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Economy and Society in Finnish Historiography of the World War II

Abstract

About two generations have passed away since the end of the World War II. Finnish historiography has analyzed the war many times and from many angles. Writing of history has changed as much as any form of human activity. It has been affected, among other things, by the changes in society and in historical research. This article examines how Finnish historiography of the World War II has dealt with issues of economy and society. The central finding concerns the change of the nature of research after its initial stages from the 1960s on towards a more scientific and socially-oriented approach as well as (the shift towards) studies which are based on individual experiences from the 1990s onwards.

Keywords: World War II, Finnish historiography, economic and social history

During the Presidency of Urho Kekkonen the term ‘*Second Republic*’ became a catchword to describe the idea of World War II as a political and social watershed. Two to (or) three generations have passed since the beginning of that war. When the war broke out, in comparison to Western Europe, Finland was still a deeply agricultural country, which had become independent at the end of the Great War. After the World War II Finnish society and its scientific perception has changed dramatically. In what follows, Finnish historiography, and to some extent, other studies in humanities of the war are analyzed. The starting point here is in economic history and in the author’s previous studies into the economic burden the war caused to Finland.¹ The time-span runs from the 1940s to the beginning of the new millennium.

Already the title of the war, World War II, tells that when studying it one should study also the World War because both were total wars in which besides armies also material, mental and other resources were at stake. Both made deep impact in the society and greatly consumed the resources of the fighting nations. The American Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (Division of Economics and History) launched after World War I a general elaboration into the impact of the war on economy and society all over the world. The project published altogether 150 works in which the war was, according to the notions of the era, seen as a waste and disturbance in fluctuations. It was assumed that there would be a return to pre-1914 conditions. The part concerning Finland had been written

¹ NUMMELA, Ilkka: *Inter arma silent revisores rationum, Toisen maailmansodan aiheuttama taloudellinen raskaus Suomessa vuosina 1939-1952*. *Studia historica Jyväskylälänsia* 46, Jyväskylä 1993.

by Leo Harmaja and it was published in English in 1933 and in Finnish and in German in 1940.²

After World War II such a project was not launched due to the different perception of the events stating that these have not always had a negative impact. Likewise, one has to bear in mind that wars are not always culpable to all the changes that happen during them. This is the case in particular with the modern welfare society which developed quite fast during and after the war. This conclusion has been brought out in Finland by Risto Eräsaari, in particular.³

One of the lessons of the war in terms of (war) economy was that economic potential to wage the war can't be created during the war. Therefore economic planning (of the war) became an essential part of defense during the interwar period in Finland, too. This took place in three fields: ensuring of the needs of the military forces and civilians and the efficacy of the national economy, and in the generalization of holistic economic thinking and calculations of the GNP. Planning was comprehensive in Finland in the 1920s but later it concentrated on military preparation.⁴

Finland with its 3.7 million inhabitants could be called a Nordic democracy although not as liberal as Sweden. In the economic fields Finland was a small, open, market-oriented country that was highly dependent on world markets. This meant that had Finland not participated in the war its economy stayed vulnerable.

A lot has been written in Finland about World War II as it has for a long time been part of the 'great national narrative', the enhancement of which has been in social demand. World War II together with World War I and the era of autonomy (1809-1917) belongs to the themes that have invited new interpretations from Finnish historians. Many of them have dealt with it and books about these topics are doing still well before Christmas and Fathers' Day, since the ratio of mobilization to the war was high and the father, grandfather or grand-grandfather of many served in the front.

First and foremost, Ville Kivimäki and Silvo Hietanen have written about the historiography of World War II. Both of them have paid attention to social studies

² HARMAJA, Leo: *Effects of the war on economic and social life in Finland*. Economic and social history of the World War. Yale University Press, New Haven 1993. HARMAJA Leo: *Die Einwirkung des Weltkrieges auf die wirtschaftliche Entwicklung Finnlands*. Helsinki, 1940.

³ ERÄSAARI, Risto: *Taloudellinen jälleenrakentaminen ja 'sosiaalivaltio' Suomessa toisen maailmansodan jälkeen*. Suomi toisessa maailmansodassa projektin julkaisu 3, Helsinki 1978. NUMMELA, Ilkka: *Sotainen Suomi - sosiaalivaltion ytimiä*. Sosiaaliviesti 1986:4. Cf. TITMUS, Richard M.: *Essays on Welfare State*. London, 1964.

