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SAVAGES AND BARBARIANS?

*An Example of Creating a Respectable Past
for Finnish-speaking Finns in the 19th Century*

R. D. Anderson has summed up the two main patterns of the 19th-century academic nationalism: (i) universities expressing cultural unity in disunited nations prior to political unification, like in Germany, and (ii) university intellectuals taking the lead in creating new nationalisms based on language and history, like within the Russian and Habsburg empires.¹

During the 19th century, those involved in the process of building the Finnish nation within the Russian Empire did not have much to offer in terms of national history. For centuries Finland had been under foreign rule, it lacked great historical monuments, and internationally recognized achievements in the fields of art, literature, war and science were few. During the first half of the 19th century, the Finnish language was vernacular and the language of education and administration was that of a previous ruler Sweden.

Jürgen Habermas is widely known and discussed for his critical theory of knowledge and human interests. In this article I maintain that his notion of emancipatory knowledge, described as self-knowledge or self-reflection which leads to a transformed consciousness, is an interesting and useful tool of looking at the construction of Finnish national identity in the 19th century. In order to do so, an

example of the Habermas' perspective transformation is offered from the field of education. An effort to interpret Finnish history and Finnish language as lasting national resources of genuine cultural value was made in theological lecture halls from 1850s onward. This effort turned out to be successful and win popular support in the emergence of Finnish national awareness.

Miroslav Hroch in his *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe: a comparative analysis of the social composition of patriotic groups among the smaller European nations* distinguishes different periods within the development of nationalism in the smaller European nations. Phase A he describes as *Landespatriotismus* in which nationalism was confined to the educated academics of the countries. Phase B, in turn, is characterized by activists' political agitation for the national cause. This is the period when a perspective transformation took place in Finland. Hroch concludes that this period began in Finland in 1831 with the founding of the Finnish Literature Society, which started to develop the Finnish language into a literary form and to publish its works systematically in Finnish. Phase B came to an end by the 1880s, when period C, the popular national awakening, ensued.²

This article offers an example of the new emancipatory mentality that was introduced into the Finnish discussion of its national past. In Hroch's terms it exemplifies phase B, when the educated university elite propagated new views among the emerging educated class, the university students. These students were theologians, future Lutheran pastors, which during the period in question formed the largest group of educated people in Finland.

University of Helsinki in the 1850s

In 1852 the new statutes regulating academic life at the University of Helsinki were passed and went into effect the following year. Their aim was to control the students more closely: to prevent their defiance and the outbursts of criticism which had taken place in the 1840s and in the beginning of 1850s. The student activism had been rather moderate: students refused to go to classes given by the Rus-

sian professors, threw rocks through some windows and even exploded some kind of device in the courtyard of one of the professors. Nevertheless, in the eyes of the Russian officials they had displayed their disobedience and their open disrespect for the authorities, as, for example, when they refused to take part in a ball held in the honor of the Russian general governor in Finland.

The political situation in Europe provided the motivation for the new statutes. The Russian officials, and especially Nicholas I, were quite displeased with the developments in Europe. Suppression of the freedom of expression, which in Russia included abolishing chairs in Philosophy, also occurred in Finland, the idea being that in this manner dangerous, liberal ideas could be prevented from entering the Russian Empire.

In this context Finnish pastors-to-be were offered, for the first time ever, a lecture series on the theme "The Development of the Church of the Fatherland" (*Isänmaan kirkon kehitys*).³ During the academic year of 1853-54 Bengt Olof Lille (1807-1875), Professor of Church History, lectured two hours each week on this theme. He was one of the few members of the academic community who were fluent in Finnish. From 1853-1868 Professor Lille gave altogether what would today be considered 12 lecture series on Finnish Church History.⁴

In this article I will take a look at an important phase of the historiography of the Finnish speaking Finns before the 12th century as well as in the 12th century, during the time when Finland slowly started to become integrated into the sphere of Swedish dominance. What actually took place in Finland during this period remains almost entirely unknown and there are no known sources that depict actual historical events from a Finnish point of view. The only sources we have are a liturgical legend and a folk poem which tells the story of a Finnish peasant murdering St. Henry (Henrik), a bishop, who quite early on became the patron saint of Finland. St. Henry accompanied the Swedish king Eric to Finland. Both the legend and the poem, which exists in two versions, date from at least a century after the alleged incident. It is thought that the crusade took place in 1157, and some Russian sources even suggest an earlier one organized by the Swedes.⁵

However, as mentioned above, the actual historical events will not be my main concern, but instead the creation of national history. Here we shall see an example how an emancipatory interpretation of an ancient Finnish nation was created and passed on to students of theology. This new interpretation challenged the previously authoritative views of foreign scholars, casting the history of a time which seemed to be beyond historical research into new light.

