



**UNIVERSITY OF PELOPONNESE
FACULTY OF HUMAN MOVEMENT AND
QUALITY OF LIFE SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF SPORTS ORGANIZATION
AND MANAGEMENT**

MASTER'S THESIS

"OLYMPIC STUDIES, OLYMPIC EDUCATION, ORGANIZATION AND
MANAGEMENT OF OLYMPIC EVENTS"

**A comparative study on the differences of the workers sport
movement in Finland and internationally during the past 100 years**

Miikka Tapio Neuvonen

Supervisor: Christina Koulouri

Professor

Sparta, February, 2015



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1. Introduction

The thesis focuses on discovering the founding reasons of the Worker's sport movement and on elaborating its 101 year history all the way to the modern times. The chosen topic is very current since the Workers' Sport Movement celebrated its 100th birthday in 2013. Having been founded on May 10th, 1913 in Gent in Belgium it held its anniversary centennial CSIT World Sports Games in Varna, Bulgaria at the end of May in 2013. The CSIT Games are held every two years and next hosts will be decided later in 2014. More on the Games later in the thesis.

CSIT is the "Comité Sportif International du Travail", hence the English translation International Workers and Amateurs in Sports Confederation. Abbreviation CSIT is used throughout the text to simplify, clarify and diversify the international moment from the Finnish equivalent. Although the CSIT name was officially inaugurated in 1946 it is meaningful to speak of it as such for readers' comprehension.

One of the main reasons I decided to look into the entire workers' sport movement and its path throughout the years up to the modern age was to reflect on the sociological aspects and to wonder the mere reasons for its existence and where it fits in the context of modern societies.

In my thesis I wish to enlighten the reader on some of the key corner stones in the movement's history. What changed and why? How did other events such as the two World Wars affect the movement? Even today the entire Workers' sport movement is relatively unknown throughout the sports and physical activity sector and it provides a challenge to illustrate its roots and developments up to the current point. An overview of the international power shifts and political changes domestically will enlighten some of the main changes in the worker's movement hence affecting the sports as well.

Volunteering as a concept is very closely attached to the worker's social class. Both men and women were needed in helping to build the society to where it stands in the modern times and it was essential that the concept of free willing helping was established through the means of volunteering.

Two things that are carefully looked at through-out the thesis are the gender issues and equality as well as the development of the volunteer front. Two characteristics that widely separated the worker's class and the workers' sport movement from the then traditional ways of handling businesses and organizations. Within the modern society covering all the aspects of the westernized world, women's rights became more of an issue in 1960's and have ever since been closely monitored and measured. Up to this day it would be an over assumption that the set targets for gender equality have been reached in any countries of the world, including Finland.

When discussing volunteering, it used to be a matter of need and orders. People were requested or told to help in any way they could particularly during the war times. The modern way of volunteering out of a free will is quite a modern tradition that lives very strong in the north of Europe.

It is also very important to notice the differences in funding methods when comparing the so called traditional sport clubs and workers' sports clubs. The ratio of private and public funding is significantly illustrating the different mentalities of the two parallel systems. That was especially highlighted in the early years from roughly 1910's until the Second World War in 1939.

The idea of the topic rose during the first semester lectures in the International Olympic Academy (IOA) in Olympia, Greece. Professor Christina Koulouri from Athens was giving an introductory lecture on other major sporting organizations besides the Olympic Games and on her presentation the Workers Sport Movement rose up and caught my attention. Coming from a background in a worker sport football club I realized that I maybe knew more about the topic than my fellow classmates and decided to ask a few specific questions on the topic. Professor Koulouri quickly picked up my interest on the topic and asked me to do more research on the matter.

The thought remained in the back of my head as I was going through options on what to write the thesis about. Thinking through the potential topics it became quite clear that the workers' sport movement had attracted my attention the most thus making the selection rather easy to do. Due to coincidence and lack of choice I have been a member of a football club that belongs to the Finnish Workers' Sports Federation (TUL) all my life. Coming from a rather small town, there was not another choice to choose if one

was looking for competitive football. However the ideology and the movement has never been very visible, disregarding maybe the fact that most of the board members are and have been from the social democrat party.

In this thesis politics is naturally brought up on a few occasions. However the intention is to explain certain symptoms and phenomena through the means of social changes, where politics have naturally been involved. The workers' sport movement is a highly politicized topic and political reasons mark most of the main cornerstones of the movement history. The attempt is to keep the politics in mind, occasionally highlighting its importance and significance but not making it the main point.

An educated reader realizes at this point that the level of writing and the tone of the language are quite casual rather than scientific. The decision is deliberate and well thought of. It allows the writer more room to express personal views and makes the message clearer. Obviously the decision can be argued for and against but for this thesis and this topic it seems suitable.

Certain vocabulary decisions were needed and in order to use the terminology consistently, the word worker in all its forms keeps being repeated on a frequent basis. In certain texts and especially between the American and British way of writing a distinction between labour (labor) and work has been made. However the only cases in which I am obliged to use the term labour is if I need to speak of the official political party in the United Kingdom.

My personal perception is that the worker's sport movement is slowly decreasing and losing its significance. The industrial revolution gave birth to the workers social class and its impacts are fading away. Less and less countries see interest in maintaining two parallel systems and the politics have developed and diversified from the origins quite drastically.

As governments and churches tried holstering the movement to work in their favor, so have done the businesses and political ideologies as well concrete political parties especially in the past. School sports were run by state benefactors and businesses wanted to make their fair share. In all this pull, the Workers' sport movement managed to keep its own ideology and fight for its existence. Certain indicators now show that

fight to have changed and sets many questions on the movement, particularly in Finland.

My research question focuses on highlighting the changes in the entire movement, comparing it with other existing models and for example in gender equality and paying extra attention to the changes in Finland. The research materials were collected during the last 18 months. I was helped by the Finnish Sport Archives, Finnish workers' sports federation and by a number of acquaintances in the university world.

This thesis is divided into a rather classical division of chapters. Within the following chapters I will illustrate the theory background discussing previous researches and books on the topic. I will lead into the history both in the international framework and on a Finland's domestic level. Then the thesis will proceed in introducing the qualitative method and how it was used in getting to the bottom of the research questions.

After that, it is time to analyze the findings, spot the differences and similarities as well as bring my own views on the matter. In the end I will conclude the thesis drawing in together the crucial pieces on my point of view and discuss the results. It will also include some self-criticism and offer insights into future researches.

2. The way workers' sport movement is presented by historians and sociologists

“To create national strength through sports training and international harmony through sporting competition” (Coubertin, 1920)

With the opening quote from Baron Pierre de Coubertin, one of the most well-known influencers of modern sport movement, it is easy to approach this chapter. The chapter will include a wide insight to the entire topic and lead into the following parts. It is not easy to gather knowledge from a topic with such a long history.

Quite a few researchers have approached the issue of sport and social change, the changes in politics interfering with sport to name a few. The likes of James Riordan¹, Allen Guttman², Seppo Hentilä³ and Barrie Houlihan⁴ for example have written much and more and their works directed the thesis to a certain direction. Most of the work discusses the possible links with politics and national progresses of the workers' sport movement.

Extra careful interest was paid to Houlihan's two books from 1997, the Sport, Policy and Politics and also the Sport and international politics. He was one of the first researchers starting to further investigate the relations between different political parties and how, or if, those have affected sports. In Finland, the now honorary president of the CSIT, Mr. Kalevi Olin is known for his efforts as an academic to collect as much information as possible on the different stages of the workers' sports movement. It is not an understatement to say that it is his lifelong dream.

The variety of languages in which research on the matter has been done makes it very complicated. A rather clear division of subchapters brings consistency and helps separating the concepts and the historical dates from each other. In any case, certain

¹ Riordan, J., Sport, politics and communism

² Guttman, A., Sport, Politics and the Engaged Historian

³ Hentilä, S., The History of the Finnish Workers' Sport

⁴ Houlihan, B., Sport, Policy and Politics

numbers and figures have to be presented in order to offer a rough timeline on the events that have occurred.

On the TUL web page they have (in Finnish) their whole program and agenda as they were one of the partners in a Good Governance project in which clarity and transparency was highlighted. After the project most of the partners made their agenda's and meeting diaries public for most part. Certainly it is a thing that helps with the research.

“Perhaps the most important, albeit the most generally ignored and least understood, aspect of working class culture is sports.” (Wheeler, 1978, 191)

“The sports world still needs the workers’ sport movement and its clubs. They offer a genuine chance to do low-level sports with reasonable costs.” However, Itkonen continues stating that “it is of utmost importance to keep developing and to follow the needs of the modern times. Satisfaction easily leads to passiveness.” (Itkonen, 2012)

As Houlihan wrote in 1997 “The increasing economic, cultural and political significance of sport over the past twenty years or so has also prompted considerable academic interest. There is currently a healthy, and growing, literature concerned with the history and sociology in sport. The literature that explores the interconnection between sport, politics and policy is smaller but is also rapidly expanding.”

Writing that in the year 1997 the author refers to the past twenty years meaning the 1970's and 1980's. The decades of Cold War still affected everything between the West and the East and since wars were not fought, tried nationalities to show their powers and excellence through different means, for example through means of sport.

“For academics there are a number of intriguing questions concerning the relationship between different political systems, policy processes and policy outputs and outcomes. Superficially at least there is evidence to suggest that very different political systems have produced very similar policies towards sports, for example: in the areas of fostering elite talent; the promotion of sport and physical education in the school curriculum; and the diplomatic use of sport.” (Houlihan, 1997, 3)

“The official use of sports to provoke conflict is generally illegal, whereas its use to promote international cooperation is commendable. [...] General practice encourages the use of sports to enhance human rights within the United Nations framework.”
(Nafziger, 1988, 99)

Within the last ten years in for example UNESCO lingua and European Commission usage the phrase “sport as a tool” has been very visible. Using the various methods sport has in it and by applying its various rules and universality, sport can be seen as a powerful tool. One way of putting it is as the president of the Finnish Olympic committee, Mr. Risto Nieminen, often puts it “sport is the most common language in the world”. Different concepts such as sports for inclusion, sports for peace, sport against taboo phobia can be seen in brochures and leaflets.

In the following paragraph Nafziger has in my opinion grasped the sheer essence of sport within different cultural origins and ideologies. His words demonstrate the need to offer and provide a variety of choices, may that be in different levels of the same sport or perhaps on the political agenda behind the cause.

“National sports cultures differ. In some societies such as Puritan England and the Islamic Republic of Iran, sports, or at least some sports, have been discouraged altogether. Elsewhere, or at other times, individuals have been culturally conditioned to participate actively or passively for a variety of reasons: for aesthetic pleasure related to the beauty of controlled body movement, for dramatic effect, for the sheer excitement of competition, for the thrill of physical exertion, or for the experience of learning. The particular approach taken may depend on the sport, age, sex and other characteristics of the participants, the level and intensity of competition, and most importantly, a particular nation’s norms, cultural characteristics, and policies.” (Nafziger, 1988, 77)

According to the paragraph above geography and the surrounding society either narrows the options to a minimum and forces people to focus on certain sports. That is not the entire truth however, as there can be many minorities within a single nation that do not have access or possibility to similar opportunities, for example in the practice of sport according to wealth and social status golf or football can function as dividers rather than the glue in factor.

It mirrors the way the society functions and showcases its traditions through the means of sport. Though the international federations and organizations continuously work towards more tolerant and inclusive globe as a whole, the place of birth still manages to determine and condemn many budding athletes in to the already existing societal norms and regulations.

As opposed to the terms perspective or framework, the word tradition has been deliberately used throughout this book because it conveys more of a sense of both change and continuity within and between different ways of thinking about sport.

“If economic and social change provided the preconditions for the rise of a mass sport, it was not until working people began to secure adequate leisure time that sports could become a working class reality.” (Wheeler, 1978, 192) Many writers and books focused on highlighting the importance of an eight-hour-work day and what it meant for the leisure time. It was only after that introduction, when workers had adequate free time and the employers realized the gap in which to introduce after work activities such as sport.

“Business relationship to sport is particularly instructive. In the interest of high productivity, employers wanted a healthy work force and sport came to be seen as a way of ensuring physically fit workers. Even more important, however, was the role sport might play in harmonizing labor-management relations. Increasingly sport was viewed as a way of combatting worker militancy and ensuring ‘industrial peace’. For example, one of the most famous British Football Clubs, West Ham United, was started in 1895 as the Thames Ironworks Football Club by the plant owner. The founding came shortly after a major strike and was part of a concerted program to improve ‘cooperation between workers and management’.” Wheeler 1978, 194, quotation from Korr, C.P., 1914.