⁴ LANTER, Max: *Die Finanzierung des Krieges*. Luzern, 1950. KNORR, Klaus: *The war potential of nations*. Princeton, 1956. SOIKKANEN, Hannu: *Die Mobilisierung der Kraftreserven Finnlands während des Zweiten Weltkrieges*. Suomi toisessa maailmansodassa -projektin julkaisu 2. Helsinki, 1977. NUMMELA, Ilkka: *Taloudellisen puolustusvalmiuden suunnittelu Suomessa 1920- ja 1930-luvuilla*. IN: *Historijoitsija – taaksepäin katsova profetta*, Mauno Jokipiille omistettu juhla- ja tutkimuskirja. Studia Historica Jyväskylänse 30. Saarijärvi, 1984.

into the war and to how socio-economic issues have been dealt with in different periods. One can say that these are neglected fields, since the studies into World War II have concentrated on actual warfare and international politics. This holds largely true, one can even say that at times analysis of socio-economic aspects has dominated the research. Our analysis proceeds according to the general chronology divided into three periods, but at first, it would be appropriate to describe the position of Finland in the war and the three most important factors that influenced the Finnish point of view of the war itself.

Finland and the World War II

The Finns usually divide the war into three parts and talk about the Winter War, the Continuation War and the Lapland War according to the military situation at hand. By the time the image of the war as an enduring period has, following international models, become more popular. However, because of the Finnish periodization has dominated Finnish studies of the war, it is appropriate to disentangle the position of Finland in them. In the beginning of September 1939 Finland declared neutrality but it had to experience warfare after a week when the iron ship *Olivebank* collided with a mine in the North Sea. Finland was not involved in the war without preparation for the matters of supply and economic regulation had been planned based on the experiences of the World War I and because of the preparedness of the defense system had been improved. Rationing had been started instantly in the beginning of September.

In the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact Finland had been placed in the Soviet sphere of interest with the Baltic countries. In October negotiations of territorial questions ensued. At the time general mobilization was called under the guise of 'practice'. The Soviet Union attacked on the 30th of November and was dismissed from the League of Nations. In the Winter War in which the Finns were defeated, 337.000 men were in arms, but it did not cause great problems to agriculture.⁵ After the peace treaty of Moscow Finland kept 100.000 men in arms, i.e. much more than in times of peace in general. In 1940-1941 a huge number of conscripts conducted their military service and Finland invested a lot in defense.⁶

Since summer 1941 Finland was again waging war, this time with Germany against the Soviets. The Finns called it the Continuation War – formally it was Finland's own war – and it lasted until September 1944. Over half a million men

⁵ TERVASMÄKI, Vilho & VUORENMAA, Anssi & JUUTILAINEN, Antti: *Ylimääräiset kertausharjoitukset – liikekannallepano, joukkojen keskittäminen ja sotavalmius*. IN: *Talvisodan historia 1*. Suomi joutuu talvisotaan. Sotatieteen laitoksen julkaisuja XVI:1. Porvoo, 1977. 96ff. KRONLUND, Jarl: *Suomen puolustuslaitos 1918-1939*. Puolustusvoimien rauhan ajan historia. Sotatieteen laitoksen julkaisuja XXIV. Porvoo, 1988. 529. 533. 541.

⁶ JOKIPII, Mauno: *Jatkosodan synty*. Tutkimuksia Saksan ja Suomen sotilaallisesta yhteistyöstä 1940-41. Keuruu, 1987.

were in arms. Out of the Allied Powers, Great Britain declared war on Finland in December 1941 what the United States never did. The war ended with an armistice on the 4th of September and the interim peace of Moscow of the 19th of September 1944. The Finns were forced to drive Germans out of the country; thus the term '*the Lapland War*' stems from the chain of battles which lasted until April 1945. In March 1945 Finnish Government stated that it had been at war with the Third Reich from the middle of September 1944 and in March 1945 that the war with it was over. Formally the Continuation War ended with the ratification of the Paris Peace Treaty.⁷ The rest of the war reparations dictated in the peace treaties were paid by September 1952. Rationing was abolished gradually and regulation of foreign trade ended in 1957.