History and Politics – the Forgotten National Past

Anthony F. Upton has pointed out that there is no nation without history; national history celebrates both the values of a nation and points out its enemies. This was recognized already in the 19th century by the circle of opposition-minded young Finnish intellectuals, the so-called Saturday Society, at the University of Helsinki. Lille as well as Gabriel Rein, Professor of History, were members of the Saturday Society, and so were also the holy trinity of Finnish nationalism: Johan Vilhelm Snellman, “the national philosopher”, Elias Lönnrot, editor of the national epic *Kalevala*, and Johan Ludvig Runeberg, “the national poet”.⁶

In 1846, one of the Saturday Society members, J. J. Nervander, Professor of Physics, criticized Snellman’s program of national awakening, especially the high priority which was placed on the founding of Finnish national literature. According to Nervander, the Finns constituted a people because they had a common language, but not a nation since they did not have a history. Therefore, what Finland needed in the first place was not a Finnish literature, as Snellman had claimed, but a common Finnish history. Unfortunately, the creation of a national history in this sense – a history of the Finnish-speaking Finns – required political independence, and was therefore, according to Nervander, beyond the reach of the Finns. While waiting for more favorable political circumstances, Finns should in his opinion behave like the children of Israel in slavery in Egypt: prosper, multiply and wait for those seven hardships which would set them free.⁷

Not everyone shared Nervander's views and the construction of Finnish national history began well before the country achieved political independence. The Finnish past, as pictured by Nervander's close friend Lille, was not a recollection, but a new interpretation. It included a new interpretation or rather a new perspective on the elements which constituted the ancient Finnish "nation". It chose to examine the previous underdog, the Finnish-speaking majority of Finland, and its history.

The extant manuscript of Lille's lecture on Finnish Church History starts with the Swedish crusade into Finland in 1156 or 1157 and with its leader, King Eric IX or Eric the Saint. Lille recalled the standard view that Eric was driven into Finland by his eagerness for the Christian cause and that the crusade had been a holy war.

Without denying the many favors Eric performed for the Church I think that we can maintain that the crusade was strongly motivated by political reasons – it might be that the crusade was undertaken solely on political grounds.

The main reason for the crusade was, according to Lille, Eric's security policy. He maintained that the Estonians and eastern peoples in general were dangerous and restless neighbors who every now and then raided Sweden. In his opinion it was understandable and typical of the era of the crusades that the main objective of pacifying the fierce, warlike Finns was combined with an attempt to spread Christianity. Conversion of the Finns would have been indeed the best way of removing the threat to Sweden. Lille thus suggested that the Swedish crusade in Finland was not a religious enterprise, or even motivated by religion. Instead, religion was of secondary importance and was used as a political tool.⁸

Lille's personal friend Gabriel Rein (1800-1867), Professor of History, gave lectures on Finnish history at the same time as Lille gave his in the Faculty of Theology. Rein's lectures on Finnish history, dating from the 1850s and published in 1870-1871, offer a possibility to compare the teaching of History, on the one hand, and Church History on the other. The most notable differences were that it was Lille who emphasized the emancipatory knowledge and crusaders lack of religious motivation. Both agreed that the crusade was not

very effective in terms of producing instant religious change in Finland and that in connection with the crusade the Finnish coastal areas were colonized.⁹

Relying on tradition, Professor Lille came to the conclusion that the Swedish troops came ashore somewhere in the Turku area. King Eric soon returned to Sweden, but left some of his troops to protect the missionary work. Leaving a party behind meant also a couple of other things. Lille maintained that it showed that even though the war was won, soldiers were still needed in order to control the locals. They were also needed to protect the colonization of Finland.¹⁰

But what were the living conditions of the Finns during the time of the invasion? As Lille stated, there are very few sources on this. However, this did not deter him from drawing conclusions. Claims that in those distant times Finland was mere wilderness and endless swamps were not correct. During the time of the Swedish crusade, Lille argued, agriculture was known and practiced in Finland. This in his opinion was evident on the basis of Finnish language, which had indigenous words, e.g., for agricultural tools and methods. "Our forefathers", as Lille repeatedly called the ancient Finns, were farmers and not nomadic hunters. The Finnish names for village (*kylä*), room (*huone*), sauna, and barn (*aitta*) testified to a permanent social structure of some sort and a certain stage of cultural development. In addition, if people had not lived in organized communities, it would have been impossible to get them together "so soon" to expel the "uninvited aliens". Rein spoke of the nomadic agriculture (as in slash-and-burn cultivation, *kaskitalous*) of the Finns. He, like Lille, used etymology in order to prove that the Finns cultivated land even before the first crusade.¹¹

