

Changing Role of the Countryside

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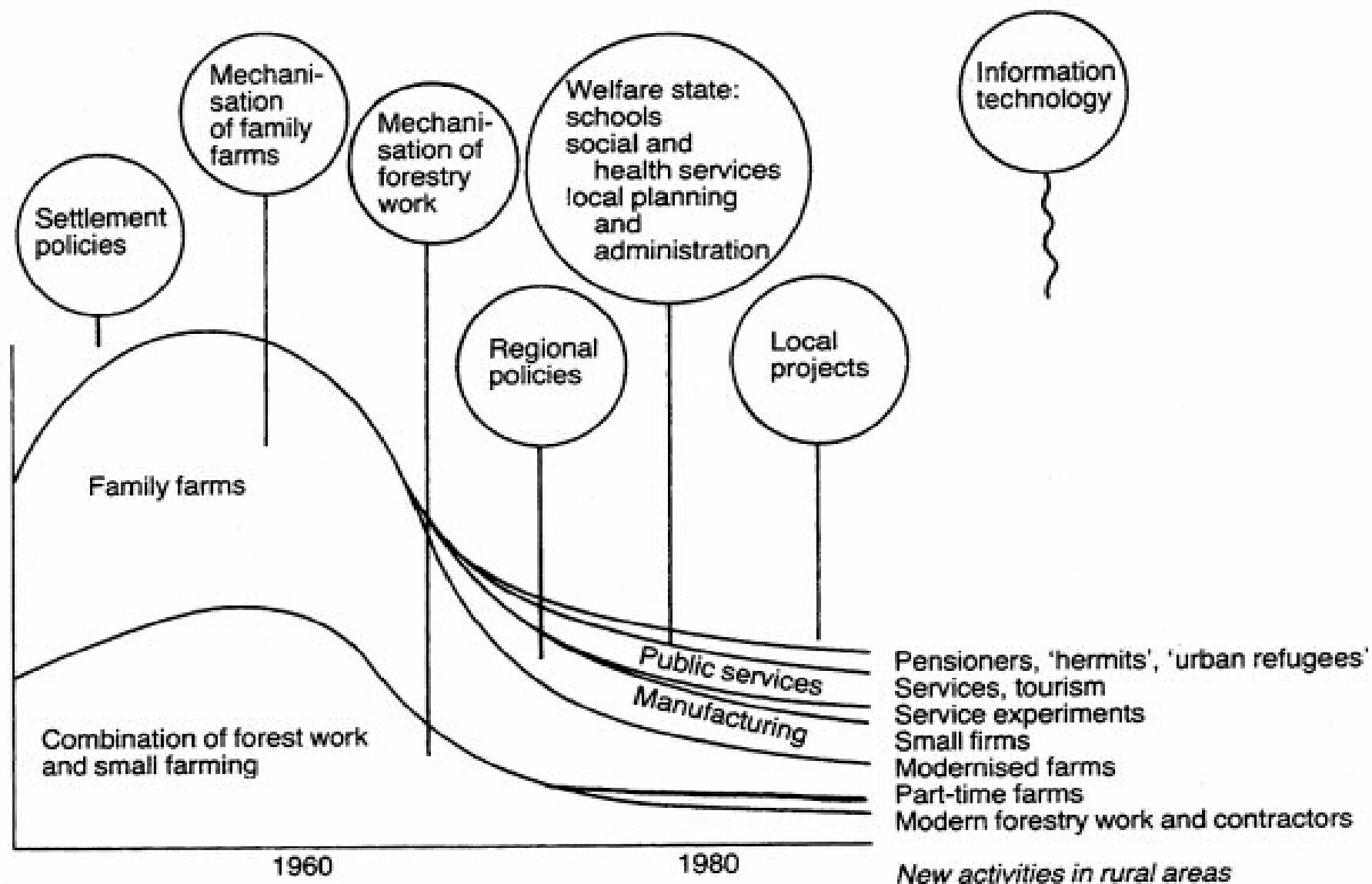
**10 February 2010
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Karelian Institute**

Four keys to Understanding Finnish Rural Society

They have transformed historically the power structures, social actors, and the role of Finnish countryside, and their impact is still felt.