“While from the 1920s sport was winning a national and international audience, the relationship between sports and geopolitical events was posing an autonomy problem for the national and international sports movement, for its capacity to override petty prejudices and divergent ideologies. This growing internationalization and politicization of sport inevitably drew in broader issues, like religion, social class, women and race. Sometimes this engendered a split in the movement, with various groups playing among

themselves and developing new sporting values—and sometimes modes of playing suited to themselves. As the century progressed, there was also a growing tension, especially in Europe, between amateur—elitist sport for rich, privileged males and commercial spectator sport for the mainly middle classes, with the latter finally winning out.” (Krüger, 1999, introduction)

Roughly a hundred years ago, the big change in how we nowadays see sport was about to happen with many power struggles, ideologies and strong personalities shaping and paving the road to the current situation. Commercialization, the freshly re-established Olympic Games and the increase of leisure time all became factors in what sometimes divided and sometimes connected people, nations and continents.

In a little contradiction to many, Gounou (1998, 203) claims that sport policies cannot be as effective as they are thought to be. His words might awake a major uproar of opinions if introduced in a class room. “However ambitious a country’s policy is on sport, that policy can hardly influence a nation’s image. The way in which the athletic performances of a country are perceived and described depends on the ideas that are associated with the country, as well as on ideological tendencies and political interests.”

Different ideologies have discussed sports and leisure and their connection to other societal functions and for example in anarchism through ideas of their ideological leaders, the realization of the role and change of leisure time influenced many to look into the topic more closely.

“It has often been suggested that sport and leisure have been peripheral or even meaningless objects of sociological enquiry. [...] it is clear that Marx, Weber, Durkheim, Simmel and others all viewed sport or leisure as anything but peripheral.” (Grant and Maguire, 1994, 2)

Especially seeing the name Marx is important as many anarchist groups based their agendas and ways of thinking in Marx’s works and thus the mention that Marx realized the meaning of sport in a society is relevant also when looking at the development of the workers’ sport movement. Anarchism is indeed a different ideology to communism

and socialism, but bringing other aspects and viewpoints further highlights the importance of sport.

2.1 The dawn of Workers' Sport Movement

What was the spark that started the entire movement and that has carried it up and until the modern day? Nafziger (1988, 77) pointed out that no single, self-explanatory answer cannot be given. I disagree on the matter, because much of the speculation is linked with the introduction of the leisure time concept and the sense of need to belong to a certain cause. Some of these examples are further explored within the thesis.

As Krüger (1999, introduction) mentions: “The defenders and promoters of sport could hardly have imagined, at the turn of the century, that sports competition would have an impact on public opinion and become an instrument of international policy. Sport, sportsmen, sports associations and clubs were never seen as potential actors in social and cultural life, in politics and economics.” The change in the dawn of the 20th century in people’s mindset and in the overall society saw new things emerge and grow in importance, new things that the decision-makers naturally recognized and harnessed in their advantage.

“That sport ultimately moved not only horizontally across national boundaries to the international bourgeoisie but also vertically to the international working class was – like the proletariat itself – a direct result of industrialization.” (Wheeler, 1978, 191, quotation from McIntosh, P., 1971)

The world and in specific Europe had gone for a long time without wars and it was living its prime-time in many ways. Culture was flourishing and cities such as Wien, London and Paris were competing mainly on an intellectual, musical and artistic level. Cars slowly became part of the big city scenery. Ideologies were discussed and debated throughout Europe and ideas became reality; something that happened within the workers’ sport movement a well.

“Modern industrial capitalism destroyed the traditional order of society. For our purposes the most important consequences of this revolutionary transformation were the rationalization of the work process and the creation of a formal concept of leisure.” (Wheeler, 1978, 191)

The entire concept of having few hours spare time is what started the change that can nowadays be seen being part of the everyday life. As many spend the newly introduced time in engaging into dancing and drinking, realized some the chance of introducing sports as an alternative option. Also churches paid attention to the shifts in the modern societies and were quick to react on the rise of sports. In England sports mostly meant football.

“This phenomenon is reflected in the large number of English football clubs that sprang in their first instance from churches and the fact that twelve contemporary professional teams grew out of church organizations and the ‘civilizing’ concerns of parson-graduates of the public schools.” (Marrus, 1974, 38)

“Working class sport, however, did not long remain confined to church oriented organizations but moved quickly to other urban institutions such as the pub and place of work. So rapid and thoroughgoing was this development that from 1883 on working class teams dominated what had begun as an ‘old boys’ competition and is recognized to this day as the premier British sports event, the Football association Cup final.” (Wheeler, 1978, 192)

It is important to realize the many ways sport is and has been used in different levels and fields of society. It has been used as a tool for peace (in the workers’ sport movement a clear change was seen when the socialists and communists united their forces for mutual “Workers’ Olympics in the 1930’s). It is said sports is the most common language in the world uniting people in ways that Esperanto never managed to accomplish; something that workers’ movement tried taking advantage by uniting their members under one umbrella according to their political views.

For Workers’ movement sport helped to bring together people from similar classes in life, with similar ways of earning their salaries that shared political views and represented a significant percentage of the people of that era.

“International tensions and crises, and the changing of political regimes, can split national and international sports organizations. From this standpoint, one may not ignore the splits that occurred in certain sports federations in most European states after 1919, under the impact of the new authoritarian regimes (USSR, Italy, Germany, etc.) and which tended to result in, for example, the autonomization of worker sports organizations, if not to their actual banning.” (Arnaud, 1998, 10)

2.1.1 The two separate systems

The international Workers’ Sports movement quickly escalated in to two separate politics driven systems, namely the Socialist Workers’ Sport International (originally the Lucerne Sport International) and the Red Sport International. Major political powers wanted to show a clear distinction between the two, even so that the RSI was planning to separate from all the other sports once and for all except the ones organized under their leadership and approval.

“The RSI was formed partly to counterbalance the social-democratic (Lucerne-based) Worker Sport International (WSI—in 1929 renamed the Socialist Worker Sport International), which had been set up in 1920 on the initiative of Belgian, French and German social democrats and was composed of worker organizations from these three countries plus others in Britain, Czechoslovakia, Finland and Switzerland.” (Riordan, 1998, 69)

That meant that many countries in Europe by 1921 were competing in three different fronts in sports. Naturally there was national governing body for all three and certain athletes belonged to both WSI and the Olympic committee. That dispersion certainly affected the level of competition as there was no guarantee that the very best of each discipline were present at certain, specific competition.

The two separate systems naturally divided the focus and powers of the two organizations and weakened the overall consensus and message. “Another source of weakness was the political division of the labor sports movement between communist and socialist groups. Not only did this tend to divide already scarce resources, but it also

fostered the kinds of acrimonious political debate that repulsed even sympathetic, class-conscious worker sportsmen and women.” (Wheeler, 1978, 204)

“Initially, the RSI was very different from the usual type of international sports body which groups together several national federations and which organizes international competitions; it was first and foremost an agitation and propaganda bureau which served the Komintern.” (Gounou, 1998, 187) Comintern was the nickname of the Communist International organization that was also known as the Third International during 1919 to 1943.

“However, the schism which appeared in the Socialist Party during the Tour Congress did have repercussions on the sports world: two rival worker sports federations were created, one affiliated to the Socialist Worker Sport International (SWSI) in Lucerne and the other to Red Sport International (RSI) in Moscow. Both the SWSI and the RSI represented the worker sport movement, but differed slightly in their political outlook, the SWSI being close ideologically to social democracy and socialism, while the RSI were communists. Membership of the two organizations was likewise split, the majority of SWSI members coming from Germany, a country dominated by social-democratic politics, while the largest section of the RSI was from the communist-led Soviet Union (where the RSI had been founded in 1921). (Arnaud, 1998, 120)

Competitive sport between the two organizations did take place, but usually between teams from the main protagonists, Germany and the Soviet Union, and victory was always considered as a success for a political ideology rather than a sporting achievement. (For example, in 1923, when Russia defeated Germany 6–0 at football, 40 000 spectators celebrated a success for the RSI.) In France, on the other hand, no sporting events between the two organizations took place.” (Arnaud, 1994, 67)

2.1.2 Socialist Confederation

“Indeed, during a congress held on the 12 and 13 September 1920 in Lucerne, the worker sports movement set up an international organization which was to become very close in ideology to the social democratic and socialist parties: the Union international

d'éducation physique et sportive du Travail (international workers' sports and physical education union). (This union succeeded the Association Socialiste Internationale de l'Education Physique (the International Socialist Association of Physical Education) which was set up in 1913 in Ghent. It ceased to be active after war broke out.) It was later to become better known as l'Internationale Sportive de Lucerne (Lucerne Sport International or LSI). The LSI declared itself to be neutral with regard to the different political and ideological tendencies within the workers' movement, and adopted a program of a distinctly reformist nature." (Gounou, 1998, 186)

"The LSI officially declared its affinity with the Socialist Worker International at its congress in Helsinki in August 1927; furthermore, in order to better communicate this new stance, it changed its name in January 1928 to the Socialist Worker Sports International (SWSI). After the Helsinki congress, sports relations with the RSI and Soviet sport ceased to be looked upon favorably by the leaders of the LSI, which prohibited its branches from taking part in the Spartakiad in 1928 in Moscow. It went on to outlaw all contact with branches of the RSI at its Prague congress of October 1929." (Gounou, 1998, 196)

"If Communist sport was in reality an arm of Soviet foreign policy, there were other international developments less obviously determined by the needs of individual states. The Worker Sport International was, of course, backed up by the strong Weimar socialist party but it had a significant French and Belgian element with a Workers' Olympiad in Antwerp in 1937." (Holt, 1998, 217)

2.1.3 Communist Confederation

There is less information on the Communist International much due to most of the member countries using Cyrillic alphabet and for the habits on the governance stage where it was common not to publish and showcase for example the expenses and where the money went.

In 1997 the Russians decided to open up their archives regarding the early days of RSI and here is how Gounou saw the situation in 1998: "Research has been especially

helped by the recent opening of the Comintern Archives in Moscow, and from the access that this has provided to the collection of 'Sportintern' documents. With nearly 60 000 documents from the RSI Bureau, this collection houses Europe's richest selection of material on the communist sports movement during the interwar period."

However what is known is that the Communist International was founded in 1919 in Moscow with the objective to spread communism around the world. Subsequently there was a need for sports section and this is how Gounou and Riordan describe the set of events respectively:

"The communists, who were convinced that reformism had failed on all levels and that capitalism could only be vanquished by revolution, considered that the LSI was scarcely equal to the political duties which, in their opinion, all the working classes were bound to perform. The congresses of the Comintern, the Communist Youth International and the Red Trade Union International, all held in June and July 1921 in Moscow in the presence of delegates who were interested in the sports issues, provided the opportunity to reconsider the matter of creating a sports organization with a revolutionary slant, at a time when the communist movement had to deal with an appreciable change in Europe's political situation." (Gounou, 1998, 186)

"Soviet foreign sports policy, in fact, was largely identical with and conducted through the International Association of Red Sports and Gymnastics Organizations, better known as Red Sport International (RSI). The RSI was formed at the First International Congress of Representatives of Revolutionary Worker Sports Organizations as an affiliate of the Comintern in Moscow in July 1921, two years after the Comintern's inception. Founder members were worker sports organizations from eight countries: Czechoslovakia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Soviet Russia and Sweden. By 1924, it had 2 214 000 members in nine sections distributed in Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Estonia, France, Italy, Norway, Uruguay, USA and USSR." (Riordan, 1998, 69)

"Between 1921 and 1937, Soviet sport was closely linked to the international communist movement and was represented by Red Sport International (RSI) in sporting

events. Set up in Moscow in 1921 as an auxiliary organization of the Communist International (Comintern), the RSI was supported by its national sections and groups of sympathizers based mainly in central and Western Europe and in Scandinavia. However, its largest national section was, by far, that of the Soviet Union.” (Gounot, 1998, 184)

Gounot (1998, 184) further continues by explaining and highlighting the governing functions of the RSI. These guidelines clearly demonstrate how highly monitored and governed the actions within the organization were and what an emphasis the Soviet Union had to its actions. “The RSI’s statutes required that all national sections applied decisions taken by the RSI congresses, which were attended by the representatives of the communist workers’ sports movements of various countries. One is therefore led to believe that the RSI, along with the worker sports organizations that were affiliated to it, could have had quite an effect on international sports relations in the USSR, relations which cannot be said to have been influenced solely by Soviet foreign policy at the time. But it must also be borne in mind that, during the 1920s, the international communist movement became increasingly dependent on the specific interests of the USSR, and that it is more likely that the RSI contributed to this development.”

