policy, the communist left was adamant to relations with the Nordic Countries, which they saw as a version of relations with the West that had to be diminished in favour of more relations with the East. Both were often seen as linked: in his diary, Paasikivi emphasized the need to calm down the language quarrel in Finland in order to be able to get support from Sweden in front of the USSR. In November 1946, a Nordic Cultural Committee had been created between the Nordic Ministries of Education. Finnish communists were critical of the scheme: during the 1948 meeting in Helsinki, the Finnish Minister of Education Eino Kilpi criticized the organization as too Western and hostile to the East. This might explain in part the passivity of the Finnish branch of the committee, led by the philologist Arthur Långfors until 1951, then by the rector of the University of Helsinki, professor Erik Lönnroth.¹⁰¹

Here again Stalin's death contributed to a renewal of relations: Finland's accession to the Nordic Council in 1955 brought it closer to Nordic cultural cooperation.¹⁰² The Finnish branch of the committee became more important in a number of cultural cooperation schemes with the other Nordics: its goals became to mitigate Finland's linguistic isolation, to develop common degrees, to coordinate education systems and diplomas and to assist the emergence of integrated Nordic work markets also in the academic and scientific fields. Concrete cooperation was satisfactory if not very active. Here too, the 1960s were years of rapid development: in 1962, the Helsinki Accords signed between the Nordic Countries contained articles demanding more cultural cooperation between the Nordic Countries. The Accords made Nordic cultural cooperation into something even more political, which brought the committee even closer to the

¹⁰⁰ Autio and Heikkilä 1990, 75.

¹⁰¹ Brotherus 1984, 150.

¹⁰² Virolainen 1984, 242-248.

ministries. The Finnish branch worked increasingly with the Ministry of Education and was finally integrated into the Department created in 1966.

The Ministry of Education also had a department for Universities and Science that managed matters linked with international scientific cooperation, and especially after 1970 with the OECD, of which Finland became a member.¹⁰³ Here also, the creation of the Department for International Affairs pushed a re-alignment of the division of labour: in 1972, a balance was found where the department for Universities and Science retained mostly technical representation in the OECD and other multilateral organizations—the rest (relations with UNESCO, the Nordic Countries, the Soviet Institute, cultural treaties and the rest of international relations) was given to Siikala's department.¹⁰⁴ In 1973, a report asked for more resources to be dedicated to strengthening relations especially with international scientific organizations and infrastructures such as the *Centre Européen de Recherche Nucléaire* (CERN, *European Centre for Nuclear Research*).¹⁰⁵ Most of the work in these matters happened at the level of universities and researchers, and the Ministry mostly followed, supported, provided networks and eventually funding.

In the eyes of both Tuovinen and Siikala, the creation of the Ministry of Education's Department of International Affairs simplified and crystallized matters, rendering the large coordinating committees created in the early 1960s useless: the field had now stabilized around a number of organizations which cooperated well enough.¹⁰⁶ The Ministry of Education's activities had gained considerable overlap with those of the Press Bureau because of the difficulties of clearly dividing, for example, "general information" from "cultural information". This model inherited from the Jakobson report was felt to be the most efficient to coordinate activities.

¹⁰³ See, for example, KA, *Opetusministeriö* fund, Uc:d Matti Lähdeojan asiakirjat, 1917-1993, Ucd 3.

¹⁰⁴ OPMA, Jaakko Numminen fund, *Opetusministeriön kansainvälisten asiain osasto*, PM, *Pöytäkirja*, *OPM:n kansainvälisten asiain osaston ja korkeakoulu- ja tiedeosaston välistä yhteistyötä ja työnjakoa koskevasta neuvottelusta*, 14.12.1972.

¹⁰⁵ KA, *Opetusministeriö* fund, Uc:d Matti Lähdeojan asiakirjat, 1917-1993, Box Ucd 3, *OPM, Korkeakoulu ja tiedeosasto*, PM, *Tiedetoimiston toimintasuunnitelma kevätkaudeksi 1973*, 1.1973, Markku Linna.

¹⁰⁶ KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box *Aineisto 1957-58 ja 1962-69...*, Sending slip, Matti Tuovinen to Kalervo Siikala, 25.4.1966; *Idem*, PM, *Valtioneuvoston yleinen istunto. Esittelyistä Ulkoasiainministeriöstä—Suomen ulkomaantiedustustoiminnan lautakunnan lakauttaminen*, 21 April 1966. Autio and Heikkilä 1990, 67–85; Lähdenmäki 1969, 116–29; Niemi 1977, 161–6.

Siikala especially compared it favourably to any solution that would have emphasized the Ministry for Foreign Affairs as the overseer of cultural relations, a model he described as seeing cultural diplomacy solely as an expansion of foreign policy.¹⁰⁷ He was convinced of the need to coordinate “cultural policy” and cultural foreign relations into a sophisticated policy of cultural exchanges and “internationalization” of Finland.¹⁰⁸ While the Ministry of Education did not manage everything in the field of culture, by the mid-1970s, it included specialized committees dealing with certain technical matters, and coordinated through personal contacts or funding a number of private or semi-public active organizations, for example, friendship societies.

This work of state organizations was still in the late 1960s rendered difficult by the lack of resources. Funding had grown between 1956 and the mid-1960s,¹⁰⁹ but in 1968, the UNESCO committee emphasized in a memorandum the necessity to dedicate more in order to guarantee a certain level of activity for Finland in the organization.¹¹⁰ These calls often fell on deaf ears. Another problem was the quick expansion of international contacts for a variety of ministries beyond the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The expansion of Finnish civil servants’ foreign trips, well presented by Matti Niemi, carries on his argument that the foreign contacts of Finnish civil servants in all ministries and organizations became more and more developed—a hypothesis confirmed by Bengt Sundelius and Matti Karvonen, who described in the 1970s–1980s a radical expansion of the international contacts of Finnish civil servants.¹¹¹ The foreign relations of the Finnish state and its agents became more intense and more varied, breaking the bounds of what the Ministry for Foreign Affairs was able to control.

¹⁰⁷ KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box *Aineisto 1957-58 ja 1962-69...*, Booklet, *Finland’s International Cultural Relations*, Kalervo Siikala.

¹⁰⁸ KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box *Aineisto 1957-58 ja 1962-69...*, PM, *Kulttuuri-ideologia ja kulttuuripolitiikka OPM Virolaiselle*, 20.4.1968; KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box *Aineisto 1957-58 ja 1962-69...*, PM, *Kulttuurisubteet ja kansainvälinen vuorovaikutus*, Kalervo Siikala, June 1964.

¹⁰⁹ OPMA, Box *Kansainvälisten kulttuuriasiain toimikunta, 1952-1963, Stipendiasiain toimikunta*, PM, *Vuosikertomus Suomen Unesco-toimikunta/Opetusministeriön kansainvälisten stiepediasiaain toimikunta*, 1962, Helsinki 1963.

¹¹⁰ OPMA, *Unesco-arkisto* fund, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 1a, Yleiset asiakirjat, 1955-1976, 81, Yleiset asiakirjat*, PM, *Muistio Suomen osallistumisesta Unescon toimintaan*, Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 19.12.1968.

¹¹¹ Niemi 1977; Karvonen and Sundelius 1987.

3.2.4 *Cultural Relations and the Political Control of “Scattered Centres” and Strong Personalities*

When, in September 1973, following his traineeship in Prague, the diplomat Mikko Pyhälä came back to Helsinki, he was assigned to the newly minted Department for Press and Culture, the successor of the Press Bureau in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The Department had mostly maintained its role as a press monitoring station and a coordination stage for the activities of cultural and press attachés abroad. Pyhälä emphasizes, however, that the main bulk of cultural exchanges had by then been shifted to the Ministry of Education, under the dominant figure of Kalervo Siikala. All technical aspects of cultural relations and the organization of events and campaigns were coordinated with the Ministry of Education.¹¹² This state of affairs was increasingly resented in the 1970s by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and individual diplomats in a context where international relations quickly developed out of control of the Ministry.¹¹³ In a 1969 report, the Ministry emphasized that “*one of these risks is that foreign policy control be insufficient or lack altogether*”. In another committee report published in 1974, the Ministry demanded more coordination, reminding the reader of the technical agencies’ “*duty to inform*” it in all international affairs. They also reminded that “*civil servants, in all administrative branches, should be well aware of the general guidelines of Finnish foreign policy, and should inform the MFA of their own initiative*”.¹¹⁴ The problem was not only one of efficiency but also one of foreign political coherence for a country of which neutral status necessitated constant attention to discourses, positions and declarations.¹¹⁵

By the end of the 1960s, this diversification of Finland’s international relations had brought a decentralization of the management of international contacts, as technical ministries started to manage “their” international relations through dedicated institutions.¹¹⁶ This development took the Ministry for Foreign Affairs by surprise.¹¹⁷ In April 1971, Foreign

¹¹² Pyhälä 2016.

¹¹³ Niemi 1977, 210-216.

¹¹⁴ Quoted in Niemi 1977, 211. Translated from Finnish.

¹¹⁵ Toivola 1969. See also, for the same idea expressed in 1969, OPMA, Jaakko Nummisen fund, Box *Kansainvälinen kulttuurivaihto, -yhteistyö, 1969, 1972*, PM, *Kansainvälinen kulttuuriyhteistyö 1969*, 29.1.1969, Kalervo Siikala.

¹¹⁶ Soikkanen 2008, 44-46.

¹¹⁷ Soikkanen 2003, 376-377.

Minister Ahti Karjalainen took stock of this development and reminded all ministries that foreign relations were still under the surveillance of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Certain tasks, for example, the signature of treaties, remained a monopoly of the Ministry, even those negotiated directly by technical ministries. A series of reports were asked from the Ministry of Education on its activities in order to evaluate the level of autonomy its civil servants had acquired in international matters.¹¹⁸ Direct contacts by administrators with foreign agents brought a problem of coordination of the state's external action throughout an expanding brief of activities, but it was also seen as a problem in terms of the political control deemed necessary to preserve the fragile compromise in which Finland lived: the Ministry for Foreign Affairs wanted to avoid any incident bringing Finland's neutrality into question.

After the mid-1960s, the idea of a Finnish Institute had been buried and loose coordination between different actors had won the day against the wartime generation's efforts to centralize information and cultural activities. The question of coordination, both inside the Finnish government and between authorities and the private sector, did not however disappear in the 1970s but on the contrary became more complex with the development of Finland's international relations and the politicization of cultural matters in the frame of the CSCE negotiations. Once institutions had been created the question was one of coordination between "*scattered centres*".¹¹⁹ These centres were not only organizations, but also (in a way specific to smaller states) personalities: main characters either in administrative service or private citizens putting their skills, networks and time to the service of the state for certain tasks linked to international cultural relations.

Most of these protagonists remained the same for a very long time, their own visions and intentions marking Finland's state's activities in international cultural relations—Jaakko Numminen writes about a "*civil service of international affairs*" to designate the group of strong personalities managing cultural international relations and gravitating around the Ministry of Education and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.¹²⁰ Siikala,

¹¹⁸ OPMA, Jaakko Numminen fund, Box *Kansainvälinen kulttuurivaikto, -yhetystyö, 1969, 1972, PM, UM:n ja OPM:n kansainvälisiä kulttuuriasioita koskeva yhteistyö*, 11.3.1977, Anders Huldén.

¹¹⁹ A term employed by Matti Tuovinen in 1969 to describe the situation (Lähteenmäki 1969, 33). Translated from Finnish.

¹²⁰ Numminen 2020, vol 2, 159. Translated from Finnish.

Oittinen and Numminen were important figures, but in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, one could find Osmo Orkomies, Max Jakobson and Matti Tuovinen, successive heads of the Press Bureau from the 1950s to the 1970s, who were also members of the UNESCO committee and actively engaged in committee work on these matters. In 1962, Siikala had been the Finnish delegate to UNESCO before becoming the head of Finland's UNESCO committee and then the head of the Ministry of Education's Department for International Affairs. A group of administrators in the Ministry of Education appeared that will be rather stable from the 1950s to the 1970s. Sakari Kiuru was a civil servant in the UNESCO committee until the 1970s, Margaretha Mickwitz started a long career in the Ministry of Education in the 1960s. One can trace these personalities and their influence especially in the Ministry of Education up until the 1980s: Mickwitz eventually became the head of the Department for international Affairs in the late 1980s. While the older generation of Siikala and Oittinen were figures influenced by the war, concerned with national developments and slightly right of centre despite their acknowledgement of the need for good and active relations with the USSR, the 1960s and 1970s brought civil servants from the left of the political spectrum, familiar with the bureaucracy of international organizations, the subtleties of Finland's geopolitical position, and the language and hopes of peaceful cohabitation and 1960s *détente*. Starting in 1970, the specialist of relations with Eastern European countries in the Ministry of Education's Department of international affairs Ritva Kaipio had come from a radical leftist background. Most did impressively long careers in the same tasks: Kaipio, for example, was a part of the Finnish group of negotiators who negotiated the 1996 cultural treaty between Finland and the Russian federation.¹²¹

In a small country, the importance of networks between these personalities and figures from the private sector cannot be overstated in the management and coordination of the state's involvement in international cultural relations. With little resources, the Finnish institutions had to use especially private personalities especially in UNESCO, most of the time coming from the academic and the artistic world.¹²² The theatre director Arvi Kivimaa is an excellent example of figures active on behalf of Finland's international cultural cooperation. Kivimaa was after 1950 the director of Finland's National Theater, a writer, playwright and educator. He started

¹²¹ Numminen 2020, vol 2, 167.

¹²² The same phenomenon is observed by Christian Sæle in his work on Norway's UNESCO relations: Sæle 2020, 51–71.

his career in the press in 1920s Finland, got involved in the modernist cultural circles of the time, and worked for some time as a cultural attaché and as a Finnish lecturer in Germany. During the war, Kivimaa worked for Finland's propaganda machinery and gained a reputation as a fierce supporter of Nazi Germany, publishing texts where he sung the praise of Nazi cultural and racial policy.¹²³ His conception of a classical European culture in need of defence meant that he had also strong interests in for example French culture.

In an interesting twist, Kivimaa would become in the 1950s one of the most outspoken partisans of UNESCO cooperation and the general UNESCO principles of peace and understanding amongst nations. Hana Worthen describes how especially the currents inside UNESCO emphasizing the role of the organization in the development of a humanist internationalism allowed someone like Kivimaa to re-enact his wartime cultural project in a different setting, hoping to fight through UNESCO against cultural decadence in Europe and for human reconciliation.¹²⁴ Kivimaa was able to reinterpret his wartime cultural idealism and racism into the context of the cultural and scientific humanism shaped by UNESCO's first Director-General Julian Huxley, while retaining an emphasis on the vitality of national values and narrowly defined ethnic or cultural categories.

An ideologically complex merging of internationalism, cultural racism and nationalism, Kivimaa's work in UNESCO was handy from the point of view of Finland's government: he continued his wartime efforts on behalf of the promotion of a certain image of Finland abroad, and thus was considered a valuable asset. As the director of the National theatre and a man with international networks, active in the UNESCO's International Theatre Institute which he created, Kivimaa was an agent for the Finnish government in its international cultural relations. His language skills, international networks and good knowledge of international settings made him a regular member of delegations and negotiations between Finland and UNESCO. He was also precious for his capacity to promote in an international context a vision of Finnishness both distinctive enough to satisfy Kivimaa's nationalism and the Finnish government's need for a distinct national image to promote (Finland as a distinct, developed culture, victim during the war and clawing its way back amongst developed cultures) and universal enough to find its place in the rubric of developed

¹²³ Martin 2016, 274; Worthen 2013.

¹²⁴ Worthen 2020, 197-242.

cultures Kivimaa had praised in his wartime writings. Despite its difference with Huxley's diverse, multicultural humanism, Kivimaa shared Huxley's anticommunism.

If Kivimaa represents the role of artists as relays of Finnish cultural relations, Ilmo Hela is a good example of academic figures working in tandem with the Finnish state. Hela was from the same generation than Kivimaa and had also spent time in Germany before the war to study maritime ecology. He was wounded during the war, but continued a career in the Finnish Center of maritime studies. In 1950, Hela was in the United States on a Fulbright grant and then in the University of Miami as a guest professor, coming back to Finland in 1955 to become the head of the centre for maritime studies. Hela came back to Finland with language skills, the experience of international contacts and international networks which the Ministry of Education was quick to put to use. His career would eventually bring him more exceptional international experience: he worked in 1961–1964 in Monaco to create the International Atomic Energy Agency's International Laboratory of Marine Radioactivity, and was the vice-president of the international organization for oceanography. In Finland, he became the head of the UNESCO committee between 1966 and 1971, and was one of the rare examples of high-level Finnish figures involved in the work of the organization: he was a member of UNESCO's executive board from 1966 to 1974, then between 1972 and 1974, the board's vice-president. Like Kivimaa, Hela was an important operative in Finland's relations with UNESCO, where both built for themselves impressive networks and reputation.

Finland's government's relations with non-governmental organizations and the private sector were, as we saw, going throughout the 1960s towards more soft coordination. This coordination worked first of all through subsidies and funding. During UNESCO's 14th general conference,¹²⁵ the Finnish delegation insisted on the necessity to not abandon support for artistic activities to private organizations, and described the way an important part of these fundings came from an unlikely source: the benefits of the Finnish state monopoly on bets, lotteries and arcade games. In 1973, documents open up the way Finland pays for scientific and cultural activities through the benefits of this monopoly in order to

¹²⁵ KA, *Unesco-toimikunta* fund, file 15, *Yleiskirjeenvaihto (1965-1966)*, PM, *Unesco 14. Kokous, Pariisi 25.10-30.11 1966, Suomen valtuuskunnan raportti*.

complement the Ministry of Education's direct funding.¹²⁶ The report especially dealt with the distribution of this money to scientific and research units in Finland, with the main beneficiaries being universities and other sites of higher learning. In 1972, the sum was a bit more than 16 million Finnish marks of the time, given to a great variety of projects and organizations. The repartition of this financial manna was not entirely realized on cultural criteria, and societies representing countries from the Eastern bloc were generally assured to receive the lion's share. In 1973, at the end of the period covered by this book, the Finland-Soviet Union Society received 540 000 Finnish marks, while other friendship societies received between 1000 and 5000 marks—the Finland-US Society received 4800 marks for the same year.¹²⁷

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, various reflections and audits tried to systematize the field of international scientific cooperation and the coordination of various elements. The work of the Ministry of Education's Department of International Cultural Affairs was the object of a lengthy governmental audit in the early 1970s, as part of a reflection on the management of Finland's foreign relations.¹²⁸ The main elements coordinated by the department were described as concrete participation in UNESCO, Nordic cultural cooperation, the Soviet Union Institute, cultural treaties between Finland and other countries, stipend programmes, the promotion of Finnish language and culture, relations with diasporas and friendship societies in Finland. Scientific relations were mostly under the coordination of the Academy of Finland, and technical departments in the Ministry of Education also had direct international contacts on technical matters, especially in education. These technical matters had developed

¹²⁶ KA, *Opetusministeriö fund, Ucd Matti Lähdeojan asiakirjat, 1917-1993, Box Ucd: 3, PM, Raha-arppajaisten ja veikkauksen voittovarojen käyttäminen tieteen tukemiseen, 2.4.1973.*

¹²⁷ OPMA, Jaakko Nummisen fund, Box *Opetusministeriön kansainvälisten asiain osasto, File OPM kansainvälisten asiain osasto 1970-1985, 1987, 1989-1994, PM, Opetusministeriön kansainvälisten asiain osasto. Selvitys kansainvälisten asiain osaston varain käytöstä v. 1973, 9.8.1973.*

¹²⁸ OPMA, Jaakko Nummisen fund, Box *Opetusministeriön kansainvälisten asiain osasto, File OPM kansainvälisten asiain osasto 1970-1985, 1987, 1989-1994, PM, Mitä kansainvälisluonteisia tehtäviä ja yhteyksiä ministeriöllä ja ao keskusvirastoilla on?, nd; idem, Letter, Tietojen hankkiminen Ulkoasiainhallintokomiteaa 1974 varten, MFA to Ministry of Education, 8.8.1974, Ahti Karjalainen, Seppo Pietinen; OPMA, Jaakko Nummisen fund, Box *Opetusministeriön kansainvälisten asiain osasto, file OPM kansainvälisten asiain osasto 1970-1985, 1987, 1989-1994, PM, Anders Hulden, Ulkoasiainministeriön ja opetusministeriön kv. kulttuuriasioita koskeva yhteistyö, 11.3.1977.**

away from “general” cultural relations and were managed by specialized committees inside the Ministry: the UNESCO committee, the state committee for the arts, the enlarged committee for Nordic cultural cooperation, the committee for Finnish lecturers abroad, the enlarged committee for international cultural exhibitions and the enlarged committee for exchanges in the field of performing arts. In the audit, the ministry re-emphasized the importance of an autonomous cultural field but also wrote that “*the successful management of international affairs demands a planification of these relations as a whole and their coordination under a single specialized department*”. The system as it is, emphasized the report, achieves these twin goals of autonomy for the cultural sector and coordination by the state. The report emphasized also, quite typically for this kind of reports in Finland at the time, the existential necessity for Finland to participate in the cultural dialogue between states and to reject the temptation of cultural autarky and isolation.

These questions of coordination in the management of international relations between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs were never really resolved and were regularly revisited: the Ministry of Education demanded the creation of a committee in 1982 to reflect on these matters deemed extremely important.¹²⁹ Generally, the main thrust was the general competence of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and the technical competence of the Ministry of Education. A lot was left to private initiative: limited budgets but also personal interests meant that the state managed mostly, except for cultural treaties, relations with the West, and relations with the East were left to organizations such as the Finland-Soviet Union Society.¹³⁰ By then, the institutionalization process had been, however, brought very far not only in the ministries but also elsewhere: the nationalization of several universities in the 1970s was one more sign of this expansion of the state’s field of action.¹³¹ Science and culture had become much more dependent on public funding and public incentives. This galaxy of private or semi-public agents working in close coordination with the state is underlined by Anita Kangas and Sakarias Sokka as a mark of Nordic corporatism, working both ways: the state influences and tries to compensate perceived failings of the private sector,

¹²⁹ OPMA, Jaakko Numminen fund, Box *Opetusministeriön kansainvälisten asiain osasto*, file *OPM kansainvälisten asiain osasto 1970-1985, 1987, 1989-1994*, PM, *Työryhmän asetaminen*, 12.8.1982.

¹³⁰ Siikala 1976, 46-48, 98-99, 103-106.

¹³¹ Siikala 1976 36, 328-329.

whether in terms of quality or in terms of foreign political orientations, but the private actors are also able to bring forward their own incentives and ideas, and often successful in influencing the state's orientations.¹³²

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¹³² Kangas and Sokka 2011.

- Kangas, Anita & Sakarias Sokka, “L’impératif de la politique culturelle finlandaise: renforcer la nation en cultivant la population”, in Philippe Poirrier (ed.), *Pour une histoire des politiques culturelles dans le monde, 1945-2011*, Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, Paris, 2011.
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Coordinating and Facilitating Bilateral Cultural Contacts

Our programs of cultural exchanges are essentially public relation efforts, to be managed well or not at all.

—*Report from the Ministry of Education's Department of International Affairs, 1979* (OPMA, Jaakko Numminen fund, Box Kulttuurisopimuspolitiikka, 1979–1984, PM, Suomen kulttuurisopimuspolitiikka 1980-luvulla, Kansainvälisten asiain osasto, 4.10.1979. Translated from Finnish.)

Finland makes full use of the possibilities offered both by UNESCO and by bilateral exchanges for the development of cultural contacts and stipend programs.

—*Annual report of Finland's UNESCO committee, 1962* (OPMA, Box Kansainvälisten kulttuuriasiain toimikunta, 1952–1963, Stipendiasiain toimikunta, Suomen Unesco-toimikunta/Opetusministeriön kansainvälisten stiepdeniasiain toimikunta, PM, Kertomus vuodelta 1962, Helsinki 1963. Translated from Finnish.)

In 1970, when Marjatta Oksanen joined the Ministry of Education, the Department of international affairs was divided into three administrative units: multilateral affairs, bilateral affairs (with two different organizations for East and West) and Nordic relations.¹ The Finnish state managed

¹ Oksanen 2016, 498.

various forms of cultural relations with countries or groups of countries, mostly in a facilitative function: support for exhibitions or concerts, longer-term support for cultural centres or language teaching and so forth. Most of these bilateral activities originated from private initiatives, and some domains like sports, scientific cooperation or relations with the Soviet Union were dominated by private, non-governmental or semi-public organizations that acted on their own or to whom the state devolved certain functions. Generally, only relations with the Soviet Union and technical issues with strong foreign political dimensions commanded a degree of involvement from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and interest from the country's higher political leadership. The rest was managed at the level of technical administrations.

In the late 1970s, Kalervo Siikala noted the way in which the Ministry of Education had grown in size and had come to move from this role as a facilitator into a more active role, managing a larger range of activities: stipend programmes, bilateral cultural treaties, Finnish institutes and "Finland houses" abroad, relations with UNESCO, Nordic multilateral relations, a Soviet Institute, the Finnish-Swedish cultural centre in Hanasaari created in 1975, several posts of Finnish language lecturers in foreign universities, the Center for the promotion of Finnish literary exports created in 1977 and so forth.² The state worked as one actor in a maze of organizations and programmes linking Finland culturally to the world. The 1960s–1970s saw the emergence on top of spontaneous cultural relations of an official level of cultural relations, strongly linked to the context of Finland's foreign policy, from bilateral relations with a variety of countries to the formal, bureaucratic work of international cultural organizations, from short-term events such as exhibitions to long-term programmes and financial support. Bilateral relations brought to view the way ministries in the Finnish state mixed a systematic development of their competencies (e.g. through bilateral cultural treaties and exchange programmes), the increasing coordination of areas of cooperation (through the funding of various organizations) and an evolutive, *ad hoc*, facilitative role for the initiatives of the private sector.

²Numminen 2020, vol 2, 161. On the creation of the centre for the promotion of Finnish literature exports, see Aaltonen 2010.

4.1 THE FINNISH STATE AS FACILITATOR AND INITIATOR OF CULTURAL RELATIONS

4.1.1 *Bilateral Relations and Relations with “Brotherly Nations”*

Bilateral cultural relations between Finland and foreign countries developed after the war without a specific plan, on the basis of existing personal relations or the relations between organizations, from friendship societies to universities. They developed for the most part as a spontaneous effort to reconstruct the links existing before the war: cultural figures took back the habit of travelling to Rome and Paris, Finnish-speaking diasporas in the United States and Canada reformed their links with Finland, embassies started anew their cultural activities, inviting journalists and scholars to Finland, supporting exhibitions and promoting translations of Finnish publications. Relations with Sweden and Western Europe were the first to pick up, followed by the discovery of new avenues of cultural relations on the American continent. Relations with the Eastern bloc were dominated by the USSR’s activities and its relays in Finland, while the 1960s saw a development of relations with Eastern European countries through the signature of cultural treaties.³

As relations started to grow after 1944, each foreign country seemed to form a case in itself, with a history of cultural, political and economic relations with Finland, and organizations or personalities relaying contacts. Apart from strong interest in developing relations with the Eastern bloc, there were no specific efforts in Finland to prioritise relations with specific countries. Embassies had retained the habit of working in local contexts to develop cultural relations especially with political, cultural and economic elites, using country-specific networks and contacts and emphasizing matters specific to the place. But they had very little resources and no sense of coordination from Helsinki emerged from the various initiatives taken at local level. Cultural relations were seen as part of the general foreign policy of the country that insisted on reconstructing relations with the West and adapting to new, friendly relations with the Soviet Union.

France provides a good example of the development of these bilateral cultural relations from the point of view of the Ministry for Foreign affairs and the Ministry of Education. Because of Germany’s postwar division, France seemed a possible door to re-open cultural relations with the West.⁴

³ Autio and Heikkilä 1990, 83-85

⁴ For the role of the Finnish embassy in France in re-igniting cultural relations with France after 1944, see Clerc 2017.

The personal preferences of many important Finnish cultural and administrative figures also brought them closer to French culture and the French language as markers of social and intellectual status. France could also seem like a good counterweight to the dominance of Anglo-American culture and a chance to get closer to “old Europe”. The process of European integration, to which Finland started to participate with the 1961 FINN-EFTA treaty, also brought a commercial tinge to these cultural aspects. Bilateral relations were pushed by representatives from ministries, the embassy in Paris, an active community of Finns in France and various organizations: the Finland-France friendship society, the Franco-Finnish Chamber of Commerce and a Finnish-French Technological and Scientific Society created in 1973 by a group of scientists and tradesmen.⁵ These organizations and Finnish embassies remained for the period under study the main poles of bilateral cultural relations, mixing private initiatives to public networks and funding.

The Finnish state, however, started to develop forms of direct involvement. One form of support for bilateral relations by the Finnish state was the funding of Finnish language chairs in foreign universities. The lecturers and professors of Finnish language and culture at Parisian universities had been particularly important human cultural channels between the two countries since the interwar period. Finnish language courses at the French Institute for Eastern Languages (INALCO) in Paris dated back to the beginning of the 20th century: the first holder of the chair of Finnish language had been Aurélien Sauvageot, from 1931 to 1967, helped by the Finn Aimo Sakari from 1937 to 1958. In 1965, the Sorbonne created a course in Finno-Ugric studies for Sauvageot, but a major change took place the following year with the creation of a chair of Assistant Professor: Heikki Kirkinen became its first holder in the autumn of 1967, succeeded in 1970 by Matti Klinge.⁶ These various activities were supported by the Finnish state through grants from the Ministry of Education.

Bilateral cultural relations also followed political contacts, developing after official visits or contacts with foreign dignitaries. In the case of France, important steps were taken in official relations after Kekkonen’s 1962 visit and the French Minister of Culture André Malraux’s visit to

⁵ Numminen 2020, vol 2, 197-198.

⁶ Clerc 2017.

Finland in 1965.⁷ The first contacts for an agreement on cultural and scientific cooperation between Finland and France were taken then, and the treaty was signed in September 1970 during the visit of French Foreign Minister Maurice Schumann to Finland.⁸ France was the first country in the Western bloc with which Finland signed a cultural agreement, and expectations were high on both sides. The regular meetings of the Joint Commission set up by the agreement were, however, largely disappointing to the Finns, as the French were mainly interested in developing French language teaching and French cultural organizations in Helsinki. In 1973, evolutions of the political context and the possibility to acknowledge both Germanies made cultural relations easier to organize with both Eastern and Western Germany, and interest in France as a kind of surrogate for traditional cultural relations with Germany became more subdued.⁹ France became also less important than the United States in Finland's bilateral cultural relations, owing to American activities in Finland and to the vivid interest of Finnish society for American culture starting in the late 1950s.¹⁰

Development of bilateral relations with countries from the Global South or Asia also gathered pace in the 1960s, a novelty compared to the pre-war state of Finnish bilateral cultural relations. Most of these contacts were channelled through UNESCO or private initiatives, but in some instances the government would directly consider for example exchange treaties. Relations with China are a good example of this peculiar mix of foreign pressures, official support and private activism.¹¹ China after the late 1950s tried to build contacts with a country in the West that could prove easier to penetrate than others, both because of its relations with the Soviet Union and because of its size. In the summer of 1952, a Chinese acrobatic group toured locations across Finland, the visit being organized by the Finland-China Society, founded a year earlier in June 1951. The main problem was mainland China's recognition by Finland: diplomatic relations had been established in 1950, after the leftist part of the Parliament had criticized Prime Minister Fagerholm for failing to

⁷ On the 1970 Franco-Finnish cultural treaty, see Salonsalmi 2008, 18 et al. Cf. OPMA, Jaakko Numminen fund, Box *Suomen ja Ranskan väliset kulttuurisuhteet*, PM, *Suomen kulttuurisuhteet—Ranska*, 7.8.1990, Raija Kallinen.