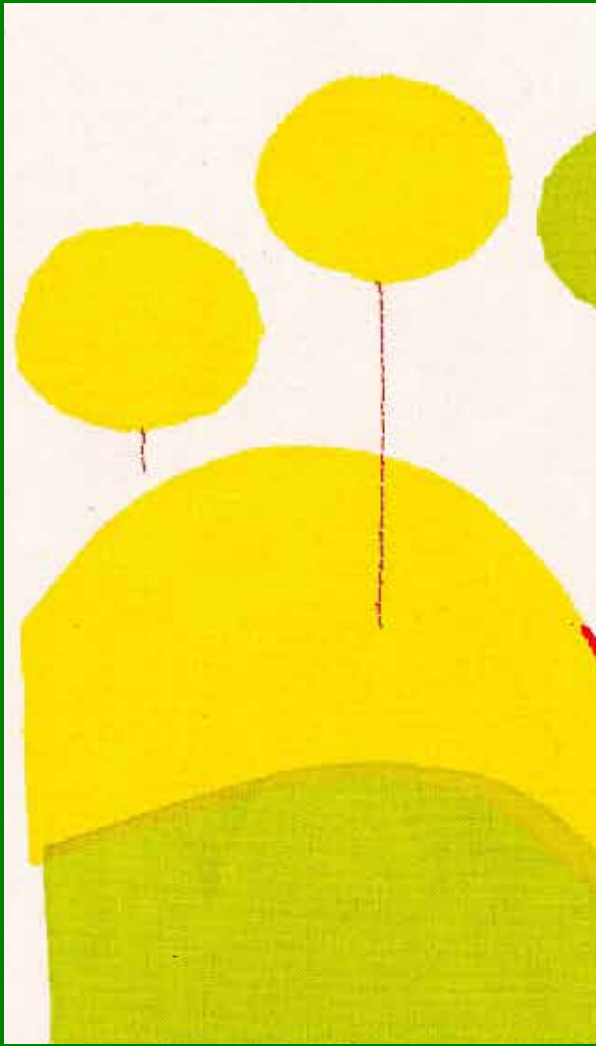
- 1. Forestry and forest ownership*
- 2. Settlement policies (land reforms)*
- 3. Finnish Welfare State and self-government of municipalities*
- 4. Relationship to Technology: Finland's Way into Information Society*

