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Bernard Enjolras · Kristin Strømsnes
Editors

Scandinavian Civil Society and Social Transformations

The Case of Norway

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Scandinavian Civil Society and Social Transformations

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Chapter 1
The Transformation of the Scandinavian Voluntary Sector

Bernard Enjolras and Kristin Strømsnes

Scandinavian (or Nordic) economy, society, and politics are often understood as constituting a separate societal model.[1] This model, characterized by a large public sector, a universal, all-embracing welfare state, and a high degree of economic and social equality, has shown itself to be surprisingly successful and robust. The Scandinavian countries are often found at the very top of statistics measuring everything from freedom and democratic prosperity to welfare, individual happiness, and well-being, which have earned this small region in the northern part of Europe the reputation of being "the strongest girl in the world" (Berggren & Trägårdh, 2010).

The Scandinavian countries of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden make up a region in Northern Europe. The Scandinavian countries have a combined population of approximately 20 million, spread over a land area of almost 880,000 km^2. From a comparative perspective, the Scandinavian countries share an array of commonalities: they have a long common history, shared cultural values, a strong position of the national church, a tradition of cooperation between the state and civil society, a strong and non-corrupt legal system, an efficient state bureaucracy, a heavy reliance on public social services and social transfers with universal coverage of the population, and consequently small income differences and low poverty rates. These features have resulted in each country becoming a social democratic welfare state with a large public sector that emphasizes equal distribution of income as well as gender

[1] The model is sometimes called the "Nordic model" when it includes Finland and Iceland in addition to the Scandinavian countries (Sweden, Denmark, and Norway). Even though Finland and Iceland share several characteristics with the Scandinavian countries, they diverge on important dimensions. Hence, we choose to concentrate on the Scandinavian countries in this book.

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equality. In terms of democratic governance, the Scandinavian model is characterized by compromise politics, local government autonomy, and cooperation between state and civil society organizations.

When trying to understand the success of the Scandinavian model, most explanations have emphasized how Scandinavian civil societies are organized and function. The Scandinavian countries are often described as a distinct type of civil society regime, regardless of whether it is labeled "social democratic," "broad," or "corporate" (e.g., Janoski, 1998; Salamon & Anheier, 1998; Dekker & van den Broek, 1998; Schofer & Fourcade-Gourinchas, 2001). Thus, Scandinavian civil societies have several characteristics that distinguish them from other types of civil society regimes. First, they are characterized by a high level of citizen participation in voluntary organizations, measured in terms of memberships and in volunteers (van Deth, Montero & Westholm, 2007; Morales & Geurts, 2007). Scandinavian countries are also often ranked among the first in comparative studies of social capital and both generalized and institutional trust (Putnam, 2000; Rothstein & Stolle, 2003). In addition, voluntary organizations in these countries have traditionally recruited broadly and have, accordingly, been important for social integration and social and political equality. Membership in democratically built local associations has been the core of the organizational societies, which has given the members an invaluable possibility for democratic influence within the organization and, more importantly, in the society at large.

This feature is closely related to the second characteristic distinguishing Scandinavian civil societies from other civil society models. In addition to a high per capita number of voluntary organizations, the organizations have usually been hierarchically organized, with local, regional, and national chapters. This was initially modeled after the political parties and the broad popular movements (e.g., the farmers' movement, the labor movement, countercultural movements) that historically have played a pivotal role in these countries. This structure implied that the organizations played an important role as mediating institutions between the individual members and the national political system. Since the development of a prosperous leisure society in the 1960s, organizational societies in Scandinavian countries have been dominated by organizations within the cultural and leisure field, while the welfare field has been comparable smaller. Historically, voluntary organizations often initiated new arrangements within the welfare field before the state gradually took responsibility in parallel with the development of the welfare state.

This is, again, linked to a third characteristic of Scandinavian civil society, namely, that Scandinavian countries are state-friendly societies, in which the relationship between the state and the civil society is characterized by nearness and cooperation rather than distance and conflict (Selle, 1993; Kuhnle & Selle, 1992). Thus, the relationship between the voluntary sector and the state in these countries is marked by close collaboration and integration, implying nearness in terms of communication and contact, financial support, a high degree of autonomy, and the possibility for influencing politics through the corporate decision-making channel.