⁸ OPMA, Box 7832/82/80, PM, *Suomi-Ranskan yhdistyksen vastaus OPMn 19.3.1980 lähettämään Suomen ja Ranskan kulttuurisopimusta koskevaan kirjeeseen*, 9.4.1980.

⁹ Numminen 2020, vol 2, 239-248.

¹⁰ Siikala 1976, 194; Fields 2020.

¹¹ Heikinheimo 2016.

recognize the new country. Prime Minister Zhou Enlai's use of Chinese opera as a tool of cultural propaganda also showed in Finland with several representations in the 1950s, invited by the Finnish Confederation of Theatre Organizations, Tampere's Workers' Theatre and the Finland-China Society. Annika Heikinheimo describes the 1950s as a golden age in Finno-Chinese cultural relations. The Finland-China Society had a *de facto* monopoly on the organization of these contacts with Chinese authorities, and relations with China were managed beyond the reach of the Finnish authorities. The Finnish state, however, tried to develop official contacts as well. In April 1953, a cultural delegation led by Urho Kekkonen's wife Sylvi left for China at the invitation of the Chinese Association for Foreign Cultural Relations. The practical arrangements and contacts for this visit were handled by the Finland-China Society, and three other delegations visited China in the same conditions in the late 1950s.

In the 1960s, the political upheaval in China ended this first period of relations. The Soviet-Chinese dispute set the Finnish authorities in a bind regarding China, and the Cultural Revolution starting in 1966 changed the tone of Chinese cultural contacts. The emphasis moved to the distribution of political propaganda and blind defence of the Chinese government. A first period of mutual discovery ended almost completely between 1966 and 1970. The Finland-China Society was instrumental in starting new exchanges in the 1970s, but this time the ministries participated more actively. The Society had been taken over by the Maoist Left and internal infightings made activities more difficult to organize. In 1973, an official programme of cultural stipends between Finland and China began as part of Finland's Minister of Education's visit to China, as well as close cooperation in the planning and implementation of its content between the Finnish Ministry of Education and the Finland-China Society.¹²

A specificity in Finland's case was the early role of public administrators in contacts with Hungary and Estonia.¹³ Old cultural relations with these nations dated from the construction of modern national sentiments in the

¹²Soikkanen 2020; Mansala 2020; Litukka 2008. Finno-Chinese political relations between 1945 and 1989 have been the object of Sari Arho Havrén's PhD: Arho Havrén 2009. Finland was among the first Western countries to recognize the People's Republic of China and the first Western country to sign a trade agreement with China in 1953. Finland's excellent reputation in China was further strengthened by Finland's support for China's UN membership and for mainland China's representation in UN organizations instead of Taiwan.

¹³Numminen 2020, vol 2, 211-222, 223-238.

nineteenth century, when the three national movements developed links with each other as the only European countries speaking Finno-Ugric languages. The notion of “brotherly nations” became a rhetorical point in Finland in the interwar period, but relations lacked substance and were emphasized especially by a conservative academic elite.¹⁴ After 1944, this symbolism came back to influence the rhetoric of Finland’s main cultural diplomats, and worked as a background for some of them to consider cultural relations with Hungary and Estonia as a special case: Jaakko Numminen, for example, used regularly the vocabulary of “brotherly nations” to justify the development of relations with Hungary. Hungary’s situation as a contested part of the eastern bloc and the disappearance of Estonia in the Soviet empire complicated these contacts: the crushing of the Hungarian uprising in 1956 was a source of considerable shock for the Finns. Kekkonen proposed his mediation to the Soviet ambassador in Finland, but the Finns abstained from criticising Moscow in the UN and were extremely cautious in public declarations. The Finnish government donated 50 million Finnish marks to the Finnish Red Cross, and there was a restlessness in Finnish public opinion that was transcribed in critical parliamentary declarations and in private donations for Hungary.

However, in the early 1960s, the incentive to build better cultural relations was strong on the Hungarian side, which used old cultural contacts as an ice-breaker during détente. Urho Kekkonen paid an unofficial visit to Hungary in 1963, preparing the terrain for a return to normal relations.¹⁵ Jaakko Sievers notes that, following this visit, official contacts returned at a brisk pace. In 1964, Kalervo Siikala visited Hungary,¹⁶ an invitation he described as an attempt by Budapest to use cultural contacts as new channels of communication with the West—Finland was in that respect something of a low hanging fruit. The trip’s organizers showed the Finnish delegations churches and museums, and avoided the Soviet-style visits to factories, kindergartens and collectivized apartments. Finland was in a good position to take advantage of this renewal of cultural activities in Eastern Europe: the country was perceived as a part of Scandinavia, a potential source of new ideas, new institutions, new forms of social and

¹⁴Vehviläinen 2002, 115-134; Sievers 2008.

¹⁵Sievers 2008, 33-41.

¹⁶OPMA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta* fund, Box 5, 842 *Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat liitteineen, 1964-1965)*, PM, *Kertomus pääsihteeri Kalervo Siikalan matkasta Unkariin 22-31.8.1964, 4.9.1964.*

cultural activities, and it didn't have any qualms with developing cultural relations with socialist countries. After 1968 and Kekkonen's re-election, the Hungarians were eager to organize an official visit, and the Finnish president visited Hungary in 1969 as part of a trip that brought him also to Romania and Czechoslovakia.¹⁷

Hungarian and Finnish UNESCO policies also seemed to match in the 1960s. Hungary saw UNESCO as an important organization, but shared Finland's suspicion towards the organization's bloated budgets and over-ambitious projects that made participation for smaller states an increasing financial burden. Hungary also insisted on UNESCO's nature as a world-wide peace and cooperation organization, not only as an agency for the channelling of development aid. In September 1968, the Hungarian UNESCO commission insisted to Finnish guests on the necessity to support the study of Finno-Ugric languages and cultures and to organize the schooling of African heritage preservation specialists in Finland and Hungary in order to keep UNESCO funds in Europe.¹⁸

Relations with Estonia were more complex, as the formerly independent state had been a Soviet republic since the end of World War II. Finland and Estonia had signed a cultural treaty in December 1937 that was never officially cancelled.¹⁹ Pushed by a strong current of private relations and public opinion interest for Estonia, science and cultural relations gave a variety of Finnish organizations the possibility to go around the fact that Estonia was part of the Soviet Union, while the state could not really get involved.²⁰ This had to be done discreetly, and often through the patronage of prominent Finnish political figures. Urho Kekkonen's trip to Estonia in 1964 was particularly revelatory of this spirit: taking advantage of détente in Europe, Kekkonen gave a speech in Estonian at the cultural heart of the national Estonian project, in the University of Tartu.²¹ This visit was the first step into a series of cooperation schemes between Finnish and Estonian scientists and especially marine conservationists and sea ecology experts. In 1965, visits between the Tallinn university of technology and Finnish university centres were organized, dealing with waste water

¹⁷ Vares 2006.

¹⁸ OPMA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta* fund, series 8, Box 7, *Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat liitteineen)*, 1967-68, PM, *Selostus allekirjoittaneen Unkarin Unesco-toimikunnan kanssa 14-18.9.1968 käymistä keskusteluista*, 22.9.1968, Ilmo Hela.

¹⁹ Kiho 2008.

²⁰ Mikkonen 2019, 244-262.

²¹ Bange and Villaume 2017.

recycling and water technologies. They ended up in a decision made in May 1968 by the Joint Committee for the 1955 Scientific and Technological Treaty between Finland and the USSR to improve scientific and environmental cooperation in the Gulf of Finland. It established a working group made of natural scientists and engineers, with a Finnish and a Soviet delegation. Environmental concerns on both sides of the iron curtain started to develop at the same time: the Finns were happy with a cooperation that emphasized environmental protection but also gave content to Finland's general relations with the USSR, and Soviet scientists could learn from Western technology, use libraries and publications in Finland and so forth. This kind of bilateral cooperation showed an interesting mix of private and public actors, spontaneous relations, bureaucratic frames and political background.

Bilateral relations with various countries in the first decades of the Cold War were a varied and crowded field, where the Finnish authorities mostly facilitated the work of more active protagonists—Finland's new official relations with the Soviet Union could even dissuade some private organizations to ask for public support, for fear of being associated to contacts with the East.²² Friendship societies, universities and often single individuals were instrumental in reconstructing after the war a network of bilateral relations that became more varied than the pre-war network, with extensions towards Asia, the United States and Eastern European countries. From the authorities' point of view, these relations appeared either through the support given to local activities by the ministries or through arrangements and organizations managed by the Ministry of Education: exchange programmes, regional or country committees, and mostly cultural treaties. No real sense of coordination emerged, apart from a strong desire to develop relations with a wide range of partners beyond the East-West divide.

4.1.2 *Support for Artistic and Athletic Relations*

International artistic relations were mostly managed by a large field of private organizations, associations and interest groups dating from before

²² A fact underlined by a report of the Ministry of Education in 1970: OPMA, Jaakko Numminen fund, Box *Opetusministeriön kansainvälisten asiain osasto*, file *OPM kansainvälisten asiain osasto 1970-1985, 1987, 1989-1994, OPM, KAO, PM, Kansainvälisen kulttuuriyhteistyön ajankohtaisia kysymyksiä syyskaudella 1970*, 15.8.1970, Kalervo Siikala.

the war. From 1947 onwards, a group of artists and directors of artistic institutions, like the head of the museum and exhibition venue *Helsingin Taidehalli*, Bertel Hintze, travelled regularly to the Nordic Countries and to Europe with plans of organizing exhibitions of Finnish art. In 1945, a Nordic Arts Association had been created in Stockholm, where the Finns were present from the beginning. The goal of the association was the organization of exhibitions, but they had also the intention to publicize the arts and artistic activities through articles in the press. The first years were still under the shadow of the war, and Elina Melgin emphasizes the way the Norwegians, for example, saw Finland's participation with suspicion—the Finns had been allies with Nazi Germany, the occupier of Norway during the war.²³ The organization used the institutions of Sweden's image diplomacy, from the Swedish institute to the Swedish PR specialists organization *Publicistklubben*.

In Finland, the main role was played by the Finnish Art Academy (*Suomen Taideakatemia*), a private organization that developed the Finnish art field's international relations. It had money and influence, and worked to coordinate Finnish museums and art galleries in cooperation with other organizations, mostly Nordic in the first postwar years. The first common exhibition of the Nordic Arts League to which Finns participated was organized in Oslo in 1946, and the exhibitions roved yearly through Nordic capitals, reaching Helsinki in 1950. The goal was to avoid officials and ceremonies, and exhibitions gave to Finland a good channel for international contacts. In 1947, Lennart Segerstråle, in a presentation during a meeting of the League in Stockholm about the Finnish arts scene and artistic life, emphasized the difficulties of postwar life in Finland, underlined the desire to reknit contacts both in the arts and in literature, by getting Finnish literature translated but also getting the modern literature translated into Finnish. According to Melgin, the Ministry of Education was involved in those mostly through personal relations in the last years of the 1940s, but contributed also through financial support and subsidies.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs also contributed, either through the help afforded by the diplomatic network or through direct financial contributions. The answer was not always “yes”, and the Ministry had to prioritize limited resources. In 1944, the four biggest Finnish publishing companies, Otava, Schildt, WSOY, and Söderström unsuccessfully asked

²³Melgin 2014, 172.

the ministry for the creation in Stockholm of a bookstore of Finnish literature. An editor got in touch asking for funding to create an editing company in Stockholm through which Finnish literature and “national propaganda” could be channelled. The ministry refused, saying that they did not want to hide their communication efforts and were planning anyway to open a Finnish institute in Stockholm. The diplomats G.A. Gripenberg and Heikki Brotherus proposed the creation of a “*literary attaché*” in Stockholm in 1944, but to no avail.²⁴ If the Ministry of Education used arguments linked to the quality of Finnish arts and literature, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs mostly saw the arts and literature as a way to promote a certain image of Finland abroad.

The situation remained similar up until the mid-1960s, when the creation of state organizations to coordinate activities also reached the realm of artistic productions and exhibitions. In February 1962, the government set up a committee to examine the form and extent of state support for various fields of art and draw up a proposal for measures to develop and promote Finnish art abroad.²⁵ The 1965 committee report made a long list of state organizations dealing with culture, with a few of them concerned with foreign cultural relations: the Finnish UNESCO committee, the Finnish Section of the Nordic Cultural Commission and so forth. It emphasized the lack of resources in both ministries to conduct a strong coordinating artistic policy. Each ambassador and diplomats abroad were tasked with managing cultural relations and helping artists, but resources were minimal despite a 1964 instruction clarifying the role of ambassadors and diplomatic envoys in these questions.

Support for artistic projects was mostly directed to the normal directions of Finland’s state-led cultural activities in the Cold War. The Nordic Countries came first: the Finnish section of the Nordic Cultural commission and the Finnish-Swedish Cultural Fund created in October 1958 promoted cultural relations through grants. The eastern bloc came second: a committee on cultural exchanges between Finland and the Soviet Union had been created in October 1963, a Finnish-Hungarian Joint Committee had been created in June 1959 as a result of the Finnish-Hungarian Cultural Agreement, as well as a Finnish-Polish Cultural Committee created in September 1964. The Ministry of Education coordinated these and had also allocated funds for the foreign and domestic information

²⁴ Melgin 2014, 172 et s.

²⁵ Komiteanmietintö 1965: A 8, *Valtion taidekomitean mietintö*, Helsinki 1965.

activities of the Music Information Center, established by the non-governmental Finnish Council for Music in 1963.

However, in the committee's view, this activity had not been carried out in the best possible way. The criticisms were well-rehearsed: operational efficiency had suffered from the lack of centralized organization with the private sector, there had been a lack of cooperation between the various fields of art and insufficient attention has been paid to resources. The report presented the use of art for national image promotion as obviously positive, but support had to be concentrated on efficient action aiming at carefully selected target audiences. Coordination was needed also for national and identity-based reasons. Foreign influences in the development of Finnish art were described both as a globally positive development and as a potential problem: the increase and intensification of international connections brought with it the danger that "Finnish art" would change to emulate foreign models and to embrace superficially understood foreign ideas. Hence, the need for more state coordination, which would give the possibility to control the percolation into Finnish arts of foreign trends. The report proposed a law supporting international relations and setting as the state's main task the organization of exchanges and the support of exhibitions. These elements remained at the heart of the Finnish state's activities as a facilitator of artistic international contacts. But despite the 1961 Jakobson report, no efforts were made to systematize the facilitation of cultural contacts, and the Finnish state's activities in this domain remained reactive, short-term support for initiatives coming from the private sector.²⁶

Sports were an important part of Finland's collective life and self-image, yet it shows only seldom in the material studied here. Sports belonged to the Ministry of Education and were considered an important part of Finland's image abroad: the Summer Olympics organized in Helsinki in 1952 were an important milestone in Finland's return to international visibility after the war. But even more than for the arts, Finnish athletic contacts with the world were mostly managed by specific sportive organizations, outside the coordinating reach of both ministries under study here.²⁷ Amongst public administrators, an unwillingness to insist too much on sports in Finland's image promotion can also be discerned. Immediately

²⁶ UMA, 46 E, Box *Yleistä, Maittain: ...-Englanti, 1951-...*, PM, *Suomen bilateraalisista kulttuurisuhteista*, Kalervo Siikala, 1.3.1967.

²⁷ Siikala 1976, 243-244.

after the war, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs had used sportive achievements to complement the artistic image of the Finnish people as an unspoiled heroic nation who fought hard against industrial revolution and imperialism. However, by the early 1960s these notions were seen as old-fashioned and even dangerous in a rapidly industrializing state that was doing its best to maintain good neighbourly relations with its Eastern neighbour. Sportive, manly, able-bodied agrarian Finland could be seen as too much turned against the USSR, whereas a new Finland, more urbane and industrious, could be better used in the promotion of the national image. The Olympic Games marked a transition between the two roles, and in the commitment of the state authorities to support sports as a part of cultural diplomacy.

However, public agencies provided strong backup and support to sportive organizations and athletes in their contacts with the world. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs shared information on competitions, facilitated travels, provided interpreters and translators, helped with visa applications and accommodations, worked as intermediary to support private organizations in their dealings with foreign agencies and multilateral organizations and so forth.²⁸ This was especially true in the 1940s–1950s, when Finnish organizations worked to reconstruct their links with other countries: in 1946, the Finnish Athletic and Sportive Union thanked the Ministry for Foreign Affairs for its support, reminding that their competitions had also an international role, to “*rejuvenate our good sportive relations with foreign states*”.²⁹ Generally, these contacts would be organized through embassies and consulates abroad.

At some points, sports relations became also political, especially in the 1970s linked to the fight against apartheid and relations between blocs. In a 1978 memorandum, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs reminded its agents that Finland had voted for the 1971 UN resolution condemning apartheid in sports.³⁰ Although Finnish sports organizations were autonomous, it was asked of them to do their utmost to avoid relations with apartheid regimes. Finland, like the Soviet Union, also supported mainland China as China’s only representative in sports organizations.

²⁸ See various examples in UMA, series 67, Box 2.

²⁹ UMA, series 67, Box 1, File *Suomen Suurkisat Helsingissä, 1946*, Letter, Suomen voimistelu ja urheiluliitto to Finnish MFA, nd (12.1946?), V.A.M. Karikoski. Translated from Finnish.

³⁰ UMA, series 67, Box 1, File *Liikuntalakikomitea*, PM, *Suomen urheilusuhteita muiden maiden kanssa koskevat asiakirjat*, 18.9.1978, Tapani Brotherus.

Sport education considered a part of Finland's educational international cooperation remained the most visible part of this state involvement in Finland's athletic international relations. This was mostly due to the strength of those specific private organizations managing Finland's international athletic relations, from the local Olympic committee to organizations managing the interests of specific disciplines. In most cases, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs would receive invitations or information about events, and either act itself or transmit to the Ministry of Education, were decisions for support, technical assistance or the sending of official representatives would be decided between the Department of International Affairs and the Ministry's Sports Board (*Urheilulautakunta*).

An interesting matter, mixing the Cold War context, Finland's image promotion and international sportive ambitions, was the question of military sportive competitions.³¹ In 1964, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs discussed with the Ministry of Education and the International Department of Finland's General Headquarters the country's possible accession to the International Military Sports Council. The debate had been going on since 1949, when Finland was approached for the first time by the Council, and hesitations were mostly linked to possible Soviet reactions to what was mostly a Western bloc organization. In 1964, the General Headquarters proposed to take advantage of the thaw in East-West relations to join the Council, a proposal that was accepted by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

4.1.3 *The Evolving Landscape of Bilateral Relations with the Soviet Union*

From the point of view of the Finnish state, cultural relations with the Soviet Union were a one-way street after the war. Soviet cultural propaganda in Finland dominated the field, managed by the Finland-Soviet Union Society. In 1949, the Finnish embassy in Moscow reported that there were no cultural activities to speak of for the embassy, since the Soviet organization VOKS on the one hand and the Society and other Finnish left-leaning organizations on the other hand managed everything and had the ear of the authorities much more than the embassy.³² Simo Mikkonen also emphasizes the lack of interest of the Soviet organizations

³¹ See documents in UMA series 67, Box 3, File *Sotilasurheilu*.

³² Melgin 2014, 189.

for reciprocal cultural relations in the immediate postwar period.³³ However, if the Finnish state worked first to facilitate the activities of these organizations, it was able later in the 1960s to increasingly bring them in its orbit. This was part of a general evolution in which the Finnish state moved from its cautiously friendly containment policy of the 1950s towards a policy of neutrality emphasizing contacts with both sides of the bipolar divide. As the state became more and more involved in relations with the Soviet Union, the gap between communist organizations and the ministries became less and less marked.

The development of cultural relations between Finland and the Soviet Union can be considered to have started with the establishment of the Finland-Soviet Union Society in the autumn of 1944. The Society, which quickly grew into Finland's most important friendship society, managed the organization of Soviet cultural events in Finland: exhibitions, lectures, film screenings, performances by Soviet artists, the general promotion of the study and knowledge of Russian and other Soviet languages, meetings between Finnish and visiting Soviet delegations and experts and so on.³⁴ Supported by state funding but jealous of its independence, the Society was until Stalin's death an organization of political propaganda, manned by Finns but working to promote the Soviet cultural and political rhetoric in Finland.³⁵ Soviet interest in Finland was also fluctuating: the Soviets saw the Society as an outpost, built for one-way propaganda purposes, and while the Society tried to cast itself as a neutral organization bringing up neutral information about the USSR, Moscow saw it primarily as a political agitation organization spreading scripted propaganda. The early 1950s were also years where the Society was actively criticized and attacked in Finnish politics as a relay of Soviet pressures. In 1952, for instance, it asked for the creation of a cultural fund between the two countries, fed by forced contributions from companies participating in trade with the Soviet Union. The Finnish government worked to deflect the blow by underlining that, since the funding would amount to a tax, it needed a law in Parliament. The project came back under various guises at various stages in the early 1950s, but Finnish stalling and fluctuating interest in Moscow delayed things.

Following Stalin's death, the Society was allowed, also in the context of changes in the Soviet propaganda structure, to engage in more cultural

³³ Mikkonen 2019.

³⁴ Siikala 1985, 57-65.

³⁵ Mikkonen 2015, 109-131.

activities and especially to take a part in the 1960s development of travels between Finland and the Soviet Union. Finland seemed like a safe place for Soviet tourists, students and researchers because it had agreed to repatriate asylum seekers to the Soviet Union,³⁶ which meant the Soviet authorities could agree to the travelling of citizens to Finland. Stalin's death and domestic changes in Finland also brought changes in the role of the Society and the state's relations with it.

The 1950s–1960s saw a process through which the Finnish state took more and more control over the Society. After the mid-1960s, the Society reported regularly to the Ministry of Education and derived increasing parts of its funding from Finnish public funding. This funding came from the budget of the Ministry of Education, to give it possibilities to develop friendly relations with the Soviet Union, a task Jaakko Numminen called the fulfilment of the Society's "*national function*".³⁷ Scientific relations were also managed directly between Finnish and Soviet scientific academies, with the help of the Soviet institute. They contained mostly exchanges of visitors between the countries, study trips and other formal forms of cooperation. Especially with the development of a radical left in the 1970s, the Society was a strong influence in the cultural debate in Finland, relaying Soviet cultural discourses, managing exchange programmes with the Soviet Union, organising touristic excursions and so forth.

While the Society was a private organization increasingly working in cooperation with the Finnish authorities, the Soviet Institute is a good example of a state agency created to manage cultural relations with the Soviet Union.³⁸ The idea of creating an Institute of Soviet Studies was clearly linked to the context of the "years of danger", 1944–1948. The truce signed in September 1944 was in effect a victory for the Soviet Union, and in Finnish society political forces and social groups on the far left experienced a rebirth. The tide turned in 1947–1948, and after the spring of 1948, successive Finnish governments attempted to wrestle relations with the USSR from the communists—hence the creation of an Institute, founded by a decision of the Finnish Parliament in 1947, as a

³⁶ Pekkarinen and Pohjonen 2005.

³⁷ Numminen uses the term *valtiollinen*, which suggests in this case duties of such import to the nation that they should be managed or supported by the state (Numminen 2020, vol 2, 204).

³⁸ Perna 2002, 45–90.

department of the Ministry of Education. Its task was linked to the promotion of research on all aspects of Soviet society, economy and culture, the management of a library of titles on the Soviet Union and Russia, and the organizations of cultural cooperation between the two countries.

During its existence, the Institute was stuck between the necessity of friendly relations with Soviet organizations and its origin as an arm of the Finnish state to reclaim a measure of control over scientific and cultural cooperation with the USSR. Difficulties can be seen already in September 1950, when the first director of the Institute was forced by a campaign of the Soviet authorities and local communists to resign. Both Moscow and local communists would not leave the Institute to be a simple scientific organization—it had to be integrated in the apparatus of friendly relations with Moscow. By 1951, the Institute was under strong pressure of Soviet representatives that forced Finnish authorities to accept its change into a relay of Soviet cultural propaganda.

In the late 1960s and the context of *détente*, the Institute became an important centre for the organization of relations with the Soviet Union. Matti Rönkä, its director, was adapted to the atmosphere of the Cold War, maintaining the institute away from overt criticism of the Soviet Union. In 1968–1969, the Institute became the manager of some student and researcher exchanges with the Soviet Union, giving it salience besides the Society. Crises were inevitable in a context where cultural, scientific and political things entangled: in the late 1960s, Siikala waged, for instance, a long battle against the automatic acknowledgement of Soviet diplomas in Finland. Finns were mostly going to the Soviet Union for cheap diplomas in Russian, literature, engineering or medicine, and debates about the quality of these diplomas lasted from 1970 to 1979, when a treaty on the question was signed.³⁹

The Lenin year, organized in 1970 as part of a UNESCO campaign celebrating the Bolshevik leader, was also a delicate moment.⁴⁰ When in 1968 UNESCO decided to celebrate Lenin's 100th birthday, Finland organized a Lenin symposium in Helsinki, gathering all organizations involved in relations with the Soviet Union. There was a debate around publications, for instance on the book by historian Tuomo Polvinen studying Lenin's decision to recognize Finland's independence. Polvinen exposed Lenin's decision as a tactical ploy, while Kekkonen wanted to

³⁹ Perna 2002, 170-174.

⁴⁰ Perna 2002, 180-190.

please the USSR and present Lenin's acknowledgment of Finland's independence as a gift to the new nation. This intervention by the president in academic debates and the organization of the symposium were considered by the Finnish leadership an important way to show goodwill towards the USSR in a matter that seemed extremely important to Moscow. During a trip to the USSR organised by the USSR committee, the Finnish committee noted the obsession of the Soviet partners with the symposium. If most of the programme was in the hands of the Finland-Soviet Union Society, the Ministry participated and delivered funding. The Finnish delegation tried to emphasize things they were attached to, like the situation of Finno-Ugric populations in the Soviet Union,⁴¹ and Finland's participation was amongst the most visible for a country outside the Eastern bloc.⁴²

Up until the 1960s, Finno-Soviet cultural relations were thus more a story of Soviet pushes and Finnish resistance and deflection than truly one of bilateral cultural relations. Mikkonen also suggests that periods of Soviet activism were scheduled to correspond with the Finnish electoral cycle and to beneficiate to the extreme-leftist coalition during these elections.⁴³ As they stabilized in the 1950s–1960s, official cultural relations between Finland and the USSR consisted mostly of scientific-technical cooperation on the one hand and cultural exchanges on the other hand. Both were based on treaties signed between the two states that tended to lack in substance but expressed strong political commitments.⁴⁴ Cultural relations with the Soviet Union were for the most part coordinated in cooperation with the Finnish state by the late 1960s—a development Kalervo Siikala noted with satisfaction in 1968.⁴⁵ The Ministry of Education used after 1968 the Soviet Institute as an expert organization for the management of all aspects of cultural relations with the Soviet Union. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs managed through an internal

⁴¹ OPMA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta* fund, series 8, Box 8, *Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat) 1969-71*, PM, *Kertomus vierailusta Neuvostoliiton Unesco-toimikunnan kutsumana Neuvostoliittoon*, 26.5-1.6.1969, 2.6.1969, Kalevi Sorsa.

⁴² <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000184442>

⁴³ Mikkonen 2019, 263-269.

⁴⁴ Numminen 2020, vol 2, 190-201.

⁴⁵ Perna 2002, 129 et s; KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box 1960-1970 *luku kirjoituksia, esitelmiä. Keskustapolitiikka, Taide- ja kulttuuripolitiikkaa, kansainvälisetä yhteistyötä*, Letter to Johannes Virolainen, 19.6.1968. Siikala describes for the Minister of Education the changes going on in the organization of cultural relations between Finland and the USSR, with especially more emphasis set on the Soviet Institute.

committee after 1967 (the TT-committee) the implementation of the bilateral technical and scientific treaty. Finally, the Finland-Soviet Union Society worked autonomously but with Finnish state funding and in cooperation with the authorities to develop grassroots cultural relations with the Soviet Union. Cooperation was not always easy: in the Ministry of Education, lack of resources and protests especially by the UNESCO committee against centralization in the Department for International Affairs meant that technical departments such as the Committee for cultural exchanges between Finland and the USSR, created in 1963, retained a measure of autonomy.⁴⁶ Most of these protagonists however agreed on the basics, such as the necessity to rebuild relations with the Soviet Union after the destructions of the war and the hostility of the interwar period.⁴⁷

The 1970s were generally years of domestic and foreign political rapprochement with the Soviet Union, but initiatives were mostly on the Finnish side and true reciprocity was never achieved.⁴⁸ The Finnish cultural weeks in the Soviet Union were, alongside student and researcher exchanges and town twinnings, one of the rare ways Finland could get reciprocity in cultural relations with the Soviet Union.⁴⁹ They were closely monitored and organized by the Ministry of Education, for which Siikala was sometimes criticized by the press, accused of presenting an official culture sanitized for the Soviet Union. Cultural relations between the two countries remained mostly a story of Soviet cultural events in Finland. Artistic collaboration with the Soviet Union was not insignificant, and it helped certain Finnish cultural sectors to reach international levels of expertise: Mikkonen points out especially the example of Finnish ballet, which reached international levels due to its relation with the Soviet Union.⁵⁰ But the interest for Soviet artistic and cultural productions remained lukewarm amongst the Finnish population, where the domination of Western culture, from the arts to fashion and ways of life, was never truly contested. For Finnish administrators, cultural relations with the Soviet Union were mostly a political endeavour, and it meant the adoption, with varying degrees of sincerity, of the Soviet international and cultural rhetoric. In his 1976 book, Siikala drew a straight line between better

⁴⁶ Autio 1993, 43-44.

⁴⁷ Siikala 1976, 148-150.

⁴⁸ Perna 2002, 210-220.

⁴⁹ Perna 2002, 196-197; Numminen 1964, 196.

⁵⁰ Mikkonen 2019, 263-269.

cultural relations between the two countries and the establishment of the Paasikivi-Kekkonen line of good relations with the Soviet Union, directly contrasting it with the nationalism- and resent-fuelled hostility of the interwar period.

City twinnings between Finland and the Soviet Union, which began after Stalin's death in 1953, were also a noteworthy channel of cultural contact between Finland and the USSR. The incentives for that came from both Finland's decentralized system of active municipalities and, starting in the 1960s, UNESCO discourse on delegation of cultural policy to local communities.⁵¹ Initiatives often came from Finland and were mediated by the Finland-Soviet Union Society. After 1969 and before the collapse of the Soviet Union, nine major meetings of twin cities were held, alternating in the main cities of both countries. City meetings focused on the foreign and local policy goals of both countries. The Soviet Union wanted the cities to strengthen the agreement between the countries, while Finland wanted immediate and direct cooperation with the cities of a large neighbouring country. Single cities also sought economic and political support in contacts with the Soviet Union. In Finland, in addition to the host city, the Finnish-Soviet Union Society and the Finnish Association of Finnish Cities, which played an important mediating role in Cold War global urban diplomacy, were responsible for organizing the meetings. In the Soviet Union, town-twinning meetings were part of a state-led, comprehensive foreign policy, and the Soviet Union of Twin Cities and Clubs and the Soviet-Finnish Society were responsible for their implementation. The meetings were marked by strict protocol, but at times participants described "*genuine friendship*", as hundreds of municipal administrators from both sides got to know each other at the grassroots level.⁵²

4.2 THE FINNISH STATE AS A MANAGER OF IMAGE PROMOTION CAMPAIGNS, CULTURAL TREATIES AND EXCHANGE PROGRAMMES

4.2.1 "Wir müssen einen Kulturpakt Machen"

In his memoirs, Heikki Brotherus evokes the 1949 visit of the Hungarian ambassador to Finland, Ferenc Münnich, a former officer that he describes

⁵¹ Renko et al. 2021.

