

European Small-State Academics and the Rise of the United States as an Intellectual Center: The Cases of Halvdan Koht and Heikki Waris

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Abstract

This chapter examines the decentering of Germany and the gradual rise of the United States into a leading center of academic life in socially oriented history and the social sciences. It focuses on the pathways of two Nordic scholars, Halvdan Koht (1873–1962) from Norway and Heikki Waris (until 1924 Warén, 1901–1989) from Finland. Both men came from the more peripheral milieus of European intellectual and academic life where the transfer, translation, and mélange of ideas from the leading international centers had always been important. They were the pioneering American travelers in their national and disciplinary academic contexts, Koht since 1908 and Waris since the early 1930s. While Koht retained his contact to the discipline of history, Waris adopted in the USA a new professional identity first as a sociologist and later as a scholar of social and public policy. The chapter shows that the patterns of mobility, the encounters, exchanges, and transfers of knowledge, people, and ideas in the first part of the twentieth century were all embedded with asymmetries and center–periphery relations that structured and shaped the development of the transnational academic space in different ways. Koht and Waris were among those scholars who, regardless of all asymmetries, greatly benefited from their exceptionally early contacts with the United States as a rising “superpower.” This did not mean the borrowing of wholesale US knowledge packages as such. With Koht and Waris, the negotiation processes were creative and evident albeit in some respects differently constructed.

Keywords: Koht, Waris, history, social sciences, Norway, Finland, Germany, United States

Introduction

Given the status of US research universities today, it may be difficult to remember that as recently as the early twentieth century, US intellectual life was considered by many in Europe as provincial and mediocre, offering little more than “feeble replicas” of Great Britain.¹ During the 1900s, however, the centers of academic and intellectual life underwent a profound shift. One of the most remarkable changes was the rise of the United States from a European cultural province to an economic, military, cultural, and academic center in its own right.² This center had a rapidly expanding influence on the premises of intellectual and academic life all through Europe.

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¹ See, e.g., Sigmund Skard, *American Studies in Europe: Their History and Present Organization*, Vol. I–II (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1958), 26–29.

² Henry Stuart Hughes, *The Sea Change: The Migration of Social Thought, 1930–1965* (New York: Harper & Row, 1975); Emily S. Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890–1945* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982); Paul Kennedy, “The First World War and the International Power System,” *International Security* 9, no. 1 (1984): 23–24.

The shift of balance in transatlantic intellectual and academic relations first took place quietly and rather unremarkably. Before 1900 very few European academics journeyed to the USA. Instead, the US academics headed to Europe and mostly to the German universities. The 1880s and 1890s were the heyday of the international academic pilgrimages to Germany, and the new Humboldtian University of Berlin was the undisputed academic model from the United States in the West to Japan in the East.³ Nineteenth-century Germany was also the leading center of modern scientific history⁴ and the so-called historical economics that had emerged as a response to the “social question.” This distinctively German academic approach to the alarming consequences of industrialization and modernization attracted great interest across the Atlantic and throughout Europe.⁵ The new German model of more pragmatic, economically and socially oriented history was effectively imported to the USA by the US visitors to German academic centers and successfully implemented in the rising American universities. The new German intellectual and academic currents found fertile soil also in those academically more peripheral parts of Europe such as the Nordic countries, traditionally dominated by German academic and cultural currents.⁶

This chapter examines the decentering of Germany and the gradual rise of the United States into a leading center of academic life through the pathways of two Nordic scholars, Halvdan Koht (1873–1962) from Norway and Heikki Waris (until 1924 Warén, 1901–1989) from Finland. The two historians provide an illustrative case of the changing “relative

³ Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: The “Objectivity Question” and the American Historical Profession* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 21–31; Björn Wittrock, “The Modern University: The Three Transformations,” in *The European and American University since 1800. Historical and Sociological Essays*, eds. Sheldon Rothblatt and Björn Wittrock (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 312, 321–23.

⁴ It is a well-known fact that the position of Germany in general and Leopold von Ranke in particular as the vanguard of modern scientific history was partly based on one-sided interpretations or even total misunderstandings of Ranke’s ideas; see, e.g., Georg G. Iggers and Q. Edward Wang, *A Global History of Modern Historiography* (Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2008), 73–75, 122–23.

⁵ The internationally best known representative of this current was the *Verein für Sozialpolitik* (Social Policy Association), founded in 1872, with such figures as Gustav Schmoller, Max Weber, Ferdinand Tönnies, and Werner Sombart in its ranks; see Woodruff D. Smith, *Politics and the Sciences of Culture in Germany, 1840–1920* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 174–82.

⁶ Risto Alapuro and Matti Aaltonen, “Konkreettinen sosiaalitutkimus,” in *Suomalaisen sosiologian juuret*, eds. Risto Alapuro et al. (Porvoo and Helsinki: WSOY, 1973), 84–87; Erik Allardt, *The History of the Social Sciences in Finland 1828–1918* (Helsinki: Societas Scientiarum Fennica, 1997), 59–65; Peter Aronsson et al., “Nordic National Histories,” in *The Contested Nation. Ethnicity, Class, Religion and Gender in National Histories*, eds. Stefan Berger and Chris Lorenz (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 257. In addition, French and British social philosophy, historiography, and evolutionary theories were applied, but to a lesser degree. On these currents, see Allardt, *The History of the Social Sciences*, 94–109, 124; Knut Kjeldstadli, “History as Science,” in *Making a Historical Culture. Historiography in Norway*, eds. William H. Hubbard et al. (Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 2001), 55–63; Fredrik Thue, *In Quest of a Democratic Social Order: The Americanization of Norwegian Social Scholarship 1918–1970* (PhD dissertation, Faculty of Humanities, University of Oslo, 2005), 14–15, 24–27.

geographies”⁷ of the centers of academic life. Both came from the more peripheral milieus of European intellectual and academic life where the transfer, translation, and *mélange* of ideas from the leading international centers had always been important. Koht and Waris were the pioneering American travelers in their national and disciplinary academic contexts, Koht since 1908 and Waris since the early 1930s. Simultaneously, both scholars’ education as historians had been decisively shaped by the German influences in Norway and Finland. Karl Lamprecht’s cultural, economic, and social history (*Kulturgeschichte*) and historical economics of the *Verein für Sozialpolitik*⁸—that had found resonance among the US academic visitors to Germany⁹—were crucially important to Koht’s and Waris’s education and a key factor that mediated their turning toward the United States.

This chapter moves within an analytical triangle of the established European academic centers, their emerging US challengers, and the peripheral Nordic academic milieus within which Koht and Waris shuttled in the first three decades of the twentieth century. During this period, the relative weight of the centers and peripheries fluctuated. By around 1915, the turn away from Germany started to be evident, and in the following decades ever more European and Nordic scholars were drawn over the Atlantic. There were shifts in the balance between different academic disciplines as well. The drift toward the more pragmatic and empirical approaches, those more useful in the mapping out and managing of social, political, and economic problems of “our time,” was a central component in the wider sea change in transatlantic intellectual and scholarly relations. Koht, who first visited the USA in 1908, retained his contact to the discipline of history and—very much due to his transatlantic exchanges—became an internationally prominent comparative historian of the nation and an expert of the Norwegian model of the nation and society in particular. When Waris traveled across the Atlantic in 1934, the US research institutions were already setting “the style” in economic, biomedical, natural, and especially the “new” social sciences that were a key field

⁷ “Relative geography” refers to the question of where the most dynamic centers of scholarly life were perceived to locate, how the centers related to one another, and how these relations evolved over time. The concept is adapted from Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 753.

