

Textbooks on didactics and the religious instruction in the Finnish primary school teacher training colleges (Seminars) in 1863-1896

1. Introduction

Textbooks are a very interesting source of historical research and offer many approaches to analyses. One may observe six aspects:

- 1) Textbooks can be seen as a part of the history of literature.
- 2) Textbooks were written for schools in which their didactics and teaching methods may have had a great effect on practice.
- 3) Textbooks are a part of the history of science and the history of ideas, how new results and paradigms of science have appeared in the contents.
- 4) Textbooks have been instruments of-ideology, this is obvious, first of all in the textbooks of history, though also in the mother-tongue, religion and geography books.
- 5) Textbooks have always been under the control of the State and the Church, which have decided upon their acceptance or raot.
- 6) Textbooks have been written, for examole by teachers, priests and researchers. Often the publischers have been book

companies, but for instance in the last century, many Finnish teachers paid for all publishing costs themselves and that took an economic risk. Sometimes it was a great success, other times the sales were small. The economic aspects of textbooks have not been researched very intensively. (Andersson 1981) In my article I will concentrate on one aspect: how textbooks have reflected the development of didactic history in Finnish teacher training colleges (Seminars). Main attention is paid to two subjects: general didactics and religious instruction. Both subjects were very important in teacher training. The decision to establish teacher training was made in 1858, and began in 1863 in Jyväskylä. In the 1870's, two new Seminars were established, in Tammissaari in 1871 for women and in Uusi-kaarlepyy in 1873 for men. The fourth Seminar started in 1880 in Sortavala, located in Eastern Finland.

2. The first period (1863-70). Lecture and textbooks

The first Seminar began in Jyväskylä, in central Finland, in 1863. Uno Cygnaeus was appointed Head of this Seminar. In its planning, he availed himself of the experience gained during his tour abroad (1859-60). He based his plans primarily on the curriculum of the Swiss Wettingen Seminar, but also drew elements from school legislation in the Canton of Bern, from Froebel's kindergarten pedagogics and the Levana near Vienna. Despite these foreign models, the Jyväskylä Seminar was Cygnaeus' own creation (Nurmi 1988, 276). Most of the Seminar teachers had worked earlier in secondary schools. Uno Cygnaeus wanted to apply new guidelines for primary schools. The decree of 1863 set general guidelines, thus the teachers of the Jyväskylä Seminar had great freedom to plan the instruction of their own subjects.

Two teachers had the responsibility of teaching pedagogy and didactics: Uno Cygnaeus and Olai Wallin, who held the post of lecturer. As other teachers, Wallin had made a two-year-long tour of teacher training colleges in Germany and Switzerland and had collected teaching materials and books. In Leipzig he had studied logic and psychology with Ziller. When Wallin began teaching in Jyväskylä, Finnish textbooks of pedagogy did not exist. According to the decree of 1863, the Seminar teachers had to write textbooks both for the Seminar and for the primary schools. So Wallin's teaching was based on lectures, with students taking notes during the lessons and transcribing them in the evenings (Isosaari 1961,51, 72-83)

Wallin's lectures mainly dealt with pedagogy and didactics, psychology and the practical organisation of schools. Wallin used several sources to collect material for his lectures. His aim was to change Finnish schools through the teachers. One source was J. Rebsamen's lectures. *Über die praktische Schulführung* from Head of the Kreuzlingen Seminar. Another textbook was J. W. J. Curtman's *Lehrbuch der Erziehung und des Unterrichts I-II*. The third source was the German pedagogue, K. Bormann's *Schulkunde für evangelische Volksschullehrer*, which is based on the Schulregulations of 1854. However, Wallin analysed more liberal education institutes than Bormann. The fourth source was a book written by Adolph Diesterweg. These sources indicated, that Wallin knew very well the pedagogics of Germany and Switzerland, however he was a nationalist and patriotist. (Isosaari 1961, 72-83)

Uno Cygnaeus also knew the above mentioned textbooks. He recommended for instance Curtman's books to the teachers. His pedagogical ideas were based on the thinking of Pestalozzi, Diesterweg and Froebel. (Isosaari 1961, 83-86) It was very interesting that Bormann's conservative principles and Diesterweg's liberal ideas met in Jyväskylä without conflict. One explanation was, that Wallin and Cygnaeus emphasized

Finnish cultural values and educational goals. These were Christian education, the development of all talents, power to the children, and the Christian personality of the teacher. (Isosaari 1961,83-87).

Uno Cygnaeus aimed to integrate all subjects in the Seminar and to hold teacher meetings at the beginning of every term. Nestor Järvinen was appointed as the teacher of religion. He had completed one-year tour in Central Europe and was ready to start in autumn 1863. He had a better chance to select textbooks for his subject, but the problem was, that they were all written for the secondary school. One of the important goals was to acquaint the students with the primary school textbooks and to provide didactic norms for teaching, Järvinen had to give lectures and dictate essential points while his students took notes. (Kuikka 1973, 33-58).