Of the founding members, only Hungary was at the time strongly communistic (besides the USSR naturally). The others had parts and regions supporting the cause and for example in Sweden it was always minimal. The RSI made sure in its statutes to demonstrate its authority.

“The RSI made its concern for sport and the class struggle manifest in the second article of its statutes: The Red Sport International embraces all worker and peasant sports associations which support the proletarian class struggle...Physical culture, gymnastics, games and sport are a means of proletarian class struggle, not an end in them.” (Riordan 1998, 69, quotation from Kozmina, A., 1964, 171.)

“In June 1924, the French Communist Party, supported by the RSI, decided to organize a Workers Olympiad, while violently denouncing the International Olympic Committee’s ‘sports fascism’ which forbade German and Soviet athletes from taking

part in the Paris Olympics of 1924. [...] Thus, the French and international worker sport movements, along with the RSI, were responsible for the revival of sports links between the victors and the vanquished of the First World War. Although the Soviets were unable to take part through not having been able to obtain visas from the French government, the Franco-German rift was being mended through the intermediary of sport. [...] It comes as no great surprise that the Germans organized the first Worker Olympic Games in Frankfurt in 1925, under the auspices of the SWSI, whereas the RSI did not hold its first sports event until 1928 with the Moscow Spartakiad.” (Arnaud, 1998, 121)

“The policy pursued by Soviet leaders in international sport in the period following the October 1917 Revolution in Russia up to 1941 was unique. Not only did the Communist leaders turn their backs on world sport, including the Olympic Games, they attempted to form a new pattern of sports relations based on ‘worker (i.e. ‘communist worker’) sport’ or ‘physical culture’. For the first time a major state declared sport to be a political institution which played a significant part in the class war between workers and bourgeoisie, between the new socialist state and the capitalist world. This was an analysis and policy that was to have worldwide repercussions not only on other Communist Parties, which tended to follow whatever line Moscow advocated for the ‘Communist International’, but on anti-communist governments and sports movements in reaction to the Soviet policy (including those in fascist Italy, Germany and Spain).” (Riordan, 1998, 67)

As Riordan mentions, the communist countries and especially Russia stated a very strong message naturally in order to gain from it. The decisions made roughly 100 years ago can be still seen in some aspects in sport. For example highlighting combat sports such as wrestling, judo and boxing was and still is the matter in the east of Europe, that is to say former and current communist regimes. One sport that the Russians up to now have ruled is gymnastics, a sport that has its roots deeply in the workers’ sport movement.

Many written captions of the “feeling” of the era reveal how selective and careful the communist side was in sending their athletes or teams. Here is an example in an editorial (Shakmatny Listok –newspaper, 1925, 3):

“In certain circumstances, the participation of working-class chess players in bourgeois tourneys would be politically advantageous, inasmuch as it would unite working people around the idea of class solidarity and of opposition as a class to the bourgeoisie. The Chess Section therefore deems it possible for the proletarian chess organizations to take part in international matches so as, through victories over bourgeois masters, to enhance self-respect among the proletarian masses and faith in their strength and youthful talents.”

The attitude and approach is very dignified and self-assuring. As if no other end result exists than taking home the victory and showing the bourgeois their might. An extract of the French journal (Sport ouvrier, 1923) show how heated the discussion in the RSI was at that point:

“Worker athletes, rise, all of you, against the fascist cause! This is the resolution of the RSI’s Third Congress against bourgeois political activism. With the slogan ‘Bolshevism justifies fascism’, militant capitalism is trying to use the lower middle classes to do here what Mussolini succeeded in doing in Italy, thanks to the proletariat’s lack of preparation and the betrayal of the socialist leaders. [...]The bourgeoisie is counting heavily on the support of bourgeois sports organizations [...] because sport has eliminated people’s readiness to criticize and more importantly has wiped out their feeling of discipline.”

“The founding of the RSI corresponded in part to Soviet sport’s desire to establish preliminary relations with European worker sport, so as to exchange ideas concerning technical issues, and to secure practical support. All in all, however, the creation of the RSI was not so much the reflection of sporting ambition as of the political and ideological interest of Soviet Russia. During this period, these interests were entirely directed towards the world revolution which had to result, in the short-or long-term, in

the creation of other socialist states. Convinced that this was the case, Soviet sports officials resolved, on an international level, to collaborate only with communist representatives of workers' sport, i.e. those who were heading the struggle against bourgeois sport and, more particularly, against the reformist leanings of worker sport within the wider context of the revolutionary class struggle.” (Gounot, 1998, 187)

That way of thinking at least in comparison to the modern way of thinking awakes wondering. If the Soviets were indeed afraid of the progress happening in Europe at the time, limiting the international contacts to those already under some sort of governance of the communist movement and fighting against the same “enemy” does not result in big change per se, it only further strengthens the already existing co-operation.

Having realized in mid-1920's that their cause could not further grow without allowing other major stakeholders in the same table the RSI suggested a compromise that Gounou (1998, 191) quotes: “The resolution that the RSI's expanded executive committee adopted in 1926 over the relationship with bourgeois sport was very much a compromise between the European branches and the Soviet branch. In order to eliminate prior differences in opinion and interests, the RSI lost no time in suggesting to the worker athletes that each part of the resolution should be considered as a tactical element of a fundamentally revolutionary strategy, which corresponded to the interest of the entire working class.”

Naturally the movement could not leave the issue unsettled and in fearing the people's reaction it had to highlight that it was their decision to involve others and that through that they would be able to gain ideas and use them for the mutual benefit of everyone. A thing that we know now failed only a decade later.

“However, the contacts with bourgeois sport in Europe were to remain very limited. Among the reasons for this was the fact that the USSR was not a member of any official international sports federation, and certain countries' governments refused to issue visas to Soviet athletes.” (Gounou, 1998, 193) Once again their own actions had ended up being badly planned and a new strategy had to be adopted with different points of emphasis. Hence the RSI's new directives led to the following: “Red Sport International

immediately applied the new directives and announced its proposals to merge with the LSI, with which it had resumed contact. The negotiations between the RSI and the LSI were to have important consequences for Soviet sport's international relations. Indeed, at its Paris-Pantin congress in November 1925, the LSI officially decided to allow events to be held between its branches and Soviet sport—provided they were not exploited by any party for political purposes.” (International Sozialistische Verband für Arbeitersport und Körperkultur, 1926)

“The first major international sports event on Soviet soil, the Spartakiad, was staged in Moscow in August 1928, at the same time as the Comintern's sixth congress. The games were above all intended to demonstrate how far the USSR had progressed in the field of physical culture and to counterbalance bourgeois sport, particularly the Olympic Games held that same year in Amsterdam, by showing the revolutionary nature of Soviet physical culture and by gathering together a large number of worker athletes from foreign countries. However, international participation remained relatively weak: 542 men and 70 women from 12 countries as opposed to 3000 men and 879 women from the USSR. “(Gounou, 1998, 197)

“The RSI drew up a plan of action to merge with the SWSI which it sent to its former main rival in September 1934. This policy of reconciliation with the SWSI was followed by a policy of conciliation with the bourgeois sports movement. It was trying, with the reformist sports organizations and the anti-fascist elements of bourgeois sport, to create a huge popular sports movement.” (Gounou, 1998, 198)

Yet another plan and yet another set of aims to accomplish. These goals were not changed because of will of the sports people, it was changed to achieve maximum benefits sports could offer and this time that decision required approaching the once enemies with a fresh proposal. By 1934 the others had already had enough and cutting a deal with the opponents was unheard of. One of the things that was considered trying was the Spartakiad of the East, a competition in which new countries outside Europe could take part.

“A ‘Spartakiad of the East’ was even planned in Baku (Azerbaijan) in which Turkey, Afghanistan, Persia, Palestine, Morocco and China would participate. However, this Spartakiad did not take place, no doubt because of financial and organizational

problems, as well as the fact that sport was still in the early stages of development in most of the countries mentioned.” (Gounou, 1998, 190)

“The RSI held in total 3 summer games and one winter games before it was abolished in 1937. [...] The RSI was disbanded when it was seen to be increasingly harmful to the interests of Soviet diplomacy. At the time, these interests were best served by a relaxed relationship with bourgeois sport rather than by maintaining an organization which continued to be seen in the sporting world as being strictly opposed to bourgeois sport. This once again illustrated the subordination of the RSI to Soviet interests, which, as has already been shown, were not always the same as those of the communist worker sports movement of other countries.” (Gounou, 1998, 202)

2.2 The birth of the Finnish Workers’ Sport Federation TUL

“Finnish society firstly found sport through active youth work societies and through fire brigadiers and police officers as it started to spread in 1880’s. First sports clubs were founded in 1890’s. [...] Through the period of oppression (Finland was governed by the Russians at that time) sport functioned as a mean of retaining and establishing autonomy. In 1900 it was thought wise to found a national central sports organization. Until 1906 it had to function under cover without many governing rules but after the major strike it could be officially registered. [...] Curiously enough, the Finnish Olympic Committee was founded in 1907 and officially recognized by the IOC in 1908 though Finland was still under the Russian governance at the time.” (Halila and Sirmeikkö, 1960, 30)

There are naturally many reasons why workers’ sport found a foothold within the Finnish society. A country so long governed by two bigger nations (Sweden until 1808 and Russia 1809 to 1917) that had never been independent and of which rulers came from wealthy social glasses and foreign origin, was a perfect place to see the apprise of the worker movement that slowly realized their rights and opportunities.

Hentilä (1982, 34) mentions for example the fundamental need of exercising as one of the key reasons sport and physical activity was introduced to the workers’. Their daily chores demanded increasingly good fitness and the physical recovery were helped by

letting off steam through doing exercises. At first they joined bourgeois clubs but as sport entered the agendas of various unions they realized the importance of establishing their own governing body. The socialist ideologies and the founding of the International Workers' Federation created an opportunity for national progresses too.

The Finnish workers' sport movement quickly determined the three main pillars it wanted to endorse: the educational, cultural and political. Due to severe conflicts of interests with the "main" sports federation, it quickly established itself as the counter force against bourgeois sport culture. Hentilä (1982, 157) mentions that the TUL stood firstly for the workers' movement as a whole and secondly to workers' sports movement.

The first workers' sport club in Finland was founded already in 1887 in Helsinki. More and more clubs were founded especially around 1908 and they all first joined the Finnish Sports Confederation SVUL. In 1913 one of the workers' clubs started asking around whether the other workers' clubs were keen to establish their own Finnish workers' sport federation following the developments in Europe at the time. Due to restricted controlling during the First World War that dream never became reality at the time.

After the Finnish Civil War (also called the citizen war in certain texts) in 1918 the SVUL expelled all the clubs that had any links or connections (or were thought to support) to the lost "red" side. That was when the need to have their own governing organization came to reality. The TUL was officially established in 26.1.1919 in Helsinki.

3. Method and material

The comparative (historical) research method is a little less known but especially in the field of social studies its usage has grown exponentially and to this thesis its use fits. It allows the writer to bring forward more personal opinion and enables the text to flow on concrete terms.

Van de Vijver (2012) explains certain key factors on which to build the method in providing a comprehensive overview of the methodological issues encountered in cross-cultural research. The focus must be on the data that are comparative in nature and most of the studies of this type involve data from at least 2 different groups, but some studies are mono-cultural.

“This integrated strategy improves the prospects of making valid causal inferences in cross-national and other forms of comparative research by drawing on the distinct strengths of two important approaches.” (Lieberman, 2005, abstract)

“The field of comparative historical methodology has in fact grown by leaps and bounds in recent years. [...] This partly entails summarizing the different procedures through which comparative historical researchers make descriptive and causal inferences. [...] Comparative historical analysis has a long and distinguished history in the social sciences. Those whom we now regard as the founders of modern social science, from Adam Smith to Alexis de Tocqueville to Karl Marx, all pursued comparative historical analysis as a central mode of investigation. [...] After some period of neglect, however, recent decades have witnessed a dramatic reemergence of the comparative historical tradition.” (Mahoney and Rüschemeyer, 2003, 1)

Whether the comparative method is the most accurate one, Jowell (1998, 169) well describes: “The demands of good science require us not to turn a blind eye to such imperfections when we come to interpreting the data arising from these studies, nor to accept at face value differences between nations that we know may well be illusory and artifactual.”