In summary, voluntary organizations constitute a large and important part of civic societies in Scandinavian countries, and they serve a key function as intermediate institutions between the citizens and the state. During recent decades, however, Scandinavian countries have changed in several dimensions, which may influence how the Scandinavian civil society model functions. Like many other Western countries, Scandinavian societies have experienced increasing levels of individualization and social mobility. Collective forces in society have become weaker, and individuals have more freedom to choose the life that they want. This is exemplified by a weakening of class structures and religious ties as determinants for individual life choices. Another important society transformation is the ongoing digitalization process that influences communication structures not only between citizens but also between citizens, organizations, and public authorities. While it is too early to identify the consequences of these changes, it is reasonable to expect that they will have great influence on both how citizens are mobilized and how organizations operate in society. A third important transformation process is the rapid increase in the level of immigration taking place during a relatively short period. Traditionally, Scandinavian countries were characterized by largely ethnically homogenous societies, with immigrants most often coming from other Scandinavian countries. However, since the mass immigration beginning in the 1970s, Scandinavian societies have developed into multiethnic and multireligious societies (Pettersen & Østby, 2013). As of 2016 about 17% of the Swedish population, 13% of the Norwegian population, and 10% of the Danish population are foreign-born (Statistics Sweden, 2016; Statistics Norway, 2017; Statistics Denmark, 2016). This is also an important society change, which may have implications for the role and functioning of the voluntary sector in these countries.

At the same time, important endogenous changes are also occurring, including how the public sector functions and how the relationship between the voluntary sector and the state is organized. Among other developments, the last two decades have witnessed how the introduction of new public management within the public sector in Scandinavian countries implies a relationship between public and civil actors that, to an increasing extent, is based on measurement and control rather than trust. In other words, the introduction of this system breaks with a core characteristic of how the relationship between the public and the voluntary sector traditionally has functioned within these state-friendly and corporative pluralistic countries.

These rapid processes of change influence both the voluntary sector and how people relate to the voluntary sector. We are currently witnessing an organizational society which is in a process of change along several dimensions, although it should also be noticed that many factors show a surprisingly high level of stability (Wijkström & Zimmer, 2011). We are witnessing a development where the bonds between individuals and associations are weakening, the role of membership seems to be less important, and the connection between memberships and volunteering is looser than it was before. People now often participate in voluntary activities without being members in the organizations they do voluntary work for, which is something

that very seldom was the case 20 or 30 years ago. We can also register a move toward more informal, ad hoc, and short-time volunteering, and the volunteers express more individual and self-related motives for their engagement.

At the organizational level, we find that the leisure society is becoming ever more important, while religious organizations and the traditional popular movements are losing ground. Often newly established organizations are issue-oriented more than broad society-oriented organizations. This indicates that the organizational society is less ideologically oriented and more oriented toward individuals and their activities. At the same time, we find that the number of organizations at the local level is decreasing, while it increases at the national level. More often national organizations do not have local chapters, and local organizations are to a lesser extent connected to national organizations. In other words, the local and the national organizational level are to an increasing degree living separate lives, and a dual organizational society is developing, where different organizations exist at the local and the national level. We also see clear tendencies toward increased professionalization, which is more valued and seen as more important within the organizations than it was before.

In addition, the relationship between state, market, and civil society is changing in fundamental ways. The market is more present and is becoming much more legitimate as an actor, for example, when it comes to welfare provision. The state is increasingly discussing the value of the voluntary sector and how to make use of the voluntary sector; however, it is primarily concerned with how to use voluntary organizations for smaller day-to-day challenges, such as integration of different groups in society and voluntary work among the elderly in order to avoid loneliness. To a much lesser extent, do the political authorities focus on the important role organizations and institutions within the voluntary sector play as providers of welfare services in society.

The primary goal of this book is to analyze the changes that are occurring within the Scandinavian model of civil society as well as the consequences these changes may have, both for how the civil societies within these countries will develop and more broadly. This book aims at advancing a conceptual framework and an empirical analysis of the transformations of the voluntary sector based on a study of Norway, a case within the Scandinavian model. Given the changes we see, the question is also to what extent it is still reasonable to talk about a distinct Scandinavian civil society model. We wonder whether the transformation trends we are witnessing are moving the Scandinavian voluntary sectors in a direction that make them less distinct and more in line with the civil societies found in other places. This question also touches upon the important issue of *diffusion*, i.e., whether the transformation processes are making voluntary sectors more similar everywhere. In the face of diffusion, it becomes less reasonable to talk about distinct civil society regimes than it once was.