⁸ Koht had participated in Lamprecht’s seminar at the University of Leipzig, whereas Waris, who was almost thirty years younger than Koht, was trained by the first generation of “Lamprechtian” social historians in the 1920s in Finland. For the influence of German *Kulturgeschichte* in Finland and Norway, see, e.g., Marja Jalava, “National, International, or Transnational? Works and Networks of the Early Nordic Historians of Society,” in *Making Nordic Historiography. Connections, Tensions and Methodology, 1850–1970*, eds. Pertti Haapala, Marja Jalava, and Simon Larson (New York: Berghahn Books, forthcoming 2017).

⁹ On the development of American historiography and especially the veins of “new history” see Dorothy Ross, “The New and Newer Histories: Social Theory and Historiography in an American Key,” in *Imagined Histories: American Historians Interpret the Past*, eds. Anthony Molho and Gordon S. Wood (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), 85–106.

to all forward-looking nations of the time. Observing and learning from the American model of history, society, and economic life, which were widely considered by Koht already to be the most advanced example of modernization and industrialization, Waris looked especially for ideas that would help guide the respective processes in his “still” agrarian yet rapidly modernizing native society. In the 1920s–1930s context, this made Waris turn away from history toward the new social sciences. Later he dedicated much of his career to establishing a modern Anglo-American type of social science research and education in post-1945 Finland.

The increased intellectual and academic mobility in the first three decades of the twentieth century helped spread American influence—political, financial, technological, and scholarly aid and patronage—through previously dominant Europe at the end of the Second World War. This influence or its history was not unidirectional. Rather, they traveled in many directions, as the cases of Koht and Waris illustrate: exchanges took place between the corners of the analytical triangle constituted by the North of Europe and the old (European) and new (American) centers of academic life. They incorporated several layers and dimensions of asymmetry, and yet, both Koht and Waris were able to transform them to the benefit of their professional careers, their chosen fields of research, and the national standing and international interconnectedness of these fields more widely. Seen from the micro-perspective of the two Nordic scholars, the triangle of exchanges and asymmetries was deeply embedded with, and shaped by, overlapping national, international, and transnational¹⁰ aspirations.

Germany as Halvdan Koht’s Gateway to the USA

When he entered the University of Oslo (until 1939 the Royal Frederick University) in 1890, Halvdan Koht also entered into the center of the national intellectual life concentrated around the sole Norwegian university, located in the capital city (until 1925 Kristiania). As Norway was a young state,¹¹ the intellectuals were deeply engaged with nation-building vis-à-vis their Nordic neighbors and the major European powers. Culturally, the country was strongly connected with Germany, whereas politically, it had a westward orientation toward France and

¹⁰ In principle, the concept “international” includes “national” as its building block, whereas “transnational” refers to phenomena that go beyond state borders and regardless of them. In practice, these realms have often been mutually constitutive; Emily S. Rosenberg, “Transnational Currents in a Shrinking World,” in *A World Connecting, 1870–1945*, ed. Emily S. Rosenberg (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2012), 824, 885.

¹¹ After some four hundred years as an integrated part of the Danish Realm, Norway entered in 1814 into a personal union with Sweden as a result of the Napoleonic Wars.

particularly Great Britain.¹² Although the US Declaration of Independence had been used as a model in the drafting of the 1814 Norwegian constitution, direct contacts with the USA were chiefly limited to mass migration to North America from the late 1840s onward. Similar to European intellectual circles in general, anti-Americanism was widespread among the Norwegian educated classes until the Second World War. To cite the Norwegian Nobel laureate Knut Hamsun's book *The Cultural Life of Modern America* (1889) that was based on his sojourn in the USA, American civilization was considered superficial, materialistic, and tasteless, plagued by the "mob rule" of the lower classes.¹³

The position of Germany as a major European center of historical research—or, on closer examination, a center with rivaling sub-centers within it—was evident in Halvdan Koht's conception of history. In principle, he cherished the Rankean method of source criticism (*Quellenkritik*) and close scrutiny of historical texts. Copenhagen served as a regional center where Rankean ideas were filtered and disseminated further to the more peripheral parts of the Nordic region. Koht adopted the method in 1897 from the "philologist-historical laboratory" of the Danish historian Kristian Erslev, who had become familiar with it at the University of Berlin in 1878–79.¹⁴ Koht combined this meticulous mindset with a broad synthetic approach that also originated from Germany. In the winter of 1897–98, he had participated in Karl Lamprecht's seminar at the University of Leipzig, impressed by Lamprecht's *Kulturgeschichte* that focused on the "totality" of social, economic, and cultural structures instead of state leaders, military actions, and diplomatic maneuverings that were essential to neo-Rankean political history dominating in Berlin. Because the history of the Norwegian state was discontinuous and the country was subordinated to Sweden, Lamprecht's idea of a nation founded on society, culture, and people accorded with both Koht's national needs and his career strategies in the Norwegian, nationalistically oriented historians' community.¹⁵ Although Koht became interested in the "social question" and socialism at the turn of the century, the union

¹² Olav Riste, *The Neutral Ally: Norway's Relations with Belligerent Powers in the First World War* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1965), 42–43; Jan Eivind Myhre, *Norsk historie 1814–1905. Å bygge ein stat og skape ein nasjon* (Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget, 2012), 53–68.

¹³ Ingrid Semmingsen, *Norway to America: A History of the Migration* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1978), 127, 169–70; for anti-Americanism of European intellectuals in general, see Corner Vann Woodward, *The Old World's New World* (New York & Oxford: New York Public Library & Oxford University Press, 1991), 24–35.

¹⁴ Halvdan Koht, *Historikar i lære* (Oslo: Grøndahl & søn, 1951), 76–77; Narve Fulsås, "Norway: The Strength of National History," in *Nordic Historiography in the 20th Century*, eds. Frank Meyer and Jan Eivind Myhre (Oslo: Department of History, University of Oslo, 2000), 245–46; Kjeldstadli, "History as Science," 52–81; on the role of Copenhagen as a Nordic regional center, see Stefan Nygård and Johan Strang, "Facing Asymmetry: Nordic Intellectuals and Center–Periphery Dynamics in European Cultural Space," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 77, Issue 1 (2016): 83–84.

¹⁵ Aronsson et al., "Nordic National Histories," 266.

conflict between Norway and Sweden remained his main concern until the independence of Norway in 1905.¹⁶

Koht's interest in America was also awakened in Lamprecht's seminar. Lamprecht had early identified the eroding economic power of Europe, breaking with the prevailing focus in European historical research that still delved into the reasons for European superiority.¹⁷ The aim of his *Kulturgeschichte* was not only to produce a history of the German people that incorporated all aspects of their development over time, but also to establish a framework that afforded comparison with other peoples throughout the world, thus permitting the uncovering of the general laws of historical change.¹⁸ As a part of his effort to embrace what he called "world history" and what he believed to consist of a series of universally valid cultural stages, he took an interest in the United States, where the political, social, and economic conditions seemed to form an obvious totality.¹⁹ American history was hence lectured at the University of Leipzig by Lamprecht's colleague Erich Marcks. For Koht, Marcks's course was an "amazing experience" at a time when European academics still commonly claimed that "America was too young a country to offer anything truly instructive to the historian."²⁰ While Lamprecht certainly was less Eurocentric than many of his colleagues, his world history can also be seen as a kind of cultural foreign policy aiming to counter the nascent decentering of Europe. He universalized a fixed set of categories based on German history, thus maintaining its superiority as the model.²¹

American scholars were not satisfied with their role as pupils, however. The 1876 foundation of the Johns Hopkins University, the first research-oriented university in the USA, marked an epoch, leading in the 1890s to a boom in university development.²² By the 1910s,

¹⁶ Koht, *Historikar i lære*, 107–09.