Although used by the most notable representative of the Finnish Enlightenment, Henrik Gabriel Porthan (d. 1804) already in 1788, this method of examining language and vocabulary as proof of cultural history and development was an international research novelty in the 1850s. The generally recognized founder of this approach was Adalbert Kuhn in his *Zur ältesten Geschichte der indogermanischen Völker*, 1845, and its developer was Adolphe Pictet (in his *Les origines indoeuropéennes ou les Arayas primitifs, essai de paléontologie linguistique*, 1853-1863), who called his method linguistic paleontology.¹²

Lille told his students, however, that the social order of the Finns was rather undeveloped; the clans and families did not have a single, common leader. Therefore the victory of Eric the Saint was easy; his opposition was not organized enough and could be defeated in a single battle. Lille explained that although it was not known where the battle actually took place, it was recorded in the legend that Finns came to meet their uninvited guests, which naturally gave the listeners the impression that their “forefathers” had actively resisted them. They lost the battle, and many were killed when they did not submit themselves to invaders and refused to adopt the new religion. According to Lille, the Swedish soldiers were the first “missionaries” into Finland. He stated that what took place in Finland was quite common elsewhere as well. In ancient times, as he said, it was customary among the uncivilized peoples that their conversion into Christianity followed a similar pattern: defeat, submission and baptism without any personal commitment. For Lille, however, Finnish resistance was more organized than for Rein; in Lille’s opinion the organized resistance itself was a sign of the developed nature of the early Finnish society.¹³

The main intention of Lille’s lecture was, however, to re-examine the supposedly uncivilized nature and way of life of the ancient Finnish forefathers. At the very first start of his lecture he argued that the Finns had risen above the state of nature before the Swedish attack. He thought this applied to their culture as well, and as evidence of it he mentioned monogamy, which he thought was already institutionalized among the early Finns. Rein disagreed with this. He taught in his lectures that Estonian sources and perhaps even the *Kalevala* gave evidence that not monogamy, but polygyny was practiced among the pagan Finns. But more compelling evidence was yet to come. The *Kalevala*, a collection of Finnish folk poetry, was first published in 1835 and in an extended version in 1849. One cannot really exaggerate the effect it had on the early formation of the Finnish national identity. It found its way to Lille’s classes as well. Although he admitted that the early Finns were illiterate, their poetry, as shown in the *Kalevala* or in the *Kanteletar*, proved that they were not savages living in a state of nature. As a true child of the Reformation, Lille maintained that if the Catholic Church had done as it should and supported the development of the Finnish-speaking people, they

would have developed a Finnish-speaking high culture already quite early on, based on what they had already achieved.¹⁴

According to Lille and the popular sentiment of the time, the *Kalevala* was not only poetry, but a source of history as well. It shed new light on, among other things, the religion of the ancient Finns. Referring to M. A. Castrén (1813-1852), the first Professor of the Finnish Language and a fellow of the Saturday Society, Lille said that *Jumala* (the Finnish name for God), was the oldest god or deity in Finland. According to this kind of reasoning Lille made it look like that the Christian God of Finns (*Jumala*) was actually the God of the forefathers, and the same applied the other way round. The notion of a “primitive” religion was changed into that of an “original, uncorrupted” religion. The interpretation was not originally invented by Lille. In the first decade of the 19th century C. A. Gottlund had come up with the idea, in the spirit of Romanticism, that the pagan Finns were actually monotheists.

Challenging Foreign Scholars and Their Interpretations

Gottlund, whom Lille knew personally, had studied folk poetry and Gottlund’s main target of criticism was an influential book by Friedrich Rühls. His book *Schweden und seine Bewohner* (1809) was translated into Swedish under the title *Svea Rikets Historia från de äldsta tider till Konung Carl XII död*.