3.1 Comparative research on the social aspects of the workers sport movement internationally and in Finland. Showcasing the research material

Many contemporary societies systematically attempt to select and promote high-performance sporting elites. While the means different societies use to form sporting elites are similar, institutional structures and promotional programs are quite different across societies, reflecting different cultural norms and political structures.

“History has witnessed that rigid systems of sports promotion have been characteristic of the sports systems of totalitarian societies. A non-exhaustive list of examples includes the rigid sports systems of the former Soviet Union, the German Democratic Republic, China, and North Korea. This historical record does not mean, however, that a totalitarian society is a necessary precondition for a rigid promotional system. Yet, a totalitarian society seems to provide at least better initial conditions than a democratic society for rigid promotional systems to unfold.” (Emrich et al., 2012, 1)

The former mentioned countries are and were perfect examples of totalitarian societies. A combination of a totalitarian society with a rigid, centralistic system of sports promotion implies that individual athletes are being controlled and that they are delegated to specific training sites. It might also imply that they train along the lines specified in long-term training concepts and that their performance is being tested on a regular basis.

“Although democratic open societies with highly developed civil liberties may also opt for a centralistic rather than a laissez-faire system of sports promotion, open societies must always publicly legitimize the type and extent of their sports promotion.”(Emrich et al., 2012, 1)

Moreover, in an open society, individual athletes can try to maximize their utility, implying that they may use their time for activities that promise the greatest subjective utility. As a result, the athletes will decide to do sports only if extra leverage or gain benefits more than what they could take out of other activities. In contrast to a centrally-planned system of sports promotion, an open society thus faces to a much more significant extent the problem to sort out those cultural, social, political, and

demographic conditions that determine why athletes do sports and why they are successful.

“For millions of workers, however, sport was a vital aspect of the revolutionary movement. Workers’ sport organizations existed in almost every country of Europe and in some of the countries of North and South America and Asia as well; by 1928 each of the two workers’ sport internationals, the Socialist Workers Sport International (originally the Lucerne Sport International) and the Red Sport International, counted well over two million members, making the sport movement by far the largest working class cultural movement. (Steinberg, 1978, 1)

“Economic and social changes in advanced countries have affected the development and growth of sports federations for the past 50 years. Finland is regarded as a good area for research because of the differentiation in sports movements after the Civil war in 1919 and the enormous growth in support of sports federations after the Second World War. [...] Social cleavages between the working and bourgeois classes, between ethnic groups (Finnish and Swedish speaking population), as well as different socio-economic factors have affected their development and growth both quantitatively and qualitatively. Changes in support for the Sports confederation are not influenced by the situational structural factors and changes to the same extent as development possibilities in the Workers’ federation are. Support for the Sports confederation is more dependent on general social-political conditions, whereas support for the Workers’ federation with its closer leftist and labor movement links is more closely and directly connected with factors affecting the position of workers in society or their internal organizations. In spite of many levelling factors, the connections are reflected in the development conditions of the two organizations even during the period after the Second World War. However, there are differences in the explanation of support during the pre-war and post-war periods.” (Kiviaho, 1978, 3)

This particular long quote from Mr. Kiviaho’s article is important on two levels. By highlighting the specialty of Finland, the author manages to draw a picture of a small nation by capita but with a versatile and fruitful ground for sport movements. Kiviaho also manages to bring forward the key aspects that showcase the difference between the so called mainstream sport movement and the workers’ sport movement. The former survives through every climate and is able to maintain its foothold within the society

whereas the latter must rely on individual workers' positions in their background organizations.

Obviously the statement cannot be adapted to fit in to every worker's sport movement member society, but it can be reflected in the light of what history has taught whether it's the two World Wars or less dramatic societal changes that especially have taken place in Europe.

In countries with higher state governed sport hierarchy changes in government or in the neighboring countries affected the whole scene including the world of sports. Take in consideration for example the changes Germany has endured in the last hundred years. Being strongly divided by ideological movements, Nazi regime and then the concrete division into two states before finally emerging back into one some 25 years ago has left their sporting roots very dispersed.

“Sporting competition was thus, circumscribed by political considerations that often transformed purely sporting contests into other rivalries: communism v. capitalism, fascism v. liberal democracy, communism v. social democracy. Yet there were other socio-political contenders for attention and influence that impinged upon sport—religion, especially the Roman Catholic Church, and the workers cultural movement. All the same, each had to contend with its own internal struggles, such as Catholicism v. Protestantism v. Judaism, on the one hand, and communism v. social democracy, on the other.” (Riordan, 1998, 1)

Each era has tried to use sport as tool for their propaganda, tried to buy the people on their side by using methods that had been seen to work for the past decades. A symbolic event was the 1990 football World Cup when still then West-Germany was crowned as surprising champions though the nation seized to exist only a short while after. (World Cup final took place 8.7.1990 and West-Germany was abolished 3.10.1990.)

“More specifically, this is to say, sport has developed in a complex and ambiguous way alongside the special figurations formed by , and interactions between, class structures, education, bureaucracy, the family and the rest.” (Jones, 1988, 5)

“This modernization perspective views modern sports as fundamentally different. This transformation is seen as a measure of the broader social changes that occurred. Modern

sports are more organized, structured and regulated. They are an elaborate system of regional, national and international organizations emerged to control and regulate sports. Sport gradually became more specialized, bureaucratized and its values oriented around individual achievement. Codification, organization and legitimation processes aided the broader institutionalization of sport in society.” (Grant and Maguire, 1994, chapter 1)

“Gruneau’s starting point is to see sport as limited by the kind of society in which it exists; that is, modern sports are contoured by those structural limitations which have surfaced during capitalist industrialization. But what are these structural limitations? Though Gruneau is not particularly explicit on this, above all the central force behind capitalism is the accumulation of profit, secured by the buying and selling of labor power.” (Jones, 1988, 9)

“The breakdown of tradition in folk pastimes, as well as in other aspects of popular culture, was marked by a relative absence of conflict between social groups. People actively chose to give up old customs and adopt new ways of living. This process was both progressive and democratic. Modern leisure opened up many new opportunities for a greater number of people. Their efforts were evaluated less on ascribed values and more on achieved criteria. Modern sports and leisure forms were thus in tune with more rational ways of living.” (Grant and Maguire, 1994, chapter 1)

Both Grant and Maguire as well as Jones try find the connections of sport of society. Certain key connecting dots that reflect one part of a society as a whole. They also unintentionally draw forward the possible difficulties the workers’ sport movement faces in the near future. Terms such as structural limitations and broader institutionalization are things that the workers’ movement did not have to face when in the early days. These above mentioned rational ways of living do no longer fit in the demands of the modern world and the focus on individual achievement narrows the breathing space of the workers’ sport movement quite extensively.

Sport was and always has been a way to dispute other problems of the society and foreign affairs. When looking into the workers’ sport movement and its origins, it always returns to the same situation. A counter-movement had to be created and fostered in order to bring forth second-guessing opinions and different ideologies. Sport

was the mean to deliver the message to masses and was used as a pawn to much larger speculations and efforts of change.

Gounou (1998, 185): As soon as the USSR's international sports relations had to perform both these functions at the same time, contradictions and disputes arose; the ambiguous relationship between Soviet sport and bourgeois sport is as much evidence of this as the tense relationship between the RSI and its socialist equivalent, the Lucerne Sports International (LSI)"

4. Analysis – similarities and differences. Perspective

“Sport is global, wherever you go, you can find sports. It has influenced the focus of its legal regulation increasingly onto international sport federations. These organizations control and govern mostly the sport internationally. They have established laws how to rule the sports and also constitutions. They are autonomous organizations and independent of national governments. In a different way compared to other NGO’s they claim immunity from legal proceedings. Many people around the world see sport as the main entertainment of their lives.” (Shatku 2014, 1)

“However sport rules are genuinely the global law because they reach across the entire world, involve both international and domestic levels, and directly affects individuals (such as athletes).” (Shatku 2014, 3)

The examples above show the symptoms from another perspective, legislative in this example. The world of sports in general and the biggest and most significant IF’s (International Federations) have huge significance in decision-making processes and in some cases seem to function according to their own views rather than common understanding for example the case of FIFA (International football federation) giving the football World Cup 2022 to Qatar, where there were barely any existing infrastructure nor suitable temperatures during the traditional time period when the games take place.

4.1 The development of the international workers’ sport movement and its current state

“If the competition is between states, we are dealing with ‘state athletes’ mandated by their government to represent their political regime or to be agents of its cultural, industrial or economic influence, in the same way as were novelists, artists, successful fashion designers or chiefs of the automobile and aeronautical industries. The selected athletes were the ‘ambassadors’, the ‘official representatives’ of a political regime or of their ‘national culture’.” (Arnaud, 1998, 6)

Whether the athletes in workers' sports movement felt that they were miniature models of women and men of their nation that was and still is the perception, though when the movement first appeared it was about internationalism not merely nationalism. Many stereotypes relating to people have been born through fine arts and sports. In the case of sports and especially workers' sports it maybe should not have been that way because although in many European nation's working class people formed the majority of the population, their behavior and appearance might not have been what the bourgeois decision-makers wanted to spread of their nation. Maybe another difference to for example the Olympics is that quite a few of the competing athletes of the working class probably were not very happy to carry the colors and flag of their nation when their social class was seen to be robbed of its rights.

“Although none of the nations of Western Europe has had a communist regime, the years 1913-1933 were the heyday of the workers' sports movement. The first and most important manifestation of this movement was the establishment in 1893 of Germany's Arbeiter-Turnerbund (ATB), a sports organization closely allied to the Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands. By 1928, the organization had 770,058 members (and another 400,000 Germans were enrolled in eight smaller working-class sports organizations).” (Guttman, 2003, 367, quotation from Ueberhorst, H. 1973.)

“In Germany, too, the beginnings of widespread working class participation in sports were tied to a gradual improvement in wages and hours. Similar developments in France around the turn of the century began to make cycling accessible to French workers.” (Wagner, 1973 and Weber, 1971)

“That more and more workers increasingly found time, money, and energy to participate in sport was in no small measure related to the growth of organized labour. The direct pressure it could bring to bear through strikes, elections, parliamentary action combined with ruling class fear of revolution was responsible of many improvements in working class life.” (Wheeler, 1978, 192) One of these improvements was the introduction of the eight-hour working day, something that is still considered the basis of planning in working life.

Different speculations have been researched in determining what was the reason sport became so immensely popular in such a quick period of time. Wheeler offers a range of

explanations: “One reason related to modern work itself. The intensity and sterility of work in the capitalistic production process increasingly tended to reduce job satisfaction to a minimum. To compensate for this growing alienation, there arose a corresponding need for physical fulfillment. [...] Through involvement in sport the individual might directly or vicariously gain a sense of self-respect and personal accomplishment missing at work.”

He then continues to offer three other possible reasons, namely: “The feeling of community or group solidarity it offered was another attraction. [...] In this way sport supplied social and cultural needs that had been displaced by industrialization. More obviously sport was pleasurable, industrial work was not. The worse the latter was, the greater the need for the former. [...] Finally, sport’s appeal was connected to its potential for providing an exciting and even titillating escape. This is to be understood not in the context of physical release but more in terms of a dream world far removed from the monotony of industrial work and the harsh reality of urban life.”(Wheeler, 1978, 193

“In the period between wars there were two elements that were closely linked to each other that grew in importance: on one hand, the social changes, a better organization of working class associations allowed an increase in free time, and sport was an important part. On the other hand, the intervention of the governments in sports was increased once they discovered the influence of sports.” (Colomé and Sureda, 1994, 6)

“The labour sport unions disapproved of idols and records. At the labour games the anthem of the socialist international replaced the national anthem of the winning country. And only the red flag flew. Participation was more important than winning.” (International Institute of Social History webpage 25.6.2014)

4.1.1 Before the World War Two

“Sport became truly international only after the First World War. It was then that politicians began to appreciate its potential as a vehicle of national values and policies—even for demonstrating and advertising the potency of a political ideology. During the 1920s and 1930s, therefore, sport was inextricably bound up with

international relations. Further, in countries where the State had direct control over sport—the ‘authoritarian’ states of the Soviet Union, Germany, Italy and Spain—sport grew to be an adjunct of foreign policy.” (Riordan, 1998, 1)

Whether Riordan in his opening words of the Sport and International Politics meant sports in general or focused the Olympic movements is irrelevant. His words precisely apply to workers’ sport movement. The early ages of the movement saw its biggest shows of strength when their competitions were able to attract much more athletes than even the Olympic Games of late could not handle. Different nations ran parts of their political agendas through the means of sport and trade unions for example benefited from all the fuss that the so called newcomer sport was able to accomplish.