⁵² On city twinnings in Finland, see Kolbe 2018, 3-21.

as unpleasant and rigid. Münnich's first words upon entering his office were clear: "*Wir müssen einen Kulturpakt Machen*". Brotherus describes the practice of cultural treaties at this time as mostly destined to develop relations with the Eastern bloc: it was for Finland a process engaging civil servants, involving official cultural contacts and scripted, bureaucratic cultural forms. Brotherus criticizes cultural treaties as a dry form of cultural cooperation, meant mostly as a support for political relations with socialist countries.⁵³ However, from the point of view of the state's authorities and especially of the Ministry of Education, bilateral cultural treaties would become especially in the 1960s–1970s an important way of channelling international cultural relations.

The Ministry of Education and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs were not always on the same line in these discussions. While the Ministry for Foreign Affairs could think after the mid-1950s about using cultural treaties as a cheap way of showing interest for the Eastern bloc, the Ministry of Education paid attention to the necessities of reciprocity, and was often eager not to spend limited resources on treaties with countries Finland had very little cultural contacts with.⁵⁴ Both ministries also had to deal with the political leadership's initiatives: Marjatta Oksanen underlined that, once Kekkonen had discussed cultural relations with a foreign potentate, the ministries' work was mostly to make things happen as fast as possible.⁵⁵ Both ministries agreed in the 1960s to demand a more systematic approach to cultural and scientific treaties, but generally the initiatives remained random and often politically motivated. Only with the rapid development of the number of treaties in the 1970s, as an aside of the CSCO negotiations, did the Finnish government adopt a set of practices

⁵³ Brotherus 1984, 148–149.

⁵⁴ For example, the Finnish ambassador in Sofia wrote in March 1968 about a possible Finno-Bulgarian cultural treaty. He wrote that he understood the point of view of the Ministry of Education and the universities, who criticized such an idea, mentioning however that such a treaty would be important for trade reasons (UMA, 46 E, Box *Yleistä, Maittain: ...-Englanti, 1951-...*, ambassador W. Schreck to MFA, 14.3.1968). In this case the Ministry for Foreign Affairs was adamant to get a treaty. In the margins of a report written for the political bureau of the Ministry and reporting of slow progress due to the opposition of the Ministry of Education, an anonymous hand wrote in big letters that "*this thing has to be solved as quickly as possible*" (UMA, 46 E, Box *Yleistä, Maittain: ...-Englanti, 1951-...*, PM, *Suomen ja Bulgarian välinen kulttuurivaikto ja tieteellis-teknillis-taloudellinen yhteistyö*, Yrjö Väänänen, 25.7.1968). Cf. UMA, 46 E, Box *Yleistä, Maittain: ...-Englanti, 1951-...*, PM, *Suomen bilateraalisista kulttuurisuhteista*, Kalervo Siikala, 1.3.1967.

⁵⁵ Oksanen 2016, 495–507.

and, in March 1972, the principle of a standard cultural and technical treaty to be replicated with all willing Eastern European countries.⁵⁶

Finland's first cultural treaties were signed already in the 1930s. A typical cultural treaty would then contain a declaration of principles on strengthening cultural links between the states involved, and a more concrete programme containing the exchange of students, scholars, artists, and reciprocal language courses. They would also set an administrative framework managing the treaty's application. After the war, most of these treaties were declared void and throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the number of cultural treaties signed between Finland and foreign countries developed very slowly. This period was dominated by treaties with the Eastern bloc, as Eastern European countries were more interested in developing state-led cultural relations and there was no perceived need of treaties with the West to develop cultural contacts. In 1959, following contacts with Hungarians eager to rebuild relations after the 1956 uprising, a cultural treaty was signed between Finland and Hungary and a joint committee for cultural relations was created between the two countries.⁵⁷ In 1960, the old 1938 cultural treaty with Poland was re-established. In 1968, an agreement was signed with Romania to develop cultural relations during the visit of Romania's prime minister to Finland.⁵⁸ Several proposals were made, especially by Bulgaria, but didn't bring results because of the lack of pre-existing cultural contacts.⁵⁹

While a certain defiance towards cultural treaties disappeared in the late 1960s, there remained problems of coordination between the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education: in 1963, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs had to remind the department of the Ministry of Education dealing with international youth contacts that it could not start alone

⁵⁶UMA, 46 E, Box *Yleistä, PM, Sivistyksellistä, tieteellistä ja ammattilista yhteistyötä koskevat sopimukset Euroopan sosialististen maiden kanssa*, Unto Tanskanen, 25.6.1974; *Idem*, PM, "Kulttuuriryileisopimuksia" koskevasta neuvottelusta 10.2.1972, Erkki Kivimäki, 11.2.1972.

⁵⁷UMA 46 E, Box *Yleistä, maittain: -Englanti, 1951-...*, File *Teknillis-tieteellinen yhteistyösopimuksen ehdotus Suomen ja Bulgarian välillä*, PM, *Suomen kulttuurisopimuksista eri maiden kanssa*, 12.9.1968, Antti Lassila; Numminen 2020, vol 2, 233-234.

⁵⁸UMA 46 E, Box *Yleistä, maittain: -Englanti, 1951-...*, Kansio *Teknillis-tieteellinen yhteistyösopimuksen ehdotus Suomen ja Bulgarian välillä*, PM, *Suomen kulttuurisopimuksista eri maiden kanssa*, Antti Lassila, 12.9.1968.

⁵⁹KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box *Aineistoa 1957-58 ja 1962-69, Suomen UNESCO-toimikunta, Yleisradio/Suomen televisio, Opetusministeriö/Kansainvälisten asiain osasto*, pamphlet, *Finland's international cultural relations*, Kalervo Siikala, nd.

contacts with Eastern Germany, a country not officially recognized by Finland.⁶⁰ Coordination between the ministries was a subject the main protagonists often revisited.⁶¹ In 1968, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs stated in a report that negotiations on cultural treaties had to originate from its services. Things had to be coordinated also with the main interest groups of Finnish industry, especially in the case of “economic-technical” treaties.⁶² The cultural treaties also normally contained clauses emphasizing athletic and sportive cooperation.⁶³

In 1968, before the visit of the Bulgarian president to Finland and following conversations between Kekkonen and the Bulgarian leadership in Sofia in spring 1967, the reflections on a treaty with Bulgaria started negotiations for a cultural treaty that give a good example of the procedures.⁶⁴ The Bulgarians were eager for an ambitious project comprising especially the development of commercial relations. The cultural field and the Ministry of Education did not think that such a treaty was necessary considering the little contacts between Finland and Bulgaria. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs proposed, in order not to vex the Bulgarians, to start negotiating a limited non-paper for 1969, and emphasized how Bulgaria’s treaties with Sweden and Denmark had remained empty shells. In front of this lack of enthusiasm, the ambassador in Sofia tried to emphasize the need to give something to the Bulgarians for political reasons during the Bulgarian president’s visit in June 1968.⁶⁵ But he too thought that, if such a treaty was realized, it had to be general and look for ways to satisfy Finnish interests at a small cost. In February–March 1968, the Finns stabilized a position regarding the Bulgarians insisting on the idea of a treaty, but underlining the costs associated and proposing a more concrete technical and scientific treaty.⁶⁶ Finally, negotiations arrived at a limited cultural treaty in late 1968. Documents show on the one hand a stalling Ministry of Education and on the other hand an impatient Ministry for

⁶⁰ Autio and Heikkilä 1990, 85.

⁶¹ UMA 46 E, Box Yleistä, maittain: -Englanti, 1951-..., *Kansio Teknillis-tieteellinen yhteistyösopimuksen ehdotus Suomen ja Bulgarian välillä*, PM, *Suomen kulttuurisopimuksista eri maiden kanssa*, Antti Lassila, 12.9.1968.

⁶² *Idem*, Letter, *Talous-tekniiset yhteistyösopimukset sosialististen maiden kanssa*, 2.9.1968.

⁶³ UMA, series 67, Box 1, File *Liikuntalakikomitea*, PM, *Suomen urheilusubteita muiden maiden kanssa koskevat asiakirjat*, 18.9.1978, Tapani Brotherus.

⁶⁴ *Idem*, PM, *Bulgarian ehdotus tieteellis-tekniillisestä yhteistyösopimuksesta*, Esko Rajakoski, 27.5.1968.

⁶⁵ *Idem*, Letter, ambassador W. Schreck to Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 14.3.1968.

⁶⁶ *Idem*, PM, *Tieteellis-tekniillisen ja kulttuuriyhteistyön edistäminen Bulgarian kanssa; suurlähettiläs Shivarovin käynti*, Risto Hyvärinen, 3.2.1968.

Foreign Affairs, where especially the Political department demanded at several occasions that things would be rushed towards a politically expedient conclusion.⁶⁷ In 1973, the Finns also negotiated a treaty with Bulgaria on educational, scientific, cultural, and social cooperation, signed in April 1973.

Some caution remained, however, mostly for technical and financial reasons. In a report on bilateral cultural treaties, Siikala insisted in 1967 on the possibility of overstretch:⁶⁸ at the time, a number of countries had expressed their will to make cultural treaties with Finland, from China to Romania, some of them lacking entirely pre-existing cultural relations with Finland. That would mean resources and efforts would have to be directed to artificially developing such relations. But he also underlined how letting spontaneous relations take care of Finland's bilateral cultural relations "*will not do much to cure the problems of dispersion and lack of direction in cultural relations*". Some kind of middle way between spontaneity and the rigidity, conservatism and high costs of state-enforced cultural treaties had to be found, even if for the most part, Siikala's compass pointed to state coordination. In order to organize, "*for political or other reasons*", cultural relations with countries peripheral to the main trends of Finland's spontaneous cultural relations (the Nordic countries, the USA, Germany etc), he suggested the establishment of temporary exchange treaties in limited amount.

In 1971, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs noted that Finland had cultural treaties or agreements with most of Europe's socialist countries.⁶⁹ In 1976, in the context of a new period of increased pressures by the USSR on Finland's domestic and foreign policy, Siikala described that situation as a positive thing, that allowed Finland to help Eastern European countries re-establish relations with Western Europe.⁷⁰ He reminded also that the strengthening of Eastern European national identities, based on a mix of old nationalist visions and new socialist organization, had been enhanced by these cultural relations. Despite numerous demands for cultural

⁶⁷ *Idem*, PM, *Suomen ja Bulgarian välinen kulttuurivaihto ja tieteellis-teknillis-taloudellinen yhteistyö*, Yrjö Väänänen, apulaisosastopäällikkö, 25.7.1968.

⁶⁸ *Idem*, PM, *Suomen bilateraalisista kulttuurisuhteista*, Kalervo Siikala, 1.3.1967. Translated from Finnish.

⁶⁹ *Idem*, UMA, PM, *Kulttuuriyhteistyö Suomen ja sosialististen maiden välillä*, Taneli Kekkonen, 24.9.1971.

⁷⁰ Siikala 1976, 188-189.

treaties, Siikala thought Finland should stay open mostly to serious proposals from countries with which Finland had an interest in developing contacts.⁷¹

In this context, the Soviet Union was, of course, Finland's most important and difficult partner. The Finns had to accept a proposal made with Anastas Mikoyan in 1954 for a technical and scientific treaty that was signed in 1955 under intense pressure from the Soviets. The main issue from a Finnish point of view was the risks of technical espionage and the problems it might cause to scientific cooperation with the West. The treaty was the first of this kind signed between the Soviet Union and a market economy, and it set provisions for technical and scientific cooperation, exchanges of researchers and students.⁷² The Finns considered the treaty a political risk, and its joint committee, the so-called TT-committee, was organized under the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in order to improve political control.⁷³ The committee gathered Soviet and Finnish members, managed on the Finnish side by people close to Kekkonen such as the ethnologist Kustaa Vilkuna (1960–1974). Its function was mostly to support proposals coming from the technical and scientific field and to help various organizations in their contacts with Soviet scientists.

The Finnish state walked a fine line in these negotiations, trying both to stall the most impervious Soviet exigencies and to give content to cultural, scientific and technical relations with the USSR. The Soviet Institute was left out of the picture, and so was the Ministry of Education: until the early 1960s, the TT-committee was the main centre of technical and scientific official cooperation with the USSR, strongly politicized by the interest of the President and its location in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, while the Finland-Soviet Union Society led most of the cultural and artistic relations.

In August 1960, a cultural treaty was signed between Finland and the Soviet Union, the first cultural agreement concluded by the Soviet Union with a capitalist country. This time, the Finns were better disposed than for the 1955 treaty, as they hoped the treaty would help assuage Soviet suspicions regarding Finland's EFTA negotiations that would end in 1961

⁷¹ OPMA, Jaakko Numminen fund, Box Opetusministeriön kansainvälisten asiain osasto, Kansio OPM kansainvälisten asiain osasto 1970-1985, 1987, 1989-1994, UM, LKO PM, *Ulkoasiainministeriön ja opetusministeriön kv. Kulttuuriasioita koskeva yhteistyö*, Anders Hultén, 11.3.1977.

⁷² Numminen 2020, vol 2, 190-194.

⁷³ Autio and Heikkilä 1990 74-78.

with the signature of the FINN-EFTA convention.⁷⁴ The agreement was relatively short, with only seven articles recording the forms of cooperation existing and promising to continue to support them. It covered a wide range of areas: reciprocal visits by representatives of educational institutions and delegations, teachers and students, in the fields of higher education, education, theatre, film, literature, libraries, visual arts and music, lectures and presentations. The agreement also stipulated support for city twinnings and friendship societies and other cultural, social, sports and other institutions, organizations and associations that directly promoted Finno-Soviet cultural ties. The most important form of cooperation dealt with the exchange of university teachers, students, experts and researchers: a separate treaty was signed in 1969 on these matters.

The 1960 treaty had a concrete effect on the relations between the two countries: the Soviet Union started to be more active, sending literature and movies to Finland, and tourism developed between the two countries.⁷⁵ A few years after, in 1963, a committee for cultural exchanges was created under two administrators closed to Kekkonen, Kustaa Vilkuna and Lauri Posti. Cultural exchanges with the Soviet Union became more institutionalized, and the Finnish state earmarked budget for these exchanges. The committee, however, was disbanded before the end of the decade, in part because its partner in the Soviet Union, VOKS, ceased to exist. The responsibility in Finland for cultural contacts with the USSR went back to the Finland-Soviet Union Society, but the treaty strongly involved the Finnish state: in the context of *détente*, the Society managed to stabilize its economic situation only with state funding, becoming a semi-official organization of the Finnish state.

In 1967, Finland and the Soviet Union created a joint bilateral economic commission, on the basis of which a treaty for economic, technical and industrial relations was signed in 1971. In 1974 and 1975, long-term plans for cooperation in natural sciences, social sciences and humanities were negotiated between the two countries.⁷⁶ In order to develop and codify wide-ranging cultural cooperation, a five-year programme for cultural and scientific cooperation has been negotiated and signed since 1978, negotiated by the Soviet Institute.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Perna 2002, 104-107; Mikkonen 2019, 267-268; Siikala 1976, 169-171.

⁷⁵ Numminen 2020, vol 2, 198-199.

⁷⁶ Siikala 1985, 57-65.

⁷⁷ Siikala 1985, 57-65; Perna 2002, 231.

In the early 1970s, the CSCE negotiations started a process of development of cultural relations through treaties that extended to both sides of the iron curtain: between 1970 and 1980, Finland signed cultural treaties with numerous countries from both the Eastern and Western blocs. Oksanen writes in her memoirs that one of the main focuses of the Ministry of Education in 1972 was still the development of cultural treaties with Eastern bloc countries.⁷⁸ Cultural treaties were managed by joint committees, mostly coordinated by the Ministry of Education but with the help of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Their content corresponded rather well with what Andreas Åkerlund describes:⁷⁹ provisions were vague in most fields of cultural and artistic cooperation, while other aspects were restricted and controlled, such as the movement of researchers and students. Treaties mentioned revision of schoolbooks, translation efforts, exchange of arts exhibitions and so forth. Strict reciprocity was an important element, especially with Eastern bloc countries who wanted to control contacts in order to protect themselves from unwanted influences.

Sometimes cultural treaty projects would not come to fruition and Finland would opt for more restricted forms, generally stipend programmes: in 1976, for example, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs sent to the embassy in Canberra a memo of the Ministry of Education in reaction to proposals for a cultural treaty with Australia.⁸⁰ The Ministry of Education made it known that there was in their view no reason to enter into negotiations for a cultural treaty with Australia. But since the interest was mostly linked to the situation of Finns living in Australia, the ministry proposed to start with a reciprocal system of grants. The same arguments were used with other countries, such as Bolivia in 1974.⁸¹ These limited exchange treaties were also used in the case of countries with an uncertain political status, or as a form of first step, like in the case of mainland China in 1973.

In the 1970s, cultural treaties were from the point of view of the Finnish ministries an important part of state-managed, official bilateral

⁷⁸ Autio 1993, 450–51, 468; Oksanen 2016.

⁷⁹ Åkerlund 2016, 64–67.

⁸⁰ UMA, 46 E, Box *Yleistä, maittain: -Englanti, 1951-...*, File *Kulttuurisopimus Suomi-Australia*, Letter, *Kulttuurisopimus Suomi-Australia*, Ministry of Education to MFA, 30.7.1976, Kalervo Siikala and Raija Kallinen; *Idem*, Letter, *Kulttuurisopimus Suomi—Australia*, Canberra ambassador Åke Backström to MFA, 11.6.1976.

⁸¹ *Idem*, Letter, *Bolivian professorivierailua koskeva pyyntö*, Ministry of Education to MFA, 20.3.1974, Kalervo Siikala and Raija Kallinen.

cultural relations. They expressed, to use the words of Benjamin Martin, a statist vision of cultural international relations as well as a vision of culture distinct from the market and from society and strongly linked to state-led national development and the welfare state.⁸² In the specific case of Finland, they also allowed for a measure of support to the country's delicate foreign policy arrangements with the Eastern bloc, a support that was considered difficult to obtain only through spontaneous cultural links.⁸³ After 1970, they supported Finland's relations with various countries both in the West and in emerging regions such as Asia or Africa.

This maturation of Finland's cultural treaty arsenal came also with the emergence of increasingly varied forms of cultural cooperations used by political leaders for developing relations with a widening range of countries, often without coordination with the Ministry of Education and under the influence of varied organizations or personalities. Friendship societies, single ambassadors or cultural and artistic figures would lobby and insist on developing cultural relations with their country of choice, or a political leader would throw the development of culture and education as a cheap way to please a foreign interlocutor.

4.2.2 *Exchange Programmes as a Concrete Part of State-Led Cultural Relations*

In 1964, the commission for stipend programmes of the Ministry of Education summarized in a report a largely shared view on exchanges and stipend programmes:

There are many obvious reasons for the expansion of scholarship programmes. The programmes are cheap and effective. They provide opportunities for effective language training and promote the exchange of information and the spread of new stimuli in different fields. Their importance as an enhancer of professional and scientific competence is undeniable. They promote a balanced

⁸² Martin 2022.

⁸³ UMA, 46 E, Box Yleistä, File Sivistyksellinen, tieteellinen ja ammattiliinen yhteistyö, yhteistyösopimukset Suomen ja Euroopan sosialististen maiden välillä, PM, Sivistyksellistä, tieteellistä ja ammattilista yhteistyötä koskevat sopimukset Euroopan sosialististen maiden kanssa, Unto Tanskanen, 25.6.1974; Idem, PM, "Kulttuurilyleissopimuksia" koskevasta neuvottelusta, Erkki Kivimäki, jasostosihteeri, UM, oikeudellinen osasto, 11.2.1972.

*perception of foreign countries and contribute to the establishment of lasting international friendship and cooperation.*⁸⁴

Exchange programmes were a concrete way in which the Finnish state worked to develop Finland's international cultural contacts. After the 1950s, some of the exchange programmes for researchers and students were channelled through UNESCO, the organization acting as a facilitator between Finland and other countries: in 1957 for example, UNESCO connected Finland and Poland for exchanges linked to the study of Slavic languages.⁸⁵ But most of these exchanges worked through bilateral contacts and treaties with foreign countries. The stipend programmes were reciprocal, moving researchers, artists, students from Finland to the world and from the world to Finland. This development took place within the context of the postwar development of scholar and student exchanges.⁸⁶

When in 1957, the freshly created Finnish UNESCO committee took to managing the stipend programmes already existing and managed by the Finnish state, Finland had state-managed bilateral exchange programmes with Belgium, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, Italy, Norway, France, Sweden, and Western Germany (see Table 4.1).⁸⁷ While most were managed by the ministry, the USSR was the exception: the exchange programme was managed by the Finland-Soviet Union society.⁸⁸ Private organizations or organizations not linked to the Finnish state managed a lot of exchange programmes: civil society organizations, from industrial interest groups to cultural organizations, universities, the Finnish chapters of international organizations such as the Youth for Understanding,⁸⁹ PEN, Rotary clubs or YMCAs, and a variety of private companies also organized their own exchanges, language trainings abroad, summer schools, etc.

⁸⁴ OPMA, Box *Ci:Stipendiasia*in toimikunnan pöytäkirjat 59–64, *Esityslistat ja pöytäkirjat* 1964, PM, *Opetusministeriön kansainvälisten stipendiasia*in toimikunnan ehdotus Suomen kansainvälisten stipendisuhhteiden laajentamiseksi, 16.1.1964.

⁸⁵ OPMA, *Unesco-arkisto* fund, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta*, 1b, 83, *Toimintakertomukset ja suunnitelmat*, 1957–1977, PM, *Kertomus Suomen Unesco-toimikunnan toiminnasta v 1957*, 7.2.1958.

⁸⁶ Tournès and Scott-Smith 2018. For a systematic study of exchange programmes in another Nordic country, see Åkerlund 2016.

⁸⁷ OPMA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta* fund, Box 8, *Toimintakertomukset ja suunnitelmat*, 1957–1977, PM, *Vuosikertomus Suomen Unesco-toimikunnan toiminnasta v 1957*, 7.2.1958.

⁸⁸ Kinnunen 1998.

⁸⁹ Mämmelä 2011.

Table 4.1 Finland's cultural treaties and other bilateral instruments of cultural cooperation, 1945–1980

<i>Year (signature)</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Treaty type</i>
1955	Soviet Union	Technical and scientific treaty
1958	Sweden	Finnish-Swedish Bilateral Cultural Fund
1959	Hungary	Cultural treaty
1960	Poland	Re-establishment of the 1938 cultural treaty
	Soviet Union	Cultural treaty
1968	Romania	Agreement on Cultural Exchanges
1970	France	Treaty for cultural and scientific cooperation
1971	Nordic Countries	Agreement between Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden concerning cultural cooperation
1973	Bulgaria	Treaty for educational, scientific, cultural and social cooperation
	Democratic Republic of Germany	Treaty on economic, scientific-technical and industrial cooperation
	Czechoslovakia	Treaty on cooperation in cultural, scientific and related fields
	Austria	Treaty on Cultural Cooperation
	Yugoslavia	Cultural Treaty
1974	Romania	Agreement on cooperation in cultural, scientific and other related fields
	Iceland	Bilateral Cultural Fund
1976	Great Britain	Agreement on cultural exchanges
	Italy	Finnish-Italian Agreement on Cultural and Scientific Cooperation
1978	Federal Republic of Germany	Agreement on cultural cooperation
	Democratic Republic of Germany	Finnish-East German agreement on cultural and scientific cooperation
	Japan	Cultural Treaty
	Austria	Cultural Treaty
	Turkey	Cultural Treaty
1979	Albania	Agreement on Cultural Exchanges
	Belgium	Cultural Treaty
	Spain	Cultural Treaty
	Norway	Bilateral Cultural Fund
1980	Iraq	Cultural Treaty
	China	Agreement on Cultural Exchanges
	Mongolia	Agreement on Cultural Exchanges

Source: OPMA, Jaakko Numminen fund, Box *Opetusministeriön kansainvälisten asiain osasto, PM, Suomen solminat bilateraaliset kulttuurisopimukset, vaihto-objelmat tai kahdenväliset kulttuurirahastot (marraskuu 1980)*, November 1980

The question was very much, once again, one of resources. In the 1960s, the Ministry of Education in particular lobbied for more of these exchange programmes to be managed by the Ministry, and with better resources. A 1961 report by the Ministry of Education stated that “*within the framework of UNESCO as well as on a bilateral basis, the opportunities for international cultural interaction and the development of scholarship exchanges are being fully exploited*”.⁹⁰ This expansion of scholarship programmes, however, met with resistance concerning funding for most of the 1960s. The Ministry of Education’s repeated requests for additional funding were met with limited response, and programmes were typically run, on Finland’s side, as cheap as possible. In May 1963, Oittinen and Siikala expressed their frustration at the situation:

*To date, the funds required for scholarship programmes have been paid out of profits gained by Finland’s state monopoly on betting and automatic gambling machines, and have not been taken from the state budget. As the programs are likely to increase as a result of the expansion of international cultural cooperation, it is proposed to consider whether the necessary funds should be included in the budget, for example for expenditure on international cultural exchanges.*⁹¹

In 1964, the committee proposed an end to this system and the incorporation of stipend programmes in the regular budget of the ministry.⁹² Similar requests, such as a broader commitment to the cost of accommodation for foreign fellows, had to be repeated by the Ministry of Education throughout the 1960s, largely in vain before the 1970s.⁹³ Siikala used often foreign examples as arguments to ask for more resources: after a trip to the US in 1964, he described the lavishness of US accommodation facilities for foreign students and the resources put at the disposal of foreign students, regretting that Finland’s financial situation did not allow

⁹⁰ OPMA, Box *Kansainvälisten kulttuuriasiain toimikunta, 1952–1963, Stipendiasiaain toimikunta*, PM, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta/Opetusministeriön kansainvälisten stipendiasiaain toimikunta, Kertomus vuodelta 1962*. Translated from Finnish.

⁹¹ OPMA, Box *Ci:1 Stipendiasiaain toimikunnan pöytäkirjat 59–64*, PM, *Alote (sic) opetusministeriölle, Stipendiasiaain hallinnon rationalisoiminen*, May 1963, Reino Oittinen, Kalervo Siikala. Translated from Finnish.

⁹² OPMA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund*, Box 5, 842 *Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat liitteineen, 1964–1965)*, PM, *pöytäkirja*, 20.3.1964.

⁹³ Esimerkiksi OPMA, Jaakko Numminen fund, Box *OPM:in Kansainvälisten asiain osasto, 70–94*, PM, *Vireillä olevia asioita hallituksen vaihtuessa*, Kansainvälisten asiain osasto, 19.5.1970.

this kind of hospitality, although exchange programmes were the best way to foster a positive image of the country.⁹⁴

Most of the existing official exchange programmes were managed by the Ministry of Education, and after 1956 by the UNESCO committee. For most programmes, the Ministry annually announced applications for Finnish students and researchers, collected applications and either made proposals for their distribution or implemented the decisions of specialized committees responsible for certain programmes: exchanges with the Nordic countries, Hungary and Poland were managed by their own committees; exchanges with the Soviet Union were managed either by the Finland-Soviet Union Society or by the Soviet Institute; exchange programmes with the United States were managed by a specific committee; and the Ministry also had a committee for the Sibelius programme meant for musicians.⁹⁵ The fact that the UNESCO committee was a key player until the mid-1960s was sometimes misunderstood: applicants had to be individually informed that the scholarship was paid by a foreign government and not by UNESCO.⁹⁶ In order to avoid misunderstandings, the Ministry of Education decided as early as 1959 that the committee should function under a different title in its tasks related to scholarship programmes, the International Scholarship Committee. In 1968, the name was changed to the Scholarship Division of the Department for International Affairs.⁹⁷

Starting with the creation of the UNESCO committee, the number of applicants was modest at first: in 1961, the Ministry of Education received a total of 131 exchange applications for the programmes it managed.⁹⁸ The number of outgoing and incoming students seems to have remained at about the same level until the mid-1960s, despite the fact that the

⁹⁴ OPMA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund*, Box 5, 842 *Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat liitteineen, 1964-1965)*, PM, *Matkakertomus*, 1.1964, Kalervo Siikala.

⁹⁵ For example, the Western German stipends in 1961: OPMA, *Stipendiasiaain toimikunta fund*, Box *Eac:11960, Belgia-Saksan liittotasavalta*, Letter, *Saksan liittotasavallan apurahat suomalaisille opiskelijoille ja taiteilijoille lukuvuodeksi 1961-62*, 27.3.1961.

⁹⁶ KA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund*, Box 17, PM, *Tiedote Suomen tietotoimistolle Suomen Unesco-toimikunnasta*, 3.3.1959.

⁹⁷ OPMA, Box *Ci:1Stipendiasiaain toimikunnan pöytäkirjat 59-64*, PM, *Vuosikertomus Opetusministeriön kansainvälisten stipendiasiaain toimikunnan toiminnasta 1960*, 10.3.1961, R.H. Oittinen.

⁹⁸ OPMA, Box *Ci:1Stipendiasiaain toimikunnan pöytäkirjat 59-64*, PM, *Vuosikertomus Opetusministeriön kansainvälisten stipendiasiaain toimikunnan toiminnasta 1960*, 10.3.1961, R.H. Oittinen.

number of students in Finnish universities increased year after year. This was, of course, also influenced by the fact that the number of scholarships offered by foreign countries and coordinated by the Finnish state remained almost the same throughout the 1960s, despite repeated requests from the UNESCO committee: in the academic year 1965–1966, there were 75 scholarships offered to Finns, excluding ASLA-Fulbright, and 25 scholarships offered to foreigners in Finland.⁹⁹ Numbers changed a bit the next year (see Table 4.2) but remained at the same levels. The number of both scholarships and applications did not start to grow clearly until the 1970s. In the case of Western Germany, the Ministry of Education was already in 1970–1971 processing 110 applications for this country alone.¹⁰⁰

Application documents filled by foreigners and Finns make for fascinating reading, as well as the reports written by stipend holders upon their return. Most Finns justified their applications either by the desire for better qualification, or a will to see the world and “internationalize”. Application for the Soviet Union only extremely rarely expressed any ideological background: the point was most of the time to obtain diplomas recognized in Finland for cheap, and a sense of adventure.¹⁰¹ Assessors and writers of recommendation as well as the choice of destination played a role in the application process: if the applicant was leaving for a place with few applicants, his or her chances were naturally higher. Countries also offered exchanges of varying lengths: the Soviet Union and West Germany had generally a high number of applicants because of their longer exchange periods.

Regarding the everyday life of educational exchanges, there is a large amount of correspondence with individual scholars in the archives of the International Scholarship Commission, for example, about studying in the Soviet Union. Exchanges with the Soviet Union caused few costs, since

⁹⁹ “Scholarship” in this case means a period of mobility abroad given to one individual according to a specific agreement with a foreign country or organization. The same agreement could include several scholarships, which generally ranged in length from two to ten months. Kts. OPMA, Box Ci:1Stipendiasiaain toimikunnan pöytäkirjat 59–64, *Esityslistat ja pöytäkirjat 1964*, PM, *Opetusministeriön kansainvälisten stipendiasiaain toimikunnan ehdotus Suomen kansainvälisten stipendiusubteiden laajentamiseksi*, 16.1.1964; OPMA, Box *Kansainvälisten kulttuuriasiaain toimikunta, 1951–1966*, PM, *Lukuvuoden 1965–66 stipendiiohjelma*.