According to Rühls, the religion of the pagan Finns was fetishism. They had no cultural achievements, and they had never been free or independent as a people. In his opinion, the Finns never posed a threat to Sweden. The crusade had been organized because of “higher motives”, in order to honour the Almighty and spread Christianity. Christianity, however, took root very slowly in Finland due to the primitive state of the Finnish language, which was undeveloped and lacked supernatural, abstract notions. These views reflected the standard interpretation of the Finnish history. Rühls’s books were to be found in several student libraries of the University of Helsinki of the time. From this point of view we can

understand why the *Kalevala* was so important for the Finnish-minded Fennomans. It testified against Rûhs and his claims that Finnish was a primitive language and that Finns had no cultural accomplishments.¹⁵

Lille's lecture manuscript includes some marginalia. The only book he mentioned was the *Chronicle of Bishops* (*Piispainkronikka*), which tells the story of the first crusade. There is also a short list of names of earlier Swedish historians whose books were available in Helsinki and who served as his discussion partners, so to speak: Rhyzelius, Lagerbring and Peringsiöld. The discussion, however, is not available for us to hear or read: in the original source material the lecturer did not comment on them. But when Lille's lecture is compared with contents of the books by these writers, we can see the historiographical background of Lille's own presentation and just how his opposition to the Swedish interpretation of Finnish history.

There is no way of telling today what Lille taught his students concerning Peringskiöld or how he commented on such books as *Bibliskt slächt-register* (1713, a genealogy from Adam to Jesus), *Then första boken af Svea och Götha minningmerken* (1710) and *Åttartal för Svea och Götha konungahus* (1725). They have very little to do with Lille's own presentation. Perhaps Peringskiöld was merely used as an example of historical fables.¹⁶

Referring to Andreas Rhyzelius (born 1677) and his book *Episcoposcopia sviogothica*, Lille agreed that crusade was undertaken in order to secure the Swedish coast. *Svigothia munita eller historisk förteckning på borgar, fästningar, slott som forðna tider hafva varit och än till en del äro uti Svea och Götha riken* (1744), counts the Swedish castles, among other things, and could have been used to outline the ancient borders of Sweden.

However, the main target of Lille's criticism seems to have been Sven Lagerbring (born 1707), the reformer of Swedish historiography. Lille wrote against Lagerbring, who had written a comprehensive history of Sweden (*Swea Rikets Historia*) and its second volume, published in 1773, dealing with Finland. Lagerbring's books were well known in Finland and several copies were available in the student libraries in Helsinki.¹⁷

Lagerbring was convinced that the ancient Finns had lived in the state of nature. He thought that Finland and its pagan inhabit-

ants had from time immemorial been under Swedish dominion, and that the crusade had merely re-established the previous state of affairs. Lagerbring mentioned that it had been lately brought out that Finns had pillaged the Swedish coastal areas. In his opinion it was more probable that the Finns had not conducted raids into Sweden, because “living in the state of nature”, they lacked political ambitions and leaders, and, in addition, there were no sources confirming these attacks. The sources testified rather the contrary; Eric the Saint offered the Finns Christian peace and Christian faith (*Guds Tro och Frid*), but was rejected. Even if Eric was a great king, said Lagerbring, he saw nothing wrong in waging a legitimate war to defend the Christian faith – it was typical of the time. Finns were killed for religion’s sake, and even if his method was wrong, king’s heart was virtuous.¹⁸

It should be mentioned that the university students attending Lille’s lectures had not studied Finnish History or Finnish Church History during their basic education; the first course book for schools on Finnish Church History was not published until 1875.¹⁹ As a result, Lille’s lectures had some additional value for their novelty. They participated in the battle of history on many fronts, political and religious. He lectured on Finnish history from the point of view of those who had been defeated both in battle and in later historiography. He denied the right of foreign authors, especially those on the “winning side”, the Swedes, to interpret the history of Finland as a footnote to the history of Sweden. The Finnish-speaking people had their own “history” not only before the Russian conquest of 1809, but even before the first Swedish crusade. One should also bear in mind that if there was a Finnish history and a Finnish-speaking culture even before the 12th century, “history” and “culture” were given to Finns neither by Swedes nor by Russians for that matter. Lille also made it clear that in his opinion the religious arguments could not be used to explain or justify the attack on Finland. In his utterances to future religious professionals of the country he was very specific on this point: political history should not be interpreted in religious terms if the aims and motivation of a historical event were primarily political.

