

Oral Histories of the Finnish Veteran Members of Parliament

ECPRD seminar

"Parliamentary history and its communication to the public"

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Library of the Finnish Parliament

Veteran Members of Parliament Oral History Archive

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PARLIAMENT
OF FINLAND

Finnish Parliamentary History Projects since the Second WW

Launched for the historical 100-years anniversaries
of the Finnish democracy: 1963; 2007

1963: a series of books of parliamentary history,
12 volumes (1958-1982)

Parliament's Centennial 2007:

- Celebrations
- Exhibitions
- History of Parliament: 12 volumes (2001-2007)

Veteran Members of Parliament Oral History 1988-



Investment in Oral History at the Finnish Parliament 1988-

Origin of the interest in oral history

Motives for collecting Ex-MPs' oral history

Launching and regularizing of the project

Results:

- 330 veteran MPs' interviews
- Interviews' average length nearly six hours

Unique in volume, continuity, depth and systematic of the themes of the interviews



Characteristics of the Ex-MPs' Oral History Interviews

Definition of a veteran MP

Criteria for selecting the interviewees

Confidence and interaction between interviewer and the interviewee

Semi-structured life history interview with the focus on the Ex-MP's political career



Content of a Veteran MP's Interview

Social and political background of the interviewee

About becoming a MP: campaigns and elections

MP's work and everyday life at the parliament

- Parliamentary committees
- Plenary sessions
- Parliamentary groups
- Media and politics

Mapping the content of politics and political activities of the MP's career

(MP as minister); (Member of European Parliament)

Finnish democracy, parliamentarism and exercise of power

Ex-MP's activities after the parliamentarian's career



Usability of the Veteran MPs' Interview Collection

Not public; strictly limited to scientific research

Low profile of the archive collection

= > potential is underutilized

Used by professional historians:

- Histories of political parties
- Political biographies
- Parliament of Finland Centennial

Used by the Ex-MPs themselves: memoirs



Mapping and Sharing of Oral History Knowledge of the European Parliaments

National duty?

Comparable oral history collections?

More information:

Veteran Members of Parliament Oral History Archive
(in English):

<http://lib.eduskunta.fi/Resource.phx/library/archive/veteran-mps.htx>



Veteran Members of Parliament Oral History Archive thanks you!