When looking at changes affecting the citizens' voluntary activity, the composition of the organizational society, and the relationship between the state and the civil society, Norway is a central case within the Scandinavian model. The level of

voluntary participation and the number of voluntary organizations are high (e.g., Baer, 2007), and there has traditionally been a close relationship between the state and the voluntary sector. In addition, the Norwegian case is a particularly good case to study because we have data over time which allows us not only to explore the voluntary engagement among the citizens, the breadth and depth of the voluntary sector, and the relationship between the organizations and the state but also to look at the development over time in a period characterized by rapid external changes.

This book thus builds on a comprehensive empirical material, covering changes at the individual level, at the organizational level, and in the state–organization relationship over more than a generation. It looks at changes in attitudes and participation based on individual survey data on membership and volunteering collected four times from 1989 to 2014 (Chap. 2), traces the developments and changes of the voluntary sector at the organizational level based on organizational data (local and national voluntary organizations) collected regularly in the period from 1980 to 2013 (Chap. 3), and analyzes the changes affecting the public policy environment of the voluntary sector based on studies of long-term strategic plans and other public documents from the 1980s/1990s until now (Chap. 4).[2] This gives us the best possible basis for analyzing how civil society is affected by important processes of social transformations and what consequences this may have.

By focusing on the Norwegian case, we expect to identify processes of change that are valid for understanding how societal transformations are affecting the voluntary sector. Indeed, even if there are some differences between the Scandinavian countries, especially when it comes to the role of the voluntary sector in welfare provision, where Norway occupies an intermediate position between Denmark and Sweden,[3] most of the development trends characterizing the Norwegian voluntary sector are of relevance for the other Scandinavian countries. Norway is, however, not only a case representing the Scandinavian model. By focusing on the Norwegian case, we expect to identify processes of change that are valid beyond a Scandinavian context and to generally improve the understanding of the relationships between societal transformations and changes within the voluntary sector. The Norwegian empirical focus thus allows us to identify processes of change that are relevant also outside this context and enable us to understand, on a more general basis, how social transformations affect the voluntary sector and the roles civil society and voluntary organizations play in society.

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[2] For more detailed information about the data used, see individual chapters and appendixes.

[3] Sweden has been on a route to a universalistic welfare state for a longer time and has gone much further than the other countries (Lundström & Wijkström, 1997). Norway is in an intermediate position, where there is a universalistic public policy, particularly in compulsory education, basic health services, and social services for the sick, the elderly, and the handicapped. Although voluntary sector providers exist, they have in many ways been so closely integrated into the public system of finance and control that hardly any differences in services or ideology exist.

The Specificity of the Scandinavian Voluntary Sector Model

The core features of what has been termed the Scandinavian model are, as mentioned, a comprehensive welfare state, coordinated wage bargaining, and cooperative arrangements between the state and civil society. Besides extensive social rights guaranteeing an egalitarian distribution of income and life opportunities, Scandinavian societies are characterized by specific features of their organized civil societies in terms of size, composition, and roles. In contrast to what is generally expected in view of relatively huge public sectors in the Scandinavian countries, the voluntary sector in these countries is neither small nor insignificant. Rather, we find in these countries some of the most extensive voluntary sectors, with a broad orientation and with important society roles. The Scandinavian civil societies are also characterized by a high level of memberships, even though a substantial number of these memberships are rather passive in nature. According to Paul Dekker and Andries van den Broek (1998), this is in itself a defining characteristic of Scandinavian civil societies. They call this type of civil society *broad*, in contrast to the *active* civil societies found, for example, in North America, where both memberships and the level of activity are high, and the *parochial* civil societies found in Southern Europe, with rather few, but active, members.[4]