“Smaller federations were formed elsewhere in Europe and – from 1925 to 1937 – quadrennial ‘Workers’ Olympics’ were celebrated the year after the ‘bourgeois’ games. Through most of the ‘entre deux guerres’ period there were two mutually hostile international organizations for workers’ sports – the Lucerne Sport International (LSI), which was socialist and the Red Sport International (RSI), which was controlled by the Soviet Union. [...] The Nazi dictatorship destroyed Germany’s working-class sports organizations and the Second World War destroyed the others or reduced them to insignificance.” (Guttman, 2003, 367)

“For example in the 1925 Frankfurt am Main summer Olympiad, more than 100,000 participants gathered for the event of which only 3,000 from 12 countries participated as athletes. The rest were spectators who were invited to take part on mass gymnastics that underlined the ideas of worker sports.” (Nauright and Parrish, 2012, 462) Though that exact number cannot be verified (different sources vary from 90,000 to an incredible 150,000 participants), the sheer number of people taking part tells of the magnitude that these games were able to attract.

4.1.2 From 1945 to modern day

The CSIT was re-established in 1946 straight after the Second World War. The re-establishing took place in Brussels, Belgium on the 30th of May 1946. The new name for the organization was in French and called “Comité Sportif International du Travail”,

hence the English translation International Workers and Amateurs in Sports Confederation.

“After World War II, sport took an increasingly political stance, not only with the Cold War rivalry between capitalist and communist states, using sporting victories as evidence of political superiority, but also with previously underprivileged and persecuted groups gaining support for attention and even integration—blacks, women, the disabled, the gay community” (Krüger, 1999, introduction)

Sport became a tool to settle disagreements between powerful nations. The concept of boycotting was introduced and many threats were given to the opposing sides disguised in being about only sports. Many smaller nations were forced to take sides and pull together to same direction. Even individual athletes were taken as pawns and highlighted of their difference. Such was the case with the black American Jesse Owens competing in the 1936 Berlin Olympics. The so called Nazi Olympics with Hitler in reign had forbid many Jewish people and people of color to attend the games but Owens arrived and took home multiple medals.

“The communist and socialist parties’ policies were to create a common front against fascism. It was also backed by their respective trade unions. And as a reaction, the international working class associations were also invited to work jointly, although they had been battling almost to death in the past. The degree of relation between the associations and the members of the former Red International and those of the Luzern Socialist International varies from one place to another.” (Colomé and Sureda, 1994, 9)

Naturally the Workers’ Sport Movement and its head organization CSIT symbol smaller quantities and less visibility worldwide than many IF’s, yet it still mirrors the progress and decisions made in the international sport. On its webpage on the 16th of May they describe the following: “During the last decade the CSIT has been growing quite fast to a worldwide organization with 43 national member unions from 36 countries, 3 continental member unions and approximately 230 million individual memberships today. Within the world of international sport, the CSIT maintains its support for everyone to benefit from sporting activities regardless of their qualifications, talent, nationality, age, sex and social circumstances.”

The amount of individual memberships is rather significant when comparing to the numbers of national member unions and continental member unions. 230 million people are moving under the flag of CSIT and according to their own words that number is likely to increase. They have six pending membership applicants, namely those of Congo, Cameroon, India, Iran, Rwanda and Slovenia.

For the Slovenian membership for example, the association seeking for the membership is the Martial arts federation of Slovenia. The specific example is brought forward to mark the kind of a federation that is applying. Not the national sports federation or workers' sport federation, but a specific martial arts federation. It is a process that for example the statutes of the IOC forbid. Currently it holds the following memberships divided continentally:

Table 1. (CSIT webpage, 4/2014)

Africa	America's	Asia	Europe	Oceania
4	2	2	28	0
Algeria, Angola, Morocco, Tunisia	Brazil, Mexico	China, United Arab Emirates	Russia, Italy 3	
Pending: Congo, Cameroon, Rwanda		Pending: India, Iran	Belgium, Bulgaria, Estonia, France 2	
			Pending: Slovenia	

The Europe centrism of the situation is shown very concretely in the table 1 above. Not only has that but to have multiple member organizations from the same country raises questions as well. Are there member organizations just to have more members? Or are the memberships well justified and understandable?

One significant step in the progress of the CSIT was to apply for an official recognition from the International Olympic Committee IOC. IOC held its meeting in the end of October 1986 in Lausanne and one of the decisions made in that meeting was the following:

“Letter from Raymond Gafner

Lausanne, 31th of October 1986

Object: Recognition by the IOC

During its meeting held the 10th and 11th of October 1986, members of the Executive Committee have studied documents given by your organization to the International Olympic Committee. I have the pleasure to inform you that the Comité Sportif International du Travail is from now on recognized by the I.O.C. Please accept, Mr. President, the assurance of my highest consideration.

Raymond Gafner” (<http://www.csit.tv/files/doc/Diverses/ioc-recognition1986.pdf>, viewed 26.5.2014)

It may sound peculiar to seek for an official recognition from an organization that in a sense they (the CSIT) were established to counter balance and even compete against, an organization which in its statutes had too many points opposing the ideology of the founding fathers of the workers’ sport movement. Yet the years and wars had shaped the movement and in the 1980’s the board of the CSIT understood the reality and applied for the official recognition with successful result as it is still today.

4.2 The development of the Finnish workers’ sport movement and its current state

Naturally the development in Finland is easier to explain since the early days it has maintained its name and its form is remarkable similar to that of the day it was inaugurated. In Finland, as well as in its international (mostly European) counterparts a serious debate started between the socialistic and communistic sides within the workers’ sports federation TUL. During that heated conversation it became clear that neither one of the two sides wanted to emerge with the Finnish Sports Confederation but also that both sides firmly wanted to hold their own grounds.

The difference of opinion was, however, solved from the outside as the Finnish government passed a regulation in which it forbid communistic organizations to formally exist in 1921. That meant that the TUL became strongly socialistic organization as it was pressured to “get rid of” the communists or else the government funding would cease to exist.

4.2.1 Before the World War Two

A year after TUL was one of the founding members of the LSI in September 1920. Hentilä (1982, 68) suggest that the Finns did not realize how close the social workers’ sports federation co-operated with its social workers international.

The first Workers’ Olympics turned out to be a success for the Finnish delegation. During the Summer Games between 1925 and 1937 it gained 232 medals resulting the small nation to finish two times second and once to win the overall medal table. Finland also sent women representatives to every games thus proving to be a front-runner in that aspect. Meanwhile in the “regular” Olympics the Finns entered the arenas with a blast emptying the medal table’s especially in running and throwing disciplines.

These success stories resulted in Finland gaining much needed self-confidence and self-assurance after winning its independence in 1917 during the First World War. Having a way to promote the entire society and to show the rest of the world the sporting might of the Finns proved out to be a vital corner stone in building the national image of which the Finns are still very proud.

“TUL was offered to send its athletes to compete alongside other Finnish athletes in the 1920 Antwerp Olympics. The federation denied its participation by saying that most of the athletes that would come in mind did not have equal chances within the society due to political reasons. The offer was repeated for the 1924 Olympics but yet again denied due to same reasons.” (Nygren, 1977, 33)

In the Finnish Sports Magazine 11.4.1932 Lauri Pihkala suggested that the SVUL was furious to TUL for sending their teams only to the Workers’ Games rather than the real Olympics. He further questioned the ideology behind the decision when many athletes

had “changed sides” in order to attract more visibility, public apprehension and success. These going overs caused a major uproar in the workers’ side and created yet another conflict when TUL heard that some of “their” athletes had changed sides for money as was the case with Eino Borg in 1926. (Hentilä, 1982, 277)

The Finnish Workers’ Sports Federation TUL had wished to organize the Workers’ “Olympics” for a long time. For the first time it was candidating was in 1931 but Helsinki lost the bid against Germany (Munich). In the 1938 world congress Helsinki was given the right to host the Workers’ Olympics in 1943. (Nygren, 1969, 84) Finland endured a major political shift in the 1930’s when the more bourgeois minded politicians were pushed to the opposition and more central parties took the reins on the country. That enabled the TUL to bid for the games as they had the common approval and political backing.

“What clearly demonstrates the way things were is the speech given by the then president of the Finnish athletics federation Mr. Urho Kekkonen, who later became the president of Finland, when appraising the role TUL had had in bringing masses of people to meet under the topic of physical activity and by promoting sportive culture. He continued by recommending more co-operation to be done between the main sports organization and the TUL.” (Hentilä, 1982, 462)

The Finnish Olympic Committee (from now on FOC) in its meeting in 1931 decided to provoke the TUL representatives by offering them one place within the board of the FOC. As TUL had had 13 places in the previous board, it naturally turned down the offer and left the meeting in angry tone. The communistic side of TUL that had few years prior been allowed back to the movement used that friction to further divide the two moments apart by claiming that the FOC was standing on their way to enter the communistic “Olympics” the Spartakiad.

The inner battle of small but popular socialist group wishing to unite TUL to the SVUL and FOC and the communist up rise tore the organization towards many directions and the turbulence gave a fruitful ground for politicians to gain power and voters by publicly announcing his/her support on the matters.

“In 1928 TUL executive board decided to dismiss around 80 spartakiads (athletes that took part in the Spartakiad against the clear will of the board), most of them moved as a

protest to the SVUL side. Finnish Sports Confederation SVUL welcomed the athletes with open arms especially because some of them became to be some of the most notorious athletes in the history of the Finnish sports (Gunnar Bärlund in boxing and Volmari Iso-Hollo in distance running to mention a few).” (Hentilä, 1982, 255) Some SVUL decision-makers claimed though, that the athletes came over because of better changes to compete the absolute best in the world and the prizes were better in their events.

Even though the international workers’ sport movement was living its prime in the 1920’s and 1930’s and blossoming almost throughout Europe, the Finns were struggling with the athletes departing the cause and mostly due to cuts in funding. Finland went through the country’s most severe economic recession to date in the turn of the two decades and TUL often could not afford sending a delegation to international events.

4.2.2 From 1945 to modern day

“Finnish society has undergone fundamental shifts during the last few decades, becoming a more urbanized, pluralistic, individualized and market-driven competitive society in a short period of time. During the same time, the population has aged and the social distribution of work has increased. This article analyses how Finnish sports clubs have changed since 1985 and how those changes have subsequently informed sport policy.” (Koski, 2012)

“Some of the broader societal changes are clearly paralleled by changes in sports clubs, such as ageing, social differentiation, urbanization, higher levels of education and other cultural changes. Problems have concerned human resources: the number of voluntary workers and their activity and/or commitment. Along with the higher level of demand and the wider distribution of work, the need for voluntary workers has also increased. Finnish sport policy has begun to follow the idea of evidence-based management, and the government has reacted to the challenges for sports clubs by creating a pilot project in which a group of clubs are supported directly by governmental subsidies.” (Koski, 2012)

In 1994 Finland had its presidential elections; Mr. Martti Ahtisaari came from outside the parliament without any previous political activities or burdens. He was a man of reason and many parties agreed to stand behind him to avoid big political confrontations or crashes. He soon realized that the Finnish world of sports needed a lot of brushing up and gave the green signal to start the conversations. Ahtisaari certainly did not realize what he had just started.

The Finnish sports had its biggest upheaval in the mid 1990's when SVUL (then the Finnish Sports Confederation) broke down and formed the current structures of divided entities SLU (Finnish Sports Federation), TUL (Finnish Workers' Sport Federation) and FSI (Finnish Swedish-speaking Sport Federation. (At this point it is wise to point out that Finland is a bilingual country, Finnish and Swedish are the two official languages. About 6% of the 5.2 million inhabitants speak Swedish as a native tongue.) Many powerful sport decision-makers and politicians sat down for almost an entire year to decide on the future and afterwards when they announced their decision a heated conversation and taking of sides started that has lasted until the current day.

During that era the country also went through a major educational reform that back then collected a major opposition and filed through many complaints. As the recent year Pisa-studies have shown (Finnish high-school pupils finished first in the world for example in 2009), the changes made back then have definitely been successful.