¹⁷ Matthias Middell and Katja Naumann, "The Writing of World History in Europe from the Middle of the Nineteenth Century to the Present: Conceptual Renewal and Challenge to National Histories," in *Transnational Challenges to National History Writing*, eds. Matthias Middell and Lluís Roura (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 85–87.

¹⁸ Smith, *Politics and the Sciences of Culture*, 188.

¹⁹ On Lamprecht's idea of world history, see, e.g., Karl Lamprecht, *What Is History? Five Lectures on the Modern Science of History*, transl. E.A. Andrews (London: Macmillan & Co, 1905), 25, 209–22; on Lamprecht's interest in the USA, see Koht, *Historikar i lære*, 134; Skard, *American Studies in Europe*, 240–42.

²⁰ Halvdan Koht, *The American Spirit in Europe: A Survey of Transatlantic Influences* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1949), 222–23.

²¹ See also Roger Chickering, *Karl Lamprecht: A German Academic Life (1856–1915)* (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1993), 412–13; Sebastian Conrad, *Globalisation and the Nation in Imperial Germany*, transl. Sorcha O'Hagan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 398–99; Marja Jalava, "Latecomers and Forerunners: Temporality, Historicity, and Modernity in Early Twentieth-Century Finnish Historiography," in *Regimes of Historicity' in Southeastern and Northern Europe, 1890–1945*, eds. Diana Mishkova, Balázs Trencsényi, and Marja Jalava (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 49.

²² Roger Geiger, "Research, Graduate Education, and the Ecology of American Universities: An Interpretive History," in *The European and American University since 1800: Historical and Sociological Essays*, eds. Sheldon

the quality of the best US doctoral education already surpassed that which was customarily offered in Germany, to say nothing of the increasingly strident nationalism of German historical scholarship.²³ A landmark was the international Congress of Arts and Sciences at the Universal Exposition of St. Louis in 1904. The Congress was orchestrated by the psychologist Hugo Münsterberg, who had been recruited seven years earlier from Germany to establish the laboratory of experimental psychology at Harvard University. According to Münsterberg, the Congress was a “baptism for American scholarship,” with the US scholars appearing on an equal footing with world’s “leaders of thought,” such as Max Weber, Werner Sombart, and Karl Lamprecht.²⁴ For these European academics, the visit was an eye-opener, after which the USA returned again and again as a point of departure in their works.²⁵

When Koht decided to make a one-year-long study tour to the USA in 1908–09 straight after obtaining his PhD in history, Lamprecht with his travel book on the USA was obviously the major inspirer.²⁶ From Lamprecht, Koht adopted an image of the United States as the “great laboratory of political and social ideas,” which due to its undiluted capitalism offered a taste of what was to come elsewhere.²⁷ In Koht’s words, “in America one could study future history (*framtid-historia*).”²⁸ As the scholar of nationalism, he simultaneously considered the recent origin of the USA an advantage. It enabled historians to establish the general principles that governed any nation-building process. For both him and Lamprecht, the most exciting thing was that the USA was just on the point of “giving life to the highest creation that a nation can attain: a national culture.”²⁹ To simplify, they instrumentalized the United States to understand better Europe’s past, present, and future.

Koht’s another mission in the USA was to act as a cultural ambassador of Norway, which was seeking recognition after its recent independence. For instance, the Norwegian Embassy

Rothblatt and Björn Wittrock (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 238–39; Wittrock, “The Modern University,” 323.

²³ Novick, *That Noble Dream*, 113; for the strengthening of militant nationalism in the German Kaiserreich in the interaction with turn-of-the-century globalization and German colonialism, see also Conrad, *Globalisation and the Nation*, 23, 61–76, 398–99.

²⁴ Chickering, *Karl Lamprecht*, 345–46; for the role of US World Fairs as a manifestation of its new imperial and global power, see Rosenberg, “Transnational Currents,” 893–901.

²⁵ Eric Foner, “Why Is There No Socialism in the United States?,” *History Workshop*, no. 17 (Spring 1984): 57–80; Chickering, *Karl Lamprecht*, 349–52; Lawrence A. Scaff, *Max Weber in America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 5–6.

²⁶ See also Sigmund Skard, *Mennesket Halvdan Koht* (Oslo: Det norske samlaget, 1982), 67.

²⁷ Halvdan Koht, *Amerikansk kultur i det nittende aarhundred*. Second Edition (Kjøbenhavn: Gyldendalske Boghandel, Nordisk Forlag, 1920a), 1–8, citation on p. 1; Koht, *Historikar i lære*, 124.

²⁸ Koht, *Historikar i lære*, 124.

²⁹ Halvdan Koht, *Den amerikanske nasjonen* (Kristiania: Aschehoug, 1920b), 1–4, 193–94, citation on p. 194; cf. Karl Lamprecht, *Americana. Reiseeindrücke, Betrachtungen, geschichtliche Gesamtansicht* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Verlag von Hermann Heyfelder, 1906), 142–43.

arranged him an audience with President Theodore Roosevelt, and he also visited the US Congress.³⁰ In his dual project of Norwegian state-promoting and his own career-enhancing, he benefited from the ongoing canonization of the Norwegian author Henrik Ibsen in world literature.³¹ In 1903, Ibsen's son Sigurd Ibsen had recruited Koht to the international team editing Ibsen's correspondence, which was published as a part of his collected writings. Thus, when Koht in 1908 traveled via Great Britain to the USA, he was already known as an Ibsen scholar. This was the beginning of his countless Ibsen-related activities, which earned him a name as a leading Ibsen specialist in the interwar period.³² As the historian Åsmund Svendsen sums up Koht's central thesis on Ibsen, to Koht Ibsen was "both a fully Norwegian and a world-class author."³³ Koht thus exemplified the turn-of-the-century advocate of the rhetoric of internationalism, who considered the national the constitutive building block of the international intellectual space, as the very word *inter-national* suggests.³⁴ In the history of science, this principle has been called the "Olympic Games model." In it, national achievements are measured by international standards while international acknowledgment serves to demonstrate national accomplishments.³⁵

Promoting Norway as a Model through US Networks

The 1908–09 study tour in the USA had a decisive impact on Koht's scholarly career. Firstly, after being nominated in 1910 as professor of history at what is now the University of Oslo, he made American history a compulsory part of the curriculum and taught regular courses on the subject. This early start arguably facilitated Norway's interwar scholarly connectedness with the USA.³⁶ Secondly, Koht got acquainted in the USA with the New History, the US version of German-influenced social and economic history.³⁷ Alerted to what he considered the harsh realities of the world's most full-fledged capitalist system,³⁸ he started to pay more attention to

³⁰ The Norwegian Nobel Committee had awarded Roosevelt the Nobel's Peace Prize in 1906, which Koht did not agree with; Koht, *Historikar i lære*, 134–36; Åsmund Svendsen, *Halvdan Koht. Veien mot framtiden. En biografi* (Oslo: Cappelen Damm, 2013), 108–09.

³¹ See the chapter by Narve Fulsås and Tore Rem in this volume.

³² Svendsen, *Halvdan Koht*, 82–84, 192–95, 202–03, 388–90.

³³ Svendsen, *Halvdan Koht*, 194.