The basic books of religious instruction was the Bible, which played a central role in Bible history and Church history. According to the model of Norwegian schools, a Bible for children was used. In addition to Finnish textbooks, several textbooks were translated from other languages. The German theologian Karl Barth had written many books, of which one was translated into Finnish. Typical of this book was the inclusion of original texts from the Bible and aspects of the history of salvation. In the religious instruction, there was great tension between the confessional centered line and the Bible-centered line. The first line emphasized close connections with the Church and confessional books, and the second line stressed general instruction based on the Bible. Järvinen was acquainted with German pedagogy and used both Christian Palmer's and Friedrich Schütze's publication in his lectures, especially in didactics. (Kuikka 1973, 71-119)

3. The second period (1871-1879). National or international line

In the 1870's, the number of Finnish Seminars increased, when two small towns in Western Finland got their own colleges, namely Tammisaari in 1871 and Uusikaarlepyy in 1873. Both were Swedishlanguage institutions.(Julistus 17.3.1871). At the same time, the atmosphere of school policy began to change. When the National Board of Education started in 1870, the Russian General C. von Kothen was appointed as its Head. It was a signal for Finland. One political group, the supporters of Panslavism, criticized the status of Finland, which had gotten too great political rights. Political tension began to become strained. (Kuikka - 1997,64-65).

Teaching of pedagogy and of didactics appeared in a new situation. Guidelines had to be decided. In the Jyväskylä Seminar O. Wallin decided to use the book written by the Swiss pedagog, Hans Rudolf Rüegg, as the basis for the syllabus for didactics. It was "Die Pädagogik in Übersichtlicher Darstellung" translated into Finnish by Ferdinand Ahlman. This book had been used in many Seminars, for example in Switzerland, Germany and in the Austrio-Hungarian Empire. The new Head of the Jyväskylä Seminar, K.G.Leinberg, had met Rüegg in 1868. This book did not get unanimous acceptance, it was too large and too difficult for students. Professor Z. J. Cleve, at the University of Helsinki, valued this book, claiming it would promote comprehension and support the independent evaluation of students.(Isosaari 1961, 108). Rüegg's book was based on several sources. Formulating the goal of education, it seems to encompass Hegel's philosophy. Its goal is to encourage the independent freedom of education, which means to create harmony with the will of God.

In the 1870s religious instruction was widely criticized for example by radical newspapers and theologians. The former

demanded, that religious instruction be removed altogether from school syllabuses, or at least be separated from other teaching, and taking over by the Church. The latter wanted to establish primary schools, that would stand on a firm religious ground. (Kuikka 1973, 128-132)

Textbooks of religious instruction followed the same guidelines as earlier. The Bible was used as much as possible, biblical quotations were taught in Church history. New textbooks from Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Switzerland and France were translated in Finnish. Although Finnish textbooks were written for secondary schools, in the Seminars they had different aims, namely didactic explanation. The criteria of the new textbooks were to further Bible-centered instruction and the history of salvation. The National Board of Education accepted new books on the basis of two experts' statements. One was usually a teacher of religion and a university professor. The Council of Bishops gave their approval regarding confessional aspects. (Kuikka 1973, 360-361).

In all Seminars the teaching of Christian doctrine was based on Luther's Small Catechism. The didactics of religious instruction were different. In Jyväskylä, it was based on a book by N. Järvinen, in Tammisaari on a book by the Swedish author Fr. Sandberg, and in Uusikaarlepyy on a book by the German author C. Schumann. Despite the different writers, these books had close connections. The Bible was the basis of religious instruction. The Catechism was the second central book. The framework of instruction was the confession of the Church. (Kuikka 1973, 362).

Although teachers of pedagogy and teachers of religion were unanimous about the general guidelines, they differed in some points, for instance about the image of man. N. Järvinen taught both religion and psychology, based on the Bible and explained according to the Lutheran doctrine that the image of a child includes the doctrine of original sin. Wallin, a teacher of

pedagogy, stressed Christian education too, but did not adopt this doctrine. (Isosaari 1961, 115-117, Kuikka 1973, 62).

4. The third period (1880-1896). Old or new guidelines

In the 1880s education changed very much. Political tension increased continuously in Finland. The reaction of the Finns was to develop all sectors of society and to protect the status of their autonomy. But Finns were not unanimous: language divided them into two parties: Fennomans (Finnish language supporters) and Swedomans (Swedish-language supporters). The development of primary school did not progress as generally as was wished. Fennomans demanded more secondary schools on the countryside, for example. Political tension appeared clearly, when the new Seminar was established in Sortavala in Eastern Finland. The Holy Synod proposed in the 1860s to establish a Russian seminar in Sortavala, but this was rejected. Discussion continued in the 1870s, an alternative for the Finns was a Finnish-language Seminar to educate primary school teachers for Carelia. Despite the conflicts, this proposal was accepted by the Czar. Perhaps one point had an effect: the Seminar was to give instruction both in the Lutheran and the Orthodox religions as Carelia had a large Orthodox population. (Kemppinen 1969, 10-11, 23-30).