Racially Inferior Finns? Moulding the Opinions of the Future Clergy

J. J. Nervander was of the opinion that the Finnish-minded national movement, in order to have any success at all, had to be movement of the peasants, and not of the elite.²⁰ In its early phase, however, it was a movement of the academic elite educated at the University of Helsinki. In 1853 the teaching of national history made its first appearance in the theological lecture hall in Helsinki. In the context of that time the Russian authorities surely saw nothing wrong in criticizing the Swedes or Swedish historiography, or in claiming that Finns had fought against the invaders. Similar criticism directed against later Russian invasions of Finland or against Russian historiography was out of question, but we can, if we like, speculate on two things.

First, the lectures painted a picture of an ancient national history that had nothing to do with Russia. Secondly, they described the unwanted invasion of a foreign power into Finland, and a similar endeavor had taken place also in recent memory as well. It is possible that these two implicit aspects of the lecture did not go unnoticed by the students, but since we have no sources on this, we can merely speculate.

Who would define what it meant to be Finnish: Swedes, Germans or Russians? Here we have seen an example of a Finnish scholar choosing to define this himself. For those students attending his lectures he created like a memory of the long forgotten past, of a time when the Finnish-speaking people were militarily defeated. The lecture gave Finns, who had gained a reputation for their cultural backwardness, savagery and primitiveness, a respectable past. When the number of Finnish-speaking students of theology started to increase during the latter half of the 19th century, the new interpretation of their noble forefathers undoubtedly fell on fertile soil.

The general theme "university and nationalism" has received some attention in recent Finnish research. As a rule, however, the role of theological education as well as of the lectures in other faculties during the middle of the 19th century have been often neglected. The lectures are, however, quite important in understanding the creation

of national history in Finland; unlike all printed publications, such lectures were not under the supervision of the censorship officials.²¹

Lille claimed that the Swedish historians were wrong. When compared with the simultaneous lectures in History, Lille's contemporary Gabriel Rein was more moderate in his views than Lille. He did not emphasize the level of the cultural development of the ancient Finns. When we examine what Lille's follower in the chair of Church History later lectured on the Swedish attack, the change of interest is obvious. The earlier Swedish historiography was no longer being criticized in the Faculty of Theology in the 1870s.²² In the 1850s, however, the situation called for a comment on cultural development – or the lack of it – if one wished to take part in the contemporary discussion.

The racial ideology of Scandinavism, defining race by the language people spoke, had arrived in Finland and the student circles. It proclaimed that Finland was inhabited by two races. The Germanic, Arayan people, i.e., the Swedish, were the master race with the capacity to conquer and rule. The Swedes were active, vigorous people with intelligence and beautiful features. The Finns, small clumsy people with big heads and square faces, were passive and possessed various kinds of barbaric, undeveloped traits. According to this line of argumentation, the Swedish race was the one capable of creating culture, whereas Finns were suited for a quiet life and manual labour such as farming. This ideology of the racial inferiority of the Finns and of the racial superiority of the Swedish was discussed in the student circles. It found supporters among the Swedish-speaking educated class especially after 1855, when it was propagated by the Norwegian historian P. A. Munch and the Swedish journalist August Sohlman.²³

In the international field of anthropological research Johann Friedrich Blumenbach (1852-1849) was influential in classifying Finns as belonging to the race of Mongols, and, as Aira Kemiläinen has shown, this view persisted in different forms over 100 years despite the fact that Finnish-speaking Finns did not look particularly Asian. Together with other anthropological theories that also classified Finns as a culturally inferior race, racial arguments were used against Fennomans in the battle for the cultural hegemony inside Finland. The racial argument is of vital importance in understand-

ing the language feud between the Swedish and Finnish-speaking population in Finland. Even the Finnish civil war was occasionally seen in racial terms; the less developed Finns were not only uglier than the Swedish-speaking Finns, but they also supported revolutionary socialism.²⁴

The argument was interwoven in the discussions of the political and cultural rights of the Swedish-speaking Finns, later receiving new impetus from the development of genetics. "Positive racial hygienics" was actively practiced in the early 20th century in order to preserve the so-called Swedish race in Finland. The race issue remained relevant for quite a long time until the experiences of the Second World War put a sudden end to the speculations concerning the cultural superiority of an Aryan race.²⁵ As we have seen, starting in the 1850s, Lutheran pastors were educated in a different spirit; Finnish-speaking Finns were not a lower race incapable of creating culture.