While the most prominent theoretical account of the development of the Scandinavian welfare states emphasizes the mobilization of the labor movement and the successful forging of class alliances, first between workers and farmers and later between manual workers and the middle class (Esping-Andersen & Korpi, 1987), it has also been suggested that the distinctiveness of contemporary Scandinavian societies has deep historical roots in preindustrial society, with the Reformation and the French Revolution being particularly important (Stenius, 2010). The Nordic countries, of which Scandinavia is a part, constitute a "historical region," having common historical experiences without being unified in a common polity (Stenius, 2010).[5] They share a transformational path to modernity during the centuries before the French Revolution, which preserved their common Lutheran heritage, an old culture of conformity that accounts for the universalistic principle characterizing the Nordic countries. At the same time, differences between the Western Nordic countries (Denmark, Norway, Iceland) and the Eastern Nordic countries (Sweden and Finland) during this period were important, especially in terms of the degree to which the peasantry was included in the political system and the role of the gentry in local decision-making (Stenius, 2010, p. 36–40). They differed also in patterns of mobilization through popular movements during the nineteenth century and early twentieth century—the period of nation building where all Nordic countries established distinct polities. Stenius (2010, p. 56–57) shows how

[4] A fourth possible type is the *weak* civil society, characterized by few and mostly passive memberships. This civil society type is empirically found in countries like Russia and Slovenia (Strømsnes & Wollebæk, 2010).

[5] The Scandinavian countries also share a long period of common history. Norway was under Danish rule from 1397 to 1814 and thereafter in union with Sweden until 1905.

social movements differed in their structure and mobilization basis in Sweden, Denmark, Finland, and Norway, depending on whether they were an old state (Sweden, Denmark)—entailing a double-norm system, one set of norms connected to the regime of old officialdom and one set connected to democratic participation—or a new state where the norm of democratic participation coincided with the process of nation building (Finland, Norway). Differences also depended on whether they had a strong active local assembly tradition (Sweden, Finland) or a weak one (Denmark, Norway). These different historical paths within the Nordic countries help us to highlight the features Norwegian civil society has in common with its Scandinavian neighbors as well as those that diverge.

There is no doubt that civil society, through voluntary associations and popular and political movements, has played a significant role in shaping a distinctive Scandinavian model. In the most expansive phase of welfare state development, popular movements within the welfare field played a much more important role in policymaking and service delivery than they do today. Rather than just expressing important distinct values and conflicting with government, they represented a constructive force in the ideological and organizational transformation toward increased public responsibility for welfare delivery. This close connection between the state and voluntary associations is one feature that distinguishes the Scandinavian civil society model from the civil society found in other places. The model implies that the links between state and voluntary organizations are many and dense. The organizations turn to the state for cooperation, funding, and legitimacy but nevertheless have a great amount of autonomy from the state (Grendstad, Selle, Strømsnes & Bortne, 2006). This can be seen as part of the state-friendliness found in these societies.

While some accounts emphasize the positive interaction between popular movements, civil society, and the state in creating and sustaining the Scandinavian model (Klausen & Selle, 1996), others suggest that the magic of Scandinavian (and other Nordic) societies resides in a state that sets the individual free from the constraints of community and thus provides the grounds for a successful market economy (Trägårdh, 2007). These perspectives (i.e., the state-friendliness perspective and the statist individualism perspective) represent different interpretations of what is going on in the Scandinavian countries. Let us look closer at them in turn.

State-Friendliness: The Positive Interaction Between Popular Movements, Civil Society, and the State in Creating and Sustaining the Scandinavian Model

A first perspective in explaining the specificity of the Scandinavian model emphasizes the *integration* that progressively occurred during the curse of the historical development of the voluntary sector between the state- and mass-based social movements (Kuhnle & Selle, 1992; Klausen & Selle, 1996). Contrary to the cases of the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States (US) where the voluntary sector

gradually developed a collective identity in opposition to the state, Scandinavian countries did not have the class basis necessary for such a development. Additionally, the cooperation and integration between public and voluntary agencies in the delivery of welfare services had been effective long before the establishment of the modern welfare state, which contributed to the state-friendliness and made cooperation with the state more appealing. Three stages—nation building, state integration, and leisure society—may be distinguished in the historical process of institutionalization of the Norwegian voluntary sector.