The three cornerstones of the World War II to the Finns

To a professional historian it is a commonplace that the image of history held by the public is not easy to change and that popular views die hard in spite the opposite proof. The popular image of the World War II was very strongly based on two studies and one movie, i.e. the memoirs of Marshal C.G.E. Mannerheim, the novel *Unknown Soldier* by Väinö Linna and the film by the same title directed by Edwin Laine.

The two-volume memoirs of Mannerheim were published posthumously and they found their way in the bookshelves of many Finnish homes. They were not directly written by Mannerheim himself but are based on texts written by many aides, for example, Colonel Aladár Paasonen, Emerik Olson, M.A., and General Erik Heinrichs. Mannerheim only checked and edited them. The decision to publish the memoirs was made after the Finnish-Soviet Treaty of spring 1948 and they were written in order to gain political support from the West. In his memoirs Mannerheim emphasized not only the meaning of unanimity and will to defend the country but also the necessity to arm. Also national unity and achievements were at the fore. Even before Mannerheim started to work on his memoirs, the Finnish defense forces had started to write a history of the continuation war.

The novel by Linna published in 1954 describes the experiences of one company from the perspective of ordinary soldiers. It is one of most famous war novels ever published in Finland. According to the back-sleeve it is „*a critique of war and a monument for the Finnish soldier*”. At the time of its publication it raised indignation because it showed how Finnish soldiers consumed alcohol. The various figures of the novel speaking different dialects of the Finnish language have grown to become archetypes of the Finnish cultural heritage.

⁷ SUONTAUSTA, Tauno: *Piirteitä Suomen oikeusasemasta sodan jälkeen*. Lakimies 1953. SUONTAUSTA, Tauno: *Suomen ja Saksan oikeudellisten suhteiden taustaa*. Lakimies 1954. HYVÄMÄKI, Lauri: *Valtioneuvosto 2. maailmansodan jälkeen vuoteen 1957*. IN: *Valtioneuvoston historia 1917-1966 II*. Helsinki, 1977. 405-406. POLVINEN, Tuomo: *Jaltasta Pariisiin rauhaan. Suomi kansainvälisessä politiikassa III*. Juva, 1981, 62-63.

Two movies and many a theater play have been made of Linna's novel, the foremost of them being the version shown in an outdoors summer theatre (Pyynikki) years on end in Linna's hometown, Tampere. The movie directed by Edwin Laine in 1955 is regarded by many a Finn as the one and only 'right' 'Unknown Soldier'. Rauli Mollberg's newer and more realistic version, produced three decades later, has not been able to overcome it. Laine's version has for many years been the stable film to watch on TV on the Independence Day (6th of December).

Concentration on concrete matters

In its time Winter War was a remarkable international media event that made Finland and Finns well-known to the outer world. The War that lasted 105 days did not cause any particular worry about shortage of work in the agriculture contrary to the Continuation War. As to the Winter War journalists and writers were the first to describe the conditions whereas the soldiers themselves depicted the war itself. At large one can say that the war was written down by the ones who experienced it. If one takes a look at the collections of the National Library to find out which aspects of the early phases of the war were best-covered, the outcome is supplies for the people, i.e. ordinary daily matters. Censorship dictated that only very few socio-political issues could be discussed publicly, one of the exceptions being the supplies from the point of view of the people, not from the *national* dimension.

The research into wartime economy was for a long time hampered by two problems concerning reporting on economy. The first related to the public accounts system of the state which was based on the decisions of the use of revenues, not on the actual use of them. Heikki Valvanne has described the revenue and expenditure by clearing the accounts from administrative costs like advance payments and estimated budgetary expenditure⁸. The second problem concerned the accounts of national economy of which a relatively reliable time-series of the wartime data started to be published from the year 1988 (10). Also the state of research changed for the better in the 1970s with the studies published by Heikki Oksanen and Erkki Pihkala.⁹

Comprehensive studies into wartime economy were rare and the point of comparison was rather state than national economy. Besides this, foreign trade and prices dominated the subject. *Ekonomiska Samfundet* representing the Swedish-

⁸ VALVANNE, Heikki: *Valtion tulot ja menot sekä kassaliike*. Suomen Pankin taloudellisen tutkimuslaitoksen julkaisu B:10. Helsinki, 1949. VALVANNE, Heikki: *Valtiontalous vuosina 1938-1951*. IN: *Taloudellisia selvityksiä 1952*. Suomen Pankin taloustieteellisen tutkimuslaitoksen julkaisu A:13. Helsinki, 1952. VALVANNE Heikki: *Mitä sotakorvaukset maksoivat valtiolle*. Kansamme talous 30/1952. VALVANNE, Heikki: *Valtiontalous vuosina 1951-1954*. IN: *Taloudellisia selvityksiä 1955*. Suomen Pankin taloustieteellisen tutkimuslaitoksen julkaisu A:16, Helsinki 1955.