Waves of Development in Rural Areas in Finland

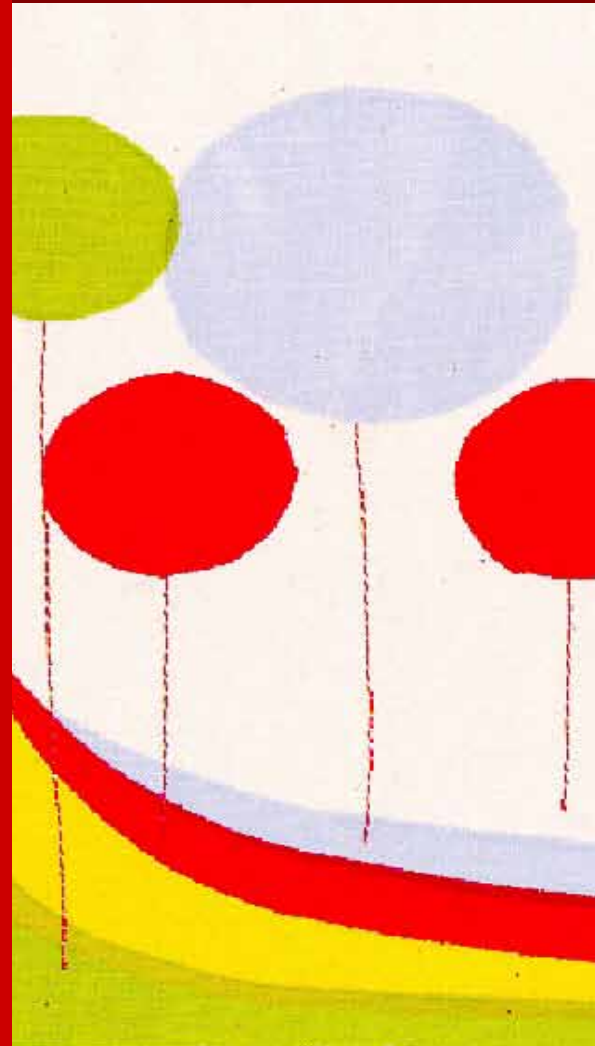


Three Stages of the Role of Rural Areas

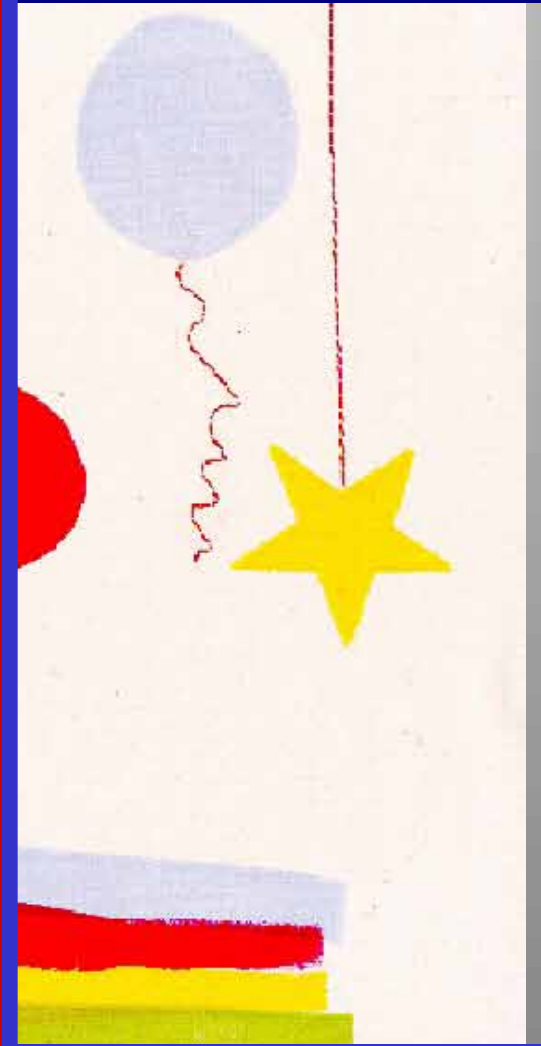
*Peasant
Countryside*



*Productivist
Countryside*



*Countryside of
Consumption*



1950

1970

1990

2000

Changing role of the countryside

Peasant Countryside

Rural areas is the backbone of the Society

- Rural settlements and clearing of farming land
- Self-relying farm and self-relying Finland
- Land reforms
- Finland was one the peasant states of the "European Green Ring"

Productivist Countryside

Rural areas in the Welfare State

- Efficient food production; larger, mechanised and specialised farms
- Guaranteed flow of raw wood to pulp and paper industries
- Agricultural income is a part of centralised income agreements
- Welfare State goes to rural areas

Countryside of Consumption

Rural environment for housing and a source of quality experience

- Certificates of origin (eg. organic products)
- Locality as a product brand
- Commuting to work in Centres
- Competition for inhabitants and visitors
- Place for good and ethical life

1950

1970

1990

2000

Changing Mechanism of Exclusion

**Peasant
Countryside**

**Productivist
Countryside**

**Countryside of
Consumption**

**Role of rural
areas**

Land, food,
places for living

Raw materials,
labour reserve

Quality,
experience,
identity

**The way of
exclusion**

Being left
without land

To be forsaken
outside income
distribution and
reforms

Loosing
connections to
markets and
networks

**Policy
response**

Land &
settlement
policies

Rural Welfare
State

New Rural
Policy, projects

**Local way of
action**

Village
Municipality
Congregation

Protest Politics
Interest lobbies
Local services

New Coalitions
New Networks
Social innovation

Emerging problems in the capability of municipalities to provide public services

Background:

Autonomy of municipalities with strong local identity

Sectoral and professional divides of the Welfare State

Present problems:

- Problems of local municipality budgets to meet the needs
- Sector based efficiency criteria of the public services cuts away local small service units.

Kiihtelysvaara



Ilomantsi



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