Nation Building

The first stage is characterized by the blooming of a multitude of civil associations during a period of nation building. In a European context, Norway is a young nation-state. For approximately 400 years, Norway was subject to Denmark's rule (in the national literature, this period is referred to as "the four-hundred-years' night"). In 1814, a personal union with Sweden was declared, under which Norway enjoyed extensive autonomy and a constitution of its own. In 1905, Norway was declared fully independent as a constitutional and hereditary monarchy. The emergence of national political parties in Norway took place in the late nineteenth century, when Norway was still in a union with Sweden. The formation of parties was part of the nation-building process. It involved, first, ideologies defending traditional language and culture in the rural districts in opposition to the central cities and the educated elites. These countercultural movements also sought to reduce public spending of "their" tax money to a minimum. In addition, this political mobilization involved a radical democratic movement in the cities that created and defended what they considered to be "traditional" Norwegian values but primarily opposed the dominance of the central administration that represented the Swedish Union government. These forces joined in the Liberal party (*Venstre*).

Many civil associations in Norway formed as national voluntary organizations. They also have their roots in the first half of the nineteenth century and reflect the processes of nation building and political mobilization. Although some community associations can trace their origins back to the sixteenth century, the first real growth period of modern voluntary or civil associations was in the 1840s. This first wave of national civil associations consisted of broad mobilizations of people around religious, social, and cultural issues. During the latter part of the nineteenth century, concepts such as associationalism and spirit of association (*associationsaand*) were commonly used (Try, 1985). The terms referred to broad new social movement organizations that occurred during this period, related to cultural, political, economic, and religious issues (Seip, 1981). Before the turn of the nineteenth century, the bottom-up model dominated. This model was characterized by a two-tiered structure where the main social movements originating from local based initiatives were composed of local organizations federated in a national organizational body. At the same time, organizations increasingly became independent of traditional

elite groups. Combined with the political role of most of these organizations, Norwegian associations came to recruit members from an unusually wide range of social spheres (Rokkan, 1967), which gave the organizations an important role as mobilizing forces. This factor makes the Norwegian case unique (despite its similarities to Denmark and Sweden) (Grendstad et al. 2006).

Hence, the common denominator of this first generation of national movements was the broad mobilization of members, with engagement based on moral values and the desire to contribute to necessary changes in society as the prime motivations for membership. Usually, the movements were loosely organized, with most of their activities anchored in the local community and administered and performed by volunteers. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Norway stood forth as an organized society with many features that still exist. Associations were often established by and consisted of people who had not known each other previously. They were, in principle, independent of public authorities (even if often closely related) and were built on individual voluntary membership. This is also an important feature of the Scandinavian organizational model. Most associations were membership based with a democratic structure, within which local and regional affiliates influenced the policies of national boards. Combined with the broad membership requirement, this also implied that citizens from wide-ranging parts of society were given the possibility for political influence through their organization memberships. Consequently, the organizations empirically played an important role as intermediary structures between the individual and the state.

Historically, most associations were linked to broader social movements nationally with manifest ideological or political purposes that gave room for vertical and horizontal integration. As a consequence, Norway did not develop a dual organizational society (i.e., a local and a national one), in contrast to what can be found, for example, in the United States (e.g., Klausen & Selle, 1996). These organizations have not only played the role of "bonding" participants in local communities, but they also have "bridged" the local and central level in society, to use Putnam's concepts (2000). Both national and local influence gave them a central role in the evolution of Norwegian democracy and in the nation-building process, in particular up to World War II (Rokkan, 1967). In addition, the broad social recruitment of members was important, as it gave citizens recruited from a wide range of society the possibility of influencing national politics through their memberships.

State Integration

At this point, the history of Norwegian associations departs from those of the Anglo-American world and engages in a second stage characterized by a process of integration between the state and the voluntary sector. While voluntary associations in Britain and the United States gradually developed a collective identity as a moral force outside and partly in opposition to the state, associations in Norway did not share a common self-understanding as constituting a sector of their own. Neither did

they see their welfare provisions as being of a different kind from those of public authorities. As philanthropy in Britain, for example, gained strength and power from nobility, merchants, and the growing urban middle classes (Owen, 1964), Scandinavian countries did not have any strong middle class with sufficient self-consciousness to bring forward that idea (Seip, 1984). Here, philanthropy was closely related to charity, which was considered nearly patronizing and to be avoided.