⁹ OKSANEN, Heikki & PIHKALA, Erkki: *Suomen ulkomaankauppa 1919-1949*. Suomen Pankin julkaisu. Kasvututkimuksia VI. Helsinki, 1975; HEIKKINEN, Sakari: *Suomeen ja maailmalle*. Tullilaitoksen historia. Helsinki, 1994.

speaking economists published in 1944 a work titled *Vårt näringsliv och kriget* in which several interesting articles about the impact of the war on the Finnish economy and society were included. They largely belonged to the earlier liberal thinking.¹⁰ In this connection, one should notice Raoul Brummert's article on taxation.¹¹

The first scholar who tried to estimate the long-term impact of war to Finland was Bruno Suviranta who was interested in the reparations Finland had to pay to Soviet Union according to the articles of the Moscow Treaty of 1944.¹² This amounted to 300 million dollars and has raised a long-standing debate and several Ph.D.-theses have been written about them.¹³

World War II was the first in Finland which killed more men than women; 94.000 men and 1.000 women lost their lives, which was more than the normal death-rate. There were 30.000 war widows and 50.000 war orphans, and about 90.000 persons became permanently disabled. The war orphans have been active in recollecting the war in interviews conducted in the new millennium.¹⁴

Because of territorial losses to the Soviet Union great many Finns from Karelia, Kuusamo, Salla, Petsamo, Hanko, Porkkala and islands of the Gulf of Finland had to find new home in postwar Finland. Every 9th Finn or 400.000 people had to move. Immediately after the war a lot was written about the reparations to those who had lost property and about how to finance them. Many local history books were also published of the lost municipalities and the focus has been on migrants from agricultural areas and their resettlement. One big issue was the status of the re-settlers and their services, for example, in the work of Heikki Varis and his research group from the year 1952.¹⁵ K.U. Pihkala wrote of the economic side of the resettlement.¹⁶

¹⁰ *Vårt näringsliv och kriget*. Helsingfors, 1944.

¹¹ BRUMMERT, Raoul: *Statsbeskattningen som medel för krigsfinansieringen in Finland åren 1939–1945*. Bidrag till kännedom af Finlands folk och natur, h. 99. Helsingfors, 1956.

¹² SUVIRANTA, Br.: *Suomen sotakorvaukset ja sen taloudelliset seuraukset*. IN: *Taloudellisia selvityksiä 1945:II*. Suomen Pankin taloustieteellisen tutkimuslaitoksen julkaisuja, A:5. Helsinki, 1945. SUVIRANTA, Br.: *Suomen sotakorvaukset ja maksukyky*. Helsinki, 1948. SUVIRANTA, Br.: *The Way to war indemnities in kind*. Acta Forestalia Fennica 61. Helsinki, 1954. SUVIRANTA, Br.: *Sotakorvaus 1944-1952 ja sen vaikutukset*. Itsenäisen Suomen taloushistoriaa 1919-50. Porvoo, 1967.

¹³ AUER, Jaakko: *Suomen sotakorvaustoimitukset Neuvostoliitolle*. Porvoo, 1956. HEIKKILÄ, Hannu: *Liittoutuneet ja kysymys Suomen sotakorvauksista 1943-1947*. Historiallisia tutkimuksia 121. Helsinki, 1983. HEIKKILÄ, Hannu: *The Question of European reparations in Allied Policy 1943-1947*. Studia Historica 27. Jyväskylä, 1989.

¹⁴ KASTARI, Irma: *Sotasiirtolaisten laitoshuolto*. Sosiaalipoliittisen yhdistyksen julkaisuja 12. Porvoo, 1965; RANTA-KNUUTTILA, Jaakko: *Sotavammaisten huolto Suomessa*. Porvoo, 1967. SALONEN, Torsti, *Muistot elävät*. Sotalesket ja kaatuneitten omaiset 50 vuotta 1995. Vammalan Kirjapaino Oy, 1995; Kaatuneiden omaisten liitto (<http://www.kolry.fi/content/kirjallisuutta>).