³⁴ On the rhetoric of internationalism, see Rosenberg, "Transnational Currents," 824.

³⁵ Paul Forman, "Scientific Internationalism and the Weimar Physicists: The Ideology and Its Manipulation in Germany after World War I," *Isis* 64, no. 2 (1973): 154; Geert J. Somsen, "A History of Universalism: Conceptions of the Internationality of Science from the Enlightenment to the Cold War," *Minerva* 46 (2008): 366.

³⁶ Despite this early start, American Studies made real headway in Norway only after the Second World War; Koht, *Historikar i lære*, 150–52; Skard, *American Studies*, 432.

³⁷ Koht, *Historikar i lære*, 132–47; for the New History School, see, e.g., Ernst Breisach, *Historiography: Ancient, Medieval, & Modern*. Second Edition (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), 313–18; Iggers and Wang, *A Global History*, 162–66.

³⁸ Halvdan Koht, *Pengemagt og arbeid i Amerika* (Kristiania: Aschehoug, 1910a), 96.

economic forces in history.³⁹ The result was a synthesis between nationalism and semi-Marxist historical materialism, which led him to depict class struggle as a form of integrative nation-building in the history of Norway.⁴⁰ This combination was also evident in his reformist political program which around 1930 won the ideological battle within the Norwegian Labor Party against a more radical stand. The victory prepared the ground for his changeover to becoming Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1935.⁴¹

Last but not least, Koht's study tour marked the beginning of his US network-building. During his stay in Washington, DC, he got to know the historian John Franklin Jameson, the first recipient of PhD in history at Johns Hopkins (1882) and a representative of the New History, who was the managing editor of the *American Historical Review* and had become in 1907 President of the American Historical Association (AHA). Jameson invited Koht to the AHA annual meeting, where Koht met Waldo Gifford Leland, a Harvard graduate in history and an archivist, with whom he became lifelong friends.⁴² Jameson also encouraged Koht to publish in the *American Historical Review* a critical book review of the biography of the German historian Johann Gustav Droysen, the founder of the Prussian School of political history. Due to both Norway's and his personal academic connections with Germany, Koht could make a name for himself among the US historians as an expert of European historiography.⁴³ Perhaps most significantly in the long run was, however, that both Jameson and Leland were involved in the Department of Historical Research of the newly-founded Carnegie Institution. The advancement of American higher education and research facilities notwithstanding, the pivotal factor behind the emerging ascendancy of the US academe was the burgeoning philanthropy of such foundations as Andrew Carnegie, Russell Sage, and the John D. Rockefeller group of trusts, all based on the unparalleled fortunes of these grand-scale capitalists.⁴⁴

³⁹ Koht, *Historikar i lære*, 133, 152; Ottar Dahl, *Historisk materialism. Historieoppfatningen hos Edvard Bull og Halvdan Koht* (Oslo: Aschehoug, 1952), 26–27.

⁴⁰ This tendency is particularly visible in Koht's major work *Norsk bondereising* [The rising of Norwegian peasants] (Oslo: Aschehoug, 1926), in which the national unity is obtained through a series of social conflicts; see also Kjeldstadli, "History as Science," 60–61; Fulsås, "Norway: The Strength of National History," 250; Jalava, "National, International, or Transnational?"

⁴¹ Rune Slagstad, *De nasjonale strateger* (Oslo: Pax, 2001), 231–41.

⁴² Svendsen, *Halvdan Koht*, 111; for Jameson's role in the professionalization of historical research in the USA, see Breisach, *Historiography*, 287–88; Novick, *That Noble Dream*, 48–59.

⁴³ Halvdan Koht, "Johann Gustav Droysen," *The American Historical Review* 16, no. 1 (Oct. 1910b): 125–27.

⁴⁴ Geiger, "Research, Graduate Education," 241–47; see also Martin Bulmer and Joan Bulmer, "Philanthropy and Social Science in the 1920s: Beardsley Ruml and the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial, 1922–29," *Minerva* XIX, no. 3 (1981): 365–66; Peter Manicas, *A History and Philosophy of the Social Sciences* (New York and Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 207–16, for a discipline-by-discipline discussion, see pp. 213–37; Thue, *In Quest of a Democratic Social Order*, 79–80.

The US networks truly benefited Koht after the First World War, in which Norway had remained neutral. While the European intellectual space was deeply split by the war, and the scholars in the victorious nations launched a boycott against German and Austrian academes, Koht seized his opportunity. By utilizing Norway's neutrality and acting as a bridge-builder between the Entente countries and the Central Powers, he could achieve three goals at once: to promote Norway as a "peace nation" in international politics, to strengthen Norway's position in the international academic community, and to increase Norway's prestige as a cultured nation with a long history, which gave nationalist legitimation to the undertaking.⁴⁵ In the early 1920s, Koht had already fortified his leading role in the Norwegian historians' community. In addition to being a full professor since 1910, he was, for instance, chairman of the Norwegian Historical Association in 1912–27 and 1932–36, and President or Vice President of the Norwegian Academy of Sciences and Letters in 1923–39.⁴⁶ In accordance with the "Olympic Games model" of scholarly interaction, which required that one had to be a winner on the national level to compete in international fields,⁴⁷ Koht was thanks to his strong position at home able to fully utilize his networks abroad.

In the intellectual reconstruction of Europe after the First World War, Koht's best allies turned out to be the American historians, above all, Jameson, Leland, and James T. Shotwell.⁴⁸ Similar to Koht, firstly, they were inspired by Lamprecht's *Kulturgeschichte* and had made a departure from traditional political history. Secondly, partly as a countermove to the challenge presented by the modern social sciences to history as a discipline in the USA, they were committed to progressive reformism, which justified the study of the past by the services it could render to the present.⁴⁹ Thirdly, they were associated with the peace movement and wanted to reestablish full internationality in the community of historians as a part of the

⁴⁵ Halvdan Koht, "The Origins and Beginnings of the International Committee of Historical Sciences: Personal memories of Halvdan Koht, 1960," (Halvdan Koht's Archive, Ms. 4° 2364: 5, National Library, Oslo); Karl Dietrich Erdmann, *Towards a Global Community of Historians: The International Historical Congresses and the International Committee of Historical Sciences, 1898–2000*, eds. Jürgen Kocka and Wolfgang J. Mommsen in collaboration with Agnes Blänsdorf, transl. Alan Nothnagle (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2005), 78–79; Jon Røyne Kyllingstad, "Menneskeåndens universalitet." *Instituttet for sammenlignende kulturforskning 1917–1940. Ideene, institusjonen og forskningen*. Acta humaniora nr. 371 (University of Oslo: Oslo, 2008), 17–20, 39–56.

⁴⁶ Åsmund Svendsen, "Halvdan Koht," in *Norsk biografisk leksikon* (Web Edition, published on February 13, 2009). Available at: <https://nbl.snl.no/Halvdan_Koht> (accessed May 12, 2017).

⁴⁷ Rosenberg, "Transnational Currents," 833.

⁴⁸ Koht, *Historikar i lære*, 132; Erdmann, *Towards a Global Community*, 72–85.