The integration of public and civil resources in welfare services commenced long before the modern welfare state was established. Local authorities provided limited financial support to the associations and did not usually impose specific conditions on the transfers. In many ways, the years between the turn of the twentieth century and World War II were a golden age of civil associations. Moral, cultural, and political ideals were realized through many activities that were welcomed by public authorities, but there was limited financial support and control. The cooperation that was gradually established between public and private welfare providers can be described as partnerships, particularly in more urban areas. Both parties profited from the other; associations contributed with volunteers, engagement, competence, and sometimes even housing and comprehensive local networks. The state and municipalities provided limited financial support. The voluntary organizations often acted as pioneers in this field, making problems visible and initiating institutional arrangements that in many cases were later taken over by the public sector (Hestetun & Onarheim, 1990). Government policy in this period may be termed state-supported private operation (Onarheim, 1990, p. 88). The state wished to support existing private services without adversely affecting private philanthropy.

In the social democratic welfare model that developed in the postwar period, associations were not given any explicit role as welfare providers. They were, in a way, lost from sight during this phase, which was characterized by strong expansion of public welfare. While Lord Beveridge (1949) created ideological space for volunteerism in British welfare, no such room was given for voluntary efforts in the Norwegian (or any other Scandinavian) welfare model. The main reason can be related to the ideology of solidarity, which came to dominate the welfare ideology of the Norwegian labor movement. As the labor movement gradually gained strength during the twentieth century, philanthropic ideas were seen as degrading, and when the labor movement dominated the state apparatus in the postwar period, the opposition to philanthropic ideas was integrated into modern social policies. Thus, "philanthropy" and "charity" referred to social activities that had not yet been made redundant by public health and social services. Gradually, most political parties became supportive of such a view.

Within the welfare system, voluntary associations were involved in running many institutions. However, many voluntary associations increasingly took on the role of *interest mediators*. For most associations, the pressure-group role meant access to government financial resources, participation in national committees, and better opportunities to bring their own philosophies into public planning. The term "the segmented state" was coined to describe corporate connections between ministries and associations (Egeberg, Olsen & Sætren, 1978). Voluntary welfare agencies were integrated in several segments within systems of stable relations

between national authorities and civil interests characterized by closeness and shared understandings of common problems and their solutions. Stein Rokkan (1966) called this "corporate pluralism," a system characterized by close connection and collaboration between organizations and the state.

The new interest group identity of many voluntary welfare providers caused basic structural changes in civil society. First, it caused an expansion of national headquarters. The planning of welfare and other social reforms was a national task; from the 1970s, ministries became the most important governmental partners for voluntary associations. Second, the identity as interest mediators created a new role for local units and their members. In the prewar period, local activities were the core elements of associations, and coordination at the national level was kept at a minimum. In the public welfare system, the number of members gradually became more important than civil activities. Legitimate influence upon planning and politics was connected to membership: the more members, the stronger the influence. This may also explain why membership sometimes seems to be more important than activity level in the Norwegian system (Dekker & van den Broek, 1998).

Nevertheless, voluntary associations continued to promote social and cultural interests locally as well as nationally by influencing political authorities while seeking support and legitimacy. "State-friendliness" became a defining trait of a nation in which the state came to play a crucial role both in industrial production and in welfare (Kuhnle & Selle, 1990). The organizations were close to the state authorities and cooperated with the authorities in the development and implementation of public policy while retaining a great amount of autonomy. This phase of state integration was followed by a new developmental phase in the wake of societal changes that have been characterized as the rise of a leisure society. This had a significant impact on the composition and orientation of the voluntary sector.

Leisure Society

In general, the 1960s represented a watershed in the activity profile of the Norwegian voluntary organizational life. The new types of organizations that evolved in this period were engaged in hugely different kinds of activity than their predecessors had been. Most new organizations were established in the broadly defined area of culture and leisure (e.g., choirs and musical groups, hobby activities, and sports clubs). This change reflects the fact that the population in general was better off financially and had more free time, but it also suggests that people's ties to their communities were different than they had once been. In addition, cultural and leisure organizations, which had been organized within the broader popular movements, were increasingly replaced by independent, often purely local initiatives.[6]

[6] Even if they were independent of the traditional popular movements, many of the new local leisure organizations nevertheless chose an organizational form that linked them to national organizations and a democratic structure where the members played a decisive role.