Lille clearly criticized Lagerbring's "state of nature" theory, but he also took part in the popular racial discussion. His lecture gave a rather different picture of the racial characteristics of the Finns than the ideology of Scandinavism. Even the Finnish forefathers of the 12th century were not savages living in and out of nature and running through the woods. They knew agriculture, there was a social order of some sort and they defended their country together against common enemies. Contrary to the claims of Scandinavism, the early Finns were not incapable of creating culture. Their religion was in no way barbaric, but in its core monotheistic. It was not "developed", but instead uncorrupted, for monotheism was considered to be the original form of religion. Although the early Finns were illiterate, they were nevertheless a people of poets, as their body of folk poetry suggested.²⁶

The University of Helsinki and the Faculty of Theology were both quite small in 1853. The total number of students was about 400. About 70 of them studied theology and 40 students of theology took Lille's class in the autumn 1853, and 30 in the spring term of 1854. Raymond Pearson has pointed out that the relationship between nationalism and history is a reciprocal one; although nationalism makes use of history at the same time it encourages the actual study of history. Lectures on Finnish Church History were an example of

this double process.²⁷ Nevertheless, the teaching of history was not only an academic enterprise, but in the context of the times also highly political in nature.

In 1853 the pastors-to-be heard lectures for the first time on the history of Finland. They heard Lille disavow the religious nature of the first Swedish “crusade” into Finland in the 12th century, and they heard him affirm the respectable past of their pagan Finnish forefathers, including their poetry, their cultivation of the land, and their social structure. The lectures questioned the foreign, authoritative view of early Finns as savages, incapable of ever creating any “culture” and thus took part in the contemporary discussion of the cultural development of the Finnish-speaking Finns.

The clergy of the Lutheran church formed the largest educated estate in the country. It also served the needs of the Finnish-speaking majority of the people. Throughout the country the pastors educated at the Imperial Alexander University in Helsinki were in close contact with the local people as pastors and school teachers – certainly more so than the educated, nationalistic elite of the capital. Later in the 19th century the pro-Finnish movement found support especially in the representatives of the peasants and clergy in the Finnish Diet. Therefore, it is rather natural to conclude that pastors’ academic education in creating the respectable Finnish past for the Finnish-speaking people should not be overlooked when examining Finnish nationalism and nationalistic interpretations of history. Future research will explore what kind of approach to national history the pastors represented – if any – in their local parishes and in the education of school children. Since altogether 12 courses, like the one portraying the 12th century crusade in a radically new light, were given during the period of 15 years, several student generations listened to Lille’s lectures. One might expect that the interpretations by a professor in Church History did not remain within the walls of the University.

Eric Hobsbawm’s treatment of Finnish nationalism in his *Nations and Nationalities* since 1780 is quite brief and his interpretation of it is largely based on Miroslav Hroch’s *Social Preconditions of National Revival*. According to Hobsbawm, the nationalists did not concentrate on the Finnish language until the 1860s, and the Finns re-

mained state patriots who were loyal to the Russian Emperor until the policy of Russification changed the situation after the 1880s.²⁸

However, the question of Finnish language was the key issue of Finnish nationalism throughout all of its “phases”, mainly because there was little else to bargain for. With Sweden’s defeat by Russia still in recent memory in the background, disloyalty to Imperial Russia was perhaps not a genuine option, and Hobsbawm was perhaps ill-advised to use public, official speeches in order to study the popular sentiments; after all, open opposition to Russia usually resulted in deportation from Finland.

Those who write the history of nationalism from the point of view of the development of a main stream culture may not be able to do justice to those countries that witnessed a movement of previously marginalized people and like in the Finnish case, offer some rather textbook examples of Habermas’ emancipatory knowledge and perspective transformation.

In his criticism of E. J. Hobsbawm’s treatment of nationalism Adrian Hastings, Emeritus Professor of Theology at the University of Leeds, has maintained that in order to understand the “construction of nationhood” the role of religion and the clergy should not be overlooked.²⁹ At least in the case of 19th century Finland, Hastings’ claims seem to be of importance. In Finland, the demands of the emerging Finnish-speaking nationality focused on the status of the Finnish language. Lille’s lectures were in Swedish, which was the official language of the University of Helsinki. But at the same time he started his emancipatory lectures on Finnish history, the students of Theology made the vernacular-is-beautiful -choice and in February 1853 they declared Finnish as the main language of the Theological Student Body.³⁰ It was the first Finnish-speaking organisation within the University of Helsinki.

Thus the students of theology in the University of Helsinki took sides with the Finnish language and were offered a new emancipatory interpretation of Finnish history already in the 1850s.