¹⁵ VIROLAINEN, Johannes: *Karjalan taloudelliset arvot*. Helsinki, 1941. MÄKI, Antti: *Maanhankintalain toimeenpanon kansantaloudelliset vaikutukset*. Kansantaloudellinen Aikakauskirja 1946. WARIS, Heikki & Jyrkilä, Vieno & RAITASUO, Kyllikki & SIIPI, Jouko: *Siirtoväen sopeutuminen*. Tutkimus Suomen karjalaisen siirtoväen sopeutumisesta. Helsinki, 1952. ILVESSALO, Mikko: *Suomen vuosien 1939-40 ja 1941-44 sotien jälkeisen asutustoiminta metsätalouden kannalta*. Metsäntutkimuslaitoksen julkaisuja 56:4. Helsinki, 1963. KULHA, Keijo: *Karjalaisen siirtoväen*

The armed forces initiated the writing of the official history of the war already in the 1940s. The series published in 1951–1965 represented very well the conventional military history in which very little attention was paid to war in a more general sense. National economy and society were not central elements in it. Actually only one volume dealt with home front and supplies. The series was complemented by Eino Tirronen's study (vol. 11, 1975) in which he examined wartime economy from the point of view of defense forces.¹⁷ The volume on service written by military officers from the year 1988 nicely fitted in with the thematic of the series.

The breakthrough of scientific history

Finnish historiography on World War II went through a turning-point in the beginning of the 1960s, in times when migration from the countryside to the urban areas and the increase of suburban settlements were everyday experience in the country. Social sciences flourished and interest in contemporary political history grew. One can also point out that a new generation – children of the people who waged the war – took the lead, although quite a few of the most renowned historians belonged to the generation which had seen the war in his youth.

It was crucial for the progress of historical studies of World War II that the archives were opened; now it was possible to consult the formerly unknown sources. In this context historical studies became more scientific and the focus was shifted to the background factors of the Continuation War, i.e. the part Finland played in Hitler's Barbarossa Plan. The discussion was begun by Arvi Korhonen in his *Barbarossa -suunnitelma ja Suomi* (1961) and concluded by Mauno Jokipii's *Jatkosodan synty* (1987).

For a long time only very little was written of the national economy, in the descriptions of which one can see the division of the debate on economy between basic production in the countryside and the industrial production in towns. Remarkable studies in this spirit were written by Kari Nars and Artturi Lehtinen at

asuttamisesta käyty julkinen keskustelu vuosina 1944-1948. Studia Historica Jyväskyläläisiä 7. Jyväskylä, 1969. JOKINEN, Marita: *Karjalaisen siirtoväen korvauskysymys.* Suomi toisessa maailmansodassa - projektin julkaisuja 6. Helsinki, 1982. VIROLAINEN, Johannes: *Siirtoväen asuttaminen sodan jälkeisinä vuosina.* Rakentamisen aika. Asutus ja maanhankinta, Maanhankintalain 40-vuotisjuhlajulkaisu (Toim. Marja Naskila). Rauma, 1984.

¹⁶ PIHKALA, K. U.: *Arviointia asutusohjelmamme taloudellisista vaikutuksista.* Kansantaloudellinen Aikakauskirja 1954. PIHKALA, K. U.: *Det finska kolonisationsprogrammets kostnader och finansiering.* Nordisk Landbruksekonomisk Tidskrift 1952. PIHKALA, K. U.: *Siirtoväen ja rintamamiesten asuttaminen.* Itsenäisen Suomen taloushistoriaa 1919-1950. Porvoo, 1967.