The constructional shift saw some major changes being forced to action that lead to drastic cuts in certain budgets and major rises in others. Those changes forced the TUL and FSI to remove farther away from the central structure.

“The Finnish sport went through a shocking change in its construction in the mid 1990's, a change that has almost destroyed the Finnish Workers' Sport Movement and the entire top level sport in Finland. While the sport allocations and grants have multiplied, meaning more and more money change hands, the results have gone dramatically down in many sporting disciplines. Many people now wonder why they wanted to bring down and destroy the workers' sport movement. How is it possible that they fired more than 70 professional and experienced people working as administrative personnel or as coaches within the workers' sport movement between the years 1995

and 1996? Why did not anyone protest when the annual state funding was cut from 32 million euros to only 8 million euros?” (Selin, 2012, introduction)

The excerpt from Selin’s introduction is both right and wrong at the same time. It also largely illustrates what is wrong with the writing of the events that then took place and what happens now. Most of the written sources and interviews regarding what happened in 1994-1995 are strongly seen through partial and biased glasses. Every trace of information has to first run through listeners or readers’ filter to absorb personal opinions and to understand what actually happened.

For example, the statement about the drop in top level success is true if merely speculated through won medals in each discipline especially if the focus is on Olympics or World Championship level. However whether it is to blame the shift in the organizational side is hardly provable. At the same time the Soviet Union fell down and more and more countries were able to compete and invest in sports – a causality that resulted in most of the previously successful countries, when calculated in medals, to gain less success in the games to come.

The perspective in which Selin approaches the issue is not at all impartial. The accusations made in the introduction already confirm the side he is on in the matter. The facts given are accurate and can be confirmed through various sources, but the reasoning and the end results he suggests are highly doubtful.

In 2013 the Finnish sports family went through a major shift. Three national sport and physical activity associations emerged into one big complex. The idea behind the transformation was to create more synergy, lower the administrative costs and direct more money to the grassroots level.

During that emerging period there was talk on the topic of including TUL and FSI in the change. However the TUL and FSI still managed to upkeep their independence although similar budget cuts are to be expected to occur than what happened in 1990’s. The political will is in emerging all into one and that leaves only a little room for interpretation.

The talk about emerging all into one had not been that active and heated in the past 20 years ever since the SVUL broke down. Still a few key players of the previous ‘fight’

were there to stir the situation. Finally it ended up in people taking sides according to their political devotions, not strictly for what is good for the sports movement in Finland in general. A few arguments were made on the point of letting politics intrude in the sports decision-making, but none of them led to anything significant.

During the merging period the biggest sports magazine in Finland (Urheilulehti, 44/12) and its editor-in-chief Mr. Jari Kupila asked in its editorial column was it not time to let the past be. The magazine insisted that the division that dates back to the civil war in 1918 is only actively maintained and preserved in the sports movement. The secretary generals of TUL and FSI wrote a response titled: Ideologies have not vanished from sports.

“What Kupila suggests is against all our common beliefs. We do not want to become a part of a shapeless head organization of other organizations. Our basic principles are to bring the sport close to our members and to be an organization directly for clubs, not for other organizations. TUL still has over 1,000 member clubs and runs with an annual budget of 2.2 million euros. For FSI the same numbers are 1.9 million euros.

Furthermore it is within our founding documents that our organizations do not only focus on competitive sports, but also enhance grass root sport and provide ways to be and to become physically active. It is not about political reasons, but for reasons of society, language and non-competitive sports that we shall stay separate.” (Urheilulehti 46/12)

It is completely understandable that they have to answer in that matter. Whether it is the whole truth, they will be under full scrutiny of. For the FSI, the situation is better as many rights including some within the United Nations protect bilingualism and officially recognized minor populations. Similar cases fit for example in to the Paralympic movement. For the TUL, the only thing that can save them in Finland is political support and support from certain trade unions that are closely affiliated with the movement.

If the tendency of cutting the public funds continues, big decisions have to be made whether it's cutting the staff size or focusing on fewer sports remains to be seen. The current political climate and the fact Finland as well many other countries are running on constant negative deficit sees all the sport organizations fighting for every penny.

Naturally being somewhat sidetracked and not being able to enjoy equal funding in comparison to the Finnish Olympic Committee and the Finnish Sports Federation, the TUL has had to prioritize its actions and focus on offering fewer sporting disciplines and mainly highlight the importance of grass-root sports and promote the importance of a healthy and active lifestyle. Inclusion and focus on other things than competition are also on the forefront of the TUL agenda.

In 2014 the conversion is more current than ever. The Finnish Olympic Committee and the Finnish Sports Confederation decided to combine their administrative offices as well as their boards emerging in to one massive umbrella organization governing the entire world of sport and physical activity. The ministry of education, culture and sport has publicly wished for “collaboration” and insists that downsizing the administrative costs on the higher poles of the ladder enables more money to flood for the grassroots sports.

These specific choices of words have resulted in significant budgetary cut-backs and seen more funding being given directly to the sports federations and to club level. Now the following steps remain to be seen, but the Finnish Workers’ Sport Federation already had a major cut in funding and as the common atmosphere keeps putting pressure on the matter, its mere existence seems to be threatened in the becoming years.

On a foot note a mention of the situation and the difference with the Swedish speaking sports federation. As a bilingual country they have a specific right in many ways to upkeep and hold their position. It is a matter more meaningful than simply changes in political climates or challenging situations on the financial markets.

Every ten years the Finnish Workers’ Sport Federation TUL updates and rewrites their sport political views and focus points. In 2013 they passed the most recent paper stating that they need to be able to answer the demands of the modern day and that they need to brighten their agenda on sport politics and to clarify where they are positioned in the overall sporting map within the Finnish society.

The main point is equality. Under equality fall the following aspects: economical, educational, professional, regional, gender equality, and age equality. Furthermore TUL highlights the importance of sport and physical activity being a fundamental right although the Finnish constitution does not put it quite that bluntly.

The previous two paragraphs reveal that the TUL has in fact realized the current situation and has taken the according steps. Whether highlighting the issues and making them known and for everyone to see will have the wanted result might take a while to assess. As they often say about problem solving, the first step is to actually recognize it and identify it.

The first concrete action was to divide the staff under ten topics. These topics or focus points then determined their own goals in accordance with the strategy made by the board. First unit focuses on children and youth in sport, where the main point is to support the growing process, to enable an access to everyone to sport.

Second unit focuses on physically active adults and to amateur competitions. Third unit is all about active work places creating different ways of activating the corporate world. The fourth group aims to create a sustaining network between different stakeholders helping the elderly people to move. In Finland, the big generations are the post Second World War generations that naturally now results in more pensioners than ever in the society's history.

The fifth emphasizes easy access to sports by working with disabled people. The sixth and the smallest group focus on ethics in sport. The unhealthy symptoms the sporting world constantly showcases whether through match fixing or doping needs to be addressed and it is a good progress that certain people dedicate their working efforts on the matter. The seventh is mostly for the board, safekeeping and guarding sports interests on different platforms.

The eight is focusing on regional influencing. The last two are all about research and development. Creating and supervising new projects, discovering different ways to approach and address mutual problems and attending conferences and forums. Furthermore their tasks have been divided differently in to following main function areas: education, services, children and youth and co-operation between disciplines.

4.3 The political developments in Finland and the effect it has had on the surrounding society

There has always been a lot of debate whether politics should be included in sports or not. Personal opinion is that they have always walked hand in hand without sometimes being able to distinguish the difference of the two. What else would the work of IF's be rather than political influencing, only through different means, in this case using sports as a tool.

“Marx, unlike Castro, never played sport not contributed directly to the sociological analysis of leisure. More generally, the Marxist body of literature on sport and leisure takes up more than an egalitarian amount of shelf space within those library sections that hold collections of books on the sociology of sport and leisure. While it is important not to overstate the case, various forms of political praxis have involved sport and leisure practices. The African National Congress and the Independent Labour Party are but two parties which recognized the transformative or revolutionary potential within sport.” (Grant and Maguire, 1994, chapter 4)

“Paralleling the development of sport into a global phenomenon was the growth in government awareness of, involvement in, and manipulation of, sport. While the expansion of governments in sports has followed slightly different paths, most industrial countries have reached a position where sport and government are inextricably linked across a wide and diverse range of policy issues.” (Houlihan, 1997, 2)

The Finnish Workers' Sport Federation TUL has its roots deeply in the politics with most of its members and particularly board members belonging to the Social Democrat Party. Even though there still is a minority of active communists, Finland took part in the socialist 'Olympics' in the past. That can be seen as a sort of counter-reaction having been under the Russian governance until 1917 when Finland gained its independence.

Finland was one of the few countries that took part also in the Spartakiads as the political climate in Finland was already back then and always has been for that matter very open and non-judgmental. Other reason might be the strength within the workers' sport movement at the time.

In the boards of Finnish sport organizations elected members represent in some cases their sending organizations or member organizations but in many cases especially after the elections they mainly represent themselves. Political party memberships are not required nor asked. Naturally especially those already working in politics are known to represent a certain party and some powerful figures have openly supported a party in media for example.

The fact that they need not to be shown or acknowledged does not mean that there would not be decisions made and based on political reasons. It is naïve to claim that political reasons are not part of the decision-making process whether it is done hidden or out in the open.

“The overlap between sport and international politics can be divided into five broad themes: diplomacy, ideology, nation-building, access and money.” (Houlihan, 1997, 29) These five apply to Finland as well. In the demands of the modern world it is increasingly important to keep the goal in mind and be clear of what you are after. Modern citizens have information by the tip of their fingers and less and less tolerance is shared with those pursuing only personal gain.

A Finnish author Sakari Selin wrote in his introduction to his book in 2012 “Is the downgrading by the government of the workers sport federation TUL during the 1990’s the reason why left wing parties have significantly lost their support and did that cut the traditional connection to young, physically active Finns and through them to a large group of young people?”

A good case example comes from the latest Finnish Olympic Committee held the council elections. Every social democrat candidating lost their places, amongst them the current Member of the Parliament Mrs. Sirpa Paatero. She is also the current chairperson of the TUL and a vice-president in CSIT (International workers and amateurs in sports confederation). She had for long been the vice-chair of the Olympic committee but was now left stranded. On the other hand the continuing chairman was accompanied by some new members all (including the chairman) coming from the national coalition party in Finland.

The modern Finnish society is proud of and known for its equality and “evenness”. For example the Pisa studies showed for many years Finland to be one of the greatest

nations in the world in educational comparison. That result relies heavily on the even opportunities created and safeguarded by legislation and decision-makers. Private schooling system barely exists and no high distinction is made geographically or economically between children from different parts of the country.

The example is important to be showcased, since it applies to the political world as well. Many young female politicians have already made their way high up the political ladder and that has been the case for quite some time. Certain newspapers have described the extreme or radical Finnish parties still ending up closer to the center than their European counterparts in most countries. That being said, certain drastic changes in the political climate have not had much effect on the sports side being cautious in shaking the already existing models. That has allowed the leaders of the sports world built their ideas with continuity and trust on their backs.

4.4 Gender rights and equality within the workers' sport movement

The workers' sport movement excels many other sport federations and movements by having and including women in their associations from the very first moment on. The president of the Finnish workers' sports federation Mrs. Sirpa Paatero emphasized the importance in recent press release "Wide-spread equality and gender balance are naturally very important focus points for us now and in the future. It is important to further continue working with these topics also on the sports field." (Paatero, 2012)

Paatero, who was recently elected as a minister for equality has functioned as one of the few female sports leaders for decades and her expertise on the matter is appreciated in many boards and committees.

However where it all derived from focusing on workers' sport movement, must be the reasoning that Bonin and Leigh (1977, 72) offer stating that it is generally accepted that women's interest in sports and athletics in the early 1900's and the subsequent organization of sports clubs for women came as a result of radical changes regarding their status and role in society.

That change was not mutually accepted though and in Guttmann's work (2003, 365) he explains that for example the fascists were encouraging young women taking part in sport, despite intense opposition from the Roman Catholic Church. These ideas are outdated in most parts of the world as equality and women's rights have been brought forward and fought for on many fronts.

