

Veikko Leväaho

1st of June 1924–25th of January 2009

Antti Rautiainen

February 21, 2009

Veikko Leväaho was an anarchist in Finland at times where movement was practically not existing in country. He has told that he first become interested on anarchism when listening radio broadcasts on events of Spanish Revolution when he was 12 years old. However left-wing views also came from family background – his father was a vegetarian and theosophist. Leväaho was born in St. Petersburg, his parents were from big Finnish community of the city, but eventually they emigrated to Finland in 1928 due to harshening political situation in Soviet Union.

During Second World war, he already had an established world view. He was serving as a meteorologist in air forces. In April of 1944 he refused to read a blessing of god in an evening ceremony, he argued that as an atheist this would be insulting towards his fellows in service. He was given one month water and bread-sentence, which he served in a prison in Kuopio.

There were few prominent anarchists in Finland at the time – Harry Järv only became anarchist after emigration to Sweden after war, former veteran of anarchist armed struggle 1906–1909 Kustaa Liukonen had become a left-wing social-democrat for a long time ago, just as former wobbly and a longtime leader of Seamen’s union in Finland Niilo Wälläri.

After war, he was involved in establishing of union of workers in air transport. Later on he was working as a journalist and an inventor.

In 1960’s, there was a brief revival of anarchism in Finland, and Leväaho become one of the central people in “anarchist club” discussion group. He was also involved in 1960’s counter-culture magazine Tähti (Star). Critical University (Kriittinen korkeakoulu), another informal think tank had anarchist research group which Leväaho was leading 1969–1974. Leväaho also participated to discussion club “Friends of the Future”-association formed by the 1980’s alternative movement.

Leväaho’s anarchism was pacifist and individualist and he did not believed in any mass action, thus besides his pioneering role he was practically isolated from the new anarchist movement which began to emerge in Finland from late 1980’s onwards, as new movement was heavily into activism and much influenced from people frustrated with the Communist Party. There were few links, such as anarchist seminar in Oulu 1984 which was also attended by people active in 1980’s squatting and zine movement, but eventually these links vanished.

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