¹⁰⁰ Kts. OPMA, Box Ci:3Stipendiasiaain toimikunnan pöytäkirjat 69–72, PM, *Pöytäkirjat 1969*, and lists of applicants, *Japanin, Länsi-Saksan ja Sveitsin hallituksen apurahat 1970–71*.

¹⁰¹ Pernaa 2002, 156.

Table 4.2 Exchanges managed by organizations under the Ministry of Education, 1958

<i>Programmes and countries involved (either destination or provenance)</i>	<i>Numbers/ duration</i>	<i>Specializations</i>
Finns abroad, UNESCO stipends (<i>duration not mentioned in the source</i>)		
Poland	1 stipend	Slavic linguistics
United States	4 stipends	Sea research, atomic energy research, television and media studies
Denmark/Sweden	1 stipend	Atomic energy research, study trip
France	1 stipend	Press
France/Great Britain	2 stipends	Television and media studies, study trip
Far-East countries	1 stipend	Fact-finding trip
Foreigners in Finland, UNESCO stipends (<i>duration not mentioned in the source</i>)		
Yugoslavia	1 stipend	Fact-finding trip
Kenya	1 stipend	Adult education
United Arab Republic (1958–1961)	1 stipend	Sports education, youth work
Finnish Workers' mobility groups abroad		
	4	
Foreign Workers' mobility groups to Finland		
	1	
Bilateral stipend programmes, Finns abroad		
Belgium	1 stipend, 4 months	Unspecified
Iceland	1 stipend, 10 months	Unspecified
Italy	2 stipends, 4 months	Architecture, Arts
Norway	1 stipend, 4 months	Unspecified
Sweden	4 stipends, 4 months	Medicine, unspecified
Federal Republic of Germany	7 stipends, 1 year	Law, education, church music, unspecified
Soviet Union	4 stipends, 5 years	Visual, musical, and performative arts, movie direction, law, unspecified
	16 stipends, 1 year	

(continued)

Table 4.2 (continued)

<i>Programmes and countries involved (either destination or provenance)</i>	<i>Numbers/ duration</i>	<i>Specializations</i>
<i>Great Britain and France managed their own programmes' recruitment through diplomatic channels, the numbers are not mentioned in the source.</i>		
Bilateral stipend programmes, foreigners in Finland		
Belgium	3 stipends, 4 months	Sports education, unspecified
Iceland	1 stipend, 8 months	Architecture
Italy	1 stipend, 4 months	Architecture
Sweden	2 stipends, 4 months	Unspecified
Great Britain	1 stipend, 4 months	Architecture
Norway	1 stipend, 4 months	Textile design
Federal Republic of Germany	2 stipends, 4 months	Unspecified
Soviet Union	1 stipend, 4 months	Unspecified

Source: OPMA, *Unesco-arkisto* fund, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 1b, 83, Toimintakertomukset ja suunnitelmat, 1957-1977*, PM, *Kertomus Suomen Unesco-toimikunnan toiminnasta v 1958, 1.2.1959*

the Soviet Union took care of the needs of Finnish students, but problems were often of a practical nature. In 1964, Finnish Soviet scholarship recipients turned to the Ministry of Education to increase the amount of their scholarships: at that time, scholarships for Finns were 90–100 rubbles a month, when, for example, the French received 170 rubbles, the Americans 150 rubbles and the Swedes 140 rubbles.¹⁰² Lack of basic amenities such as warm water and the rather spartan conditions of life in Soviet student accommodations were also emphasized.

In the 1960s–1970s, the volume of foreign exchanges grew. The *Foreign Study and Research Scholarships (Ulkomaiset opiskelu- ja tutkimusapurahat)* brochure published by the Ministry of Education in the late 1970s brought together different scholarship opportunities by country. At

¹⁰² OPMA, Box Ci: *Istipendiasiaain toimikunnan pöytäkirjat 59–64, Esityslistat ja pöytäkirjat 1964*, PM, *Pöytäkirja kansainvälisten stipendiasiaain toimikunnan kokouksesta, 20.2.1964*.

this point, the socialist countries dominated quantitatively in interstate official agreements. In the case of the Soviet Union, 20 full-time scholarships, 25–30 yearlong research fellowships, a number of fellowships in various fields for academic studies, and 100 summer course fellowships were listed.¹⁰³

In the 1960s, more exotic destinations alongside Europe, the United States and the Soviet Union started to emerge. In 1965, consideration was already given to including Japan in the programme. The proposal originally came from the embassy in Tokyo, and the first eight-month grant to Japan came in the same year. Although there were no applications during the first years, in a few years, there were many times as many applicants to Japan as there were possibilities.¹⁰⁴ The same phenomenon was repeated with Thailand. All in all, however, stipend holders headed primarily from Finland to European countries and the United States, but the panel started to diversify: in the 1963–1964 school year, there were individual entrants to Algeria, Brazil, Ceylon, India and Pakistan.¹⁰⁵ Exchange programmes with mainland China were opened during a state visit of the minister of Education Marjatta Väänänen in the spring of 1973. The Chinese example shows well how these exchanges could be very different from one country to the other: the treaty stipulated the sending of a Chinese language lecturer in Helsinki and reciprocal language stipends for Finnish and Chinese students.

Exchange as part of stipend programmes worked in both directions, and the number of foreign students in Finnish universities started to increase in 1954, when there were 105 foreign students in Finland.¹⁰⁶ The number remained close to a hundred for a decade: according to the Ministry of Education, a total of 115 foreign students studied at Finnish universities and colleges in the academic years 1959, 1960 and 1961. The figure was significantly lower than in other Nordic countries, as the Ministry of Education often pointed out, a situation they said originated

¹⁰³ *Ulkomaiset opiskelu- ja tutkimusapurahat*, Opetusministeriön stipendiasiaain keskus [n.d., 1978?].

¹⁰⁴ OPMA, Box Ci:2Stipendiasiaain toimikunnan pöytäkirjat 65–68, PM, *Pöytäkirjat 1965, esityslista ja pöytäkirja kokouksesta*, 25.3.1965.

¹⁰⁵ OPMA, Ci:1Stipendiasiaain toimikunnan pöytäkirjat 59–64, *Esityslistat ja pöytäkirjat 1964*, PM, *Opetusministeriön kansainvälisten stipendiasiaain toimikunnan ehdotus Suomen kansainvälisten stipendisubteiden laajentamiseksi*, 16.1.1964.

¹⁰⁶ KA, Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund, Box 44, PM, *Unesco Questionnaire, filled by Helvi Rastikainen*, 23.1.1959.

from poor hospitality conditions and the small number of stipends offered by Finland.¹⁰⁷ The number of students who came to Finland even decreased in the early 1960s, with 88 students in 1963.¹⁰⁸ In its 1964 report, the Stipend Commission stated bitterly that “*there is no reciprocity to be talked about, but the scholarships awarded by Finland represent only a small fraction of the scholarships received by Finland*”. The situation “*does not correspond in any way to the pursuit of active international cultural relations, which is a declared principle of Finland’s foreign policy*”. The Ministry of Education wanted to propose more stipends to foreigners, and a 1964 report called for a long-term plan to increase the number of scholarships.¹⁰⁹ The results were modest: two new scholarships were opened, one for African countries and one “*for Nordic researchers in the Finnish language*”¹¹⁰ (see Table 4.2).

In the mid-1960s, exchange programmes brought students to Finland mainly from other parts of Europe and the United States. For example, in the academic year 1963–1964, 14 of the foreign students who were in Finland on programmes directly managed by the Ministry of Education were from Western Germany, 11 from Sweden, 14 from the United States, 5 from the Soviet Union and individual students from other countries.¹¹¹ Statistics from the UNESCO committee show that almost half of the students who came to Finland through programmes managed by the government came to study the humanities (mainly the Finnish language, literature and history), a quarter came to study social sciences and about a fifth natural sciences, design, architecture, and technology.¹¹² One of the main motives for studying in Finland was scientific interest in the Finnish

¹⁰⁷ OPMA, *Ci:1Stipendiasiaain toimikunnan pöytäkirjat 59–64, Esityslistat ja pöytäkirjat 1964*, PM, *Opetusministeriön kansainvälisten stipendiasiaain toimikunnan ehdotus Suomen kansainvälisten stipendisuhteiden laajentamiseksi*, 16.1.1964

¹⁰⁸ KA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund*, Box 44, PM, *Tilastollisen päätoimiston kooste Unesco-toimikunnalle*, 7.12.1964.

¹⁰⁹ OPMA, Box *Ci:1Stipendiasiaain toimikunnan pöytäkirjat 59–64, Esityslistat ja pöytäkirjat 1964*, PM, *Opetusministeriön kansainvälisten stipendiasiaain toimikunnan ehdotus Suomen kansainvälisten stipendisuhteiden laajentamiseksi*, 16.1.1964.

¹¹⁰ OPMA, Box *Ci:1Stipendiasiaain toimikunnan pöytäkirjat 59–64, PM, Esityslistat ja pöytäkirjat 1964, kansainvälisten stipendiasiaain toimikunnan kokous*, 20.2.1964.

¹¹¹ KA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund*, Box 44, PM, *Tilastollisen päätoimiston kooste Unesco-toimikunnalle*, 7.12.1964.

¹¹² KA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund*, Box 44, PM, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunnan laatima muistio*, n.d.; OPMA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund*, Box 5, 842 *Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat liitteinen, 1964–1965)*, PM, *Vuosikertomus 1963*, nd.

language, as Pertti Virtaranta describes in his book about foreign linguists' relations with Finland.¹¹³ Of the scholarship students in 1960–1963, the largest single group (16 students) came to study the Finnish language, literature and history.¹¹⁴ Contacts with the Finnish language or Finland often preceded a student exchange. A good example of this is the 1970 application by Béla Gunda from Hungary: the head of the Department of Ethnology at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, he had previously studied Fenno-Ugric ethnology.¹¹⁵

Decisions on foreign scholarship holders to Finland were largely made abroad, in cooperation with embassies, local authorities and the Ministry of Education. For example, Finnish state scholarships for British students were decided in 1970 on the basis of a shortlist established by the embassy in London, with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs sending the information to the Department of Education for implementation.¹¹⁶ In the case of Sweden, the scholarship committee of the Swedish Institute sent a list of named recipients to the Embassy of Finland, and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs forwarded it to the Ministry of Education.¹¹⁷ In cases where the application volume was relatively small, the delegation simply sent a list of applicants to the Ministry of Education, which, in turn, made decisions about the recipients of the scholarships.¹¹⁸ In the case of more distant countries, decisions could be taken entirely by the embassy: the candidates nominated by Nigeria were evaluated at the embassy in Lagos on the basis of letters of recommendation from their professors. The personnel of the

¹¹³Virtaranta 1995.

¹¹⁴OPMA, Box *Kansainvälisten kulttuuriasiain toimikunta, 1951–1966*, PM, *Suomen bilateraaliset stipendivaihtosuhteet 1963–1964*.

¹¹⁵OPMA, *Kansainvälisten Stipendiasiain toimikunta fund*, Box Eac:3 1970, *Alankomaat-Unkari*, Application by Béla Gunda, 7.4.1970.

¹¹⁶OPMA, *Stipendiasiain toimikunnan arkisto*, Eac:3 1970, *Alankomaat-Unkari*, Letter, MFA to Ministry of Education, *Suomen hallituksen apurahat englantilaisille v. 1970–71*, 4.4.1970.

¹¹⁷OPMA, *Stipendiasiain toimikunta fund*, Box Eac:31970, *Alankomaat-Unkari*, Letter, MFA to Ministry of Education, *Suomen hallituksen apurahat ruotsalaisille v 1970–71*, 9.4.1970.

¹¹⁸Ks. esim. OPMA, *Stipendiasiain toimikunta fund*, Box Eac:31970, *Alankomaat-Unkari*, Letter, MFA to Ministry of Education, *Suomen hallituksen apurahat israelilaisille v. 1970–71*, 28.4.1970.

embassy added comments on the applicants' psychology, family situation, supposed intelligence and other qualities or defaults.¹¹⁹

In the case of non-European developing countries in the 1960s, the Ministry of Education regularly collected applications but asked for an opinion from the International Development Assistance Office of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The increase in scholarships for students and researchers in developing countries in the 1960s was the result of Finland's response to UNESCO's call for scholarship programmes to be used as a form of development cooperation.¹²⁰ In 1963, UNESCO called on its member states to consider awarding scholarships to African graduates who wished to continue their studies abroad. In January 1964, the Department of International Scholarship Affairs of the Ministry of Education considered African scholarship programmes on this basis. The Finnish UNESCO Commission set up a special section to deal with the matter, which proposed five scholarships to African countries. Outside Europe, interest in Finland gradually expanded:¹²¹ in 1966, the countries that received scholarship applications to Finland without having specific dedicated programmes with Finland but as part of extra contingents were typically from Africa and Asia.¹²²

During the 1970s, the network of exchange agreements began to expand significantly, expanding the exchange opportunities for Finnish students both in terms of new countries and the number of available places. This laid the foundation for the actual breakthrough of international mobility that took place in Finland in the 1990s, with the development of the Erasmus programme and Finland's EU membership. In the context of the Cold War, the stated goals of the exchanges emphasized neutrality and adhered to the goals set by Finland for its cultural diplomacy: economic and trade development, educational development, geopolitical factors and the promotion of Finland's international image, but also the development of the national project, internationalization and the

¹¹⁹ OPMA, Box Ci:1Stipendiasiaain toimikunnan pöytäkirjat 59–64, PM, *Esityslistat ja pöytäkirjat 1964, Suomen hallituksen apuraha afrikkalaisille 1964–65.*

¹²⁰ OPMA, *Stipendiasiaain toimikunta fund*, Box Eac:21965, *Alankomaat-Yhdysvallat*, Letter to the MFA's development office, 25.5.1966.

¹²¹ OPMA, *Kansainvälisten kulttuuriasiaain toimikunta fund*, Box 1951–1966, PM, *Afrikan stipendiohjelma*, 15.1.1964.

¹²² OPMA, Box Ci:2Stipendiasiaain toimikunnan pöytäkirjat 65–68, PM, *Pöytäkirjat 1966–1967*, 17.5.1966.

modernization of society came to the fore. Scholarship programmes were mainly seen in a positive light and were particularly important to the Ministry of Education, which tried also to improve foreign stipends' living conditions in Finland.

Finland also participated in stipends and exchange programmes coordinated by UNESCO: already in late 1958, Finland contributed 21,500 dollars to participate in a variety of stipends organized by UNESCO, from a seminar for art teachers to a stipend for television journalists,¹²³ from internships for young workers' associations to a scientific seminar on atomic energy.¹²⁴ Through UNESCO, exchange programmes for workers and trade unionists developed in Finland. In 1958, for example, the UNESCO committee offered workers' education programmes, through which delegations from trade unions would travel, for example, to Switzerland, Western Germany, Belgium, Holland or Denmark.¹²⁵ The 1959 report stated that "*during the previous year the stipends have grown in numbers, especially UNESCO's education programs for workers, in which Finland is both sender and receiver*".¹²⁶ In the 1960s, Finland's trade unions and workers' associations could apply for mobility programmes and exchanges through UNESCO¹²⁷, and direct UNESCO stipends were also open to Finns for trips and studies of certain disciplines.¹²⁸ In 1961, for instance, UNESCO opened stipends for writers, composers and artists, "*specialists in information processing and automatic computation*", or specialists in sea ecology.¹²⁹ Although educational exchanges were perceived

¹²³ OPMA, Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund, Box 3, file 842 Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat liitteineen) 1958-1960, PM, Pöytäkirja, 29.5.1958.

¹²⁴ OPMA, Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund, Box 3, file 842 Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat liitteineen) 1958-1960, PM, Pöytäkirja, 2.10.1958.

¹²⁵ OPMA, Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund, Box 8 Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 1b, 83, Toimintakertomukset ja suunnitelmat, 1957-1977, PM, Kertomus Suomen Unesco-toimikunnan toiminnasta v 1958, 1.2.1959.

¹²⁶ OPMA, Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund, Box 8 Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 1b, 83, Toimintakertomukset ja suunnitelmat, 1957-1977, Kertomus Suomen Unesco-toimikunnan toiminnasta v 1959, 17.3.1960.

¹²⁷ OPMA, Box Kansainvälisten kulttuuriasiain toimikunta, 1952-1963, Stipendiasiaain toimikunta, PM, Suomen Unesco-toimikunta/Opetusministeriön kansainvälisten stiependiasiaain toimikunta, Kertomus vuodelta 1962, Helsinki 1963.

¹²⁸ KA, Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund, Box Unesco TDK Ulospäin suuntautuva informaatio 1964-1966, 540 19:16, communiqué, Unescon apurahoja suomalaisille, 8.8.1966.

¹²⁹ OPMA, Suomen Unesco toimikunta fund, Box 4, 842 Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat liitteineen, 1961-1963), PM, Pöytäkirja, 25.4.1961.

above all as university exchanges, Oittinen especially emphasized the importance of internships and exchange programmes for young workers. His views emphasized the need for the working population and young people to get a true picture of the world, as well as the need for Finland to be active in international cultural organizations.¹³⁰ In the early 1960s, he was eager to emphasize and preserve UNESCO's Workers Travel Grant programme: Kalevi Sorsa reported in 1963 to UNESCO that Oittinen considered the scheme as "*one of the basic working methods of UNESCO (just as fellowships were) which cannot be replaced by something else*".¹³¹ These forms of exchanges however disappeared in the 1970s.

Development cooperation agreements were also signed under the leadership of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Stipends with Africa were discussed in the mid-1960s as part of a growing Finland's development aid destined to former colonies.¹³² Discussions insisted especially on attracting young diploma-holders in technical disciplines. The main problems were the difficulties to choose these candidates due to the little Finnish diplomatic representation in Africa. So UNESCO organized a lot of these programmes, such as the UNESCO East-West programme. In 1965, the Finnish government, however, considers that exchange programmes were extremely important for Finland and should not have only an emphasis on developing countries.¹³³

In this palette of exchanges between Finland and the world, two programmes stood out: exchanges with the United States and exchanges with the Soviet Union. Both were managed in part outside the Ministry of Education, but got drawn in the Ministry's area of influence around the 1960s.

With the United States, the main form of exchange was the ASLA-Fulbright programme. The Fulbright programme started in 1946 after

¹³⁰ See for instance speeches and letters in KA, Reino Oittinen fund, Box 7, *Kansalaisykskuvatus, puheita, esitelmiä, 1952-1959*. See also Kiuru 1995, 15-17.

¹³¹ TA, Kalevi Sorsa fund, 92, U 36, file *Unescoon virkaan liittyvät asiakirjat*, Sorsa to Mr Carter, Director of the International Exchange Service, 2.5.1963, *mission to Scandinavian capitals, 1-5 april*.

¹³² OPMA, *Suomen Unesco toimikunta* fund, Box 12, 844 *Muut kokoukset, erityisjaosto 1958-1964*, PM, *Pöytäkirja Suomen unesco-toimikunnan Afrikan stipendiohjelman jaoston kokouksesta*, 24.10.1963.

¹³³ OPMA, *Suomen Unesco toimikunta* fund, Box 4, 842 *Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat liitteineen, 1961-1963)*, Draft, *Unescon ohjelma ja budjetti vv 1965-66, Suomen hallituksen kommentaarit*.

Congress adopted a law concerning the use of excess war budget to build a stipend programme for foreigners. Finland joined the programme in 1952. However, Finland got the benefit of a distinct programme, the ASLA (*Amerikan Suomen lainan apuraha*, Finnish for “Grants from the American Loan to Finland”)—programme. This was set in 1949 through a separate law which authorized the use of the repayment and interest of Finland’s World War I debt to the United States for educational and cultural exchanges between the two countries.

In his work, Marek Fields describes well how the development of the ASLA-Fulbright cooperation began in 1948.¹³⁴ Heikki Brotherus remembers in his memoirs the cultural suspicions against contacts with the United States present among the Finnish leadership in the late 1940s. The geopolitical situation was also difficult before the spring 1948 and the signature of a treaty with the Soviet Union. Finland was one of the first nations to be offered the opportunity to join the Fulbright Program in 1947, but since it was just re-establishing relations with the Soviet Union after the war, an extensive agreement on educational cooperation with the United States might have been perceived as a threat at the other end of the political spectrum.¹³⁵ However, in 1948–1949, Brotherus and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs were able to answer positively to American demands and started negotiating an academic exchange treaty based on the law set by the American Congress. The basis for this law was the enormous goodwill garnered in the United States by Finland’s timely repayment of its loan, and the country’s resistance in front of Soviet aggression in 1939–1940. Problems became technical, and negotiations revolved mostly around the composition of the committee in charge of managing the exchange programme: in December 1949, the United States accepted the Finnish demand that the committee would be made of an equal number of Finnish and American members and that the Finnish government would nominate the Finnish members.¹³⁶

Finland sent out the first ASLA-grantees in 1950. Finnish students and scholars gained access to educational resources not available at that time in Finland. Mikko Majander also describes the way these exchange travels were used by the anti-communist wing of the Social-democrats and trade

¹³⁴ Fields 2019, 186; Majander 2007, 219–234; Tarkka 2012, 104–106.

¹³⁵ Fields 2015, 200 et s, 334–336.

¹³⁶ UMA, Box *Luettelo muistioista 48-50*, PM, *Muistio Fulbright-sopimuksesta*, 2.12.1949, Heikki Brotherus; *idem*, PM, *Muistio Fulbright-sopimuksesta*, 3.1.1950, Heikki Brotherus.

unions to gather money to finance the party in Finland, using the argument that the SDP was the best wall against communism in Finland. The trade unionist Olavi Lindblom's trip in the autumn of 1951 was a good example of that: he left with advice to gather money from US trade unions. The exchanges also contributed to the spread in Finland of American ideas on management and state intervention. Ideologically, the exchange programme was a part of US Cold War politics, which strived to strengthen the mental barrier between the Western and the Eastern bloc, yet without openly challenging the Soviet Union. This worked in spreading economic, social and industrial methods, the American way of life, as well as building a link between some Finnish organizations and the United States.¹³⁷ In his book, Ambassador Jukka Valtasaari reminds his reader of the importance of the exchange programme in keeping alive relations between the United States and Finland in difficult times.¹³⁸ In 1971, the Ministry of Education counted that, from the beginning of the scheme, a grand total of 427 Americans and 554 Finns travelled respectively to Finland and to the United States as part of the ASLA-Fulbright programme.¹³⁹

For the Soviet case, numbers remained unequal: only a few Soviet students came to Finland while hundreds of Finns went to the Soviet Union. For most of the period under scrutiny, these exchanges worked through the Finland-Soviet Union Society, but what Ville Pernaa called “*a state-coordinated way to the Soviet Union*” opened up already next to this “political way” in the late 1950s.¹⁴⁰ In 1957, an exchange treaty was signed, comprising the mobility of 20 Finnish students per year to the Soviet Union and a couple of Soviet students towards Finland. This exchange was managed by the stipend committee in the Ministry of Education, then by the Soviet Institute. Things became more systematic and volumes grew in 1969, after the negotiations between Finnish universities and ministries and Soviet organizations of an agreement on cultural exchanges. The exchange was signed for the period 1969–1973, but continued up until the early 1990s. 100–200 Finnish students went to the Soviet Union every

¹³⁷ Jalava 2012, 37; Allardt 1984; Tarkka 2002.

¹³⁸ Valtasaari 2013, 51.

¹³⁹ OPMA, Box *Kansainvälisten kulttuuriasiain toimikunta, 1952-1963, Stipendiasiain toimikunta*, PM, *Recipients of US government Fulbright-Hayes grants, starting academic year 1953-1954*, Helsinki, 21.4.1971.

¹⁴⁰ OPMA, Box *Kansainvälisten kulttuuriasiain toimikunta, 1952-1963, Stipendiasiain toimikunta*, PM, untitled, nd, *Neuvostoliitonhallituksen apurabat suomalaisille opiskelijoille ja tutkijoille*, probably 1963; Pernaa 2002, 156.

year during the 1970s and 1980s through this exchange programme, under the coordination of the Soviet Institute, to which the Ministry of Education had given the responsibility to manage exchanges.¹⁴¹ Besides this “official” line of exchange, the “political” line remained under the coordination of a variety of left-leaning organizations, some of them supported financially by the state: the Finland-Soviet Union Society, the Finnish Communist Party, the League of Socialist Students, the League of Cultural Workers and so on.¹⁴² The late 1970s saw however a strong push by the Finnish government to develop and grow the official line at the detriment of the political line. No cases of industrial espionage left a trace in the archives of the ministry, and for Jaakko Numminen, the Finns were both more interested and gained more from these exchanges than the Soviets.¹⁴³

The students were warned by the ministry of the tight schedule of studies in the Soviet Union and to consider carefully whether the conditions were ok for them. Perna emphasizes the difficulties met by the students in the USSR, especially concerning living conditions. This was managed without much publicity in the Ministry and reports highlighting poor living conditions and destined to the Ministry of Education were marked “*only for official use*”.

As to Soviet students, most of them were either in technical fields or natural sciences.¹⁴⁴ Despite Finland’s good reputation as a safe destination, travel abroad was considered with suspicion in the USSR, which was also reflected in educational exchanges.¹⁴⁵ Although the Soviet Union opened up to educational exchanges as early as the mid-1950s, the country received significantly more students than it sent abroad. Contemporaries considered that, compared to other Western countries, Finland had an exceptional number of student exchanges with the Soviet Union, both proportionally and absolutely. However, Ritva Kaipio from the Ministry of Education estimated that the contacts with the Soviet Union were above all formal and that without the various cooperation bodies involved

¹⁴¹ Perna 2002, 157-158; Mikkosen 2019.

¹⁴² Perna 2002, 161-163.

¹⁴³ Numminen 2020, vol 2, 193.

¹⁴⁴ Perna 2002, 219-228.

¹⁴⁵ For example, the year 1959/1960 saw no Soviet students in Finland: KA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta* fund, Box 44, PM, *Tilastollisen päätoimiston kooste Unesco-toimikunnalle*, 17.2.1961.

contacts would have been much smaller.¹⁴⁶ Official delegations from ministries and official organizations were more numerous than students.¹⁴⁷ In the 1970s, various Finnish-Soviet seminars and conferences were also organized (see. Tables 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5).¹⁴⁸

4.2.3 *Image Promotion Campaigns, Language Teaching and Finnish Institutes*

Leaving Finland in a dire political but also financial situation, the end of the war was not conducive to long-term national image promotion.¹⁴⁹ But the end of ticketing in the early 1950s, postwar reconstruction and especially the 1952 Summer Olympics in Helsinki brought new initiatives. Paasikivi was himself interested in the use of the arts and especially exhibitions as a form of development of cultural relations and promotion of Finland's image.¹⁵⁰

As the promotion of Finland's image abroad was one of the most important incentives to the management of international cultural relations by the Finnish state, image promotion campaigns and initiatives appear often in the record of the organizations under study here. Between 1945 and 1960, and especially in the early 1950s with the approach of the 1952 Olympic games, the Ministry's Press Bureau initiated several projects of publications on Finland. Some like Arvid Enckell's book were supported and others like the 1950 proposal by geographer Jalmari Jaakola were not supported. All of these projects provoked discussions between the Ministry and embassies, especially when it came to the representation of war times (how to present the Soviet aggression in 1939? How to tone down the presence of German troops already in 1941 and Finland's co-belligerency

¹⁴⁶ KA, *Suomi-Neuvostoliitto-Seura* fund, Box 398, *Kulttuurivaihto / Yleistä (1945–1994)*, Speech, *Ritva Kaipion esitelmä [SNS:n] keskusjohtokunnan kokouksessa*, 30.3.1982.

¹⁴⁷ Ks. esim. UMA, 46 Z, Box NL, *Matkat*, report to MFA, 8.12.1964; *idem*, PM, *Muistio: Kouluballituksen valtuuskunnan vierailu Neuvostoliitossa*, 28.10.1965.

¹⁴⁸ For example, KA, SNS fund, Box 48, *Sihteeristön pöytäkirjat (1970–77)*, PM, *Pöytäkirja sihteeristön kokouksesta*, 18.6.1974.

¹⁴⁹ Autio and Heikkilä 1990, 83–85.

¹⁵⁰ Paasikivi 1985, I 12.5.1948, 609.

Table 4.3 Exchanges managed by organizations under the Finnish Ministry of Education, 1966–1967

<i>Programmes and countries involved (either destination or provenance)</i>	<i>Numbers/ duration</i>	<i>Specializations</i>
Finns abroad, UNESCO stipends		
Japan	1 stipend, 7 months	Japanese arts, study trip
Canada, United States, Japan, India	1 stipend, 6 months	Study trip
Great Britain, France, Holland, Federal Republic of Germany, Monaco	1 stipend, 4 months	Sea Research, study trip
Foreigners in Finland, UNESCO stipends		
Hungary	1 stipend, 3 months	Architecture
Thailand	1 stipend, 1 month	Social policy and youth work
Cuba	1 stipend, 10 months	Architecture, social planning
Finnish workers' mobility groups abroad		
	3	
Foreign Workers' mobility groups in Finland		
	1	
Bilateral stipend programmes, Finns abroad (<i>duration not mentioned in the source</i>)		
Belgium	1 stipend	Roman linguistics
Holland	2 stipends	Art history
Ireland	1 stipend	Political sciences
Switzerland	3 stipends	Engineering, political sciences, humanities
Iceland	1 stipend	Philology
Italy	2 stipends	Musical theory, Roman linguistics
Norway	1 stipend	Education science
Israel	1 stipend	Theology
Denmark	3 stipends	Humanities, Nordic philology
Turkey	1 stipend	Geography
Czechoslovakia	5 stipends	Musical education, press, Polish linguistics, visual arts, history, humanities
Austria	6 stipends	German linguistics, music theory, biology, high school stipend
Sweden	3 stipends	Medicine, Nordic linguistics, law
Yugoslavia	1 stipend	Chemistry

(continued)

Table 4.3 (continued)

<i>Programmes and countries involved (either destination or provenance)</i>	<i>Numbers/ duration</i>	<i>Specializations</i>
Greece	1 stipend	Art history
Federal Republic of Germany	20 stipends	Humanities, social and political sciences, economy, architecture, arts education, theology, sports education, engineering, music
Democratic Republic of Germany	3 stipends	Medicine, humanities
Soviet Union	15 stipends	Humanities, visual, musical, and performative arts, economy, engineering, social sciences, political sciences, law
Bilateral stipend programmes, foreigners in Finland		
Belgium	2 stipends, 4 months	Architecture, medicine
Bulgaria	1 stipend, 8 months	Technology
Iceland	1 stipend, 8 months	Finnish linguistics and literature
Ireland	2 stipends, 4 months	Architecture
Italy	2 stipends, 4 months	Social sciences and economics
Sweden	1 stipend, 6 months 2 stipends, 5 months	Literature, history, Finnish linguistics
Great Britain	2 stipends, 4 months	Architecture, industrial design
Norway	2 stipends, 4 months	Architecture, Finnish linguistics
Federal Republic of Germany	2 stipends, 8 months	Architecture, history
Democratic Republic of Germany	2 stipends, 4 months	Finnish linguistics
Soviet Union	3 stipends, 8 months	Economy, Finnish linguistics
Holland	1 stipend, 8 months	Finnish and Finno-Ugric linguistics
Israel	1 stipend, 8 months	Sports education

(continued)

Table 4.3 (continued)

<i>Programmes and countries involved (either destination or provenance)</i>	<i>Numbers/ duration</i>	<i>Specializations</i>
Austria	1 stipend, 8 months	Architecture
Yugoslavia	1 stipend, 4 months	Radio and TV-technology
Japan	1 stipend, 8 months	Contemporary history
Greece	1 stipend, 8 months	Finnish linguistics
France	1 stipend, 5 months	Finnish linguistics, Sports education
	1 stipend, 3 months	
Czechoslovakia	2 stipends, 4 months	Medicine, architecture
Denmark	1 stipend, 8 months	Sociology
Turkey	1 stipend, 8 months	Forestry science
Stipend programmes for students of Finnish linguistics to Finland (<i>duration not mentioned in the source</i>)		
Sweden	1 stipend	Finnish linguistics
Stipend grants for African students to Finland		
Nigeria	1 stipend, 8 months	Chemistry, dairy farming
	1 stipend, 10 months	
Sudan	1 stipend, 8 months	Chemistry
Ivory Coast	1 stipend, 10 months	Architecture
Stipend programmes for unspecified countries to Finland		
Japan	1 stipend, 8 months	Arts and crafts education
Iraq	1 stipend, 6 months	Sports education

(continued)

Table 4.3 (continued)

<i>Programmes and countries involved (either destination or provenance)</i>	<i>Numbers/ duration</i>	<i>Specializations</i>
Turkey	1 stipend, 4 months	Geodesic science
Lebanon	1 stipend, 2 months	Architecture
India	2 stipends, 3 months	Architecture, social sciences
Jordan	1 stipend, 8 months	Folkloristics
Transferred from the previous year, foreigners in Finland		
Thailand	1 stipend, 8 months	Finnish design
Soviet Republic of Estonia	1 stipend, 2 months	Medicine
Poland	1 stipend, 4 months	Engineering

Source: OPMA, Box *Opetusministeriön kansainvälisten stipendiasiaain toimikunta, 1959–1968, Kansio 1*, Yearly report, Finland's UNESCO committee, 1966

with Nazi Germany?¹⁵¹) but also of Finland's situation in the 1950s (how to explain in a convincing manner Finland's odd position in the Cold War?). Most of the Finnish ambassadors abroad deplore two things: that nobody knows much about Finland, and that most people up until Stalin's death consider Finland to be under the Soviet yoke, more or less visibly. The Ministry, however, worked hard to develop publications, brochures and pamphlets and distribute them abroad. The focus of these activities moved from Europe to the United States, and the Finnish consulate in

¹⁵¹An interesting example of this dilemma is the Finnish part of a 1951 promotion book on the Nordic Countries coordinated by the Press departments of Nordic Ministries for Foreign Affairs. In the Finnish part of this book, mentions of the Lapland war, where the Finnish army fought against retreating German troops, were difficult to understand since there was no mention in the text of Finland's quasi-alliance with Germany and the presence of German soldiers in Finland starting in 1941: Anderson 1951.