⁴⁹ Novick, *That Noble Dream*, 89–100. For "presentism" in Koht's thinking, see, e.g., Halvdan Koht, "Historieskrivning og folkevokster," in *Norsk historisk videnskap i femti år 1869–1919*, ed. Den Norske Historiske Forening (Kristiania: Grøndahl & søns, 1920c), 1–2, 17–18.

maintenance of world peace.⁵⁰ And fourth, they wanted to strengthen their native country's position in academic history.⁵¹ At the two last-mentioned points, the US historians' ambitions were closely linked to general American cultural expansion where national interest and international betterment were fused and soft power used in promoting the USA as the model.⁵²

For Koht and the Americans, the main arenas to realize these common goals were the International Union of Academics (UAI), founded in 1919, and particularly the International Congress of Historical Sciences (CISH) with its permanent Bureau of the International Committee that they managed to create in 1926.⁵³ A crucial factor behind their success was that Jameson, Leland, and Shotwell were closely connected with the Carnegie Foundation, the Carnegie Endowment, the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial Foundation, and the Rockefeller Foundation, and were thus able to arrange US funding for the new scholarly institutions placed in Europe.⁵⁴ As an established historian from a small neutral country with wide networks with both Continental European and Anglo-American colleagues, Koht was simultaneously able to lobby for Norway as the next CISH Congress location and to rise in 1926 to President of the Bureau of the CISH. He later recalled that the opening ceremony of the Oslo Congress of 1928, with himself as the dominant figure and the "symbol of the historians' reunion," was "the greatest moment in my life."⁵⁵ It was also a proof of his skill to seize the opportunity he was afforded by America's expanding cultural and economic influence on the European intellectual space.

Despite becoming Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1935, Koht remained a Counsellor-Member of the Bureau of the CISH until 1960 and kept up his friendship with Leland.⁵⁶ The friendship was highly valuable to him after the Nazi invasion of Norway in 1940 and his four-year exile in the USA. Still, even then he remained disinterested in modern US social science research. This indifference apparently reflected a shared uncertainty of the Norwegian historians of his generation about the character and demarcation of the "social sciences."⁵⁷

⁵⁰ Shotwell was a major architect of the Kellogg–Briand Pact of 1928 that outlawed war; Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream*, 112–16; Erdmann, *Towards a Global Community*, 72–74. Koht had been active in the international peace movement since 1890; see Svedsen, *Halvdan Koht*, 29.

⁵¹ See, e.g., John Franklin Jameson, "The International Historical Congress at Oslo," *The American Historical Review* 34, no. 2 (Jan. 1929): 270, where he laments the European historians' lack of interest in US history.

⁵² Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream*, 114–21.

⁵³ Koht, "The Origins and Beginnings"; Erdmann, *Towards a Global Community*, 72–84.

⁵⁴ Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream*, 113; Erdmann, *Towards a Global Community*, 72–75, 106–07.

⁵⁵ Koht, "The Origins and Beginnings"; Erdmann, *Towards a Global Community*, 101–23.

⁵⁶ See, e.g., the letters of Waldo G. Leland to Halvdan Koht, 1935–39, Brevs 386, Halvdan Koht's Archive, National Library, Oslo.

⁵⁷ The senior scholars tended to think that all humanistic disciplines incorporated a sociological dimension; Thue, *In Quest of a Democratic Social Order*, 247–50.

Throughout his life, he also remained critical of both US capitalism and Soviet collectivism, considering Norway to represent the successful combination of individual freedom and national solidarity.⁵⁸ Indeed, in his lecture at Harvard University in 1930 he suggested that the USA was indebted to “a real political genius” of the Norwegian Vikings for its spirit of political independence, because the first European colonists in North America had come from England and Ireland where the Vikings had been the initial state-builders.⁵⁹

Heikki Waris: From Historian to a Sociologist of Modernizing Society

By the time Heikki Waris (1901–89) first headed to the United States in 1934, the USA was already considered one of the most dynamic and rapidly rising centers of scientific life. Since the mid-1920s, an increasing number of scholars from around the world and Europe had visited the country. These exchanges were facilitated by the American philanthropic foundations such as the Rockefeller Foundation (RF), whose growing focus on scholarly mobility was a key element structuring the transnational flow of people and ideas, and shaping the transnational academic space in the 1920s and 1930s.

Waris was a Rockefeller Fellow of the academic year 1934–35. The first international fellows in the field of social sciences (that included history) had been nominated by the RF in 1924. Four years later, in 1928, the Foundation established its five “core areas” of fellowships and opened an office to Paris to specifically foster the US–European exchanges.⁶⁰ By 1928, the fellowship programs had expanded their geographical scope and now also included Finland, whose geo-cultural location had initially puzzled the RF observers: in the mid-1920s Finland was at first discussed within the RF administration as a part of the Baltic countries but was then transferred to the group of Scandinavian countries by the end of the decade. However, as the RF observers recurrently reported, Finland was a young country where the German influence had been very dominant in the fields of culture, education, and academic life, and which could therefore greatly benefit from broader contacts with “the outside world.” The fact that the country was divided—politically (1918 civil war), linguistically (Finnish/Swedish), and

⁵⁸ See, e.g., Koht, *Pengemagt og arbeid i Amerika*, 140–41; Koht, *The American Spirit in Europe*, 276–77.

⁵⁹ Halvdan Koht, “Social and political organization of the Scandinavian countries,” a handwritten manuscript of a lecture series given at Harvard University, September 24–December 19, 1930, Ms. fol. 3670, Halvdan Koht’s Archive, National Library, Oslo.

⁶⁰ In 1924–29, there were 178 social science fellows out of which the biggest country-specific groups came from the UK (53), Germany (25), France (19), Czechoslovakia (14), Austria (12), the Netherlands (9), Italy (8), and— notably to the discussion in the first part of this article and indicating early connectedness among the Nordic countries—Norway (5). The five “core areas” established in 1929 were public health, medicine, natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities. See Christian Fleck, *Transatlantische Bereicherungen. Zur Erfindung der empirischen Sozialforschung* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2007), 71–86, 90–91, 102.

regionally (East/West)—further added to its relevance as a case for increased activities by the Foundation. While the breakthrough proper of the US foundation activities in Finland did not come until the end of the Second World War, the number of Finnish Rockefeller fellows started to grow slowly from the turn of the 1920s and the 1930s.⁶¹ As facilitators of the post-1945 expansion in the bilateral US–Finnish scholarly relations, the role of these pre-war fellows was often seminal. This was also the case with Heikki Waris.

Similarly to Halvdan Koht, the contacts across the Atlantic profoundly influenced Heikki Waris’s scholarly thinking and shaped his academic future. In contrast to Koht, however, the Anglo-American influences made the historian Waris turn into a sociologist in the early 1930s. His scholarly transition did not stop here. Returning from the USA, where he had also witnessed the powerful rise of government-sponsored social research and social engineering, he once more adapted his academic profile and settled down with the distinctive field of social policy. Besides his evident attraction to the more pragmatic rather than the theoretical, and to the grassroots rather than grand-scale social engineering technologies, his interest in social policy stemmed from his education as a historian under the guidance of the few representatives of Lamprechtian School of history at the University of Helsinki. Perhaps even more importantly, it stemmed from his early experiences with the *settlement house movement* and its modes of social work in 1920s Helsinki. While both these currents—the Lamprechtian type of schooling and the settlement house social work—were in many ways connected to Germany, for Waris they became the main bridges toward the more Anglo-American and less German, as well as the more social and less historical understandings of society, education, and research.

The following section first looks at Waris’s encounters with the social settlement house movement and, linked to it, his PhD studies of history at the University of Helsinki. The attention then turns to his experiences on the American type of social science research as experienced in the mid-1930s United States. All these currents were crucial to the “making” of a scholar who was to have formative influence on the emergence and consolidation of the modern Anglo-American type of social science education and research in post-1945 Finland.