Notes

- 1 R. D. Anderson, *The Formation of National Elites: The British Case. In University and Nation. The University and the Making of the Nation in Northern Europe in the 19th and 20th Century*. Studia Historica 53. Finnish Historical Society: Helsinki 1996, 113; Raymond Pearson, History and Historians in the Service of Nation-Building. In *National History and Identity. Approaches to the Writings of National History in the North-East Baltic Region Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*. Ed. Michael Branch. Studia Fennica. Ethnologica 6. Helsinki 1999.
- 2 Miroslav Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe: a comparative analysis of the social composition of patriotic groups among the smaller European nations* (originally published in Prague in 1968). Cambridge 1985, 23, 72, 178.
- 3 The first Finnish professor in Church History, B. O. Lille, received his historical training from August Neander at the University of Berlin during 1836-1837. Church History did not become a part of the education of the Finnish clergy until 1840. Index praelectionum in imperiali litterarum universitate Alexandria Fenniae publice privatimque habendarum. Helsingforsiae. 1830-1839; Tarja-Liisa Luukkanen, B. O. Lille ja kirkkohistorian opetuksen alkuvaiheet Aleksanterin yliopiston teologisessa tiedekunnassa. Historiallisia tutkimuksia 216. Suomalaisen kirjallisuuden seura: Helsinki 2000, 32-44; Die Deutsche Kirchengeschichtsforschung und die Entstehung der Disziplin Kirchengeschichte als universitäres, theologisches Lehrfach in Finland. - *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 11/2002, 76-80.
- 4 *Förteckningar öfver föreläsningar och öfningar, hvilka vid Kejsarliga Alexanders-Universitet i Finland af Professorer och öfvriga Lärare under Läseåret – komma att anställas*. Helsingfors 1853-1867, 3.
- 5 For a modern account of the first crusade to Finland, see Eino Jutikkala & Kauko Pirinen, *A History of Finland*. Helsinki 1996, 40-47; Mauno Jokipii. *Historiallinen Aikakauskirja* 2002.
- 6 Anthony F Upton, History and National Identity: some Finnish Examples. In *National History and Identity. Approaches to the Writings of National History in the North-East Baltic Region Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*. Ed. Michael Branch. *Studia Fennica. Ethnologica* 6. Helsinki 1999, 153, 56.
- 7 Nervander reminded Snellman that the language spoken by the majority of the people had never yet replaced the language of the educated anywhere in the world, if the latter was a living language. He raised

serious doubts whether this could be accomplished in Finland for the first time in the world history. With his delightful sarcasm Nervander added that if one believed in the rise of the Finnish-speaking culture, one should also believe in all kinds of absurdities like in the rise of Estonian culture or, indeed, in the culture of the Lapps. J. V. Snellman, *Samlade arbeten* V, 1992, 627-628 (in Nervander's private letter to Snellman in 1846).

- 8 HUL (Helsinki University Library), Coll 127.1, *Föreläsningar i Finsk Kyrkohistoria* [Lectures on Finnish Church History], 1.
- 9 HUL (Helsinki University Library), Coll 127.1, *Föreläsningar i Finsk Kyrkohistoria* [Lectures on Finnish Church History], 1; Gabriel Rein *Föreläsningar öfver Finlands historia. Förra delen*. Helsingfors 1870, 43-51, 87 (on Eric's motives for the crusade).
- 10 Rein agreed already in 1831 that the Finnish coastal areas were colonized in connection with the crusade. HUL, Coll 127.1, *Föreläsningar i Finsk Kyrkohistoria* [Lectures on Finnish Church History], 1, s.a.; Rein *Finlands forntid i chronologisk öfversigt, åtföljd av de förnämsta händelser ur Rysslands och Sveriges historia. Ett försök*. Helsingfors 1831, 4; 1870, 43-51.
- 11 HUL, Coll 127.1, *Föreläsningar i Finsk Kyrkohistoria* [Lectures on Finnish Church History], 1; Rein 1870, 17-18, 25, 88.
- 12 Osmo Ikola, *Porthan suomalaisen kielentutkimuksen tiennäyttäjänä. In Porthanin monet kasvot*. Ed. Juha Manninen. Suomalaisen kirjallisuuden seura: Helsinki 2000, 115-116.
- 13 HUL, Coll 127.1, *Föreläsningar i Finsk Kyrkohistoria* [Lectures on Finnish Church History], 1.
- 14 HUL, Coll 127.1, *Föreläsningar i Finsk Kyrkohistoria* [Lectures on Finnish Church History], 1.
- 15 Friedrich Rühs, *Svea Rikets Historia från de äldsta tider till Konung Carl XII död*. Stockholm 1823, 143, 144-145 (the pious Eric weeping for the Finns slain in the battle, because as pagans they could not enter Heaven); M. G. Schybergson, *Historiens studium vid Åbo Universitet. Åbo universitets lärdomshistoria. 3. Historien*. Helsingfors 1891, 24, 150; Ilmari Heikinheimo, *Kaarle Aksel Gottlund. Elämä ja toiminta* 1. Porvoo 1933, 289-292; Päiviö Tommila, *Historiantutkijan muotokuva. Suomen historian käsikirjoja* 17:2. SHS. Porvoo 1998, 158; Luukkanen 2000, 136-137.
- 16 For a list of Peringskiöld's books available to students in Helsinki, see *Finska student-bibliotekets katalog. Suomalaisen ylioppilaskirjaston luettelo* 1872. Helsingfors 1873, 128, 133; On Peringskiöld and his contribution in creating a great past for Sweden, see Sten Lindroth *Svensk lärdomshistoria. Stormaktstiden*. Södertälje 1989, 330-332.