Table 4.4 Foreign exchange students and researchers in Finland, through instruments managed by organizations under the Ministry of Education, 1973–1974 (not including summer schools)

<i>Programmes and countries involved (provenance)</i>	<i>Numbers/duration</i>	<i>Specializations</i>
Bilateral, reciprocal exchange programmes (foreigners in Finland)		
Holland	1 stipend, 4 months	Literature, theatre, sociology
	2 stipends, 4,5 months	
Belgium	2 stipends, 1,5 months	Interior design, unspecified
	1 stipend, 6 months	
Bulgaria	3 stipends, 3 months	Agricultural studies, technology, Finnish linguistics
	1 stipend, 2 years	
	1 stipend, 9 months	
Great Britain	3 stipends, 3 months	Industrial design, sociology, Agricultural studies
	2 stipends, 9 months	
Spain	1 stipend, 9 months	Finnish literature
Ireland	1 stipend, 9 months	Unspecified
Iceland	2 stipends, 4 months	Medicine, industrial design
	1 stipend, 9 months	
Israel	1 stipend, 9 months	Industrial design
Italy	2 stipends, 4 months	Architecture, Finnish and Finno-
	3 stipends, 9 months	Urgic linguistics, University library
Austria	1 stipend, 9 months	Archives, Finnish linguistics
	1 stipend, 3 months	
Japan	1 stipend, 9 months	Sibelius-Academy
Canada	1 stipend, 9 months	Industrial design
Mexico	1 stipend, 9 months	Industrial design
Soviet Union	5 stipends, 10 months	Technology
Norway	1 stipend, 9 months	Finnish linguistics
Poland	4 stipends, 3 months	Industrial design, technology, economics, medicine, heritage studies, forestry studies, hygiene, writers association, museum studies, translation, chemistry, Finnish linguistics
	5 stipends, 1 month	
	3 stipends, 2 months	
	2 stipend, 5 months	
	3 stipends, 2 years	
	9 stipends, 10–20 days	
France	2 stipends, 9 months	Sociology, unspecified
Romania	1 stipend, 5 months	Forestry studies, Technology
	1 stipend, 4 months	
	1 stipend, 2 years	
Democratic Republic of Germany	2 stipends, 4 months	Geology, medicine, unspecified
	1 stipend, 4 years	
	1 stipend, 2 years	

(continued)

Table 4.4 (continued)

<i>Programmes and countries involved (provenance)</i>	<i>Numbers/duration</i>	<i>Specializations</i>
Federal Republic of Germany	1 stipend, 9 months	Technology
Switzerland	2 stipends, 4,5 months	Technology, chemistry
Denmark	1 stipend, 4,5 months	University library
Czechoslovakia	3 stipends, 2 months	Architecture, geology, forestry
	1 stipend, 4 months	Studies, technology, medicine
Turkey	1 stipend, 9 months	Bacteriology
Hungary	12 stipends, 2 years	Movie-making, technology, Geodesic science, Geography, biology, forestry
	4 stipends, 2 months	science, Finnish linguistics, translation,
	2 stipends, 1 month	nursing studies, agricultural studies,
	3 stipends, 3 months	geology, architecture
Swedish grantees in Finland, per programmes		
Finnish Ministry of Education's stipends	1 stipend, 9 months	Unspecified
Grants from the Finnish-Swedish Cultural Fund	5 stipends, 4 months	Sibelius-Academy, sociology,
	3 stipends, 2 months	Geography
American grantees in Finland, per programmes		
Institute for International Education	1 stipend, 9 months	Industrial design, political science, Finnish linguistics
Suomi-College	2 stipends, 4,5 months	Agricultural and forestry studies
Youth for Understanding	1 stipend, 9 months	Political science
Grants for researchers in Finnish linguistics and other "national themes" (<i>kansalliset aiheet</i>)		
Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Holland, India, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Canada, Korea, Romania, Federal Republic of Germany, Democratic Republic of Germany, Denmark, Czechoslovakia, United States	18 researchers, 3-9 months	General philology, theology, Finnish and Finno-Ugric linguistics, contemporary history, political science, architecture, music

(continued)

Table 4.4 (continued)

<i>Programmes and countries involved (provenance)</i>	<i>Numbers/duration</i>	<i>Specializations</i>
Special programmes Australia, Brazil, Egypt, Great Britain, Holland, India, Iceland, Israel, Japan, Yugoslavia, Canada, Norway, Poland, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Sudan, Denmark, Tunisia, United States	25 researchers, 1 month–6 years	Musical education, technology, Nordic and general literature, medicine, history, sociology, political science, agricultural studies, pharmacology, philosophy, archives, education policy, architecture

Source: OPMA, Jaakko Numminen fund, box *Opetusministeriön Kansainvälisten asiain osasto*, document *Ulkomaiset stipendiaatit Suomessa lukuvuonna 1973–1974*

New York in 1950 had 11,700 copies of a variety of brochures and books aiming at giving an updated image of postwar Finland.¹⁵²

The importance of getting the word out about Finland also meant that some initiatives coming from abroad could possibly go beyond the bounds of acceptability in the frame of relations with the Soviet Union. A good example of that is a thick volume published in 1953 by the British journalist Wendy Hall and dealing with Finland's economy. Hall had been impressed by the survival of wartime Finland and explained the contours of Finland's wood and paper industries, although she also took pains to extoll also Finland's resistance during the war. For the Ministry, the book was welcome and its success in the United States was a boon for Finland's image promotion, but the publication's critical tone towards the USSR was not appreciated. In a move typical of its activities, the Ministry decided to invite Hall to Finland, where she spent a few weeks in 1956 before a new edition of the book.¹⁵³ Inviting journalists to Finland for promotion tours of the country and a steady diet of explanations on Finland's official foreign policy line was an activity that had started before the war and was pursued actively.¹⁵⁴ This work was essentially destined to Western

¹⁵² Lähteenkorva and Pekkarinen 2008, 42-52 for a number of these examples.

¹⁵³ Hall 1953.

¹⁵⁴ Lähteenkorva and Pekkarinen 2008, 77.

countries, as there was only little interest and possibility to promote or spread an official image in the Eastern bloc. Work towards the Global South or Asia was also very limited before Finland's entry in UNESCO.

Most of this work was done by embassies. The Finns were quick to react to any publications they felt could complicate Finland's image abroad. The foreign press was followed at the top level of the state, where Kekkonen personally followed a number of foreign publications. For example, he reacted to a 1959 article by the French journalist Henry Bénazet concerning Mikoyan's visit to Finland and the possible influence it may have on Finland's relations with EFTA.¹⁵⁵ The Ministry worked on Bénazet for a number of years, and he was finally invited to Finland in 1962. Some crises were considered important, such as the one provoked by a 1968 caricature in *The Times* where Finland was associated to the group of Eastern European people's democracies. This caricature was the occasion of a strong debate in the Finnish press about Finland's image abroad, and a flurry of activity by the Finnish embassy in London.¹⁵⁶

The 1961 Jakobson committee report emphasized the need for more sophistication in these campaigns and initiatives. The tone had to be less nationalistic than during the interwar period, and the dissemination of information had to be less indiscriminate and concentrate more on "useful audiences": foreign journalists, opinion leaders, politicians, business circles and youth organizations. This policy would replace the undirected injunction to "make Finland known" with a limited, realistic and professional effort aimed at providing specific audiences with tailored information relevant to them: the Jakobson committee in 1961 insisted on "*thinking hard about what we want to make known, where, and with which means*".¹⁵⁷ Finland's image had to be efficiently curated for quality, by emphasizing things that were of an international cultural quality, but also for political content, in a context where the slightest slip of the tongue could ruin diplomatic efforts and the image of developed, realistic neutrality the country aimed for. The so-called crisis of the note in October 1961, which was interpreted abroad largely as the Soviet Union gaining a say in Finland's domestic political development, made this process into something even more important.

¹⁵⁵ Lähteenkorva and Pekkarinen 2008, 169-172.

¹⁵⁶ Lähteenkorva and Pekkarinen 2008, 179-181.

¹⁵⁷ Lähteenkorva and Pekkarinen 2008, 106.

Table 4.5 Finnish students and researchers abroad, through instruments managed by the Ministry of Education, 1975–1976 (not including summer schools)

<i>Programmes and countries involved (destination)</i>	<i>Numbers/duration</i>	<i>Specializations</i>		
Bilateral, reciprocal exchange programmes (Finns abroad)				
Holland	2 stipends, 4.5 months	Natural sciences, industrial design		
Australia	1 stipend, 10 months	Humanities		
Belgium	2 stipends, 9 months	Humanities, natural sciences		
Bulgaria	2 stipends, 1 month	Medicine, humanities, architecture, visual arts, literature, natural sciences, technology		
	2 stipends, 4 months			
	1 stipend, 8 months			
	6 stipends, 14 days			
Spain	5 stipends, 9 months	Spanish language, medicine, economics		
	4 stipends, 1 month			
Ireland	1 stipend, 9 months	Humanities		
Iceland	1 stipend, 7 months	Humanities		
Israel	1 stipend, 11 months	Medicine		
Italy	3 stipends, 8 months	Humanities, musicology, Forestry, agricultural studies		
	2 stipends, 2 months			
	1 stipend, 4 months			
Austria	1 stipend, 9 months	Humanities		
Japan	2 stipends, 18 months	Humanities, architecture		
Yugoslavia	2 stipends, 8 months	Humanities, political sciences, musicology		
	2 stipends, 21–27 days			
Canada	3 stipends, 10 months	Natural sciences, humanities, forestry, agricultural studies		
China	4 stipends, 9 months	Chinese language		
Cuba	2 stipends, 8 months	Social sciences, humanities		
Mexico	1 stipend, 10 months	Economics		
Soviet Union	4 stipends, 3 months	Russian language (<i>72 out of 102 grantees</i>), natural sciences, humanities, law, dance, technology, architecture		
	5 stipends, 1 month			
	33 stipends, 2 months			
	22 stipends, 5 months			
	4 stipends, 2 years			
	9 stipends, 10–30 days			
	17 stipends, 10 months			
	8 stipends, entire diploma			
	Poland		2 stipends, 5 months	Polish language, humanities, architecture, natural sciences, arts
			6 stipends, 1 month	
5 stipends, 14–28 days				
3 stipends, 2 months				
1 stipend, 7 months				

(continued)

Table 4.5 (continued)

<i>Programmes and countries involved (destination)</i>	<i>Numbers/duration</i>	<i>Specializations</i>
France	12 stipends, 9 months 14 stipends, 1 month 8 stipends, 14 days 2 stipends, 3 months 6 stipends, 2 months 1 stipend, 6 months 1 stipend, 8 months 1 stipend, 5 months	French language, natural sciences, musicology, technology, humanities, law, social sciences, economics, medicine
Romania	1 stipend, 5 months 6 stipends, 14-28 days 1 stipend, 10 months	Technology, humanities, literature, economics, arts, Roman linguistics
Democratic Republic of Germany	5 stipends, entire diploma 5 stipends, 1-9 months 6 stipends, 14-21 days 2 stipends, 3 years	German linguistics, musicology, forestry studies, humanities, social sciences, arts, natural sciences
Federal Republic of Germany	13 stipends, 10 months 3 stipends, 2 months 7 stipends, 3 months	Natural sciences, humanities, technology, social sciences, musicology, social sciences, sports education, economics, medicine
Switzerland	2 stipends, 8 months	Humanities, economics
Denmark	2 stipends, 4,5 months	musicology, natural sciences
Thailand	1 stipend, 10 months	Humanities
Czechoslovakia	5 stipends, 14 days 8 stipends, 1-6 months	Humanities, arts, Czech linguistics
Turkey	1 stipend, 8 months	Humanities
Hungary	6 stipends, 14 days 12 stipends, 1-8 months	Forestry science, musicology, arts, medicine, humanities, folkloristics, natural sciences, visual arts, Hungarian language
United States	4 stipends, 6 months 7 stipends, 8 months 12 stipends, 9 months 2 stipends, 4 months	Humanities, medicine, musicology, sports education, law, natural sciences, social sciences, technology, architecture
Finnish grantees in Great Britain, per programmes		
British Council	4 stipends, 9 months 1 stipend, 2-3 years	Humanities, social sciences, medicine
YRWIS	5 stipends, 21 days	Humanities, natural sciences
AIES	10 stipends, 4-10 days	Humanities, natural sciences, public relations, economics, technology, medicine

(continued)

Table 4.5 (continued)

<i>Programmes and countries involved (destination)</i>	<i>Numbers/duration</i>	<i>Specializations</i>
Finnish grantees in Sweden, per programmes		
Grants of the Swedish government	2 stipends, 8 months	Humanities, technology
Grants from the Finnish-Swedish Cultural Fund	20 stipends, 4 months	Technology, humanities, natural sciences, musicology, humanities, social sciences

Source: OPMA, Jaakko Numminen fund, box *Opetusministeriön Kansainvälisten asiain osasto*, document *Suomalaiset stipendiatit ulkomailla 1975–1976*

The committee emphasized new images to be concentrated on: a country on its way to prosperity, caring and socially egalitarian, with a lively cultural life, and ready to act in international relations as a neutral, pacifying influence.¹⁵⁸ These themes were already present in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' Press Bureau's material: in one of the main publications distributed in the late 1950s, the leaflet *Speaking of Finland*, the country was described as an established democracy, economically prosperous, industrialized, sporting an evolved cooperative movement, a functioning welfare state and an ideal mix of nature and modernity, capitalism and state-funded safety nets. The war was quickly glossed over, while the 1948 Treaty with the Soviet Union, neutrality and the "new relations" with Moscow were described at length.¹⁵⁹ One can find the same in other publications coordinated or supported in many different ways by the Finnish state. These ideas and themes could be found also in trade promotion brochures. These elements were also well in sync with attempts by the Finnish authorities at reshaping the national self-definition of domestic audiences.¹⁶⁰ A service providing ready-made press articles was also started

¹⁵⁸ The contours of this "new Finland" were described in UMA, Box 19 A *Tiedotustoiminta yleensä*, File *Ulkoasiainministeriön tiedotustoiminta, 1960, 1961, 1962, 63, 64, 65, PM, Suomen ulkomaille suuntautuvan tiedotustoiminnan organisaatio, toimintamuodot ja aihepiirit*, December 1964, Mikko Immonen.

¹⁵⁹ Kihlberg 1954.

¹⁶⁰ Moisio & Harle 2000, 154.

in March 1961, *Finnish Features*, and publication activities became more discriminating in their intentions and targeted audiences.¹⁶¹

While the promotion of a certain image of Finland was a shared goal of all state protagonists, the most focused part of image promotion work was under the responsibility of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. In 1961, following the Jakobson report, the Ministry received 50 million Finnish marks to further develop its informational activities overseas.¹⁶² This came in addition to 2.5 million in order to organize exhibitions and films. Of this sum, 34 million was used to acquire publications but also films about Finland to be distributed by the ministries. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs bought about 50 publications, of which about 30 were done with the help and support of the Ministry. The distribution was mostly done by Finland's diplomatic network, the Finnish Institutes and private organizations defending the interests of economic sectors: the national air company Aero oy, Metex for the metal industry, the interest groups of the wood and paper industry, big companies, tourism promotion organizations, event organizers and the like. Films were produced with the help of the Press Bureau, especially documentaries, which were distributed through Finland's diplomatic network. With the Soviet Union, these activities had to answer to a rigid system of reciprocity: in 1961, a Soviet film week was organized in Tampere, Turku and Helsinki, which allowed for a Finnish film week to be organized in 1962, especially in Leningrad.

Exhibitions were an important aspect of international contacts from the point of view of the Finnish authorities. Here again the activities started slowly during the 1940s–1950s and developed especially during the 1960s. During the 1960s–1970s, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' Press bureau managed between 50 and 70 exhibitions per year in foreign countries. These exhibitions concerned culture, the arts, but also a lot of exhibitions organized with the private companies responsible for Finland's industrial and artisanal design sector. These exhibitions are often accompanied by presentations dedicated to Finland by diplomats, politicians or cultural figures. In 1963, the UNESCO committee participated intensively in the organization of an exhibition in Zurich on the Finnish

¹⁶¹ UMA, Box 19 A 1978, PM, *Ministeriön artikkelipalvelusta*, 5.2.1963, Pauli Opas; Pekkarinen & Lähteenkorva 2008, 129–143.

¹⁶² OPMA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta* fund, Box 4, 842 *Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat liitteineen, 1961–1963)*, PM, *Ulkomaille suunnautuva tiedotustoiminta 1961*, 31.1.1962, Max Jakobson.

education system. The exhibition was organized in the frame of UNESCO cooperations, and moved from Zurich to other countries.¹⁶³

Erik Kruskopf described the first exhibitions of Finnish handicrafts and design in the 1950s, especially involving the architect and designer Tapio Wirkkala.¹⁶⁴ Kruskopf managed the participation of a Finnish delegation to the Milano triennial in 1951, with a stop on the way to the *Kunstgewerbemuseum* in Zurich. Finland had received an invitation for the same triennial in 1948 but had refused to participate for fear of costs and humiliation so soon after the war. The new invitation had been received in 1950. The Ministry of Education proposed to contribute to the costs but could not pay everything. This limited contribution itself was due to the intervention of Hermann Gummerus, a diplomat's child, journalist and the public relations (PR) chief for the industrial design company Arabia. He managed to convince the Ministry to match 50 Finnish pennies to every Finnish mark of private assistance for the exhibition. Kruskopf describes the Milano Triennial as the event that brought Finnish design back on the world stage. Other exhibitions were organized after this first one about with the same idea: initiative came from private sector, but ministries helped and coordination went mostly through personal relations.

This image promotion also took place as an aside of the development of student and researcher exchanges. As a function of exchange programmes, the UNESCO committee organized seminars for students and researchers leaving abroad, aiming at explaining to them the contours of Finland's history, foreign policy, society and the like. The committee also organized receptions, summer schools and activities for foreign students in Finland. The seminars were organized yearly and contained mostly representatives of various sectors explaining the official image of Finland. Oittinen would talk about Finland's schools, a representative of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs would talk about foreign policy, Siikala would talk about Finland's international cultural relations, someone would talk about the economy, Finland's products made for exports, the culture and so on.¹⁶⁵ Apart from that, the Ministry of Education advised the students and researchers

¹⁶³ OPMA, Box *Kansainvälisten kulttuuriasiain toimikunta, 1952-1963, Stipendiasiaain toimikunta*, PM, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta/Opetusministeriön kansainvälisten stipendiasiaain toimikunta, Kertomus vuodelta 1962*, Helsinki 1963.

¹⁶⁴ Kruskopf 1989, 206-208.

¹⁶⁵ For example. OPMA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund, box 8 Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, lb, 83, Toimintakertomukset ja suunnitelmat, 1957-1977*, PM, *Kertomus Suomen Unesco-toimikunnan toiminnasta v 1959, 17.3.1960*, 12.

leaving for foreign countries to take with them material related to Finland, such as posters with a Finnish theme.¹⁶⁶

Part of the cultural activity organized by the Finnish state was in close coordination with a series of private or semi-public organizations. Short-term events came mostly from the state's support to private initiative. The Finnish Council for Music (*Suomen musiikkineuvosto*) got in touch with the UNESCO committee in 1962 for the preparation of the 100th anniversary of Sibelius' birth in 1965.¹⁶⁷ The promotion of the Finnish language abroad was also a matter of coordination between the ministries and semi-public committees and organizations. Finnish as a language would potentially attract linguists interested in one of the world's rare Finno-Ugric languages, and language teaching abroad was considered very early on by the Finnish state as an excellent channel for bringing forward ideas and notions about Finland and Finnish culture. Finnish lecturers abroad but also translators were thus treated by the Finnish authorities as informal cultural ambassadors. At this point in time, Finland paid local Finnish language lecturers in Sweden (Stockholm, Uppsala and Lund), in Western Germany (Hamburg and Tübingen) and in Eastern Germany in Greifswald. Those were mostly remnants of pre-war cultural relations with Sweden and Germany. Sent lecturers were also active in Paris and in Copenhagen, as well as in Leningrad, Hungary and the United States, mostly in places where Finns had emigrated en masse in the late nineteenth century.

In this domain as well, the movement between 1944 and 1975 was a movement of institutionalization and of expansion of the state's coordination of private organizations. The Ministry of Education first set in 1962 a Committee for Foreign Lecturers to develop teaching of Finnish abroad. In 1963 was created another organization to manage language course in Finland and to organize the participation of Finnish students in Nordic language courses. In 1969, these two were fused into UKAN (*Ulkomaanlehtori ja kielikurssiasiaain neuvottelukunta*, in English the Advisory committee for Finnish lecturers abroad). This organization and its leader, professor Pertti Virtaranta,¹⁶⁸ worked under the Ministry of Education to organize summer camps for lecturers of Finnish abroad and other lessons (the first in Tampere in 1963), often in the region of the

¹⁶⁶ OPMA, Box *Kansainvälisten kulttuuriasiaain toimikunta, 1952-1963, Stipendiasiaain toimikunta*, letter, 2.9.1965, Kalevi Sorsa to Mirja Tervamaa.

¹⁶⁷ OPMA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta* fund, Box 4, 842 *Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat liitteineen, 1961-1963)*, PM, *pöytäkirja*, 14.9.1962.

¹⁶⁸ See Yli-Paavola 1995.

lakes in the centre of the country, which was considered to correspond to exotic clichés foreigners would have about Finland.¹⁶⁹ There is an interesting insistence from the Finns on teaching Finnish as a language and Finnish history and the like abroad through systems of lectureships and teaching positions organized in cooperation with foreign universities. The Finns kept track of these posts and reflected intensively on their role and the possibilities open for them. For example, Finnish language courses started in 1964 in the University of Groningen, in Holland, and Finnish could be read in Amsterdam as a minor since 1969.¹⁷⁰

In 1974, the Ministry of Education counted 24 Finnish lecturers abroad, which received from the Ministry a compensation for their teaching according to the level of their salary in the university they worked in.¹⁷¹ There was, however, a problem of competence, and the Ministry wanted to sharpen the criteria used in recruitment. In 1971, the Ministry for Education calculated that a grand total of 251 foreigners had participated since 1963 in the Finnish language and culture courses organized by Finnish organizations.¹⁷² By far the most important group was Swedes (105), then Hungarians (30) and then Soviet citizens (21). UKAN was described as the ideal organization to promote cultural contacts: it didn't weight much on the state's budget, and had good contacts with the academic world both in Finland and abroad. The Ministry also drew a list of the reasons for this activism in linguistic studies: the need to participate as real states do in reciprocal language teaching contacts, the need to create bridges with more developed languages, the need to use these courses, which are quite cheap, to develop and promote Finland's and Finnish culture's image abroad, and the fact that Finnish can be useful in the context of diasporas. The question of the Finnish diaspora comes back in this context at various occasions. In 1964, after a trip to North America,

¹⁶⁹ OPMA, Jaakko Numminen fund, file *Ulkomaanlehtorit 1972-1976, 1990, 1992-93*, PM, *Suomen kielen ja kulttuurin opetuksesta ulkomaalaisille*, Pertti Virtaranta, New York, 21.3.1975.

¹⁷⁰ KA, Opetusministeriö II fund, Eva Paajanen, Box *Suomi ja kahdenvälinen kulttuurivaihto eräiden maiden kanssa, 1976-2007*, Ucg:1, PM, *Suomen ja Alankomaiden väliset kulttuurisuhteet*, 20.3.1984, Pirkkoliisa O'Rourke.

¹⁷¹ OPMA, Jaakko Numminen fund, file *Ulkomaanlehtorit 1972-1976, 1990, 1992-93*, PM, *OPM valtiovarainministeriölle, Ulkomaanlehtoreiden ohjesääntö ja työsopimus*, 30.11.1974, Siikala et Raija Kallinen; *Idem*, PM, *UM Tiedotuskiertokirje n.33, Ulkomaalehtorien ja ulkomaanedustuksen yhteistyömahdollisuudet*, 21.2.1975.

¹⁷² OPMA, Box *Kansainvälisten kulttuuriasiain toimikunta, 1952-1963, Stipendiasiaain toimikunta*, PM, *Kansainvälisten Suomen kielen ja kulttuurin kurssien osannottajat v 1963-1970*, nd.

Siikala regretted the lack of language skills and contacts with Finland amongst the descendants of Finnish families in the United States. He saw amongst those an outdated and rather negative image of Finland, which should be corrected by information on the welfare state, social policy, urbanism, handicrafts and so on.

There were several attempts to use UNESCO as a funding source for efforts to promote Finnish culture abroad. In 1962, there was a discussion in the UNESCO committee about the promotion of Finnish literature abroad and the possibility to get funding for that from the organization.¹⁷³ The committee wrote that books in Finnish were rarely proposed to foreign editors, because translators rarely took the risk to translate books with uncertain selling prospects. The UNESCO committee thus demanded that money would be given to it in order to pay for translations of extracts of books in Finnish, to be presented to publishers abroad. This was linked to the will by UNESCO to work in order to make better-known literature in smaller languages. The committee proposed grants that translators could apply for, and the Finnish state developed a system of aid to translation of Finnish cultural material.¹⁷⁴ There were also several projects by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to support translations of literary and artistic work but also of books developing general notions on Finland, like a well-known short introduction to Finland's history by Matti Klinge. Siikala on several occasion described translation as an essential tool in modernizing the country, its literature and opening it to international literary currents.¹⁷⁵

In the field of science, the government was mostly active through funding and support for scientific institutions. Finnish universities were semi-private up until the mid-1970s, and the Ministry of Education worked mostly through a host of specialized committees and the Academy of Finland to develop foreign scientific contacts. Most of these contacts came from private initiatives that were upgraded into state actions, often for reasons that were described as linked to image promotion but also out of a desire to support Finnish scientists in their international contacts. In the early 1980s, Siikala wrote that with the spontaneous development of

¹⁷³ OPMA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta* fund, Box 4, 842 *Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat liitteineen, 1961-1963)*, PM, *Perustelut toimikunnan toimintaohjelman talousarvioon v. 1962*, esp. point 13.

¹⁷⁴ Chalvin et al. 2019, 210, 310-315.

¹⁷⁵ KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box 1960-1970 *luku kirjoituksia, esitelmiä. Keskustapolitiikka, Taide- ja kulttuuripolitiikkaa, kansainvälisetä yhteistyötä*, Speech, *A Public lecture to mark the Anniversary of Finland's independence...*, 5.12.1978.

scientific international contacts more coordination would be needed, but no efficient model had been found in a field where the protagonists (especially universities) were jealous of their autonomy.¹⁷⁶ The main organizations were specialized committees, the Academy of Finland and universities. Siikala, of course, thought that coordination should be located in the Academy and the Ministry of Education, under the control of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on the general lines.

One of the things in which the state was directly involved was participation in international organizations such as CERN. CERN was an interesting example also of the incentive for Finland to balance between East and West in its contacts abroad, especially in the 1970s when contacts with the East were often a prerequisite to contacts with the West—the entry fee, in a way, to pay for access to the West. In 1970, a committee pondering Finland’s possible integration in CERN emphasized that Finland should also develop the same contacts with the Dubna Institute for Nuclear Research situated near Moscow.¹⁷⁷ The report emphasized that, while cooperation with CERN is most important scientifically, a possible cooperation with Dubna could open “interesting perspectives”. Another report the same year underlined Finland’s caution towards cooperation with nuclear research centres, and took the occasion to criticize the timidity of Finns in international research contacts more generally.¹⁷⁸ Resources could not anymore be a reason for such isolation, said the report. Professor Laurikainen, who signed the report, criticized in strong words the Finnish authorities for their timidity. An *ad hoc* cooperation had been signed with CERN, where Finland did not pay but got only partial access, which made everything more difficult for Finnish scientists. Laurikainen insisted on the fact that, if there was no will to advance with CERN, at least Finnish researchers should get full access to Dubna.

Before the 1980s, a few projects of Finnish Institutes abroad emerged. In 1949, the committee report on international cultural relations insisted on the necessity to develop these Finnish institutes abroad as places where scientists and artists could get lodgings and work abroad for periods of time. In 1950, the Kekkonen government decided to create the first of these institutes, buying the Villa Lante in Rome.¹⁷⁹ In 1954, a Finnish

¹⁷⁶ Siikala 1985, 31-32.

¹⁷⁷ OPMA, Jaakko Numminen fund, Box CERN 70-71, PM, CERN-komitean puolesta UMlle, 6.3.1970.

¹⁷⁸ *Idem*, PM, Suomen kansainväliset subteet ydintutkimuksen alalla, KV Laurikainen, 12 2 1970.