“It should also be a platitude, although it is not, that modern sports have also become a venue for femininity, a site where women are able to display their physical prowess. [...] The ‘sexual politics’ within modern sports has very largely been about the transition from one ideal to another. As more and more women have refused to be content with conventionally feminine sports (like tennis) and have ‘intruded’ into traditionally male sports (like rugby), male resentment has taken the form of solicitude (rough sports are said to endanger a woman's reproductive organs) or hostility (female athletes are said to be lesbians). Some radical feminist sports sociologists have overstated men's resistance to women's sports, but there was (and is) resistance.”
Guttmann, 2003, 370)

The resistance and the categorizing of “men's” and “women's” sports in Finland is an on-going discussion that appears in the main media regularly if not often and has escalated into multiple heated discussions. The way many female athletes are portrayed in especially yellow press (ranked by their looks or bodies) disregarding their athletic abilities has brought forward some athletes building their image strongly based on their looks and for example make up –brands rather than in their sport. A good case example internationally could be the former tennis player Anna Kournikova from Russia, who was and perhaps still is one of the most known female tennis players although her career high WTA ranking was eight in year 2000.

“While the history of women's sport is a rife with political controversy, historians of women's sports have been in more or less agreement. Women have never been totally excluded from sport, but they have – until quite recently – seldom been granted with the same opportunities as men. Opportunity came only after a prolonged struggle (sic) on the part of female athletes and their male supporters.” (Guttmann, 2003, 371)

Guttmann's founding of women not having same opportunities with men is still very much the case 11 years after he wrote it in 2003 let alone during the early stages of

modern Olympics. “Women in sport” –concept was unheard of nor accepted by the reviving fathers of the Olympic movement. Baron Pierre de Coubertin is known for his resistance and fight against allowing women into sport and through him and other that thought similarly the IOC stood against the progress. That forced women to organize their own World Games of which the last were held in 1936.

The FSFI (Fédération Sportive Féminine Internationale) was founded in 1921 and it grew from founding five member states to 30 nations by 1936 (Bonnin and Leigh, 1978, 82). As Marie-Thérèse Eyquem (1944, 57) mentions “Those who had not wanted to assume the risks of a hazardous beginning showed themselves eager to gather the fruits of the labors of others.” She describes the steps that were taken after all the efforts and hopes of the FSFI were denied after the IAAF (International track and field association) board meeting in 1938. New people were ready to stand for their rights and to further fight for women’s rights in sports.

“Because the revived Olympics did not accept women to part-take, women organized their own first ever ‘Olympics’ in Monaco 1921 titled ‘Olympiades Féminines’ or also known as ‘Jeux féminins’. 300 women from five countries take part and many of the disciplines are those that do not belong to the Olympic program at the time such as track and field and basketball. The Games are a success and are further held both in 1922 and 1923 but when they are supposed to be held in Sweden in 1926 the IOC forbids them to have the name ‘Olympic’ in the title. Women agreed on it if women were allowed to compete in track and field in the Olympics as well. Both parties agreed eventually.” (Nykanen, 2014)

After the Second World War women participating and competing in sports became more acceptable, for example the Soviet Union and the USA started producing more and more top female athletes and the Nordic countries followed immediately. However, “There still is a tendency to control which sports are suitable for women, but the debate is never on which sports are good for men.” (Laine, 2000, 308) The previous years have shown positive signals in allowing for example women’s boxing to enter the Olympics “...but much and more need to be done before women and men stand equally on the same line.” Laine concludes.

For example in the United States the so called Patsy T. Mink Equal Opportunity in Education Act was taken in the use in 1972. The title IX of the education amendments states that: “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance” (Women’s Sports Foundation)

Not only can gender be a hindrance in taking sport, also race plays a big role. Representing a “double minority” can definitely complicate issues as Lovell (1991) explains that another common strand is the variation by gender in the rate that modern sports are adopted by ethnic minorities. Female members of minority populations are almost invariably slower than male members to abandon traditional recreations and adopt modern sports. South Asian women in the United Kingdom are an instance of this phenomenon.”

In the IWG World congress on women in sport held in Helsinki 11.-15.6.2014 the development manager of Peace and Sport Ms. Ana-Luz Thirifays mentioned in her speech that too often too many agendas are combined into one. She further explained that if the topic is gender equality, it often gets mixed with the LGBT (Lesbian and gay and transgender) rights, religion and age discrimination as well as some other beliefs. She felt that different topics should be approached individually with keeping the focus in mind.

In the Workers’ sport movement women in Finland were encouraged to take their part but as the society around the movement was still shaping to its current state, the first years saw few women taking part as they still had the pressure of taking care of the family and the chores at home.

“Women doing sport was not an acceptable issue even after the times of antiquity. In the early 1900’s women’s sport was thought to be unaesthetic and against nature, competitive sport was though to shape the women into too masculine characters and to affect their abilities in having children. [...] What would Baron Coubertin say if he was to witness modern athletic competition where women and men, both old and young compete neck and neck at the same time and at the same place?” (Siekkinen, 2014)

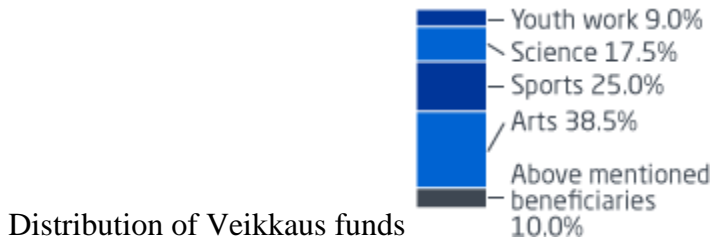
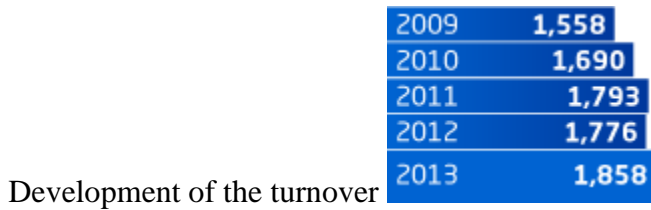
During the last few decades Finland has seen a huge uprising of women in multiple sporting disciplines, many of them traditionally stereotyped male sports. Laine (2000, 12) describes the change during roughly the last 100 years: “The wild end of the 1900-hundreds saw Finnish women play ice-hockey, ski jump, box and wrestle. Often they competed against other women, but sometimes with men too. After the First World War men were rejecting women taking part in sports. The returning soldiers were served and it was thought that women should stay home and that the few resources should not be wasted on them. Abroad other nations were asking why Finland did not produce female athletes as well, but the common answer was that the men did not welcome women to compete with them.”

4.5 Funding and its differences in comparison with the other existing parallel system focusing on Finland

The Workers’ Sport Movement and its umbrella organization TUL apply for public funding every year from the Ministry of Education and Culture. In Finland sport does not have its own ministry as such but it is embedded within the ministry of education and culture. Curiously there are two ministers within the ministry. One of the minister’s focuses solely on education and the other minister is in charge of culture and sport.

The state funding in Finland has a very specific way of distributing. Almost 100 per cent of the money comes through state lottery company called Veikkaus. The revenue that flows through state lottery and betting is further directed to the ministry, which then states the distribution percentages of that money going to art, culture, youth work and sport. In the recent years that money has been between 120 and 150 million euros.

Table 2. (<http://veikkaus2013.fi/en/>)



These numbers and charts are important to show, because even on a European scale having a closed state monopoly is rare and the Finnish MEP's (Members of the European Parliament) were lobbying hard within the EU to further protect the right.

Now out of this 25 per cent share that goes to sports organizations, TUL got in 2014 1,650,000 euros or roughly 1.3 per cent. Its "counterpart" Valo (The Finnish Sports Confederation) received 3,360,000 euros. When you add the amount given to the Finnish Olympic Committee (all in all around 10,000,000 euros) the gap between the appreciation and funding is visible.

The amount has been quite stable in the last years though. Since 2002 it has risen from 1.3 million euros to its current 1.65 million euros. What is significant is that its exponential growth has not reached the level of the other two organizations.

4.6 Comparison with the IOC

Some may think that comparing the IOC with the CSIT is irrelevant. However since these are the two multi-sport international non-governmental sports organizations (INGO) it is justified to have a closer look in the similarities and differences between the two and to showcase certain numbers and figures to point out the drastic differences.

“When attempting to assess the ability of INGO’s to operate effectively in the international system a valuable starting point is to explore their organizational capacity. In simple organizational terms the major sports INGO’s possess considerable resources which should enable them to achieve substantially the goal of any international organization namely leadership role on policy issues that are central to their activities, and a capacity to voice and protect their interests when sports-related issues are being discussed in non-sport policy arenas.” (Nafziger, 1988, 64)

Naturally the comparisons to the IOC makes CSIT look insignificant, the mere comparison of annual budgets and for example media coverage reveals the different categories these two belong. The IOC consists of 204 member states; the CSIT has 36 member countries.

The IOC organizes biannually senior Olympic Games (winter every four years and summer every four years), in addition Paralympic Games follow the same cycle, Youth Olympic Games were launched in 2010 and also function with the dual system of winter and summer. The CSIT launched its World Games in 2008 and organize them biannually. The CSIT World Games in 2013 was able to attend 34 member organizations of which quite a few were from same countries. The previous Summer Olympics in London in comparison were able to attract 206 nations to take part.

But naturally there are similarities as well. The foundation of democracy in giving everyone a chance to vote is carefully monitored through elections on different levels, in IOC the board consists of 105 members and in CSIT the executive committee has 11 people seated. The decisions are made based on the majority votes.

Nafziger (1988, 64) explains the process in organizational terms. Of particular importance is the legitimacy that is derived from the global coverage of the major sports

organizations and for most the ‘one country – one vote’ basis of decision-making – though this is not the exact case with the IOC. Huntington (1981, 26) explains that because of the independence of the international federations (IF’s) and of the IOC the government leaders find international sports less appealing. The IOC members, according to the Olympic charter, are not representatives of their states to the Olympic body; rather they are ambassadors of the Olympic ideal to their homelands.”

5. Discussion

There are many ways to do the discussing section. This thesis uses a division that relies directly on the structure of the previous chapters and continues the rather straightforward approach on the topic. The paper has illustrated and highlighted the changes the Finnish workers' sport movement and the international workers' sport movement has endured during the last 100 years. The previous chapters have also offered comparisons within the two movements and where they have moved from their origins and in relation to each other as the societies and world as a whole has evolved. The third subchapter comes from certain academic sectors where the authors are given a few paragraphs to describe the actual writing process.

As James Riordan so aptly puts in his work *Sport and International Politics* (1998) "When and in what circumstances did sport become a matter of prestige among nations, a propaganda medium, an indicator of national vitality or the showcase of a political regime?" Naturally there are many ways and even many fields of studies that can be used in approaching the matter and obviously no single, affirmative answer can be found but it is important to try to dig under the surface and reveal some key aspects that have made the modern situation to what it is now.

"The tremendous emphasis which many nations today place on winning at international events such as the Olympics is due to several factors. Those nations spending millions of dollars on sports programs for elite athletes expect results. Sport can be a very useful political and diplomatic tool and weapon in gaining prestige, protesting various situations, spreading propaganda, and in recognizing or isolating another nation. There is a long tradition mixing sports and politics which dates all the way back to ancient Greeks." (Strenk, 1978, 128)

It is important to bear in mind the visible and hidden agendas different countries have and have had regarding the world of sports and how to use it in their favor. It is not always clear to the outside why certain decisions were made. As Colomé and Sureda

(1994, 3) put it: “Not all nations have the same interests, an Olympic medal or winning an international championship, for example, do not have the same value for a small country than for a large one. Therefore, the nations can use sports for different goals, and this is why we need to know which role, which part a specific country wants to play or is able to play, to see which model of exploitation is more appropriate.”

5.1 The international worker’s sport movement’s path to the modern days and a glimpse to the future

This chapter is not focusing on fortune telling, but speculations and estimations of years to come seem to be in order. Not only has the workers’ sport movement been active for over 100 years but also it has endured and lasted through major shifts in the power dimensions. The likeliness of another world war seems to diminish and new sort of threats are becoming more and more concerning for the sports world as well. The increasing gap between the rich and the poor, the overpopulation in some areas and the sitting culture are all issues that need to be addressed also within the workers’ sport movement. New challenges call for new solutions.

As Nafziger (1988) appropriately puts “International non-governmental sports organizations (INGO’s) need to be accepted as credible actors in the international political system. They must have the capacity to defend their interests when sport issues are being discussed in other policy communities.” Especially the latter sentence grows in importance when discussing the current situations and threats.

The research question aims in discovering the main characteristic changes that the entire workers’ sports movement has had in the last 100 years. The four examples Wheeler gives that were first introduced on the page 24 in reasoning the growth of the movement can be turned upside down to investigate the movement’s modern state.