In comparison with earlier organizations, the activities of these new organizations were directed more toward their own members than toward the society around them. This development trend likewise emerged within organizations that had previously been clearly outwardly directed but which changed their orientation in the direction of the members (Selle, 1999). While interest organizations that directed their activities toward specific groups held their ground and expanded into new territory, particularly the health and social services sector, the broader organizations whose objectives included matters other than their own members' interests were gradually weakened (Wollebæk & Selle, 2002). Thus, new organizational formations within the organizational community reflected and reinforced a development away from mostly society-oriented and ideologically oriented organizations toward stronger individualism (Selle & Øymyr, 1995). The center of activity shifted from traditional social humanitarian and religious organizations to athletics, leisure, and hobby activities. The growth in organizations for children and young people, with a clearly activity-oriented focus, reinforced the trend.

Statist Individualism: The Social Contract Between the Individual and the State—Freedom from the Constraints of Community

A second perspective that explains the specificity of the Scandinavian model privileges the strong individualism that characterizes social relations and political institutions in Scandinavian countries, rather than emphasizing social solidarity and membership in social movements (Trägårdh, 2007). For Trägårdh, it is precisely in the *Scandinavian social contract*—where the basic unit of society is the individual and a central purpose of policy should be to maximize individual autonomy and movement—that the idiosyncrasy of the Scandinavian model in general, and of its voluntary sector in particular, is rooted.

Trägårdh contends that, over the course of the twentieth century, Scandinavian countries have pursued an ambition not to socialize the economy but to liberate the individual from all forms of subordination and dependency within the family and in civil society. The social contract between the state and the individual has had as its main goal not the decommodification of the labor force but the liberation of "the poor from charity, the workers from their employers, wives from their husbands, children from parents - and vice versa when the parents become elderly" (Berggren & Trägårdh, 2010:14; see also Berggren & Trägårdh, 2006).

Individual taxation of spouses, family law reforms, universal public care for children and the elderly, student loans without means testing, and emphasis on children's rights are policies that converge in reducing the dependency of individuals (women, the elderly, and teenagers) on their families. Data from the World Values Survey (WVS) support this interpretation and show that Scandinavian countries

constitute a cluster of societies with a strong emphasis on individual self-realization and personal autonomy (Inglehart & Welzel, 2005).[7]

The Scandinavian social contract consists, from this viewpoint, in the alliance between state and individual or what Trägårdh (2010) calls "statist individualism." The emphasis on individual autonomy coincides with a positive view of the state and a negative view of unequal and hierarchical power relations between individuals.

From this viewpoint, the alliance between the state and the individual, leading the way to the Scandinavian welfare state, has consequences for the way civil society and the voluntary sector are institutionalized in the Scandinavian model. In contrast to Germany and other continental European states, where a strong family and a strong voluntary sector are both a means and an end for social welfare policies (logic of subsidiarity), and to the United States, where a general antipathy toward state intervention leads to social policies that privilege individual self-reliance and autonomy (through the family and voluntary organizations), Scandinavian countries are characterized by a greater acceptance of state intervention to the benefit of the individual rather than family and civil society.

This perspective stresses the specific logic that characterizes Scandinavian civil society. The social contract between the state and the individual gives shape to the voluntary sector and opens up a space for those voluntary organizations that either provide a "voice" to a number of groups in society, including interest groups and social movements, or are the locus for citizens' self-organization within fields such as culture, leisure, religion, poor-relief, and humanitarian work at home and abroad.

The two explanatory perspectives on the origins of the specificity of the Scandinavian model and the Norwegian voluntary sector, namely, (1) integration between the state and popular movements and (2) social contract between the state and the individual, lead to different expectations when it comes to the effects of modernization trends on the voluntary sector. Whereas modernization from a state individualism perspective may be seen as reinforcing the tendencies embodied in the Scandinavian social contract between the individual and the state, modernization will appear more detrimental to the voluntary sector from the state-friendliness perspective because it is likely to undermine the foundations of the voluntary sector.

Explaining Stability and Change: An Institutional Perspective

Before going deeper into the empirical analyses, it is essential to clarify the concepts and theories through which we can explain both the stability and change of the Scandinavian civil society model during the last generation. We outline here a conceptual framework that will help us in identifying the most

[7] The weight put on so-called self-expression values within Scandinavian countries has become stronger over time (see WVS, 2017).