¹⁷⁹ Klinge 2017, 257–270.

institute was created in Rome in the villa, mostly for artists, students, and researchers of architecture and archaeology. The Villa Lante was founded on the model of a scientific institute that could host researchers and organize scientific and artistic exhibitions.¹⁸⁰

The Villa Lante was for long the only Finnish Institutes abroad, despite a number of initiatives before the 1980s. In 1960, the UNESCO committee discussed the creation of a Finnish institute in Paris. The initiative came from the Finnish embassy in Paris, which demands consequent public funding.¹⁸¹ In July 1961, Maja Genetz, commercial counsellor, and Heikki Herlin, managing director of the industrial company Kone, contacted Professor L. A. Puntila of the University of Helsinki and then the Finnish Cultural Foundation to apply for funding. Support was sought for a project aimed at establishing a Finnish cultural centre in Paris, the “centre of European culture”, under the auspices of which the French would come into contact with Finnish culture and its representatives. The house would be a kind of Finnish cultural centre, from which “it would also be easier for Finnish researchers, students and artists to get a closer look at French science and art”. There was already a Finland House, an embassy, a consulate and a sailor’s church in London, but there was nothing like it in Paris. Herlin actively promoted the project, and he received help from Vilho Kallioinen, a Finnish language teacher in Paris, and Gurli Sevón-Rosenbröijer, an old Parisian Finn, journalist and *au pair* agent. However, the matter did not progress due to a lack of money and interest from the Cultural Fund. After 1970, however, the role of the Finnish cultural and scientific institutions in Paris (a possible Finno-Ugric educational centre and the Nordic section of the Sainte-Geneviève university library) was considered by the joint commissions provided for in the Finnish-French cultural agreement.

In 1975, the Finnish and the Swedish government discussed also the creation of a Swedish-Finnish cultural centre in Hanasaari, in Espoo near Helsinki. The centre was the result of the activities of the Finnish-Swedish cultural fund and works as an event organizer, an exhibition hall and a hotel. The centre was opened on the occasion of a state visit by the Swedish king Karl Gustav XVI in June 1975. But the emergence of Finnish Institutes abroad mostly happened in the 1980s–1990s, when a dozen

¹⁸⁰ Kontkanen et al. 2012; Helenius 2011; Salonsalmi 2008.

¹⁸¹ OPMA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta* fund, box 3, file 842 *Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat liitteineen) 1958-1960*, PM, *Pöytäkirja*, 15.1.1960.

Institutes were created by Finland as a result of the end of the Cold War, amongst which the Finnish institute in Paris finally created in 1991.

Some of these centres were linked to the local activities of the Finnish embassies, for example the London-based Finland House created in December 1958. In 1970, a similar Finland-house (*Suomi-talo*) was founded in Stockholm. The creation of Finland Houses, mostly destined to work as places for export promotion, was delayed by lack of resources up to the late 1950s, but the idea was in the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs' plan since the war. Until the mid-1960s, these creations were mostly the result of local initiatives.¹⁸²

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¹⁸² Pekkarinen 2012, 193-194.

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Participating in Multilateral Cultural Cooperation

We consider as extremely important UNESCO's second basic duty: the development of a moral and intellectual solidarity, on the basis of which we can build lasting peace in the world. In this work, education, communication and cultural contacts are important tools.

—*Armi Hosia, Finnish Minister of Education, speech at the 12th UNESCO general conference, 1962* (OPMA, Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund, Box 4, 842 Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat liitteineen, 1961-1963), Yhdistyneiden kansakuntien kasvatus-, tede- ja kulttuurijrjestön Unescon 12 yleiskokous, Pariisi 11-12.1962, PM, Suomen valtuuskunnan raportti, 28.1.1963, R.H. Oittinen, Armi Hosia, Kalervo Siikala. Translated from Finnish.)

15 years ago, when Finland joined UNESCO, our international cultural relations were underdeveloped. Forced isolation in wartime and the agitation of the immediate postwar period complicated developments also in this area. After that, however, we have managed to catch up.

—*Finnish Minister of Education Meeri Kalavainen, March 1971* (OPMA, Unesco-arkisto fund, series 0, Box 1a, Perussääntö..., Speech by minister Meeri Kalavaisen, 19.3.1971. Translated from Finnish.)

Because of our foreign political position and in part because of the financial commitments associated with membership, we had the possibility to join UNESCO only in 1956. But our membership in the UN solved the matter, and Finland has since considered full commitment to international cooperation as a national duty.

—*Reino Oittinen, 1963* (KA, R. Oittinen fund, file 17, YK. Unesco, Artikkeleita 1958-1963, Article text, “Kansainvälinen yhteistyö ja yhteisymmärrys”, Viitta 18.2.1963. Translated from Finnish.)

Finland signed the UNESCO charter on 10 October 1956. Jaakko Numminen starts the part of his memoirs dedicated to international cultural relations by insisting on the importance of UNESCO and multilateral organizations for the Ministry of Education’s work after the late 1950s. September delegation work in Paris during the organization’s assembly was an important event for the Ministry’s civil servants involved in international relations, a moment of reflection with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs about Finland’s position in international cultural cooperation with Nordic committees on positions, programmes, declarations and so on.¹ It was both a proud moment, when Finnish representatives could feel concretely their country’s re-integration in international circles, and a difficult moment, when the Finns could vituperate about UNESCO’s bureaucracy and disorganization.

The focus of Finland’s multilateral cultural activities evolved in time. The first forum after the war was Finland’s participation in Nordic cultural cooperation, before the country got the possibility to participate in UNESCO and other international organizations. In the early 1970s, Finland’s participation in discussions concerning the third basket of the CSCE brought also new dimensions to multilateral cultural matters, making them a part of the collective security organization in which Finland had put hopes and hard work. These relations were based on Finland’s interest in participating in international organizations and programmes, but Finland’s administration for international cultural contacts also insisted on UNESCO’s peace project and in the promotion of UNESCO’s values inside Finland. Some forms of Finland’s multilateral cultural cooperation were more bureaucratic than others, and by the mid-1970s these forms

¹Numminen 2020, vol 2, 158.

went from participation in UNESCO's multilateral bureaucracy of programmes and reports, to more concrete exchanges in Nordic forums.

5.1 ENLARGING FINLAND'S MULTILATERAL HORIZONS, FROM THE "NORDIC FELLOWSHIP" TO UNESCO

5.1.1 *Nordic Cultural Relations as a Natural Postwar Channel for Finland's Multilateral Contacts*

In a report written for the Council of Europe in 1974, its former Director of Education, Cultural and Scientific Affairs (1962–1968) Anthony Haigh reflected on the collective experience of cultural diplomacy in the Nordic countries, highlighting especially their role as avenues of international cooperation for Finland and Iceland.² After the war, the Finns indeed tried their best to participate in the Nordic organizations created at this time, as a way to get out of their wartime isolation. This happened first through direct contacts in regular meetings of Nordic Ministers of Education started in 1947, and the same year in a Nordic Cultural Commission created in Oslo. This intergovernmental organization of cultural cooperation gathered mostly university professors and had the reputation of a sleepy, conservative affair. But in 1951, all Nordic governments had appointed civil servants to the commission, which lasted until 1971 and became the main driver of concrete Nordic cultural cooperation, aiming at improving exchanges and organizing common activities: university courses using joint educational material and curricula, Nordic Summer Schools for post-graduate students, fellowships, exchange schemes, adult education, the organization of common libraries and cultural centres, cooperation with publishers for translations and so on.³

In the 1950s, Finland's participation in the Nordic Council also had cultural aspects. The Council was created in 1952, and while Finland was not a member before 1955, it had the right to participate in the Council's meetings. The Council was a demonstratively non-political organization, which made Finland's relations with it less tensed than, for example, with the UN: when presenting Finland's accession to the Council to the Finnish parliament, the government precised that if questions linked to

² Haigh 1974, esp. 133.

³ Numminen 2020, vol 2, 169-181.

the conflicts of great powers were mentioned in the Council, the Finnish representative would have to leave the room.⁴

A characteristic of Nordic cooperation was its origin in grassroots contacts between Nordic societies, organized around a number of institutions, part public agencies and part private organizations. While the bilateral Finnish-Swedish cultural fund created in 1958 was a public agency, there existed already after the war a galaxy of private societies acting at the level of the Nordic region: foundations, like the Nordic network for scientific research Nordforsk created in 1947, friendship societies, municipal cooperations, etc. Renamed Pohjola-Norden in 1945, the Finnish branch of the Nordic network of friendship societies had 150 local sections in 1974 and was supported after 1963 by the state—although less than the powerful Finland-Soviet Union Society.

In March 1962, the Helsinki Accords brought one more thread in Finland's fabric of official cultural relations with the Nordic Countries. The Accords were meant to clarify relations inside the Nordic Council, and it incited the Nordic countries specially to strengthen their cultural relations: teach each other's languages and civilizations, multiply exchanges of students and researchers and so on. A Nordic Cultural Fund was created in 1966 as a consequence of the Helsinki Accords, on a proposal of the Nordic Council.⁵ It went into full operation in 1967 with an annual grant of 3 million Danish crowns to be devoted to Nordic cultural cooperation in all areas. The relations in these organizations were centred on concrete common projects such as the exchange of information, education projects, joint Nordic representation at prominent art fairs, a Nordic prize for literature created in 1962, and for music in 1965. The fund was one of the most efficient ways to organize Nordic cultural cooperation, able to provide funding to projects and to coordinate them. The fund's headquarters were first located in Helsinki, due to the signing of the Accords there, but were moved to Copenhagen in 1968. The fund's board had two members from each Nordic countries, one a civil servant of the Ministry of Education and the other a legislator. Finland also had bilateral cultural funds with Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Iceland, managed directly by the Ministry of Education.

At this level, the goals of Finnish foreign policy became intertwined with the multilateral goals pursued by the organizations Finland

⁴ Siikala 1985, 42-44; Siikala 1976, 98 et s.

⁵ Numminen 2020, vol 2, 182-189.

participated in. The Nordic committees shared values, and a stated aim of their cooperation was to build a Nordic cultural community. Such cooperation would lead to synergy gains achieved through resource pooling and increased influence. In UNESCO, the Nordic countries became known as proponents of cultural cooperation based on practical expert work and international solidarity. For Finland, Nordic cooperation was also a source of models, especially in the field of education: a Nordic model of education, coming from Sweden, circulated towards Finland and influenced Finnish discussions on the matter.⁶

An important part of concrete Nordic cooperations from the point of view of Finland was cultural support for the Finnish diaspora present in Sweden: in the harsh years of the postwar reconstruction and up until the 1970s, more than 300 000 Finns had moved as migrant workers to the industrial and agricultural centres of Sweden. The question of their cultural links with Finland and especially the education of children born of these families was considered all through the 1960s–1970s as a critical matter for the Finnish cultural authorities. On both sides, there were strong concerns for these populations, for various reasons: social reasons linked to their social integration and wellbeing, and national or cultural reasons linked to the perceived necessity to maintain a linguistic and cultural link between Finland and populations that, while often left without thoughts of permanent settling, did remain for considerable amounts of time in Sweden. In 1973, a report written by the Ministry of Education calculated that by 1982, there should be 26,000 Finnish children of pre-school age, 70,000 of comprehensive school age, and 18,000 of upper secondary school age in Sweden.⁷ The goal was to develop in them an “active bilingual ability” between Finnish and Swedish, to ensure the possible return of these migrants to Finland at some point. This active bilingualism, however, was difficult to reach in Sweden, especially when it came to teach Finnish: the main problems were the social conditions in which these children lived and the complicated recruitment of Finnish teachers. The report emphasized cooperation with Sweden on these matters: a Finnish-Swedish Educational council had been set up in the summer of 1967, which had taken care of the transfer of teachers to Sweden

⁶Kettunen and Simola 2012, 443-450.

⁷KA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunnan II fund, Box I 23 13, Projektit, etc...*, File 131 *Tasa-arvo, naisten asema, siirtolaisten koulutus*, PM, *The Education of migrants, country report of Finland*, September 1973.

from Finland. About 40–50 teachers per year were paid to work as bilingual teachers: in 1973, 230 teachers were in Sweden placed by the council, and 100 teachers through unofficial channels.

But in 1975, the Ministry of Labour underlined the same issues, emphasizing that children of Finnish origin in Sweden did not learn either Finnish or Swedish correctly. They demanded solutions especially for the teaching of language and to improve the social-economic conditions of these children as a whole.⁸ In the 1970s, when Finland was still mostly a country of emigration, this question of diaspora children in Sweden took a lot of space in Finland's participation to Nordic cultural cooperation.

Nordic cooperation had thus concrete aspects, especially for Finland which was maybe the country most in demand for contacts, shared funding, exposure to foreign trends, and the promotion of its national image in international settings. But Nordic cooperation worked mostly as a setting that facilitated bilateral relations on specific problems, in the case of Finland mostly with Sweden.

5.1.2 *Finland's Accession to UNESCO as a Connexion to Multilateral Cultural Cooperation*

Most of the multilateral activities in terms of culture led by the Finnish government were before 1956 linked to participation in Nordic cultural cooperation. In 1956, UNESCO came to bring new directions and a new essence to the Finnish state's international cultural relations, connecting it to the bureaucracy of international cultural cooperation. Marjatta Oksanen writes that UNESCO meant an opening to wider channels of intellectual cooperation: "*it gave the possibility to participate in dialogue with the whole world in education, science, culture and mass media*".⁹

The creation of the Finnish UNESCO committee and the development of its activities meant that a significant portion of Finland's state-led international cultural activities became channelled through UNESCO. Autio and Heikkilä judge in their study that "*after the Second World war a dominant trait of Finland's foreign cultural relations was the country's tendency to become strongly associated with larger forms of cooperation and forms of*

⁸ KA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunnan II fund*, Box I 23 13, *Projektit, etc...*, File 131 *Tasa-arvo, naisten asema, siirtolaisten koulutus*, PM, *Siirtolaisten ja heidän perheittensä kulutusongelmia koskevat Unescon tutkimukset*, Työvoimaministeriö, Kari Hietala, 19.3.1975.

⁹ Oksanen 2016, 495-507. Translated from Finnish.

integration".¹⁰ Siikala also emphasized the way connection to UNESCO contributed massively to the development of Finland's global cultural contacts,¹¹ connecting Finland's domestic cultural policy to the country's UN policy and international contacts. UNESCO gave the Finnish state a tool to develop Finland's international cultural relations in certain directions, mixing technical, cultural, educational and scientific aspects with geopolitics. UNESCO was also the seat of a certain ideology linked to human rights, the fight against discrimination and racism, equality of gender and races, and peaceful cohabitation between nations—all elements that could fit easily within Finland's rhetorical relations with the Soviet Union.

For Finland, UNESCO worked as an aggregator of information and contacts in cultural matters, as well as a forum to promote a certain image of Finland, Finland's international involvement, Finnish culture. It was also a source of funding and a channel for exchange programmes. There is an insistence amongst people managing these contacts on the way UNESCO opened up Finland's narrowly confined culture towards other areas than Europe such as Asia, Africa and Latin America. It meant new concrete incentives and information for Finland's education, the arts, scientific research and language teaching. It opened new horizons for exchange activities, gave a frame for the protection of cultural sites, supported nature preservation and emphasized the fight against discriminations. UNESCO also opened new ways in which the Finnish state could intervene in the management of Finland's international cultural relations and promote Finland's image abroad: the delegations regularly noted the genuine interest for Finland amongst UNESCO members but also the lack of up-to-date knowledge about the country.¹²

In the first years of Finland's UNESCO membership, the main preoccupation of Finland's cultural diplomats was to find their bearings and create links within the organization.¹³ The Finns tried to get Finnish nationals recruited by the organization, and they proposed several names

¹⁰ Autio and Heikkilä 1990, 83-85. Translated from Finnish.

¹¹ Mylly 1970, 29-41.

¹² KA, *Unesco-toimikunta fund*, file 47 *Unesco-asiakirjat (1957-1964)*, PM, *Selostus Suomen Unesco-toimikunnan sihteerin vierailusta Unescon päämajassa 15.9-4.10.1957*, Kalervo Siikala, 19.10.1957.

¹³ OPMA, *Unesco-arkisto fund*, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 1b, 83, Toimintakertomukset ja suunnitelmat, 1957-1977*, PM, *Kertomus Suomen Unesco-toimikunnan toiminnasta v 1957, 7.2.1958*.

in the first year, although unsuccessfully. Finland also worked to attract UNESCO's personnel to Finland for fact finding visits, organizing a trip by Luther Evans in 1958. The committee also translated material destined to UNESCO and regarding Finland's cultural, artistic, scientific and education systems. Contacts happened through the Finnish embassy in Paris, where the Press and Culture Attaché Nils Lund became Finland's permanent representative with UNESCO.¹⁴ The first report emphasized the education sector, showing Oittinen's inclinations and desire to use UNESCO to emphasize the internationalization of education organizations in Finland.¹⁵ In the early 1960s, the Finnish authorities celebrated the fact that Lund had become the head of UNESCO's press section, and Kalevi Sorsa a secretary in the department of human resources. In 1960, CE Granberg entered the statistical bureau of UNESCO as the third Finnish UNESCO civil servant.¹⁶

Cultural cooperation with UNESCO also exhibited the interests of personalities managing these relations: Ilmo Hela emphasized sea ecology and maritime studies, Arvi Kivimaa was active in the theatre policy developed by UNESCO, Reino Oittinen emphasized youth and workers exchanges and education.¹⁷ Finally, there was a notion that Finland could contribute to the work of UNESCO, as highlighted in a report from the 11th general conference in 1959.¹⁸ Finland had been tasked with the organization of a conference on sport education, and the report listed other major projects Finland contributed to: the East-West project, the obtention of grants for the establishment of an education clearing house and restoration of historical monuments, and so forth.

Various documents and reports throughout the late 1950s and 1960s highlighted Finland's early commitment to active participation in

¹⁴ *Idem.*

¹⁵ OPMA, *Unesco-arkisto* fund, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 1b, 83, Toimintakertomukset ja suunnitelmat, 1957-1977*, PM, *Kertomus Suomen Unesco-toimikunnan toiminnasta v 1958, 1.2.1959.*

¹⁶ OPMA, *Unesco-arkisto* fund, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 1b, 83, Toimintakertomukset ja suunnitelmat, 1957-1977*, PM, *Kertomus Suomen Unesco-toimikunnan toiminnasta v 1960, 9.2.1961.*

¹⁷ See documents in the file OPMA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta* fund, Box 13a, 844, *Muut kokoukset, Erityisjaostot 1963-70, Suomen unesco-neuvottelukunta 1958-65, file SUTin hydrologian vuosikymmenen jaosto (pöytäkirjat liitteineen), 1963-1970.*

¹⁸ OPMA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta* fund, box 3, file 842 *Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat liitteineen) 1958-1960*, PM, *Suomi, Raportti Unescon yleiskokouksen 11.istunnolle*, nd.

UNESCO.¹⁹ Some UNESCO programmes were more interesting than others, especially in these fields where Finland felt it had possibilities to contribute, or that were especially important for the country. In 1963, following a trip to Paris, Kalervo Siikala presented the main elements of Finland's interest in UNESCO, emphasizing stipends (which he wanted to see more for Finland and the Nordic Countries), Finnish experts' participation in UNESCO programmes, publications, organization of conferences, organization of translations, development contacts with Africa, exchange programmes for workers, and positions for Finns in UNESCO.²⁰ In 1967, a report listed these main interests of Finland in UNESCO: environmental affairs, UNESCO's East-West programme, strengthening Finnish representation in the organization's secretariat and developing the position of Finnish specialists in UNESCO's field programmes (especially in school architecture, educational policy, science policy, engineering and meteorology).

While Finnish cultural diplomats worked to appear as active as possible inside UNESCO, they also tried to convince Finland's civil society to participate, and to adopt UNESCO's vision of international relations. The UNESCO committee saw as part of its role the promotion in Finland of knowledge about UNESCO's work and ethos, for example by translating publications in Finnish about UNESCO. The logic was a pedagogy of international cooperation and Finland's participation in it, mostly destined to Finnish audiences. In its 1962 yearly report, the UNESCO committee described its activities to promote UNESCO's work in the world: discussions with journalists, columns in the press, radio and TV programmes, publications of books on UNESCO in Finnish and Swedish, support for civil society organizations and so forth.²¹ The yearly reports of the committee all strongly emphasized these aspects: the goal was from the start to

¹⁹ OPMA, *Unesco-arkisto* fund, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 1b, 83, Toimintakertomukset ja suunnitelmat, 1957-1977*, PM, *Kertomus Suomen Unesco-toimikunnan toiminnasta v 1959, 17.3.1960*; OPMA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta* fund, series 8, Box 7, *Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat liitteineen), 1967-68*, PM, *Aide-memoire on conclusions of conversation on Finland-Unesco cooperation*, Ilmo Hela, Malcolm Adiseshiah, 9.6.1967.

²⁰ KA, *Unesco-toimikunta* fund, file 47 *Unesco-asiakirjat (1957-1964)*, PM, *Pääsihteeri Kalervo Siikalan selostus neuvotteluistaan Unescon päämajassa Pariisissa marraskuun 6-9 päivinä 1963*, Kalervo Siikala, 23.12.1963.

²¹ OPMA, Box *Kansainvälisten kulttuuriasiain toimikunta, 1952-1963, Stipendiasiain toimikunta*, PM, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta/Opetusministeriön kansainvälisten stiepedenia-siain toimikunta, Kertomus vuodelta 1962*, Helsinki 1963.

both “*strengthen our contacts with UNESCO’s headquarters and strengthen our country’s position in the organisation*” and “*attract attention to UNESCO and promote a better knowledge in our country of the possibilities it opens for us*”.²² In October 1966, Ilmo Hela expressed the same idea in his speech for the 20 years of UNESCO.²³ The speech had the accents of the recently converted to the necessities of multilateral cooperation as the ferment for world peace. After the late 1960s, the ministries also facilitated the emergence in Finland of an active field of UNESCO associations that overlapped with the strong development of youth activism and the peace movement in Finland.

Finland’s approach to UNESCO was marked by the same aspects as Finland’s general approach to the UN. There was a perceived need to participate in international organizations, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs working to keep the activity in line with the official foreign policy line and the Ministry of Education managing routine technical relations. The Finns showed, however, strong hesitations regarding financial commitments to the organization: the question of costs came back regularly in the reports, with a strong control on activities by the Finnish Ministry of Finances. Finnish representatives have several significant speeches on the necessity to make UNESCO into a cost-effective organization, by reducing the number of programmes and looking for cost-saving measures.²⁴

In 1973, after the devaluation of the dollar, UNESCO found itself in a difficult financial situation, with the Board trying to find solutions to end a plunging deficit. The Finnish Ministry of Education organized a meeting to discuss the matter in July 1973, gathering the main characters of Finland’s UNESCO policy.²⁵ The general spirit of the meeting was positive towards a possible growth of Finnish contribution in order to preserve UNESCO’s capacity to act, and the Ministry of Education stated that this

²² OPMA, *Unesco-arkisto* fund, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 1b, 83, Toimintakertomukset ja suunnitelmat, 1957-1977*, PM, *Kertomus Suomen Unesco-toimikunnan toiminnasta v 1958, 1.2.1959*. Translated from Finnish.

²³ KA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta* fund, Box *Unesco TDK Ulospäin suuntautuva informaatio 1964-1966, 540 19:16*, communiqué, *Suomen unesco-toimikunnan puheenjohtajan, Professori Ilmo Helan pitämä tervehdyspuhe ...*, 9.10.1966.

²⁴ KA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta* fund, file 47 *Unesco-asiakirjat (1957-1964)*, PM, *Unescon alustava ohjelma- ja budjettiesitys vuosiksi 1965/66, Suomen Unesco-toimikunnan ehdotus Suomen hallituksen lausunnoksi*, nd.

²⁵ KA, *Unesco-toimikunnan II* fund, file *I:5 04 Yleiskokous, 3. Ylimääräinen yleiskokous, 1973*, PM, *Unescon taloudellista tilaa käsittelevästä kokouksesta*, Marjatta Oksanen, 21.8.1973. Translated from Finnish.

might be a good occasion to rationalize UNESCO's programmes. The conclusion was that Finland's reaction to the proposal of a growth in the budget should be "qualifiedly" positive: "*Finland's goal is to realize an overhaul of the organization without being cast in a negative light by the organization*". Finally, Finland voted for the augmentation of the budget, but in its explanation for its vote emphasized that it should be an extraordinary measure for extraordinary times, and demanded cost-cutting measures.

In the early 1970s, Nordic delegates criticized the uncontrolled growth of UNESCO's budget despite the economic crisis. In 1974, the Swedish delegate Ernest Michanek reminded during the general conference the words of the Finnish delegate some years before:

*We are convinced –and we are still convinced –that UNESCO in the same spirit as our national governments, will have to, and is able to cut costs in times of austerity. In view of our own experience, it seems logical that the programs of UNESCO be devised with greater selectivity and carried through with greater efficiency and at less expense. UNESCO, which advocates rational methods of action to its members, ought to be able to set an example in its own ways of acting.*²⁶

The Finns were particularly active in this research for more efficiency and less bloat in UNESCO's work: in September 1974, Finland organized a seminar of Nordic committees on programming, decision-making and execution within UNESCO. A certain sense of crisis was looming, and the preparatory documents ponder different solutions to improve the realization of the UNESCO programmes.²⁷ The transformation of UNESCO into an organization dealing with huge societal problems, from peace to environment, and helping the economic development of member states was seen with worries by Finnish representatives. If they did not see these new directions as problematic *per se*, they were worried about the ways in which this could be realized and feared bureaucratic inefficiency and rising costs, as well as a deviation from UNESCO's role in buttressing European peaceful cohabitation.

²⁶ KA, *Unesco-toimikunnan II* fund, file I:7, 18. Yleiskokous, 1974, Speech by Mr Ernest Michanek, Sweden, 23.10.1974.

²⁷ KA, *Unesco-toimikunnan II* fund, Box I *Unesco-toimikunnan asiakirjat*, file I:12 1973-1978, PM, *Tausta-aineistoa avauspuheenvuoroo varten*, AK/OPMA, 4.9.1974.

5.1.3 *Finland and UNESCO During Détente*

In studying Norway's relations with UNESCO in the late 1940s, Christian Sæle emphasized the role in Norwegian UNESCO policy of private characters with a sense of obligation, duty to participate in multilateral cultural cooperation.²⁸ In Finland, involvement in UNESCO mixed in the same way a national inferiority complex, a desire for involvement in all aspects of international integration, the perceived necessity to tap into international cooperation for the country's internal development, worries about Finland's international image, and a genuine interest in the values exposed in UNESCO's charter. The Finnish example reminds one of Norway also in the sense that strong private individuals worked in cooperation with the Ministry of Education to shape Finland's UNESCO policy. Especially in education, the UNESCO committee was interested in getting new information and practices from abroad and spreading information about Finland and its education system. The point was to make Finland a part of UNESCO's normal activities, and to add Finland to the information gathering organized by UNESCO. UNESCO thus mixed, from Finland's point of view, technical, administrative and political aspects, an existential urge linked to the perceived necessity to participate in international integration and defend the values of multilateral cooperation. While the first postwar generation was mostly interested in bringing Finland back to the international scene, the 1960s and détente brought a more active vision of Finland's role as a neutral pacifier of international relations.

Technical aspects discussed by the Finns in UNESCO were mostly linked to the organization's budget, the management of its programmes, and the dilemma between its increased commitment to the Global South and what Finland perceived as its role as a source of intellectual exchange, funding and dialogue in Europe. Finland's ambition to keep UNESCO's budget at reasonable levels and to make the programmes more pragmatic and realistic was also linked to a desire to keep UNESCO interested in Europe after decolonization and UNESCO's turn towards assistance to developing countries. After the mid-1960s, members of the Finnish committee insisted on several occasions, both in internal documents and in public speeches, on the fact that UNESCO's activities should not forget Europe: in 1972, the Finnish delegation gave a speech in that sense on

²⁸ Sæle 2020, 51–71.

behalf of all Nordic committees.²⁹ The same thing was expressed throughout Finland's tenure in UNESCO up until the late 1970s, in terms that changed with time. In 1958, in a planning document destined to the Ministry of Education, the UNESCO committee wrote that "*the part of UNESCO programs dedicated to so-called backward countries is, from a Finnish point of view, way too high*".³⁰ Finnish comments on the 1961–1962 programme and budget highlighted the same thing, emphasizing the need for concrete activities realized with the money spent, not only in Africa and Asia but also in Europe. In the 1970s, the focus had changed: the Finns wanted UNESCO to take its role in supporting collective security in Europe.

The main thrust of Finnish reflections in these matters points to a strong interest for UNESCO's values and for its role as a softener of Cold War international relations particularly in Europe. A role the Finns were not ready to see UNESCO abandon, as expressed in this document from 1960:³¹

*While fully appreciating the needs of the under developed regions, the National commission wants to stress the importance of the other principal field of activity of UNESCO, namely the role of coordinator and promotor of intellectual cooperation between nations. In this field, it is felt, UNESCO cannot without risks neglect the needs and interests of the better developed countries in order to become only an international relief agency. A sound balance between the two main fields, aid to under-developed nations and efforts to strengthen peace and international understanding through intellectual cooperation, is essential for the success of UNESCO.*³²

In 1964, the Finnish minister of Education Jussi Saukkonen said the same thing, insisting that détente "*offered new possibilities for UNESCO in*

²⁹ See, for instance, OPMA, *Unesco-arkisto* fund, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 1b, 83, Toimintakertomukset ja suunnitelmat, 1957-1977*, PM, *Kertomus Suomen Unesco-toimikunnan toiminnasta v 1972*.

³⁰ OPMA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta* fund, box 3, file 842 *Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat liitteineen) 1958-1960*, PM, *Unescon ohjelma- ja budjettiesitys vv 1959-60, 15.2.1958*, Suomen Unesco-toimikunta. Translated from Finnish.

³¹ Chaubet and Martin 2011, 57, 103.

³² OPMA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta* fund, box 3, file 842 *Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat liitteineen) 1958-1960*, PM, *Pöytäkirja, 15.1.1960, addendum, Comments of the Finnish National Commission for Unesco to the proposed programme and budget of Unesco for 1961-1962*.

its endeavours to promote international understanding and peaceful cooperation between countries, thus strengthening the foundations of permanent peace in the world".³³ This was more than rhetoric from a foreign political perspective: UNESCO was an important part of détente and peaceful cooperation, in which Finland could truly realize the potential of its neutrality policy. One could, however, see a discrepancy between Finland's essentially technical, pragmatic contribution to UNESCO and the very strong rhetoric of peaceful coexistence between nations the commission emphasized in its discourses destined to Finnish domestic audiences.³⁴

As a country in a delicate geopolitical position, Finland had also to be careful, in UNESCO as in other settings, with matters linked to global geopolitical disputes. The main tensions in UNESCO after 1956 were linguistic tensions around the use of French, tensions between different conceptions of culture, the East-West divide and, after the first decolonizations, divisions between North and South.³⁵ Finland did not take sides in the feud between French- and English-speakers, but it had critical positions regarding the compulsory translation of all UNESCO documents, which it saw as a waste of time and money. The main questions for Finland were linked to the bipolar divide and to disputes between North and South. While it could sometimes emphasize some matters with the Nordic group, Finland tried to keep to technical and formal matters, often opting out of the most politically charged matters.

Due to its specific geopolitical situation, Finland most of the time stayed outside of debates but sometimes also took sides with the East or used its contacts with the Soviet Union. In 1966, for example, Ilmo Hela asked for Soviet support to his candidacy to become the Nordic member in UNESCO's Executive Board.³⁶ The Nordics had given him their support, but a Danish note from July 1966 described a meeting of West European commissions in which the Spanish representative had declared

³³ KA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund*, Box *Unesco-TDK*, 13. yleiskokous, 14. yleiskokous, *Yleiskirjeenvaihtoa*, 540, 19.15, file 13. *Executive board*, *Speech*, *Speech by Mr Jussi Saukkonen at the general discussion of the 13th session of the general conference of Unesco*, nd.