⁶¹ Ann Yrjälä, *Public Health and Rockefeller Wealth: Alliance Strategies in the Early Formation of Finnish Public Health Nursing* (Åbo: Åbo Akademi University Press, 2005), 120–25, 130; Allan Tiitta, *Säätiöiden vaikutus Suomen tieteen ja korkeimman opetuksen kehitykseen* (Helsinki: Säätiöiden ja rahastojen neuvottelukunta, 2015), 39; Marjatta Hietala, “The Development of International Contacts in the 20th Century,” in *Research in Finland – A History*, eds. Päiviö Tommila and Aura Korppi-Tommola (Helsinki: Gaudeamus, 2009), 131–46.

Settlement House Movement and 1920s Settlement Sociology

Considering the degree of German influence in 1920s Finland, Waris's contacts with the Anglo-American cultural sphere stand out as exceptionally broad and early. Born to an upper middle-class family in the capital city of Helsinki, Waris, whose father worked as a German teacher before taking a job at the brand new Ministry of Foreign Affairs press section in 1918, had studied English already at school. In contrast to the linguistically anti-Swedish, politically anti-Russian nationalist movement that colored the early adulthood of most among his generation of university students, his early path was a different one. After graduation, he served for a few years in varying administrative functions of the emerging foreign representation of Finland, mainly in Poland. As a result of his experiences in these politically turbulent years, young Waris went through a spiritual and religious "awakening," which led him into contact with the Christian student unions and eventually the Social Settlement House Kalliola. Kalliola had been founded in Helsinki's largest working-class district Kallio in 1918 by Sigfrid Sirenus (1877–1960), a former minister of the Finnish Seamen's Church in London, who had the famous model of the London East End's Toynbee Hall⁶² in mind. The need for a local settlement house was particularly urgent in the wake of the recent Civil War between the Whites and the defeated Reds, and was to foster grass-roots level reconciliation by bringing together representatives of the educated classes and those from less privileged backgrounds and to provide the latter with opportunities to education, cultural life, and other skills for everyday well-being.

In 1923–28 Waris was in charge of the popular and civic education activities of Kalliola and came to a close contact with the people living on the darker side of industrialization and urban poverty. The scale was not the same as in the great European cities or the American metropolises but the trends he observed were nevertheless local variants of the global processes shaping the economic, social, political, and human conditions in all industrializing and urbanizing societies. His experiences in Kalliola reflected and greatly reinforced his orientation toward the more concrete veins of social research that seemed the most adequate, "objective,"

⁶² Toynbee Hall (1884) was a collegiate-style residential settlement house where young university graduates, the "future leaders of the nation," lived amidst people of less privileged neighborhoods and contributed to the settlement houses' lively social, cultural, and educational programs. The model was eagerly copied elsewhere in Europe and especially in the USA. Leaning on a dynamic mix of the traditions of liberal and practical ethical Protestantism, local involvement, and concern for social problems, the US settlements rapidly grew into sites for an entirely new type of empirical social research. See, e.g., Michael Rose, "The Secular Faith of the Social Settlements: 'If Christ came to Chicago'," in *Settlements, Social Change and Community Action*, eds. Ruth Gilchrist and Tony Jeffs (London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2001).

and “neutral” way to address the challenges and problems which he detected through his tasks in Kalliola.

Besides being distinctively local, or even glocal as the contemporary globalization literature would put it, Waris’s Kalliola years were filled with international connections.⁶³ From the mid-1920s on he—not least thanks to his language skills—represented Kalliola in several international associations and networks connected with the international settlement house movement that reached across from the Nordic countries to Europe and the USA. He also came in touch with the type of social research conducted in the US social settlements where the leading settlement houses turned into “laboratories” for the gathering of social statistics as well as the production of qualitative, quantitative, and sociographic data on the sociological anatomies of the settlement neighborhoods.⁶⁴

Waris left Kalliola in 1928. Frustrated by what he felt was an overemphasis on religious salvation of individual souls at the expense of a broader, more societal, and structural approach⁶⁵, he embarked on a more systematic and “scientific” enquiry of the social, economic, and structural make-up and the historical emergence of the very neighborhood he had learned to know in Kalliola. While there was no program for such historical social research at the University of Helsinki, his thesis work was encouraged and supervised by historians Gunnar Suolahti and Väinö Voionmaa, the two foremost representatives of the small Lamprechtian School in the 1920s Finnish academia⁶⁶.

Waris’s two-volume doctoral dissertation (1932/34) tackled the emergence and structure of the Kallio working-class “community.”⁶⁷ In the Finnish academic milieu heavily dominated by German *Staatslehre* and under a growing influence of 1930s German-type nationalism, Waris’s dissertation was an exception. The study was nevertheless well received in general and seen by the contemporaries as a meticulous, “objective,” and highly informative piece of

⁶³ The different dimensions of the settlement movement—the local, the “glocal,” and the international—were strongly present in Waris’s 1920s writings, e.g. Heikki Waris, *The Settlement Movement in Finland* (Helsinki: Kristillisyhteiskunnallinen Työkeskusliitto, 1926); “Yhteiskuntatieteellistä tutkimusta Englannissa ja Yhdysvalloissa,” *Historiallinen Aikakauskirja* 30, no. 2 (1932): 188–95; “Yhteiskunnallinen tutkimustyö työkeskuksissa,” *Yhdyside* (September 1934): 11–19.

⁶⁴ Joyce E. Williams and Vicky M. MacLean, *Settlement Sociology in Progressive Years: Faith, Science, and Reform* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 23; see also Joyce E. Williams and Vicky M. MacLean, “In Search of the Kingdom: The Social Gospel, Settlement Sociology, and the Science Reform in America’s Progressive Era,” *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 48, no. 4 (2012): 339–62; Patricia M. Lengermann and Jill Niebrugge-Brantley, “Back to the Future: Settlement Sociology, 1885–1930,” *American Sociologist* (Fall 2002): 6–20; Mary Jo Deegan, *Jane Addams and the Men of the Chicago School, 1892–1918* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1990).

⁶⁵ For instance Waris, “Yhteiskunnallinen tutkimustyö työkeskuksissa.”

⁶⁶ For more on Lamprechtian traditions in Finland, see Jalava, “*Latecomers and Forerunners*”.

⁶⁷ Heikki Waris, *Työläisyhteiskunnan syntyminen Helsingin Pitkäsillan pohjoispuolelle*, Vol. I–II (each with a 25-page English-language summary) (Suomen Historiallinen Seura: Helsinki, 1932–1934).

concrete social research on a topic that was widely unknown to the academic, cultural, and administrative elites of the young republic. Academic experts commended Waris's innovative use of up-to-date methods of American social and urban community research. This feature eventually made his work a part of the national social research and social history canon. It was an early example of Anglo-American style social research in Finland, representing "descriptive and historical sociology at its best and ... written in the style of the Chicago School of the 1920s and 1930s."⁶⁸ Waris himself was explicit about the influence of the American style sociology and community studies on his dissertation. There were several references to this genre of literature, pointed out to him, for instance, by the US sociologist Donald C. Marsh whom he had met many times in the meetings of the International Federation of the Settlement Houses and the American Association for Adult Education since 1927⁶⁹. Waris's study also had an extensive English-language summary, which he used when applying for a Rockefeller fellowship as had also been suggested by his both national and international mentors.