¹⁷ TIRRONEN, Eino: *Puolustuslaitos taloudellisena tekijänä.* Sotilasaikakauslehti 1966. TIRRONEN, Eino: *Sotatalous.* Suomen sota 1941-1945, XI. Sotatieteen laitoksen sotahistorian toimiston julkaisuja IX:11. Helsinki, 1975. TIRRONEN, Eino: *Sotatalous.* Talvisodan historia 4. Sodasta rauhaan, puolustushaarat ja eräät erityisalut. Sotatieteen laitoksen julkaisuja XVI:4. Porvoo, 1979.

the end of the 1960s. Nars, who worked in the Bank of Finland, produced a work in 1966 in which he tried in the view of published sources to present a picture of Finnish national economy and its effectiveness in 1939-1945.¹⁸ Lehtinen's article on the short history of Finnish economic history can be regarded as fundamental about Finnish economy in the war years. Its significance is highlighted by the fact that Lehtinen had worked in the Ministry of Supply and in committees planning the economic readiness to defend the country.¹⁹

The new wave of historians did not at first concern economic and social matters. For comparison, in Sweden the Stockholm University launched in 1966 a big project titled *Sverige under andra världskriget* (SUAV) which dealt with the impact of war on a society that had stayed out of the war. Altogether 21 doctoral theses were defended in two decades. The Swedish project gave boost to a similar Finnish project to study Finland in World War II, titled *SUOMA*. It was started as a joint venture by several Universities in 1975. The aim was to have produced 15 doctoral theses financed by the Academy of Finland but not all of them were published because the financing of the project was halted. Only five doctoral theses and two licentiate theses were born out of it. The end-product was a three-volume work in which the main results were published and a comprehensive picture of the Finnish society mobilized for the war was given.²⁰

Among the studies of *SUOMA* dealing with economy and society one may mention Silvo Hietanen's work on emergency settlement and Ilkka Seppinen's book on preconditions of Finnish foreign trade.²¹ Both of them are rather political than economic history works. The same emphasis can be detected from the works of Hans Peter Crosby and Esko Vuorisjärvi who studied Petsamo nickel industry.²² Economic history at its purest was represented by Nummela's calculations of war expenses.²³

When it comes to the studies into Finnish national economy in World War II, one should mention Erkki Pihkala's many remarkable studies. He was involved in the *SUOMA*-project as a member of the board. It is very characteristic of Pihkala's perspective is to combine studies into national economy with studies into social life.²⁴

¹⁸ NARS, Kari: *Suomen sodanaikainen talous ja talouspolitiikka*. Suomen Pankin taloustieteellisen tutkimuslaitoksen julkaisuja, Sarja A. Taloudellisia selvityksiä. Helsinki, 1966.

¹⁹ LEHTINEN, Artturi: *Sotatalous 1939–1945*. In: *Itsenäisen Suomen taloushistoriaa 1919–1950*. Porvoo, 1967.

²⁰ HIETANEN, Silvo (toim.): *Kansakunta sodassa 1-3*. Valtion painatuskeskus 1989, 1990 & 1992; LESKINEN, Jari & JUUTILAINEN, Antti (toim.): *Talvisodan pikkujättiläinen*. Porvoo, 1999; LESKINEN, Jari & JUUTILAINEN, Antti (toim.): *Jatkosodan pikkujättiläinen*. Porvoo, 2005.

²¹ SEPPINEN, Ilkka: *Suomen ulkomaankaupan ehdot 1939-1944*. Historiallisia tutkimuksia 124. Tammisaari, 1983.

²² KROSBY, Peter: *Finland, Germany, and Soviet Union 1940-1941, The Petsamo Dispute*. Madison, 1968; VUORISJÄRVI, Esko: *Petsamon nikkeli kansainvälisessä politiikassa 1939-1944*, Suomalainen todellisuus vastaan ulkomaiset myytit. Keuruu, 1990.

²³ NUMMELA, 1993.

²⁴ PIHKALA, Erkki: *Kuinka jatkosota kestettiin taloudellisesti*. Jatkosodan kujanjuoksu (toim. Olli Vehviläinen), Juva, 1982. PIHKALA, Erkki: *Sopeutuminen rauhaan*. Suomen taloushistoria 2. Teollistuva

The new, more scientific orientation could be seen also in the defense forces. The Institute of Military Science launched before the *SUOMA* a project to study the Winter War. The end-result was a four-volume history of the war, published in 1977-1979. If compared with the history of the Continuation War, this new series approaches the war from a wider perspective. Partly this was possible because many historians who took part in it were trained as officers by their military service.²⁵ Inspired by the Winter War-series the Institute revised the series of *Suomen sota 1941-1945* which was published as a six-volume history of the Continuation War.