³⁴ OPMA, *Unesco-arkisto fund*, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta*, 1b, 83, *Toimintakertomukset ja suunnitelmat, 1957-1977*, PM, *Kertomus Suomen Unesco-toimikunnan toiminnasta v 1965*.

³⁵ See Maurel 2010.

³⁶ KA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund*, Box *Unesco-TDK*, 13. yleiskokous, 14. yleiskokous, *Yleiskirjeenvaihtoa*, 540, 19.15, file *Professori Helan ehdokkuus hallintoneuvostoon 14 yleiskokous*.

that a Finnish representative would damage the atmosphere of the group meetings. In a meeting in June 1966, also reported by the Danish delegation, the Spanish representative had emphasized that the presence of two communist ministers in the new Finnish government was a problem for Spain's acceptance of a Finnish candidate.³⁷ The presence of communist ministers in Finland was not the only reason for Spain's opposition: Spain complained that it never had a seat on the Executive Board, and had previously denounced the Nordic practice of rotating seats.³⁸ Hela thus demanded in April 1966 in a personal letter the support of the USSR in getting him the place in the Executive Board.³⁹

In the 1960s, the Finnish delegations dully noted divisions between various groups in the organization and stayed extremely cautious especially in affairs dividing East and West. In such questions as, for example, the question of China's representation, the country sided mostly with the Eastern bloc. The instructions of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs insisted regularly on the potential political content of technical affairs, reminding the delegations of Finland's "non-aligned and neutral foreign policy", its will to remain outside of great powers' conflict and to favour objective solutions.⁴⁰ Instructions always started with the usual: "*the delegation should in its actions and speeches work according to Finland's policy of neutrality and to the principles that Finland tries to adapt in all situations to all relations between states*". Finland emphasized solutions and decisions that had universal support, and abstained from difficult votes.⁴¹ Voting instructions and speeches were given by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, mostly the political department. Instructions insisted on the organization's

³⁷ KA, Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund, Box Unesco-TDK, 13. yleiskokous, 14. yleiskokous, Yleiskirjeenvaihtoa, 540, 19.15, file Professori Helan ehdokkuus hallintoneuvostoon 14 yleiskokous, PM, Notat. Môte i Unesco's "vesteuropiske gruppe", 8.7.1966.

³⁸ KA, Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund, Box Unesco-TDK, 13. yleiskokous, 14. yleiskokous, Yleiskirjeenvaihtoa, 540, 19.15, file 13. Executive board, PM, Delegacion permanente de Espana ante la unesco, nd.

³⁹ KA, Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund, Box Unesco-TDK, 13. yleiskokous, 14. yleiskokous, Yleiskirjeenvaihtoa, 540, 19.15, file Professori Helan ehdokkuus hallintoneuvostoon 14 yleiskokous, personal letter, Ilmo Hela to Fedorov, Soviet representative to Unesco, 27.4.1966.

⁴⁰ KA, Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund, file 15, Yleiskirjeenvaihto (1965-1966), Unesco 14. Kokous, Pariisi 25.10-30.11 1966, PM, UM:n ohjeet Unescon 14 yleiskokouksen määrättylle valtuuskunnalle, O. Orkomies, 21.10.1966

⁴¹ KA, Unesco-toimikunnan II fund, Box I 3, 04 16. Yleiskokous (1970), file 041 Yleiskokous 1970, muistioita, PM, Unescon 16 yleiskokous: ohjeet Suomen valtuuskunnalle, Risto Hyvärinen, 7.10.1970. Translated from Finnish.

budget ceiling and on keeping Finland within solutions that had the widest possible backing.⁴² The Finnish delegations thus noted with increasing worry in the mid-1960s that international tensions started to show in UNESCO's proceedings. US policy in Vietnam was criticized by the Eastern bloc, and tensions flared in relations between the South and the industrialized North.⁴³

Sakari Kiuru, who became head of the UNESCO committee after Siikala in 1966, emphasized that Finland's activities in UNESCO were mostly technical and tried to keep out of political questions.⁴⁴ In a 1968 memorandum dealing with Finnish participation, the Finnish UNESCO committee drew a quick summary of its activities,⁴⁵ emphasizing technical tasks and the formal aspects of participation in an international organization: reports, surveys, statistics, meetings and visits. For the committee, Finland was clearly on the receiving end of UNESCO's activities, getting inspirations and concrete cooperation to global educational, scientific and artistic projects. Finding a balance and keeping to these technical matters became more difficult in the 1970s, when even the Nordic countries were divided in their UNESCO policy. Finland abstained when a conflictual resolution on mass media was put to a vote in 1972.⁴⁶ A Swedish initiative in 1974 to find a compromise between the free flow of information defended by the United States and EC countries and the controlled flow of information defended by socialist countries divided the Nordic group. The 1973 meeting of national committees was sour, and UNESCO was then described by the Finns as a hotbed of political disputes. After 1976, none of the groups seemed to be ready to compromise.

⁴² KA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund*, Box *Unesco-TDK*, 13. yleiskokous, 14. yleiskokous, *Yleiskirjeenvaihtoa*, 540, 19.15, PM, *Ulkoasiainministeriön ohjeet Unescon 14. yleiskokouksen määrättylle valtuuskunnalle*, 21.10.1966, Osmo Orkomies.

⁴³ See, for example, the report of the 1966 yearly meeting: KA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund*, file 15, *Yleiskirjeenvaihto (1965-1966)*. *Unesco 14. Kokous, Pariisi 25.10-30.11 1966*, PM, *Suomen valtuuskunnan raportti*.

⁴⁴ Kiuru 1995, 17.

⁴⁵ OPMA, *Unesco-arkisto fund*, Series 8, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 1a, Yleiset asiakirjat, 1955-1976*, File 81, *Yleiset asiakirjat*, PM, *Muistio Suomen osallistumisesta Unescon toimintaan*, Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 19.12.1968.

⁴⁶ Haggrén 2009, 98-100.

Finland's UNESCO membership also brought new avenues for coordination with the Nordic Countries.⁴⁷ Finland's UNESCO committee organized in March 1957 a meeting of all Nordic committees in Helsinki, which was meant to strengthen the Nordic countries' cooperation in UNESCO. Contacts consisted mostly of information sharing but also coordination of initiatives and positions, harmonization of common positions on certain matters during delegation work.⁴⁸ As mentioned earlier, a joint representative in UNESCO's Executive Board rotated between the Nordic countries. This cooperation in UNESCO was important during all the period under study here.⁴⁹ There are plenty of concrete examples of this coordination: in 1958, for example, in preparation to the discussion on the designation of a new general secretary for UNESCO, the Nordic countries discussed their support for the candidacy of the Swede Alva Myrdal.⁵⁰ Siikala made clear during the meeting that Finland would not back any candidates, but he assured personally that the Finnish committee would have nothing against Myrdal.⁵¹ The Nordics also organized together their participation in common programmes such as the East-West programme or salvage archaeological operations in Sudan and Egypt.

During UNESCO conferences, one could observe strong Nordic routines of cooperation between delegations. The Nordic group gathered in informal meetings, had joint representation, tried to coordinate their positions and interventions and informed each other. The Nordic member of UNESCO's Executive Board represented all the Nordic countries. National UNESCO committees met every year in a different Nordic country, for meetings informal in nature but important as a coordination

⁴⁷ OPMA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta* fund, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 1b, 83, Toimintakertomukset ja suunnitelmat, 1957-1977*, PM, *Kertomus Suomen Unesco-toimikunnan toiminnasta v 1957, 7.2.1958*.

⁴⁸ OPMA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta* fund, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 1b, 83, Toimintakertomukset ja suunnitelmat, 1957-1977*, PM, *Kertomus Suomen Unesco-toimikunnan toiminnasta v 1959, 17.3.1960*.

⁴⁹ OPMA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta* fund, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 1a, Yleiset asiakirjat, 1955-1976, 81, Yleiset asiakirjat*, PM, *Muistio Suomen osallistumisesta Unescon toimintaan, 19.12.1968*.

⁵⁰ OPMA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta* fund, box 3, file 842 *Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat liitteinen) 1958-1960*, PM, *Raportti pohjoismaiden Unesco-toimikuntien sihteerien kokouksesta Kööpenhaminassa, 29.1.1958, 31.1.1958*, Siikala.

⁵¹ In April 1958, Myrdal declares that she is not available for this post: OPMA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta* fund, box 3, file 842 *Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat liitteinen) 1958-1960*, PM, *Pöytäkirja, 14.4.1958*.

and information sharing device. Common projects were developed especially in education, which was a huge part of the Nordic countries' profile in UNESCO.

This Nordic cooperation was a very important aspect of Finland's participation in UNESCO. Nordic activities in international organizations were generally coordinated, and education and culture were particularly important for this: culture was typical of the non-political and non-economic, mostly symbolic elements most suitable for Nordic cooperation.⁵² As in general cultural cooperation in the Nordic Council, the pooling of material and intellectual resources, as well as the attempt to gain more influence as a group inside the organization, was the main motivation for Nordic cooperation. For Finland especially, identity was also important, as it wanted to be seen as part of the Nordic group: in the late 1940s already, Oittinen said that one of the central goals in UNESCO would be to “*build a regional cultural bloc that as such could manifest the Nordic fellowship outward*”.⁵³

While UNESCO affairs were mostly matters for the Ministry of Education, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs considered UNESCO as part of Finland's delicate foreign policy balance and kept a close eye on activities there.⁵⁴ The management of relations with UNESCO happened through a cooperation between the embassy in Paris, the Ministry of Education and the UNESCO committee,⁵⁵ and big political issues such as Portugal's departure from the organization in December 1972, or the admission of the People's Republic of China, were decided by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. In 1967, when Portugal was banned from the instances of UNESCO for its colonial policy, Finland was approached to organize the next meeting of European committees. Helsinki refused out of a desire not to have to decide whether or not to accept Portugal's participation. In 1970, Finland voted for the first time in favour of the admission of Eastern Germany in UNESCO⁵⁶ that Czechoslovakia had inscribed to the agenda of the UNESCO conference. The thing was not discussed during the

⁵² Haggrén 2009, 88-111.

⁵³ KA, Reino Oittinen fund, Box 8, undated speech.

⁵⁴ UMA, 5 G, report, Finnish embassy in Paris to Foreign Ministry, *Suomen ja Unescon subteet vuonna 1971*, RR Seppälä, 8.2.1972.

⁵⁵ UMA, 5 G, report, Finnish embassy in Paris to Foreign Ministry, *Suomen subteet UNESCOon*, RR Seppälä, 01.02.1968.

⁵⁶ UMA, 5 G, report, Finnish embassy in Paris to Foreign Ministry, *Suomen subteet Unescoon v 1970*, RR Seppälä, 30.12.1970.

conference, but in the Executive Board, Finland voted in the favour of Eastern Germany's accession to UNESCO, even if in the explanation of its vote Finland insisted that it didn't mean a change to its politics towards the two Germanies - although it worked as a convenient stepping stone to Finland's recognition of both Germanies in September 1971.

Some problematic questions inside UNESCO were also linked to Finland's own peculiarities. In the late 1960s, Finland, for example, did not join the UNESCO convention on the fight against racism and discriminations in education. Chloé Maurel reminds us that this convention came from the Eastern bloc and the United States did not sign it.⁵⁷ While the Finns insisted on several occasions in UNESCO on these subjects, making them an important part of their discourse in UNESCO, they did not join the convention because of the specific status of education in the Åland islands.⁵⁸ An autonomous and Swedish-speaking part of Finland's territory, the Åland islands had the possibility to refuse financial support to schools teaching in another language than Swedish, a majority language on the archipelago but a minority language in Finland. Because this provision might fall foul of the UNESCO convention, Finland did not join the convention when it was published.⁵⁹ The question was debated intensively, as Finland's representatives felt it placed the country into an uncomfortable situation regarding the majority of UNESCO members. In 1967, in a report on the question, Ilmo Hela considered that Finland should ratify in order to avoid reputation damages, proposing a series of measures that would solve the Åland question.⁶⁰

Both protagonists in the Ministry of Education and in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs increasingly agreed after the late 1950s that UNESCO cooperation had been positive for Finland. In an undated article published in the 1960s, Siikala writes that Finland's participation in UNESCO was

⁵⁷ Maurel 2010, 153-154.

⁵⁸ The Åland islands form an archipelago between Finland and Sweden, populated mostly by Swedish-speakers. It was disputed with Sweden after Finland's independence in 1917, but was given to Finland in the early 1920s by an international treaty.

⁵⁹ KA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta* fund, file 15, *Yleiskirjeenvaihto (1965-1966)*, *Unesco 14. Kokous, Pariisi 25.10-30.11 1966*, PM, *Suomen valtuuskunnan raportti*, nd; OPMA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta* fund, Box 4, 842 *Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat liitteineen, 1961-1963)*, PM, *Esityslista ja pöytäkirja*, 12.9.1963.

⁶⁰ OPMA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta* fund, series 8, Box 7, *Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat liitteineen)*, 1967-68, PM, *Yleissopimus syrjinnän vastustamisesta opetuksen alalla*, *Unesco 15.12.1960*, Ilmo Hela, 12.6.1967.

largely profitable to Finland.⁶¹ What he especially emphasized, and what one can find also in documents from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, were the advantages gained through participation in UNESCO: while Finland got prime information from the UNESCO meetings, the organization saw Finland as a country worthy of recognition, solid, neutral, engaged in international activities and constructive. Secondly, the country had opened up through UNESCO towards Africa, Asia and other horizons at very little cost to its diplomatic apparatus. And finally, Finland had benefited from new trends, new models and new incitation linked to internationalization, to the development of education methods and so on. Cooperation especially of the Ministry of Education with UNESCO and other international organizations corresponded to this reflection; it was mostly a series of concrete cooperation schemes, where Finland aimed for concrete gains, information, methods, finances, models, inspirations and so on.

5.1.4 *Finland in UNESCO's Programmes*

Concretely, Finland's activity in UNESCO was organized around UNESCO programmes. Programmes were used to facilitate the work of Finnish organizations, provide them with new outlets and funding, develop their international contacts, orientate their activities in certain directions, and enhance Finland's educational, cultural and scientific modernization. Mixed into that was also the will to develop a Finland more open to the world and to promote UNESCO's rhetoric of pacified international relations.

Finnish participation in UNESCO's East-West programme is a good example of that. The programme started in the 1950s and was one of the first Finland participated in. It was mostly realized through subsidies given to organizations in Finland to organize seminars on Asia, predominantly on India and Indian culture. While the UNESCO committee worked as a facilitator, Finland's friendship societies and especially the Finland-India and Finland-Pakistan societies were the main agents of the programme's realization. This was also realized in cooperation with other Nordic

⁶¹ KMA, Kalervo Siikala Fund, Box *Aineistoa 1957-58 ja 1962-69, Suomen UNESCO-toimikunta, Yleisradio/Suomen televisio, Opetusministeriö/Kansainvälisten asiain osasto*, Article draft, *Vuosisikymmenen yhteistoimintaa UNESCO:n kanssa. Mitä se on meille antanut?*, nd.

countries: India's then Vice-President Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan was invited by the Nordic committees in the late 1950s.

In 1960, Finland joined one of the longest projects of the 1960s, the UNESCO campaign for saving the treasures of the Nubian valley in Sudan and then the preservation of the temples of Abu-Simbel in Egypt from the consequences of a dam construction.⁶² The goal in Finland in the early 1960s was first to secure Finnish and Nordic participation in the expedition to Sudan starting in 1961. A sub-committee was created, headed by professor Esko Suomalainen and archaeologist Ella Kivikoski. The expedition, organised under UNESCO's patronage, was supposed to work in Sudan for four months during four to five winters. The Sudanese government had promised half of the objects salvaged to the expedition, and Finland in 1960 contributed 2.5 million Finnish marks to this Nordic project. Finnish archaeologists participated in the Nubian research campaign, and following that Finland remained involved in salvaging the Abu Simbel temples.⁶³

Another programme in which Finland participated in the 1960s was the ASPRO programme, *Associated Schools Project for Education in International Understanding and Cooperation*. The ASPRO programme was created in 1953 and Finland joined it in 1959, with the affirmed goal of the UNESCO committee being to promote "international values" in Finnish education.⁶⁴ The programme went through three phases: the sensibilization of pupils first to the UN and questions linked to international cooperation, then to a given foreign culture (Finland chose India), and finally to the Declaration of Human Rights and its principles. In the autumn of 1962, there were seven Finnish schools in the programme, mostly in the biggest towns of the country.⁶⁵

The programme was seen by the Ministry of Education as a channel for the opening up and internationalization of the country. UNESCO was the

⁶²OPMA, *Unesco-arkisto* fund, box 8 *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta, 1b, 83, Toimintakertomukset ja suunnitelmat, 1957-1977, PM, Kertomus Suomen Unesco-toimikunnan toiminnasta v 1960, 9.2.1961.*

⁶³KA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta* fund, Box *Unesco TDK Ulospäin suuntautuva informaatio 1964-1966, 540 19:16, communiqué, Voitto Nubiassa, 17.12.1964.*

⁶⁴Suárez et al. 2009, 197–216; OPMA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta* fund, Box 6, 842 *toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat liitteineen) 1966, PM, Unescon ASPRO-kokeilusta ja sen mahdollisesta jatkamisesta Suomessa, Kai Lehtonen, 2.2.1966.*

⁶⁵OPMA, Box *Kansainvälisten kulttuuriasiain toimikunta, 1952-1963, Stipendiasiaain toimikunta, PM, Suomen Unesco-toimikunta/Opetusministeriön kansainvälisten stiepedenia- siain toimikunta, Kertomus vuodelta 1962, Helsinki 1963.*

inspiration of this work, and the Finnish documents repeat the rhetoric of UNESCO documents, with the main goal being “*education for international understanding and cooperation*”.⁶⁶ This meant a place in school programmes for international themes, the refurbishing of textbooks and teaching aids, work with youth organizations and so on. This was particularly marked in 1970, when Finland participated in the year of international education, with publications on international cooperation and international education.⁶⁷ It also worked as a rehearsal for the themes emphasized during Finland’s school reform and the debates on the introduction of the International Baccalaureate: the university of Helsinki started work towards the establishment of the IB in 1970. The 40th Nordic school youth meeting in Helsinki, in May 1970, dedicated its seminar to internationalism at school and worked on translation of UNESCO material on the subject.⁶⁸

Kaisa Savolainen, a former UNESCO civil servant in the field of adult education, did a PhD in 2010 on the subject of this internationalization of education in Finland,⁶⁹ where she emphasizes the role of UNESCO in importing to Finland the idea of education as a basis for peace and mutual understanding. She looks especially at the 1974 UNESCO recommendations on education to international understanding, cooperation and peace, as well as human rights and basic freedoms. The context was the CSCE negotiations, but this also revealed a more important dilemma in Finland between the committee’s international and its domestic work. In 1968, a report by the committee emphasized this double role of the committee, in which its “*concrete work to promote international intellectual cooperation*” contains constant efforts to connect domestic organizations to multilateral and international cultural activities, programmes, projects and organizations.⁷⁰ In a striking image, the report described the committee as both an

⁶⁶OPMA, Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund, box 3, file 842 *Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat liitteineen) 1958-1960*, PM, *Pöytäkirja, liite 1, Kasvatus kansainväliseen yhteistyömääritykseen ja yhteistyöhön*, 21.5.1958.

⁶⁷KA, *Unesco-toimikunnan II fund*, file I:25 *Projektit, Lukutaito, Ympäristökasvatus, väestönkasvatus, Muut projektit (1968-1976)*, PM, *Kasvatuksen kasainvälinen vuosi 1970*, nd.

⁶⁸KA, *Unesco-toimikunnan II fund*, Box I:25 *Projektit, Lukutaito, Ympäristökasvatus, väestönkasvatus, Muut projektit (1968-1976)*, PM, *Situation report on the international education year in Finland*, 28.7.1970.

⁶⁹Savolainen 2010.

⁷⁰OPMA, Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund, series 8, Box 7, *Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat liitteineen)*, 1967-68, PM, *Unesco-toimikuntien rooli kansainvälisen sivistyksellisen yhteistyön edistäjinä, liite 1*, nd.

electrical wire and a transformer, connecting the domestic and the international and adapting one to the other.

In the late 1960s, there were long reflections on the development of internationalization programmes in Finnish schools.⁷¹ In a 1967 speech, Kalevi Sorsa spoke of education to internationalization as “*a kind of spiritual national defence*”, a basis for the global reflections necessary for the youth to understand and manage global problems. Sorsa emphasized the insufficiencies of the current situation, where Finns travelled but failed to get the right impressions and influences from foreign examples. Hence, the need to internationalize the school system, to ensure the “*education of citizens who are cooperative, without prejudices, and open to other cultures*”. He proposed the development of the network of ASPRO schools, and the Ministry also strongly supported UNESCO clubs, organizations of high school students or UN societies in the country.

Finland showed also significant interest in questions of environment in UNESCO. In 1966, during discussions about the creation of an international centre for environment studies, Finland tried to lobby for the centre to be created in Finland. The argument developed by the delegation in its report to Helsinki spoke of cultural policy, but also of the “*significance it could have from the point of view of our foreign policy, that aims at peaceful international cooperation*”.⁷²

5.2 NEW WINDS IN FINLAND’S MULTILATERAL CULTURAL RELATIONS DURING THE 1970s

5.2.1 *The Nordic Countries in UNESCO Between Criticism and New Avenues of Cooperation*

The Nordic countries became more critical of UNESCO in the early 1970s.⁷³ The organization was accused of inefficiency, its portfolio of programmes was described as bloated and inefficient, with fragmented projects and lack of concrete actions. Although opinions varied amongst the

⁷¹ KA, Unesco-Toimikunta II fund, Box I: 23 Unesco-toimikunnan I arkisto, 1 Kasvatus, 13 Projektit, file 132 Kansainvälisyyskasvatus, rauba, aseistariisunta, ihmisoikeudet, Unesco-clubs, eg. PM, *Kansainvälisyys kouluissa*, Kalevi Sorsa, 1967.

⁷² KA, Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund, file 15, Yleiskirjeenvaihto (1965-1966), Unesco 14. Kokous, Pariisi 25.10-30.11 1966, PM, *Suomen valtuuskunnan raportti*. Translated from Finnish.

⁷³ Haggrén 2009, 88-111.

Nordic countries, many shared the view that parliamentary decision making, as well as practical cultural cooperation, had to be strengthened in the organization. Some of the national committees felt that the influence of member states was diminishing, as were the opportunities to influence the work of UNESCO. The Nordics thus tried to develop cooperation, although with little success. At the 1978 meeting of national committees, despite strong pressures from Sweden, the committees were unable to reach an agreement on what should be done to strengthen their cooperation as a solution to UNESCO's shortcomings. Denmark also increasingly behaved as a member of the European Communities after its accession to the organization in 1973, and the other Nordic Countries suggested that it might threaten the Nordic profile in UNESCO. These discussions were a first taste of the tensions that would split UNESCO in the 1980s.

Like the other Nordic Countries, Finland was associated to a Swedish proposal in 1972 trying to change the composition of the Executive Board by making its members representatives of member states and not anymore private individuals.⁷⁴ They reminded Maheu of the 1954 reform, where it was decided that the board's members would be representatives of their government, although they would retain the necessity to be qualified in UNESCO's fields of competence. The Swedes demanded that this proposal would be conducted to its logical end, which is to enable the general conference to elect member states as members of the board instead of private individuals. That would make the member states more interested in the work of UNESCO.⁷⁵

The 1970s however opened new avenues of cooperation that the Nordic Countries and Finland were quick to adapt to, as the CSCE became an essential backdrop to these countries' foreign policy. This showed both at the Nordic level and in Finland's UNESCO activities and participation in the CSCE process. It was not an entirely unproblematic development for Finland, as the Finns tried to maintain an even keel between the blocs and the various power players inside UNESCO, but progressively the CSCE project became an increasingly important part of Finland's foreign

⁷⁴ On that, see documents in OPMA, Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund, series 0, Box 1a, *Perusääntö etc.*

⁷⁵ OPMA, Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund, series 8, Box 9, *Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat) 1972-76*, letter of the Swedish government's OECD-delegation in Paris to René Maheu, 10.4.1972.

policy.⁷⁶ In 1970, delegations at the Nordic Council meeting in Reykjavik demanded that Nordic cultural relations would be strengthened in the perspective of the CSCE: in March 1971, a treaty for cultural cooperation was signed between the five Nordic countries. The treaty emphasized old cultural links between these countries but planned also vast areas of new cooperation in the field of education, workers' education and the management of intra-Nordic movements of population, scientific relations and so on. Siikala's reaction to this increased institutionalization of Nordic cultural relations could not be anything else than enthusiastic: he wrote then that, finally, Nordic cultural relations were moving away from "*punsch Scandinavism*", a Scandinavian cultural cooperation of elites and students drinking punsch in academic settings, and had moved towards the creation of a genuine Nordic cultural area.⁷⁷

The background was the CSCE but also the development of Nordic economic relations, with the signature in 1969 of the Nordek treaty. Despite the failure of this treaty to be ratified, and especially the 1971 Finnish decision not to ratify, these years were years of debate on the strengthening of Nordic integration. The 1971 treaty and its cultural institutions were the few things that remained of this discussion. Cooperation was organized by the Nordic Council, each country participating financially at the level of its contribution to the UN budget. The Nordic Cultural agreement of 1971 was the fruit of 25 years of collective cultural diplomacy practised in cooperation by Nordic governments, mostly through the Nordic Council and the cultural commission.⁷⁸ The list of domains of cooperation mentioned in a 1972 report for the Nordic Council is extensive: under the coordination of cultural secretariat in Copenhagen, led by the Finnish Magnus Kull, cooperation ranged from concrete proposals linked to the sharing of best practices in the domain of education to cultural cooperation, cooperation in the field of television, cinema, literature, the coordination and sharing of research infrastructures.

⁷⁶ OPMA, Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund, Box 2, 841 *Laajennetun toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat), ja sen jaostojen kokoukset, 1965-1976*, PM, *Kansainvälinen politiikka Unescossa*, Ilmo Hela, 7.12.1972.

⁷⁷ KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box 1960-1970 *luku kirjoituksia, esitelmiä. Keskustapolitiikka, Taide- ja kulttuuripolitiikkaa, kansainvälisetä yhteistyötä*, Press clipping, "Pohjoismainen kulttuurisopimus allekirjoitetaan maanantaina", *Ilta-sanomat*, 12.3.1971, Marja Kyllönen.

⁷⁸ OPMA, Jaakko Numminen fund, File *Nordiska Rådet, 1965-1973, 1977*, PM, *Pohjoismaiden ministerineuvoston antama Kertomus pohjoismaisesta yhteistyöstä, Oslossa joulukuussa 1972*, Hallvard Eika ja Harald Synnes; Numminen 2020, vol 2, 172-175.

All that was linked to a rhetoric of strengthening the cultural proximity of the Nordic countries and developing a new vision of culture, away from the intellectual notion of culture as an elite practice and towards a cultural policy taking the masses into account. The budget of the organization for 1973 was 32 million Danish crowns, with the biggest single items of cooperation being funding for the Nordic centre for theoretical atomic physics and the Nordic centre for Asian studies, as well as the funding of a Nordic People's Academy and a Nordic Department of social planning. In this context, Finland states as its goals in a 1973 report the development of cultural relations with Nordic neighbours, the harmonization of school systems, the translation of Nordic literature in the languages of other Nordic countries and cooperation in the domain of television and youth organizations.⁷⁹ Jaakko Numminen also emphasized Finland's concrete participation into this cooperation, for example, the creation of the Nordic artists' residency in Suomenlinna.

In various general conferences, Finland supported development aid, proposed actions for education, and was considered by African UNESCO members as a positive force in the organization, helping the emergence of a genuinely African cultural sector.⁸⁰ Siikala in 1969 emphasized this role of UNESCO as a development organization through education, writing that this work should concentrate on supporting cultural work by African countries themselves. The envoi of Siikala's tirade insisted on educating Africans to care for themselves: "*we could even say that education programmes developed without any concern for local needs and possibilities have been a problem more than a solution. They have triggered baseless hopes and social movements whose main destination was bound to be the local city slums*".⁸¹ In Africa as in Finland, modernization and international cooperation had to be adapted to local needs, interpreted by locals, and not taken in blindly from abroad as bastardized version of the American way of life. In this work, Siikala ended, UNESCO was essential and Finland should be able to take a stronger role in that activity than it had before. Development was also clearly linked to trade: during the Nordic campaign

⁷⁹ OPMA, Jaakko Numminen fund, Box *Opetusministeriön kansainvälisten asiain osasto*, file *OPM kansainvälisten asiain osasto 1970-1985, 1987, 1989-1994*, PM, *Hallituksen kertomus vuonna 1973*, Kansainvälisten asiain osasto, 14.12.1973.

⁸⁰ KA, Suomen *Unesco-toimikunta* fund, file 15, *Yleiskirjeenvaihto (1965-1966)*, *Unesco 14. Kokous, Pariisi 25.10-30.11 1966*, PM, *Suomen valtuuskunnan raportti*, nd.

⁸¹ Mylly 1970, 36-37. Translated from Finnish.

against illiteracy in 1966, Finland delivered money to Tanzania to buy Finnish printing paper.⁸²

In 1961, commenting the UNESCO programme for 1963–1964, the Ministry for Education insisted on a pragmatic relation to development aid, which should mostly aim at developing education systems and other organizations in African countries, to give them the possibility to work for themselves.⁸³ In 1964, the Finnish committee on development aid demanded however a more active participation in international development aid.⁸⁴ Most of the work linked to development aid was organized in the 1960s–1970s by private or semi-private organizations, especially youth organizations that organized fund raising and aid projects in Africa, often in rocambolesque conditions. The state for the most part facilitated these organizations' work: the UNESCO committee sent information and material to these organizations, for example in 1966 when the local high school youth organization of Taivalkoski wrote to ask for material.⁸⁵ This was true especially in the 1960s, when, for example, Finnish youth organizations organized the 1969 aid campaign in Mozambique.⁸⁶ The UNESCO committee served to either amplify or channel this strong interest amongst Finnish youth organizations and especially leftist youth organizations for practical development aid with countries in Africa. This was related to Finland's growing commitment to UNESCO's activities and was during the 1970s a shared competence of the ministries of Education and Foreign Affairs.⁸⁷ The state accompanied, supported and provided channels for these private initiatives.

⁸² KA, *Unesco-toimikunnan II fund*, file I:25 *Projektit, Lukutaito, Ympäristökasvatus, väestönkasvatus, Muut projektit (1968-1976)*, PM, *Lukutaitokampanja, Suomen Unesco-toimikunta*, Esa Peltonen, 19.1.1968.

⁸³ OPMA, Box *Kansainvälisten kulttuuriasiain toimikunta, 1952-1963, Stipendiasia- in toimikunta*, PM, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta/Opetusministeriön kansainvälisten stipendiasia- in toimikunta, Kertomus vuodelta 1961*, 8.2.1962.

⁸⁴ OPMA, *Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund*, Box 5, 842 *Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkir- jat liitteineen, 1964-1965)*, PM, *Kansainvälisen kehitysavun komitean mietintö*, 10.1.1964.

⁸⁵ KA, *Unesco-toimikunnan II fund*, file I:25 *Projektit, Lukutaito, Ympäristökasvatus, väestönkasvatus, Muut projektit (1968-1976)*, manuscript letter, Osmo Buller, 27.10.1966.

⁸⁶ Jouhki 2020, 244-245; Virtanen 2013.