Heikki Waris was in many ways able and privileged to draw the best out of the increasing transatlantic exchanges and mobility of the 1920s and the 1930s. The mobility was exclusive to start with: only carefully selected few from such small peripheral academic communities as Finland's were given the opportunity to take part; the chosen ones were required language skills that were not widespread and they needed support from the domestic academic community and preferably some international connections as well. In a wider European perspective, there were scholars for whom the arrangements of international mobility were voluntary and short-term, and those who had to leave their country with very uncertain options of return.⁷⁰ This asymmetry was at its deepest around Waris's fellowship year 1933–34 when the previously dominant German centers of academic life collapsed from within due to the rise of authoritarianism and national socialism. In 1933–34 the thus far greatest number of prominent and to-be-prominent scholars from the German-speaking erstwhile centers of European academic and cultural life were brought over to the USA by the American foundations. In a longer term, this mass movement of intellectual resources from the "old" German centers

⁶⁸ Quotation from Erik Allardt, "Scandinavian Sociology," *Social Science Information*, no. 6 (1967): 223–46, 231. On US influences on sociology in Finland see also Alapuro and Alestalo, "Konkreettinen sosiaalitutkimus," 84–147.

⁶⁹ Waris and Marsh met regularly since 1927, for instance, in the meetings of the International Federation of the Settlement Houses and the American Association for Adult Education. See correspondence in Heikki Waris's Personal Papers.

⁷⁰ Fleck, "Transatlantische"; Johan Heilbron, Nicolas Guilhot, and Laurent Jeanpierre, "Toward a Transnational History of Social Sciences," *Journal of the History of Behavioral Sciences* 44, no. 2 (2008): 146–60, 151–53.

proved to be a key component in the widely unchallenged US rise to the scientific and scholarly dominance in the post-1945 Europe and the world at large.⁷¹

Sociology as Social Engineering

When Heikki Waris arrived in the USA in 1934, “university sociology” was rapidly overshadowing the earlier, the more practical strands of “settlement sociology” that – together with the Lamprechtian influences – had made Waris to identify himself as a sociologist. The rise of university sociology also meant an increasingly clear (and gendered⁷²) distinction between sociology and social work. Of these two, the new, more “scientific” university sociology was proving more successful in raising funds from the US philanthropic foundations and in attracting growing public attention as an answer to the social challenges and problems of the modernizing, urbanizing, and industrializing nation. Systematic, empirically based study of society was increasingly often seen as a requisite for an effective conduct of government and for the removal of the social and economic dysfunctions that threatened to slow down the nation’s progress. Already in 1922, one of the founding memorandums of the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial (LSRF) had made this clear:

All who work toward the general end of social welfare are embarrassed by the lack of that knowledge which the social sciences must provide. It is as though engineers were at work without an adequate development in the sciences of physics and chemistry, or as though physicians were practicing in the absence of the medical sciences.⁷³

American university sociologists were willing to prove their value as engineers of the social sphere. One of the main embodiments of the new alliance between social sciences and the foundation money was the Chicago School of Sociology, which by the late 1920s was provided with resources exceeding those of any other sociological institution. This allowed the Chicagoans to be among the first to establish a solid international exchanges program with generous support from the Rockefeller Foundation. The University of Chicago also hosted the Heikki Waris’s fellowship. He participated regularly in the research seminars instructed by the leading names in the field and his research project on the Finnish migrant communities and families – supervised by a leading urban sociologist Ernest W. Burgess – took him to visit all

⁷¹ Fleck, *Transatlantische*, 153–54.

⁷² Williams and MacLean, *Settlement Sociology*, 80.

⁷³ Cited in Bulmer and Bulmer, “Philanthropy and Social Science,” 347–407, 362–63; Barry D. Karl and Stanley Katz, “The American Private Philanthropic Foundations and the Public Sphere, 1890–1930,” *Minerva* XIX, no. 2 (1981): 236–70, 238.

the most prominent sites of new sociological research and undertake field research excursions amongst the immigrants with a Finnish background. His project was in many ways a case for the Chicago School of Sociology, sharing its interest in ethnicities, communities, and in the combination of sociographic and ethnographic methods.⁷⁴

During his fellowship year, Waris was able to observe the massively increased interest of the federal government authorities in the potential uses of the new type of empirical social science in the large-scale management of society, economy, and the national cohesion. In the post-depression society, the road to the well-being of humankind was ever more clearly seen to rely on rational and objective “social technologies,” designed by scientific experts and providing a basis for effective executive decisions and public policies. In line with these national priorities, the foundation money found its way to governance- and policy-relevant research. Since the beginning of Franklin D. Roosevelt’s first presidential term in 1933, social scientists were increasingly employed by New Deal-spirited federal planning and social engineering agencies,⁷⁵ and most of the scholars with whom Waris came into contact during his fellowship year were participants to this trend. Within the US academe, the tightening nexus between the federal government, the foundation money, and the social sciences generated much debate, particularly so in 1934–35. Many liked to see sociologists as the architects of the new order of American life, its traditions, values, and ways of thinking. Others felt that sociologists should keep a critical distance to the state power and the big money, to be wary of the limits and the unanticipated consequences of large-scale social planning.⁷⁶

Waris’s initial turn away from history toward a more social scientific approach had been informed by the Lamprechtian traditions of social research and by the Anglo-American influences of settlement-type sociology (as mediated to and in Finland). By his return from the USA and in contrast to many other scholars who were to make their careers on the other side of the Atlantic, Waris seems to have grown reserved about the most recent, increasingly technocratic forms of sociology. His fondness for the earlier settlement house sociology and traditions of concrete social research set limits on his fascination with the type of sociology encountered in the post-depression United States. He learned a lot and continued to feel the

⁷⁴ Waris’s study on the American Finns was never finished. However, it served as an important predecessor for his large-scale project on the integration of the displaced persons in post-1945 Finland, funded by the Ford Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation.

⁷⁵ An illustrative example is *Recent Social Trends in the US* (1933), initiated by President Hoover. On New Deal-spirited trends, see Charles Camig, “On Edge: Sociology during the Great Depression and the New Deal,” in *Sociology in America: A History*, ed. Craig Calhoun (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 235–39.

⁷⁶ For an excellent summary of these debates, see, e.g., Camig, “On Edge,” 265–67.

benefits of scientifically underpinned public and social policy drafting but with a less gigantic technocratic twist than was the case in the “laboratory of the future,” the USA.

Returns

Of the altogether 96 Rockefeller social science fellows in 1925–41, one third never returned to their country of origin.⁷⁷ Many had no other choice than to stay or to emigrate further. Much scholarly potential went lost under strained circumstances. In some cases, as with Paul Lazarsfeld, a sociologist “rescued” from Austria through a Rockefeller Fellowship in the very same year when Waris attended the program, the transition to an American—and to an internationally leading scholar—was much more successful. Unlike Lazarsfeld, Waris was among the two thirds of the 1925–41 fellows who could and did return home. As Waris wrote to his wife during his stay in the USA, permanent immigration was not at all a serious or an attractive option to him either from a scholarly or the family perspective.⁷⁸ While scholars who stayed, such as Lazarsfeld, often made significant contributions to the transnationalization and internationalization of the American social science, the main contribution of those who returned would be in the field of internationalization (or Americanization) of their native academic milieus and national scholarships. Waris is a perfect case in point of the latter: he made effective use of the lessons learned during his voluntary and temporary scientific socialization in the leading centers of scholarly life to benefit the scholarship and academe in his native country and also his own career as one of the leading social science scholars in post-1945 Finland.