National economy and its social impact has been a surprisingly neglected field. The Ministry of Supply which functioned in 1939-1949 published its 5-year history in 1945 and in 1950 a memo-history type of work by Onni Toivonen. In the next decade Kari Nars systematically surveyed the relation of regulated consumption and black market and Jaakko Keto studied later the price-levels taking into account the prices in the black market. In 1977 Kari Salovaara published a popularized study on economic regulation. Credit for writing a comprehensive study of wartime economic distress goes to Heikki Rantatupa who studies the grave supply situation during the World War I.²⁶

Studies in War Experience

In comparison to earlier times, Finland had become a more individualistic country in the end of the 1980s, where people live in the so-called casino-capitalism and there was a lot of discussion going on structural change until the collapse of the Soviet Union and the deep economic crisis forced the country to repair its structures and allot more money into research. This and the opening of the country more to Western Europe can be seen at least in studies into World War II, on which nowadays many studies are written both by professional and non-professional historians. Maybe the crucial factor in this development is the change

Suomi (toim. Jorma Ahvenainen, Erkki Pihkala & Viljo Rasila. Helsinki, 1982. PIHKALA, Erkki: *Sotatalous 1939-1944*. Suomen taloushistoria 2. Teollistuva Suomi (toim. Jorma Ahvenainen, Erkki Pihkala & Viljo Rasila, Helsinki, 1982. PIHKALA, Erkki: *Suomen kauppapolitiikka vuosina 1918-1944*. Suomen ulkomaankauppapolitiikka (toim. Lauri Haataja). Keuruu, 1978. PIHKALA, Erkki: *Taloudellinen kasvu ja yhteiskuntamurros*. Suomen historia 8. Espoo, 1988. PIHKALA, Erkki: *Toisen maailmansodan aikaisesta huoltotasosta Suomessa ja analogioista 1980-luvun alun tilanteeseen*. Puolustustalouden suunnittelukeskus, Selvityksiä ja raportteja n:o 5. s.l. 1986.

²⁵ *Talvisodan historia 1-4*. Sotatieteen laitoksen julkaisuja 16, 1-4. Porvoo, 1977-1979.

²⁶ RANTATUPA, Heikki: *Elintarvikehuolto ja -säännöstely Suomessa vuosina 1914-1921*. Studia Historica Jyväskyläläisiä 17. Tampere, 1979. RANTATUPA, Heikki: *Elintarvikehuolto ensimmäisen maailmansodan aikana*. In. *Suomen maatalouden historia 2*. SKS, Helsinki, 2004. 265-329. RANTATUPA, Heikki: *Kansanhuolto toisen maailmansodan aikana 1939-1949*. Suomen maatalouden historia 2. SKS, Helsinki, 2004. 265-329. SALOVAARA, Karli: *Säännöstellen selvittiin: kansanhuoltoa 1939-1949*. Helsinki, 1977; TOIVONEN, Onni; *Kymmenen vuotta kansanhuoltajana*. Turku, 1950; *Viisi vuotta kansanhuoltoa*. Toim. Untamo Utrio. Helsinki, 1945.

of perspectives and seeking for influences from among several sciences. Formerly the studying of the World War II was dominated by men but the new many-sidedness/multilateralism and the change of the point of view towards individualism has brought more women to the group of historians writing on it. In many ways path-breaking was the study titled *Naisten aseet* edited by Riikka Raitis and Elina Haavio-Mannila.²⁷

The turn in studies of World War II in the 1990s was meant that many earlier vantage-points have been questioned. The grand-children of the wartime adults have grown in a more international environment than their predecessors, a fact that affects their approach to the problems and the way they leave the often solid national(ist) standpoint. Good examples of this new genre are the series *Sodassa koettua* edited by Sari Näre and Martti Turtola and *Ihmisiä sodassa* edited by Tiina Kinnunen and Ville Kivimäki.²⁸

Younger historians have dared to challenge many national myths. In Finland there had been a lot of talk about 'the model Cajander', a saying which was meant to emphasize how poorly Finns prepared themselves for the possible war in the 1930s. By comparing the Finnish situation with other European countries Jari Eloranta with his calculations of GDP has proved that this myth is false.²⁹ The same holds true of the reparations Germany was to pay to Finland – the Finns tended to explain them in a more positive light than they really were.³⁰