⁸⁷ OPMA, Jaakko Numminen fund, Box *Kulttuurisopimuspolitiikka, 1979-1984*, PM *Suomen kulttuurisopimuspolitiikka 1980-luvulla*, Kansainvälisten asiain osasto, 4.10.1979.

5.2.2 *The CSCE's Third Basket and Expanding Multilateral Cooperation in the 1970s*

According to Margaretha Mickwitz, who worked most of her career in the Ministry of Education, 1960s UNESCO was one of the forums on which the CSCE negotiations of 1970–1975 were prepared.⁸⁸ Mickwitz, who worked in Geneva for more than a year negotiating Finland's participation in the CSCE's so-called third basket, saw the CSCE as a continuation of European bridge-building, collective security characteristic of Finland's foreign policy line. While development aid was important, the Finns never forgot to mention and support UNESCO's European side and its role for a pacification of Europe's international relations. Cultural relations thus naturally found their place into a continuum of effort going from UNESCO to the CSCE, and corresponding both to Finland's neutrality policy and to a rhetoric of European coexistence. This was in sync with Finland's foreign policy: in an autumn 1970 report, Siikala mentioned that Moscow wanted to use UNESCO for the strengthening of peace and security in Europe, and Finland might have a role in that. With the CSCE negotiations in the background, Siikala emphasized continuity and the possibility to use cultural relations as a support for Finland's bridge-building efforts.⁸⁹

An important step in this process was the European intergovernmental conference on cultural policy *Eurocult* organized by Finland in June 1972. The first of its kind, *Eurocult* was organized as a cooperation of European UNESCO committees.⁹⁰ It was an important occasion in the emergence of a democratized conception of culture: René-Pierre Anouma emphasizes the way this conference was a "*Helsinki before Helsinki*".⁹¹ The Finnish organizers used the occasion not only to emphasize Finland's position and cultural heritage, but also a to showcase a certain definition of culture. *Eurocult* followed the Venice Conference on Cultural Policy that had

⁸⁸ Interview with Margaretha Mickwitz, transcript held by the author.

⁸⁹ OPMA, Jaakko Numminen fund, Box *Opetusministeriön kansainvälisten asiain osasto*, file *OPM kansainvälisten asiain osasto 1970-1985, 1987, 1989-1994*, OPM, KAO, PM, *Kansainvälisen kulttuuriryhdytyön ajankohtaisia kysymyksiä syyskaudella 1970*, Kalervo Siikala, 15.8.1970.

⁹⁰ OPMA, Suomen *Unesco-toimikunta* fund, box 8 Suomen *Unesco-toimikunta, 1b, 83, Toimintakertomukset ja suunnitelmat, 1957-1977*, PM, *Kertomus Suomen Unesco-toimikunnan toiminnasta v 1972*.

⁹¹ Anouma 1996, 161-180.

debated the same points a few years before, expressing a certain vision of culture and cultural policy.

During *Eurocult*, the biggest point of discussion was the definition of the concept of culture: was culture an elite activity, the arts and humanities, or was it a social phenomenon, a democratized way of life born of increasing leisure time and mass media? Of these definitions, the Assembly wished to focus on the latter and emphasized democratic cultural policy and the democratization of culture, broadening participation and inclusion in cultural life. The definition of the relationship between the two remained incomplete and also led to problems in interpreting the concept of culture. The mass media and pop culture were seen as a priority for cultural policy but also as threats to existing official forms of culture.⁹²

During the negotiations of the CSCE, debates over these points continued with increased alacrity, linked to the political stakes of the conference as a whole. Finland actively participated in discussions linked to the so-called third basket, aiming at the improvement of human contacts and cultural exchanges, using the discussions and ideas developed during *Eurocult*. Geopolitically, Finland appeared throughout the negotiation to thread the same line as the USSR, working as a mediator between the superpowers and a group of Western European countries. Finland also had its own ideas to emphasize, reminding for example the role of the state in Finland in coordinating cultural contacts,⁹³ as well as the importance of cultural equality, democratization of culture and UNESCO.⁹⁴ Finland affirmed its support for more circulation of information, but underlined also Soviet reluctance towards this principle⁹⁵: in March 1973, the Soviet

⁹² Pirnes 2008, 179-180.

⁹³ UMA, Ryhmä 7 B, Box 29 Etyk III-komitea ja sen alakomiteat, Speech, *Yleiskeskustelu, Suomen puheenvuoro*, M. Reimaa, 4.10.1973.

⁹⁴ UMA, Ryhmä 7 B, Box 29 Etyk III-komitea ja sen alakomiteat, Speech, *Yleiskeskustelu, Suomen puheenvuoro*, Kirsti Wartiovaara, 15.11.1973; UMA, ETYK-fund, Box *Geneve*, 48, 49, *alakomitea E, F, G, H III-komitea...*, file *Kausiraportteja*, report, *Report on the progress made in the various committees and sub-committees of the CSCE, 2nd stage, 18 september-31 october 1973*.

⁹⁵ UMA, Ryhmä 7 B, Box 29 Etyk III-komitea ja sen alakomiteat, Speech, *Yleiskeskustelu, Suomen puheenvuoro*, Klaus Törnudd, 6.11.1973; UMA, ETYK-fund, Box 21, *Fab 7/2, Helsinki*, file *Epäviralliset dokumentit; III-korin työryhmän pöytäkirjat...*, transcript of proceedings, *Statement by the representative of Finland, Working group on 29th March 1973 on Basket III*. Translated from Finnish.

representative praised Finland's balanced statements and respect for the diversity of European social and political systems.⁹⁶

During discussions in the early spring of 1973, the negotiations of the third basket hit a crunch that the Finns contributed to resolve as members of the N+N group (Neutrals and Non-aligned). The discussions pitted mostly Western Europeans against the Eastern bloc, with both the US and the USSR looking at the debates from a distance. In March, Finnish remarks about the necessity to take into account European diversity of political systems and sovereignty attracted the ire of the British representative, who mocked Finland's peace rhetoric, concluding that "*it is the philosophy of my country that the broadest possible exchange of information and ideas will be the best guarantee of peace*".⁹⁷ The Eastern group and especially Poland had strongly emphasized the role of the state as a coordinator of culture in order to avoid the rise of a "brutal" under-culture, and Finland was taken in the crossfire trying to balance between statist and liberal visions of cultural policy.⁹⁸ This difficult balancing act between state control and liberalism was also one between Western and Eastern Europe.

In June 1974, the Finnish Ministry for Foreign affairs sent its instructions to the delegation in Geneva: quarrels between East and West blocking the Third basket and the entirety of the conference should be solved through the addition of "*non-inference in internal affairs*" to the principles of the conference. The Ministry thought that only Finland could carry that proposal, and the delegation answered with a possible wording.⁹⁹ The Nordic Countries were not enthusiastic about the proposal, but the Soviet Union was thankful to Finland for efforts contributing to include this principle in the conference.¹⁰⁰ In fact, Sarah Snyder showed how the Soviet Union and the United States had reached an understanding on this point but, in order to avoid Western European suspicion, decided to work

⁹⁶ UMA, ETYK-fund, Box 21, Fab 7/2, Helsinki, file *Epäviralliset dokumentit; III-korin työryhmän pöytäkirjat...*, transcript of proceedings, Working Group, 29.3.1973, Soviet Union.

⁹⁷ UMA, ETYK-fund, Box 21, Fab 7/2, Helsinki, file *Epäviralliset dokumentit; III-korin työryhmän pöytäkirjat...*, transcript Working group meeting, Afternoon session, 30.3.1973, Great-Britain.

⁹⁸ UMA, ETYK-fund, Box Geneve, 48, 49, alakomitea E, F, G, H III-komitea..., file 48, III-korin kokoukselosteet..., transcript Commission III, K. Sous-commission 10, 16 octobre.

⁹⁹ UMA, Ryhmä 7 B, Box 29 Etyk III-komitea ja sen alakomiteat, telegram, MFA to Geneva delegation, 3.6.1974; *idem*, Jaakko Iloniemi, Geneva delegation to MFA, 3.6.1974/4.6.1974.

¹⁰⁰ UMA, Ryhmä 7 B, Box 29 Etyk III-komitea ja sen alakomiteat, telegram, Iloniemi to MFA, 13.6.1974.

through Finland as a member of the N+N group to promote the solution.¹⁰¹ Finnish documents show the way Finland carried on this task.

In mid-June 1974, the Soviet Union said they were ready for concessions on substance if the wording proposed by the Finns was in the introduction, and at the end of June Switzerland and Austria announced their backing of the Finnish proposal.¹⁰² The Finnish main negotiator, diplomat Jaakko Iloniemi, reported on 26 June that discussions on formulation were ongoing.¹⁰³ In the beginning of July, Sweden was the only remaining obstacle, Stockholm wanting to add respect for international commitments amongst the principles of the conference, a red cloth to Eastern European countries. Kalevi Sorsa, now the Finnish prime minister, had to call the Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme to unlock the situation:¹⁰⁴ in mid-July, Sweden fell behind the Finnish proposal. A package deal was finally accepted on 21 July, Finland garnering praise for its work on the matter. At the end of 1974, however, reports from the Finnish delegation in Geneva still emphasized stalemate between Eastern and Western Europeans. In November 1974, a proposal by the USSR on family reunions and international marriages was defended by France and Finland, but cultural affairs remained a bone of contention for the rest of 1974.¹⁰⁵

Relations between UNESCO and the CSCE were considered by Finland as important also after 1975: a list of proposals through which the work of UNESCO could support the CSCE process was discussed in 1975 by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs as part of reflections on post-Helsinki foreign policy.¹⁰⁶ The goal was to use the CSCE process to bring back UNESCO's attention towards Europe.¹⁰⁷ The proposals were mostly scientific, cultural and pragmatic: the development of sea ecology, language training, education, heritage preservation, scientific cooperation and so on. But the Ministry for Foreign Affairs was

¹⁰¹ Snyder 2011, 24-26.

¹⁰² UMA, Ryhmä 7 B, Box 29 *Etyk III-komitea ja sen alakomiteat*, telegram, Iloniemi to MFA, 24.6.1974.

¹⁰³ UMA, Ryhmä 7 B, Box 29 *Etyk III-komitea ja sen alakomiteat*, telegram, Iloniemi to MFA, 26.6.1974.

¹⁰⁴ UMA, Ryhmä 7 B, Box 29 *Etyk III-komitea ja sen alakomiteat*, letter, MFA to Geneva delegation, 4.7.1974.

¹⁰⁵ UMA, Ryhmä 7 B, Box 29 *Etyk III-komitea ja sen alakomiteat PM, ETYK II, Tilanne III komiteassa*, Paavo Keisalo, 30.12.1974; UMA, Ryhmä 7 B, Box 29 *Etyk III-komitea ja sen alakomiteat*, PM, *ETYYKin kolmas kori*, nd.

¹⁰⁶ OPMA, Box 721, *Ulkoiset subteet: Unesco ja ETYK, 1975->...*, PM, *Unesco ja ETYKIn seuranta*, 18.12.1975.

¹⁰⁷ OPMA, Suomen Unesco-toimikunta fund, series 8, Box 9, *Toimikunnan kokoukset (pöytäkirjat) 1972-76*, PM, *pöytäkirja*, 25.8.1975.

not unanimous: the diplomat Ralph Enckell insisted that all issues mentioned could be better managed through the bilateral cultural treaties recently signed between Finland and various countries. UNESCO could not be seen anymore, for Enckell, as an efficient platform: it was too susceptible at that stage to be blocked by the majority of developing countries opposing the use of limited funds for programmes dedicated to richer countries.¹⁰⁸ Support for UNESCO was found mostly in the Ministry of Education, which was more optimistic: Margaretha Mickwitz insisted on the role the CSCE could play to attract UNESCO back towards Europe while acknowledging that most cultural relations could be handled bilaterally.¹⁰⁹

During the 1960s–1970s, Finland also became increasingly integrated in Western European cooperation mechanisms and organizations.¹¹⁰ In January 1970, Finland became a member of the Council of Europe’s Cultural Cooperation Commission (CCC). The government had presented this project to Parliament in 1969, insisting on the way the treaty completed the palette of officially organized cultural international links, from UNESCO to bilateral treaties. The CCC was the first Western European cultural organization in which Finland entered after UNESCO accession. In 1975, as the Council discussed the integration of the CCC in the Council’s political architecture, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs made it clear to representatives of the Ministry of Education that it would mean Finland’s departure from the Commission, since Finland was not a member of the Council of Europe. The proposal was finally rejected. Finally, the OECD was particularly influent in education, through exchanges of teachers, spreading of material and teaching aid and so on.¹¹¹ For example, about 40 Finnish teachers participated every year to teaching courses in different parts of Europe, which had an effect on foreign language teaching in Finland’s schools. Finland was also after 1965 an observer in the Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education.

¹⁰⁸ OPMA, Box 721, *Ulkoiset subteet: Unesco ja ETTYK, 1975->...*, Ralph Enckell to MFA, 29.9.1975.

¹⁰⁹ OPMA, Box 721, *Ulkoiset subteet: Unesco ja ETTYK, 1975->...*, PM, untitled, 21.8.1975, Margaretha Mickwitz.

¹¹⁰ Siikala 1976, 206 et s.

¹¹¹ This is emphasized during the April 1970 meeting of the Department for International Affairs: OPMA, Jaakko Numminen fund, Box *Opetusministeriön kansainvälisten asiain osasto*, file *OPM kansainvälisten asiain osasto 1970-1985, 1987, 1989-1994*, PM, *Kokouskutsu ja asialista*, 30.4.1970. See also Kettunen & Simola 2012, 443-450.

In 1970, the country had joined the OECD, and especially the organization's committees on education, science and technology. Marjatta Oksanen emphasized the importance of this for scientific and technological cooperation with the West, which went beyond bilateral relations.¹¹² This vast field of organizations and multilateral agencies was coordinated from Finland mostly in the Ministry of Education, which had cemented its role as the architect of most technical aspects in Finland's cultural diplomacy: relations with the OECD for example were managed in the Ministry of Education by the Department for universities and science.¹¹³

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¹¹² Oksanen 2016, 495-507.

¹¹³ Numminen 2020, vol 2, 158.

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CHAPTER 6

The Finnish State and International Cultural Relations, 1945–1975

Our generation has made an essential contribution to our country's opening and internationalization, the fruits of which we can enjoy today.

—*Kalervo Siikala, 1999* (KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box Kulttuuripolitiikka, kirjeenvaihto 1996-2000, Letter, Siikala to Ritva-Liisa Elomaa, 23.2.1999. Translated from Finnish.)

Culture was no exception in Finland's foreign policy during the Cold War: international cultural relations were seen by the Finnish authorities as another stage on which the basic play of Finland's Cold War domestic and foreign policies was performed. In the maze of justifications used by administrators for improving the state's capacity to coordinate and direct Finland's spontaneous cultural relations, figured historical memories, conceptions of desirable directions for the nation's development, the necessities of Finland's geopolitical situation, and more concrete notions linked to commercial and economic development. The slow institutionalization of this cultural diplomacy and the activities it conducted aimed at Finland's geopolitical stabilization and participation in international developments, and the country's state-led cultural modernization.

After the improvisations of the first postwar years, Finland's state developed a cultural diplomacy also in order to further its control of the country's society. Finnish administrators wanted to promote certain forms of cultural modernization and adoption of foreign models. In the context of the Cold War, they also wanted better control over organizations managing cultural contacts with the Eastern bloc, and a society more in tune with at least the rhetoric of the country's official foreign policy line. The development of Finland's welfare state and the tensions of the Cold War, mostly for Finland the country's relation with the Soviet Union, precipitated the concentration in the hands or under the influence of state institutions of prerogatives conceived as essential to the nation's development and to the stability of its foreign policy. Even though the Finnish state created institutions to manage parts of the cultural field, create new forms of cultural relations, and coordinate or support a large group of private organizations, the system remained divided between private, semi-public, and public agents. Some of these private organizations however worked with state agencies through personal contacts, networks, funding and the promotion of common values and lines. The concrete forms of this cultural diplomacy went from facilitating activities on behalf of the cultural field to directly coordinating certain organizations and activities seen as essential to the state. The state tried to compensate for the perceived shortcomings of society's spontaneous cultural contacts, especially the lack of spontaneous contacts with the Eastern bloc. It developed a form of official cultural relations and involved the Finns in the bureaucracy of multilateral cultural cooperation. In that, the Finnish state's actions contributed in their own way to Finland's long-term internationalization, despite a lack of resources and a number of constraints. Some activities such as cultural treaties with Eastern Europe ended with the Cold War context—others, such as academic exchanges, burst beyond the limits imposed by the Cold War and developed further.

The intellectual environment in which Finland's administrators developed the institutions of the country's cultural diplomacy was bookended by the memories of World War II and by the context of the Cold War. For many, memories of the war worked as an essential background for plans to modernize the country through the controlled digestion of international examples and inspirations, to pacify Finland's relations with the USSR, and to maintain its relations with the West. Siikala's quote at the head of this conclusion, written in 1999, is a clear example of the way most of Finland's cultural diplomats saw their work: before everything as an attempt to create a situation in which Finland would both entertain

pacified and active relations with the Soviet Union and be able to develop and fulfil its Western European cultural destiny. For state administrators like Siikala, this situation did not appear as a difficult compromise pushed on Finland by the result of the war, but as a desirable state of affairs making the most of Finland's geopolitical situation and allowing for the controlled development of Finland's cultural level. On this basis, he could very well in 1999 consider Finland's trajectory since World War II as a single rising curve, tracing his country's harmonious integration into global cultural developments and cultural, scientific and educational modernization. In this vision, cultural globalization in the 1990s and the very questioning of the tenets of Finnish cultural identity could be seen as more disruptive to Finnish culture than the Soviet Union or the end of the Cold War. What this narrative understates is the domestic political consequences of Finland's Cold War status, the self-censorship, uniformization and state control this entailed. What it overstates is the role of the Finnish state in a process of opening Finland to the world, in which the state was never the only, nor even in certain sectors the main protagonist.

Finland's cultural diplomats in the years 1945–1975 envisioned a necessary increase in the capacity of the Finnish state to control, develop and coordinate the spontaneous flow of cultural relations. This had to be channelled in directions congenial to harmonious cultural development, modernization, participation in international cultural cooperation and good relations with the Soviet Union. In the Cold War context, extending the structures of the welfare state to culture was not only a process aiming at modernizing society following a statist vision of relations between state and culture:¹ it was also a way to support Finland's official foreign policy, as some essential things could not be left to domestic political passions or to the market. Because of a need for modernization and in the context of relations with the Soviet Union, cultural, intellectual, scientific or artistic international relations became conceived as too important to be completely left to society. They had to be linked to the state-led harmonious development of the nation and to the balanced development of its foreign policy. Geopolitics also provided a sense of national emergency, a tension that allowed for increased state coordination in society.

These evolutions took some time to unravel. Immediately after the war, cultural relations with the Soviet victor developed as the private endeavour of organizations supported by Soviet resources, while the Finnish state

¹ Martin 2022.

had little means to conduct any ambitious cultural policy, foreign or domestic. Memories of wartime censorship also prevented the recreation of state-led coordination agencies. As Finland remained outside of UNESCO, the reconstruction of links with the West happened mostly bilaterally through private organizations, individuals or local administrations. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union's edgy relations with Finnish governments before 1956 meant Moscow preferred to deal with private organizations. The most important exception to a figure of general public passivity was cooperation with the Nordic countries. Starting from this postwar situation where the Finnish authorities had only little instruments to support cultural international relations, ministries worked to create a level of official international cultural relations and achieving coordination of the Finnish cultural field in matters linked to international cultural relations.²

In 1956, Finland became a member of UNESCO. This widened Finland's horizons in international intellectual cooperation, and integrated it in the formal and bureaucratic universe of multilateral cultural cooperation and UNESCO's programmes. Finland's reflexes in UNESCO were rather similar to its participation in other multilateral organizations: the Finns contributed faithfully to the organization, but were also critical from the beginning of the organization's costs and bureaucratic system. They tried to obtain as much as possible at the smallest cost possible, while at the same time worrying about their reputation in the organization. They worked to keep their policy statements aligned with the Eastern bloc, or to keep away from big geopolitical questions altogether. The rhetoric of understanding between nations and development of the Global South was genuinely felt by most Finnish administrators, but they also worked to keep UNESCO involved primarily in Europe, where Finland's interests were.

The early 1960s also saw a stabilization of relations between Finland and the USSR, after a series of crises in which the president elected in 1956, Urho Kekkonen, imposed himself as the centre of a policy of friendly relations with Moscow. After 1962, *détente* gave Finland the opportunity to develop more contacts with the Eastern and Western blocs. The strong

²In his essay on the history of cultural institutes, Gregory Paschaladis draws a similar chronology, describing a progressive politicization of cultural affairs, a rise of the role of the state as coordinator of these policies, a new dialogue between identity and politics, and the role of international developments (Paschaladis 2009, 275-289).

autonomy of private or semi-private organizations dealing with aspects of international cultural relations was allowed to continue, although the Finnish state absorbed or brought in its orbit the main organizations dealing with cultural relations with the USSR and other important aspects (exchanges, or language teaching abroad for example).³

In March 1966, the creation of the Department of International Affairs in the Ministry of Education was the high-water mark of Finland's state-driven development of cultural diplomacy. A centripetal force attracted various private organizations towards the Ministry of Education, either through direct funding, absorption or coordination. A vast field of organizations remained, although parts of it were increasingly coordinated by or in contact with a Ministry eager to help and support them. The need for coordination in the most important domains was regularly emphasized for reasons linked both to a strongly normative view of desirable cultural evolutions for the country and to worries about losing control over society's spontaneous international contacts.

Finland's solution to problems of coordination in these circumstances was genuinely original, and could still inform current practices. Forms of private-public cooperation in cultural diplomacy have ranged across a variety of models: while Germany has a distant Foreign Ministry that mostly funds middle-ground organizations, in the United States debates over cultural diplomacy have resulted in the creation of agencies in the State Department. Finland during the Cold War emphasized flexible arrangements across agencies, soft forms of coordination with civil society organizations, and the channelling of relations through close-knit networks destined to ensure that most basic assumptions would be shared and information would quickly circulate. Under strong domestic and foreign pressures, this coordination could morph into enforced uniformity in the context of a small state. The difficult geopolitical context and the need for modernization were good reasons to exert a level of pressure on non-state actors, either directly or through public resources and the state's facilitative support. The Finnish state thus found itself coordinating important parts of Finland's cultural relations, benefiting from the expertise and engagement of non-state actors.⁴ The state was, however, never the only protagonist, but worked through soft coordination in a context where a certain conception of the national interest in terms of

³ Perna 2002, 260.

⁴ Gienow-Hecht 2010, 10.

cultural relations was shared widely. The increasing role of the state in Finland's international cultural relations also meant the emergence of official, bureaucratic forms of cultural cooperation, as in cultural treaties or in UNESCO's multilateral bureaucracy. UNESCO also brought new subjects to Finland's debates, for example the organization of development aid.

In the early 1970s, the CSCE process electrified the field, bringing state-coordinated culture to the centre of renewed European relations. A number of cultural treaties were signed, while the CSCE contributed to a new definition of culture that brought back the influence of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. This statist approach was mostly visible in Finland's relations to countries in the Eastern bloc: Finnish society didn't need much support for its relations with the West, which flowed naturally although they too benefitted from instruments created by official initiatives. Cultural treaties were a specific form of cultural relations, heavy on bureaucracy and rather official, a culture of folk groups and classical music, literature and language teaching, art exhibitions, official visits, administrators' meetings and strictly reciprocal exchange programmes. While UNESCO was perceived as unable to play its role of bridge over the bipolar divide due to its concentration on the Global South, Finland felt it necessary to emphasize the CSCE as a new organization for cultural cooperation.

Finland's activism in international organizations came to replicate the expansion of the state's action, reaching a plateau in the mid-1970s. The state's role in cultural affairs had expanded, the Cold War had reached a moment of *détente*, and the Ministry of Education had at its disposal a group of institutions directly managing or coordinating various aspects of international cultural relations. Finland had managed to build a cultural diplomacy defined by the development of a welfare state coordinating part of the private sector, accompanying the modernization of the country and linked to its foreign policy. The administrators of this process conceived it as a small nation waking up from its nationalistic slumber, opening up to the world, taking its place, and importing modernity on its own terms.

A rhetoric of peace through cultural cooperation, visible especially in the UNESCO context, almost perfectly corresponded to the Soviet rhetoric of peaceful cohabitation and understanding between nations. This brings into question the sincerity of such rhetoric: was it genuinely felt as an important thing for Finland or mostly borrowed as a necessary bow to Finland's powerful neighbour? The importance of the experience of the

war tends to suggest that, despite the obvious cynicism linked to Finland's geopolitical position and Soviet pressures, the idea of a pacification of Finnish society through cultural contacts also had a resonance amongst Finnish cultural diplomats.

Can we say, as Paavo Lipponen points out, that the Finnish state "internationalized" Finland? During the three decades we studied Finnish society generally opened up to the world. After the stabilization of its international and domestic situation in the late 1950s, and following the FINN-EFTA treaty in 1961, Finland was increasingly associated to Western economic integration. Nordic cooperation also included Finland in a zone of free circulation, simplifying border crossings to seek jobs or cultural artefacts. On the other side of the bipolar divide, relations developed out of the state-enforced logic of the arrangement signed in 1948, but also in some circumstances spontaneously: the peace festivals organized by the Eastern bloc are a good example of this, which worked for many young Finns more as an avenue to the world than as a moment of ideological indoctrination.⁵ These decades saw the development of several ways through which the Finns could have international connections. While most were spontaneous, the state or an official organization could often be seen in the background, providing funding, support, networks, programmes and institutions facilitating one way or another. Ministries, however, also developed a specific field of cultural diplomacy and multilateral cultural cooperation dominated by public organizations and working of its own logic. It also set limits to what could be done and criteria for what was desirable, out of an ethos of national cultural development and the necessities of life as a friendly neighbour to the USSR.

In his work, Andreas Åkerlund questioned the link between state-funded international exchange programmes and the development of Sweden's foreign policy between 1938 and 1990.⁶ In the Swedish case, Åkerlund describes a system mostly dominated by public-funded organizations and the state. In the case of Finland, one can observe a process of slow expansion of state-funded activities that never managed to entirely monopolize the field of cultural relations, although it spread certain assumptions and became a towering feature in the cultural field. The welfare state managed to channel a significant part of the Finnish population's international cultural contacts in these years. It also created bureaucracies

⁵ Koivunen 2020.

⁶ Åkerlund 2014, 390-409.

and institutions that would not have developed spontaneously, mostly aiming at giving Finland visibility in international cooperation and emphasizing relations with the Eastern bloc. Next to spontaneous relations, an official form of cultural cooperation emerged involving state agencies but also local levels such as most Finnish municipalities. The Cold War imposed limits and opened opportunities, while the construction of the welfare state and debates about national identity suggested directions in which to steer Finland's culture.

These arrangements, which Finland's cultural diplomats considered essential because of the necessity for the state to manage some things of national importance, stabilized in the 1970s but evolved in the 1980s following changes in the equilibriums of the Cold War, and the evolution of relations between state and society. Finland's rapid economic growth and social changes came with demands of decentralization and an increase in spontaneous international cultural relations. After the mid-1970s, while demands of decentralization in domestic cultural policy started to increase,⁷ the role of state institutions in the careful curating of cultural relations changed quickly.⁸ One can find signs of increasing frustration in the Ministry of Education as to the seemingly anarchical development of Finland's international cultural contacts, and a feeling of disenchantment with international cooperation. In 1981, Siikala criticized cultural globalization and the spread of crass, American, commercial popular culture: "A universal culture has emerged only in the realm of commercial mass entertainment".⁹ Siikala's conclusion to a life spent "internationalising" Finland was bitter-sweet: the development of international relations in cultural matters was escaping the careful coordination of the state, imposing new criteria of excellence to local productions, taking too many resources and imposing new trends without first refining them for local use. These influences could not be allowed to become the main thrust of its cultural life. But in a country that was integrating into the Western world's cultural and economic developments, Siikala's words were already outdated.

The 1980s, despite the strong economic development of Finland, witnessed also the partial unravelling of the administrative arrangements described earlier, especially at the expense of the Ministry of Education. In

⁷ Renko et al. 2021.

⁸ See Clerc and Valaskivi 2018.

⁹ KMA, Kalervo Siikala fund, Box 1980-luku, Article draft for *Kanava* 6/81, "Suomen kulttuurin viennin näköaloja", Kalervo Siikala. Translated from Finnish.

the late 1980s, a large committee reflecting on cultural and image diplomacy made an ambitious programme of development of Finland's cultural diplomacy, but was mostly unsuccessful in bringing it to concrete fruition due to an economic crisis and the disturbances created by the end of the Cold War.¹⁰ Finland's bid for integration in the EU, started in 1991, opened up a period where Finnish society would enter directly in contact with other societies, the state slowly withdrawing from the management of cultural affairs: in a 1994 letter to the Finnish ambassador in The Hague dealing with the possibility to create a Finnish cultural centre in Antwerp, Siikala described cultural relations as a domain where the state was less and less involved. Progressively, the state was moving away from direct contacts between citizens and cultural actors.¹¹ Changes after the 1970s also touched the nature of state intervention in society and of Finland's integration in Western Europe and the world.¹² The 1991–1992 economic crisis that struck Finland derived into a deep crisis of public funding, that forced official organizations from ministries to municipalities to entirely rethink their activities.¹³ This transformed what was mostly a political, technical (education, arts and cultural projects) and identity-driven project into a commercial and economic project using culture as a commodity destined to foreign markets, an asset in the global competition of states and societies, and an aspect of nation branding.¹⁴ This retained some old aspects, such as the importance of work towards domestic audiences for “international education”, and a longing for consensus and state coordination.¹⁵

Looking at Finland's cultural diplomacy in 1945–1975, it appears clearly that Finland is not a *sui generis* case when it comes to the organization and development of its cultural diplomacy. In scholarly terms, this work comes to confirm the importance in Nordic postwar cultural diplomacy of the elements presented by Ingimundarson and Magnúsdóttir:

¹⁰ Clerc and Valaskivi 2018.

¹¹ KA, *Opetusministeriö fund*, Eva Paajanen series, Box *Suomi ja kahdenvälinen kulttuurivaihto eräiden maiden kanssa, 1976-2007*, Ucg:1, Letter, Kalervo Siikala to ambassador Erkki Mäentakanen, 10.1.1994.

¹² Lehtonen et al. 2014; Kangas 2001, 63-65.

¹³ For a critical take on Finland's response to the crisis and changes in the conception of its welfare state, see Kantola and Kananen 2013.

¹⁴ Bruun et al. 2009, 18-22, 95-194.

¹⁵ Bruun et al. 2009, 196, 206-210.

historical experiences from World War II, modernization drives, the construction and idealization of the welfare state and the development of national cultural traditions in the crossfire of the Cold War.¹⁶ These evolutions suggest multiple chronologies of cultural diplomacy in Finland, some extending beyond the context of the Cold War and linked to the evolutions of the Finnish welfare state. Once the pressing context of the Cold War was over, financial crisis and a new liberal era made resistances to state coordination the norm, changing the structure of Finland's welfare state. Accession to the EU allowed direct, simple and natural contacts between Finnish society and its international environment, and the incentives for state action in international cultural relations became ripe for re-evaluation. Here again, what mattered in this re-evaluation were the contours of national identity, Finland's geopolitical context, domestic policy and increasingly commercial and economic considerations.

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¹⁶ Ingimundarson and Magnúsdóttir 2015, 10–11.

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