Pedagogy followed several guidelines during this period. In 1886 O. Wallin published his own textbook on pedagogy. It produced a great cultural discussion, which focused on the school system and the value of teacher training. Bruno Boxström, in the Sortavala Seminar, started the discussion by criticizing Wallin's book. He could not accept it, because Wallin had used Cleve's and Rugg's books as sources, which were very close to Hegel's philosophy. Boxström stressed

Christian faith and the Bible as the basis of pedagogy. The discussion continued and indicated that unity between pedagogy and religion has been partly broken. Despite the criticism Wallin's book was included in the curriculum in Jyväskylä until 1893. (Isosaari 1961, 126-128).

A new lecturer, K. Jalkanen selected another pedagogical book written by Z. J. Cleve: *Koulujen opetusoppi* (Didactics of schools). Its basis was close to Hegel's philosophy, which had had a great influence at the University of Helsinki from the beginning of the 1830s. Professor Cleve wrote his book based on his lectures. Thus the pedagogy of the university and of teacher training followed the same guidelines. Cleve had criticized Herbart and his tradition in 1861. His book was published in 1885 and accepted as a textbook in the Tammi-saari and Uusikaarlepyy Seminars in that same year. According to Cleve's discipline or ethic, education should develop will and character. Teaching should expand knowledge and emotional life. In 1894 Jalkanen began his lectures on didactics by using a book by the German pedagogue F. Leutz (published I.ed.1882, II ed.1885). This book stressed the education of teaching, pedagogy and didactics based on psychology and ethics. Other principles were: centralization, development of a solid ethical character, awakening of interest as an aim of teaching and formal decrees that indicate very close connection to Herbart's tradition. This meant that the tradition of Hegel began to give way and the didactics of Herbart arose new guidelines. (Isosaari 1961, 138-155)

But the teaching of pedagogy was not consistent. In the Sortavala Seminar Boxström preferred religious conviction and a Christian view of life. So he continued the earlier tradition in Jyväskylä, pedagogy and the religious instruction were closely connected. (Isosaari 1964).

Religious instruction did not change in 1880- 1896. Perhaps a great change was moving from cognitive aims to formal and

didactic aims. Entrance examinations increased. Bible instruction continued more important than earlier, although the theological and pedagogical lines had different starting points. Luther's Small Catechism remained in a central position, though the Lutheran Church wanted to use a new Catechism accepted by the Church Council. The Church wanted to influence both teacher training and the primary school. In Church history instruction new textbooks included more national history than general history. One important part of confessional instruction was knowledge of the parish. It had an independent syllabus, though the hymnbook, divine service and the reading of Bible texts were also included in the Seminars' education. Didactics of religion was based on two books. N. Järvinen published his own didactics of religion, which was used in Jyväskylä and Sortavala. Another book was written by the Swedish pedagogue, W. Norlen, and used in Tammisaari and Uusikaarlepyy. Both books were based on the confessional pedagogy of religion. Both emphasized, in the same way, general aims for the primary schools, and preferred the same principles of teaching methods, which differed greatly from the didactics of Herbart. A new point, that emerged in Norlen's didactics, was the pupil-centered principle that teaching should be realized according to the conditions of the pupils. Another point is the question about the basis of instruction of the school. Earlier, the Church as a basis was emphasized. At this point, when the State took over responsibility for the school system and curriculum, it was thought, that perhaps the aims of religious instruction should be founded on the general aims of the school. Both didactics further stressed the task of a teacher: he should be a Christian, who knows the truth of the Bible and follows it as a model for his pupils. (Kuikka 1973, 317-354, 362-363) .

5. Summary

When the first primary school teacher training college (Seminar) started in 1863, the lecturer of pedagogy and didactics had no textbooks, but instead used learning materials, lectures and textbooks, which he was acquainted with from Seminars in Middle Europe. These textbooks provided a clear structure of didactics, which the lecturer joined with the national values of education. The tradition of Hegel appeared in the lectures of Professor Z. J. Cleve at the University of Helsinki in the 1860s, and extended in the 1880s to the Seminars. Later it began to give way, when the didactics of Herbart became popular in the Seminars and at the University. Thus, didactics in the Seminars and at the University were very closely connected.

When the religious instruction began, secondary school textbooks were used, though the aim was to stress didactic norms. Textbook criteria were Bible-centered and loyal to the confession of the Church. Therefore, the Bible and Luther's Small Catechism were the most important books. It is true, that the unity between pedagogy and religion began to break in the 1870s, but nevertheless a Christian conviction was preferred as a very important qualification for a teacher. Perhaps the views about the image of man were different: pedagogy was based on Christian humanism and religion was based on the Lutheran doctrine of original sin. (Järvinen 1882. Norlen 1884)

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