The question of rationality of resettlement caught public eye in the end of the 20th century when some observers argued that forceful and rapid resettlement (e.g. of Karelian from the territory ceded to the Soviet Union) had been economically unwise. The rationale behind this argument has been rural depopulation which began to increase in the 1960s. Erkki Laitinen's *Rintamalta raivioille* helps us to understand the real meaning of resettlement of some 700.000 people.³¹

In the last decades quite a lot has been published on World War II in Finland but most of it either deals with very concrete matters or confines to memoirs. Locally, and in the countryside in particular, many publications tell of the warpath of veterans or the stories of others who took part in the war effort. During the last

²⁷ RAITIS, Riikka & HAAVIO-MANILA, Elina (toim.): *Naisten aseet*. Suomalaisena naisena talvi- ja jatkosodassa. Helsinki, 1993.

²⁸ See KIVIMÄKI (2011).

²⁹ ELORANTA, Jari: *'External Security by Domestic Choices: Military Spending as an Impure Public Good among Eleven European States, 1920-1938'*. Diss., European University Institute, 2002. ELORANTA, Jari: *Paljonko on paljon? Perspektiivejä Suomen sotilasmenojen kehitykselle maailmansotien välisellä ajalla*. Historiallinen Aikakauskirja 4, 437-452. ELORANTA, Jari: *Military Spending Patterns in History*. EH.Net Encyclopedia, edited by Robert Whaples. September 27, 2005. URL: <http://eh.net/encyclopedia/article/eloranta.military>.

³⁰ NUMMELA (1993).

³¹ Asutushallituksen - maatalousministeriön asutusasiainosaston 40-vuotisjuhlajulkaisu. Helsinki, 1957; *Rintamalta raivioille. Sodanjälkeinen asutustoiminta 50 vuotta*. Toim. Laitinen, Erkki. Jyväskylä, 1995. ROIKO-JOKELA, Heikki *Asutustoiminnalla sodasta arkeen*. Suomen maatalouden historia. III. SKS, Helsinki, 2004.

two decades professional historians have also written local or parish histories in which remembrance and experiences of war have been recorded.

Conclusion

Finns returned to peace relatively calmly if one compares it with the events happened, for example, in Central Europe. One can conclude that Finns returned to peacetimes in their own way. Usually, as with many other great changes in Finnish society, the transition process has been late and radical but have rose only very little opposition or rebellious moods. In postwar Finland it seemed as if the wheel of history had been turning backwards; large-scale resettlement strengthened country's agrarian character for several decades and extreme right-wing politics was prohibited and left-wing politics was allowed. This problematic return to peace has been examined in a project by Petri Karonen at the University of Jyväskylä.³²

All in all, Finnish historiography of World War II has greatly developed in last the two decades. If the first, '*agrarian*' generation of historians depicted the war very concretely and from the point of view of the ones who fought in it, the next '*urban*' generation of historians introduced a more critical and comprehensive approach to it. The third, '*Europeanized*' generation is no longer closely tied with the story of concrete warfare or the tradition of nationalistic explanation.

There is also a negative side of the development of Finnish historiography of the war; once historians have learnt something new, they have also lost quite a lot of 'good old' in the research of the wartimes. When historians have been taught by social sciences and other related fields, it has lost some of its own strengths. To a historian who was schooled in the spirit of the 1960s, the way how structural wholes have recently been passed over seems rather odd. Obviously the value of publicity is in play when marginal matters have been emphasized at the expense of holism. Uncritical approach which formerly dominated research can still be seen in such studies into the wartime economy which appeal rather to the state control than to the national economy. Furthermore, some historians calculate with budget numbers which could during the wartime be budgetary estimations only and thus only fraction of the real costs in the accounts.

Someone, like the author of this paper, who was a child during the war cannot but wonder how little society and national economy meant for the Finnish postwar historiography. However, the '*new history*' of the war has wonderfully displayed its powers to pose new questions and find answers to them from the point of view of individuals. Nevertheless, all development is not progress because '*individualization*' of the war experiences has jettisoned something essential of the wartimes and of the lives of people in societies and communities, in *Gesellschaft* and *Gemeinschaft*.

³² KARONEN, Petri & TARJAMO, Kerttu: *Kun sota on ohi*. Sodista selviytymisen ongelmia ja niiden ratkaisumalleja 1900-luvulla. Historiallinen arkisto 124. Helsinki, 2006.