Such a path seems distinctive to the RF fellows from the Nordic countries more generally. No less than 92 percent of the Nordic fellows of the years 1934–38 held key positions later at home.⁷⁹ While most of these fellows were economists, such as two future Nobel Prize winners Gunnar Myrdal and Ragnar Frisch, the success of this overwhelming majority of the interwar RF fellows stands out. It speaks volumes about a notable openness to new scholarly centers and the ability to navigate between the changing centers. It also serves as concrete evidence of the notion that “everywhere in the world sociologists are in debt to American sociology but hardly anywhere did this sociology find such a fertile soil as in the Scandinavian academic milieu.”⁸⁰ At the personal professional level, early contacts with the emerging USA appear to

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ See, e.g., Heikki Waris to Emmi Waris, July 7, 1935 from Virginia, Minnesota. Heikki Waris papers.

⁷⁹ Fleck, *Transatlantische*, 106.

⁸⁰ Allardt, “Scandinavian,” 223–46. Allardt also writes that while the “methodological sophistication” of the Nordic social sciences owed a great deal to the US models, “none of the great European founders of sociology

have been a remarkable asset that opened a rather straightforward path to the top of the national academic establishment after 1945 at the latest.

When Heikki Waris returned to Finland in 1935, there was no discourse, practice, or discipline comparable to US social science research and its societal role. But Waris had seen the “future” of social sciences. Adapting the lessons to correspond to the “stage of development” in his native society and with traditions of social inquiry that were closest to him, he took a job as an academically low-profile yet forward-looking post as teacher of social policy and social work at the newly established School of Social Sciences⁸¹ that was founded by social reformist circles outside the mainstream academic establishment.

The time for a new type of social sciences in Finland came after the Second World War. Not only was the German orientation of the 1930s severely discredited by the war, but there was also an urgent need for new thoughts, orientation, and people within the academe. This was Waris’s moment. He was among the key figures in the founding of a new university-level faculty for social, political, and economic sciences within the University of Helsinki. He was also among the new institution’s first generation of professors, and in this connection, he preferred social policy and social work over sociology. The new faculty had a chair in sociology but Waris became the first professor in the distinctive discipline of social and public policy in 1946/48. This was a discipline that he literally “founded” at the academic level and headed until his retirement in 1968. His contributions to modern, academic social science far exceeded the confines of his own discipline and faculty. In the building-up of the basic foundations for modern Anglo-American-influenced social science research and education in post-1945 Finland, he—and the whole community—benefited greatly from his early contacts with the western superpower of the post-1945 world. In the American vein, he crossed, and also encouraged others to cross, the line between the academic and the public. By the 1950s, he was one of the most widely consulted experts in the drafting of new social and public policies in a modernizing, urbanizing, and industrializing Finland, and a key architect of the Nordic type of welfare state in Finland. In many ways, however, the basic blueprint of modernization and industrialization he had in mind was the one he had learned through his Anglo-American exchanges in the 1920s and the 1930s.

was of any great importance in the Scandinavian academic milieu until they were imported by the way of American sociology.” The exceptions were Marx and, to some extent, Engels and Kautsky, but these elaborations took place and were kept firmly outside the established academia. Ibid. 225–26.

⁸¹ The institutional predecessors of the School of Social Sciences (*Yhteiskunnallinen korkeakoulu*), located in Kallio working class district, were the “citizens’ colleges” that had provided lower-level degrees for students with varied backgrounds since 1925, overlapping with the educational activities of Kalliola led by Waris in the 1920s.

Conclusion

The patterns of mobility, the encounters, exchanges, and transfers of knowledge, people, and ideas in the first part of the twentieth century were all embedded with asymmetries and center–periphery relations that structured and shaped the development of the transnational academic space in different ways. Halvdan Koht and Heikki Waris were among those scholars who, regardless of all asymmetries, greatly benefited from their exceptionally early contacts with the United States as a rising “superpower.” This did not mean the borrowing of wholesale US knowledge packages as such.⁸² With Koht and Waris, the negotiation processes were creative and evident albeit in some respects differently constructed.

For both scholars, the USA provided a “laboratory of the future” where one could observe the most advanced stage of the development that would transform lives and society in all advancing societies. To European societies that were considered to “lag behind” yet on the same path of “modernization,” this meant an opportunity to study the USA to prevent the culmination of the most obvious problems and traps beforehand. Simultaneously, in Koht’s eyes, the USA also lagged behind Europe because of the recent origin of the American nation, which is why the historians could return there “back in time” to the earlier stages of a nation-building process. Although both the USA and Norway were young independent states, according to Koht, Norway was a much older nation where nationalism acted as an antidote against social fragmentation. Thus, he wanted to teach the Americans about Norway as an alternative model for modern society.

Waris, instead, headed to the USA in the 1930s to learn from the US experiences. With an interest in the more concrete and practical modes of social and historical inquiry, he was also convinced by the methods of the new model of social sciences. This led him to adopt a new professional identity first as a sociologist by the early 1930s and, after his American year, as a scholar of social and public policy that was more in line with his interests. Also, returning from the laboratory of the future, coming back to Finland meant a journey back in time in the process of modernization and industrialization.

The different scholarly paths of Koht and Waris arguably manifest more general paradigmatic changes taking place during the interwar period. Koht’s conception of a social science remained thoroughly informed by the conviction that historical research was pivotal for understanding and solving current social problems, whereas the perspective that Waris

⁸² See also Rausch, “US ‘Scientific Philanthropy’,” 97–98.

adopted in the USA was future-oriented and based on the assumption that research on current conditions was a tool for steering future developments. Consequently, Koht was an early pioneer of historically-oriented American Studies in Europe, whereas Waris became a key figure in postwar Finland in the establishment of modern social science research and education facilities in the US vein. Eventually, however, similar to Koht and most other Nordic scholars who visited the USA, Waris ended up promoting strategies that greatly differed from the US model, contributing instead to the formulation of a model of its own, the Nordic model of welfare state policies.

Moreover, while the nascent “decentering of Europe” benefited both Koht and Waris, both were most explicitly concerned with the question of what to make of their new US contacts in Europe. Both also had their focus on their countries of origin albeit differently. As Koht saw it, Norway’s national interests were best guaranteed by promoting the country as a “peace nation” in international politics. By positioning himself as a neutral actor between Europe’s rival power blocs and as a valuable partner for the US scholars who wanted to enter into the European intellectual space, he made his way to the top of the international community of historians in the 1920s. For Waris, domestic integration was the most urgent objective, as interwar Finland was still deeply divided by the 1918 Civil War. Neither could Waris make use of Finland’s geopolitical position, because the country’s location on the imagined maps of Europe was vague until the late 1930s. His priorities were thus more practical than they were theoretical, and more national-societal than they were international: the main aim was to bring to Finland something that could be adapted and implemented at home. This something, as it turned out, helped him find a place in his native academe and society as well.

Finally, when Koht and Waris made their first study trips to the USA, they were both young, relatively unestablished scholars. However, they were already well-off in their native societies, equipped by virtue of their privileged background with social and cultural capital and language skills that allowed them to take part in the modes of academic mobility that were highly selective to start with. Later, a full professorship in the native academe was a prerequisite for both men to fully utilize their US contacts and exchanges in the domestic or the European intellectual space. Indeed, on a broader European level, to say nothing of the wider international scale, Koht and Waris as individual scholars as well as the academic milieus of their native Norway and Finland belonged to the absolute winners from the massive increase of academic knowledge exchanges and mobility of the twentieth century. Considering the turmoil of the two World Wars and the Cold War barriers to free mobility, their self-chosen

return home and their ability to translate the lessons learned to serve the best interests of their own careers, society, and scholarship were certainly not self-evident.

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