Has the CSIT as an umbrella organization and all of its member organizations been able to respond to the needs? Do its members take in the sport because their jobs will not give them self-respect or personal accomplishment? Or are sports still more pleasurable than work? Does the CSIT as an umbrella recognize the needs of its current members and have a way to tackle them? In the case of Finland and CSIT, the two seem to share

common goals as well as fight against the same threats. Cuts in funding and lack of young people in the movement are highlighted in various manifestos and the trendy topic of being current can be heard in various speeches.

Naturally the comparison is artificial and was not intended to use to this very purpose but still it is often considered a smart move to look back in history to discover what has been said and done and to learn from the mistakes. The other two of the Wheeler's examples I do believe, namely the statements that sports provide exciting and titillating escapes from reality or that it is a perfect example of communal feeling of group solidarity.

For a long period of time many countries such as Germany, China and the United States have used sports as a tool to be recognized worldwide and so that other countries can admire their strength and might. International sport is seen as a safety valve to international tension and thus international sports can be seen as a means of improving relations between states.

“In summary, one can argue that there are number of sports INGO's that possess the necessary resources to enable them actively to protect their interests within the international system. When acting in a concerted fashion the major federations and the IOC have the potential to form a powerful lobby. However, this capacity is certainly weakened by the tensions between the federations and the Olympic movement and the degree of mutual suspicion that is frequently apparent.” (Houlihan, 1997, 66)

These tensions are more and more visible when international federations (IF's) have gained more power within recent years and the past two decades through increased media coverage and higher rights fees. That is to say through gaining more money and by obtaining more leverage. Even the IOC seems weaponless against the likes of FIFA (International football federation) or IAAF (International Athletic Federation) in some cases.

Where does that leave the CSIT? Of course the scale in which these problems are faced is smaller and the economical imbalance of welfare states potentially offers more 'sport for all' opportunities. The emphasis is still and in the future on top-level athletes and elite sport, but increasing amount of concerned voices are questioning the economical division of funds and raising awareness on other issues such as passive lifestyle and

general inactivity. Both of them are topics that CSIT has been working on throughout its history.

“What these highly varied organizations have in common is a desire to accomplish their goals by acting transnationally as well as working within the confines of geographically defined national units.” (Kegley and Wittkopf, 1989, 131)

Defining that goal and making sure all shareholders see the main points similarly is something that seems to be far easier said than done. The personal, national and political power struggles are often shaping the agenda and decisions; and in many cases not for the ‘greater good’.

“At first sight the realistic perspective would seem to have little to contribute to an understanding of the role and significance of international sport in world politics. [...] Within the realist perspective a fundamental prerequisite for participation in the international system as an independent actor is recognition of national sovereignty. (Strenk, 1978, 25)

5.2 The Finnish workers’ sport movement’s path to the modern days and a glimpse of the future

The path of TUL is full of stories, legends, arguments and controversial decisions. Much like all the other workers’ sports federations it has had its peaks and its lows, but persistently and with lot of effort it has maintained its functions and still continues to work on its cause.

Jukka Nokelainen is a longtime chairman of the football club STPS Savonlinna, a club that I have played all my life. He also used to function as a social democrat politician in the municipality of Savonlinna. STPS (the letter T stands for workers in Finnish) belongs to the Finnish Workers’ Sports Federation (TUL) in Finland and still takes part in the TUL cup competition annually. The reason why I joined the team already at a young age was that in my city it was the only club providing competitive football at the time, there were not any political reasons behind the selection on my parents’ behalf either.

Nokelainen feels that the golden age of workers sport movement has passed but that the ideology is still not faded: “People in the workers sport movement are mostly older middle-aged or elderly people who have lived during the World Wars and straight after, who have witnessed need and poverty and who have been taught from early on to belong to ‘a cause’. For them it is a matter of lifestyle and values not to mention politics. Politically speaking these are some of the most trustworthy voters who stubbornly rely on the same party no matter what. These are people who would not even consider living their lives differently.”

Nokelainen continues stating that the changes in the sporting world have clearly been bigger, from his point of view, in countries with non-socialist or communist backgrounds such as Finland. Furthermore he adds: “It seems to be a long standing trend to be different, to diversify from the major public. I personally do not think that much is going to change in the near decades. Younger generations will take the cause to their own hands and make it their own by adding their own twists and making more current where possible. It would be a huge shame to see something like with such a colorful and long history to vanish.”

Coming from the club, the only thing that separated it from the so called normal clubs was the TUL organized cup tournaments in addition to the regular season. Those tournaments were and still are held every year in a changing location and the teams that are eligible to take part are the teams paying the member fee for the TUL as well. Unlike in the past, no active club can only be a member in the TUL but they also belong to their national federations, in football’s example to Finnish Football Association (FFA). FFA is the sole body in Finland organizing competitive football leagues and divisions.

Nokelainen brings up an interesting subject. The whole concept of trend by definition is something that is current and without better words cool. However for example in fashion those things change rather quickly and the workers’ sport movement has stayed on the surface for 100 years now. It is quite safe to comment that the success is not a matter of trendiness. The reasons are surely more profound with a long historical background breeding from various matters such as politics, social status, financial situation and human rights.

Some researchers agree to a certain extent with what Nokelainen had to say. Itkonen states the following: “The sports world still needs the workers’ sport movement and its clubs. They offer a genuine chance to do low-level sports with reasonable costs. It is of utmost importance to keep developing and to follow the needs of the modern times. Satisfaction easily leads to passiveness.” (Itkonen, 2012)

On a personal note, my club belonging to the TUL actually turned out to be a blessing. I mean that in a sense that it was the only competition where our (third division) team was able to play competitive football matches against other teams of which some played in the first division. For a young boy it meant the world to face some players you had only seen on television. Putting that into context, it was a genuine feel of the old values of the workers’ sport movement. All ages and levels were competing side by side with no segregation or separation.

5.3 Reviewing the writing process

After many months of digging into the topic, it is remarkable to notice how complicated it is to create a smoothly running, right on the topic thesis that has all the references cited accordingly and is able to create some new views and aspects on a topic that has been previously studied. Bringing in that different angle and producing an own flavor might be the most complicated part.

On-line sources and references are naturally easier to search and find but a very important lesson was to be learned. Cross-referencing is vital when writing a scientific thesis and the easiest and quickest of answers is not necessarily the correct one. Certainly it is something that will be of use in the future writings when producing scientific texts to different needs.

Gathering information and collecting data is surprisingly hard when at first the writer has to be very open-minded and not deliberately narrow the field of inspection too much. At the same time a careful consideration of related topics and research questions needs to be carried out. A surprising variety of matters have causation and even the oddest coincidences have to be followed through.

Time management and consumption is another key aspect that the writer has to bear in mind. Distractions are natural and plans do change, but some sort of a plan is essential in order to complete the task in hand. Something that in this case did not work out as planned hence the late delivery day.

Letting the writing process pause for a while was a good decision. After some time and more research re-beginning seemed easier and drawing the bigger picture was easier as well. Unofficial friendly discussions with different stakeholders in sport gave a picture that surely has affected the approach for the topic and some of the views expressed within the thesis.

Certain opinions were fortified reading through various publications and articles whereas certain surprises from an author's perspective emerged. Many papers written of the topic had a certain emphasis on the topic. Whether the author was deeply involved in the movement or whether it was the complete opposite was sometimes shown or at least easily interpreted when reading between the lines.

Conclusion

The entire research project offered a lot. Plenty has been written of the workers sport movement especially from the sporting and political perspectives. Although the social side does come up in many papers it is often somehow disregarded as an end result rather than the main point of interest. National progress reports and papers on the international development were to be found without many writing of the entire movement's path up to the current era. If the workers' movement was found to be a serious threat and a competitor to the revived Olympic movement in the 1920's and especially in the 1930's that is not the case anymore. The downshifting of the workers' sport movement has seen it vanish in the sidelines with no real threat (nor option) to the modern world of sports.

Although the research did not result in anything crucial, it did try to open a new view point to the whole aspect. For many people, in the modern times in particular, the sense of belonging is of importance and the associations and organizations play a vital role in accepting and engaging these individuals otherwise often left outside.

The Workers sport movement did indeed succeed and to some extent still succeeds in bringing people together through the means of sport ignoring the level, the gender and the age. What the Olympic movement can only wish to achieve has been the reality within the workers sport for decades already. However athletes taking part in the modern workers World Games are often at least national level athletes, the Games are not crowded with participants registering for fun purposes as it apparently was especially before the World War Two.

I am not a sociologist and thus feel that much and more remained hidden from me. However I do feel that there are plenty of research still to be done to explain the importance and difference of workers sport movement and other sport movements. The countless facts that the CSIT for example provides tell clear story of the vitality of the organization 100 years after its establishment. They have, as a whole movement, managed to fight back many threats during the years. They have overcome the two World Wars and remained as a rather large entity. They were able to fight back from the

demolition of major stakeholders and world powers as the former Soviet Union collapsed as well as many socialistic strongholds in central Europe.

In Finland things seem to remain the same. The emerging of new, nation-wide confederations has only raised the level and amount of conversations regarding the Workers' Sport Federation, but as for now, no changes can be seen in the near future. And quite frankly, the Workers' Sport Federation is already a confederation running and governing 59 different disciplines.

Where as to some the whole movement depicts a relic from the past and quite a few (especially the younger generations) in all honesty have never even heard of the whole movement, one thing still remains; those deeply involved with the cause have not lost a bit of their passion, dedication and motivation towards the movement and it is these people who will not let the ideology go forgotten.

Finland's age pyramid is similar to many other modern, westernized European countries. The biggest generation is already retired or on the verge of retirement causing all sorts of problems and structure changes in the society. That also means that the sport movement as a whole has a new problem to handle.

The concept of voluntarism, particularly strong within the workers' sport community, has been diminishing in the recent years. Younger generations have become stranded with the concept of helping for a greater cause and many competition organizers are facing problems in putting up competitions and camps due to lack of active club members. The post-World War generations are getting older and the necessity of the general concept of helping losing its significance. The younger generation has become more passive when it comes to organizational memberships at least in Finland resulting in a behavioral change for example in the so called "mall culture" – spending after school hours in shopping malls rather than enrolling in the extracurricular activities such as sports or art.

The financial situation and government funding at least in Finland is rather going down than up when considering amateur sports and not quite the national team level athletes. This all meaning that having to organize what has always been organized with the demands of the modern world (social media for example) with the same amount of funding or less is indeed introducing a major problem. In my opinion, this might be the

next threat for the Workers' sport movement as well as the aging of the strong personalities and major stakeholders.

The lifespan so to say between the progress of the workers' sport movement and in Finland has followed similar paths. Biggest differences have been the unifying needs between different organizations in Finland were internationally it is out of the question. Internationally the CSIT remains rather stable and is able to maintain its amount of memberships, though the overall participant numbers have been steadily decreasing especially when looking into the grass-root level. In Finland there are heavy disputes regarding the future of the TUL but for the moment it seems that the political backing from especially social-democrat party keeps the cause alive.

Possible future research topics could be somehow measuring the political influence levels in sport decision making both internationally and in Finland. For example finding out the political biases between different board members in international sport governing boards and seeing if there is a tendency between how some of the members are elected during certain political party ruling period for example. One natural research topic would be producing a similar case study reflecting of another country with such a strong history in the workers movement.

All in all I find that I was able to find quite a few explanations for my research questions and offer more insight on the matters and bring in a Finnish perspective and the comparison. I struggled in dividing some of the paragraphs under the correct headings and faced difficulties in bringing the text along smoothly and consistently. Did not expect it to be such a difficult task, but in the end it turned out to be harder than I imagined.

To conclude, Workers' sport movement has lived through many major events during its 101 years since it was established in 1913. What once were two separate ideologies in communism and socialism has emerged into one mirroring the changes in the societies within the last hundred years. Where as many other ideologies or movements have vanished, continues the CSIT safeguarding its tremendous legacy and further producing major events.

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Official Statement

With knowledge of my personal responsibility taking legal consequences into account according to the provisions of the article 11 paragraph 2 (Process of deleting from students' records) of the Regulation of Postgraduate Study Programme I hereby declare that during completion of the thesis under the title "A comparative study on the differences of the workers sport movement in Finland and internationally during the past 100 years" I did not use all or part of another author's work or his/her ideas and beliefs without reference to the relevant source (book, newspaper or magazine article, website etc..).

Date: 09/02/2015

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