- 17 Sten Lindroth, *Svensk lärdomshistoria. Frihetstiden*. Södertälje 1989, 678-687.
- 18 HUL, Coll 127.1, *Föreläsningar i Finsk Kyrkohistoria* [Lectures on Finnish Church History], 1. Sven Lagerbring, *Swea Rikes Historia. Ifrån De äldsta tider Till De närvarande. Andra Delen som innefattar Rikets öden från år 1060 til 1300*. Stockholm 1773, 154, 155.
- 19 L. L. Laurén, *Sammanställning af de viktigaste kyrkohistoriska fakta i Finland*. Helsingfors 1875.
- 20 Snellman, *Samlade arbeten* V, 627-628 (in Nervander's private letter to Snellman in 1846).
- 21 Eino Murtorinne, *Suomalainen teologia autonomian kautena* (1828-1918). Helsinki 1986, 58; Den fennomanska rörelsen och Finlands kyrka 1850-1914. In *Kyrkan och nationalism i Norden. Nationalism och skandinavism i de nordiska folkkyrkorna under 1800-talet*. Utg. Ingmar Brohed. Lund. 1998, 381-391; Ilkka Liikanen, *Fennomania ja kansa. Joukkokärjestytyksen läpimurto ja Suomalaisen puolueen synty*. Historiallisia tutkimuksia 191. Suomen historiallinen seura: Helsinki 1995, 98-102; Tommila 1998, 154-177; Markku Heikkilä, *Teologia*. In *Suomen tieteen historia 2. Humanistiset ja yhteiskuntatieteet*. Porvoo 2000, 18-63; Päiviö Tommila, *Historia*. In *Suomen tieteen historia 2. Humanistiset ja yhteiskuntatieteet*. Porvoo 2000, 66-71.
- 22 HUL, Archive of the Swedish Literature Society 629.4 (Professor Herman Råbergh on the arrival of Christianity in Finland).
- 23 Kemiläinen's informative book deals with the various theories of the Finnish race that had been advanced in international discussions and anthropological research beginning with 17th century. Most of these ascribed negative or inferior racial characteristics to the Finns. Aira Kemiläinen, *Suomalaiset, outo, pohjoinen kansa: Rotuteoriat ja kansalinen identiteetti*. Historiallisia tutkimuksia 177. Suomen historiallinen seura: Helsinki. 1993, 145; On race ideology, on student discussions and hopes of Finland becoming reunited with Sweden, see also Sakari Kuusi, *Aksel August Granfelt. Elämä ja toiminta*. Otava: Helsinki. 1946, 117-130; Pirinen & Jutikkala 1996, 318-319, 320-325; Päivi Molarius, "Veren äänen" velvoitteet – yksilö rodun, perimän ja ympäristön puristuksessa. In *Uusi uljas ihminen eli modernin pimeä puoli*. Ed. Marja Härkämaa & Markku Mattila. Jyväskylä 1998, 95-97.
- 24 Pekka Hämäläinen, *Suomenruotsalaisten rotukäsityksiä vallankumouksen ja kansalaissodan aikoina*. In *Mongoleja vai germaaneja – rotuteorioiden suomalaiset*. Ed. Aira Kemiläinen. Historiallinen arkisto 86. Suomen historiallinen seura: Helsinki 1985, 409-415. Marjatta Hietala, *Rotuhygieniä*. In *Mongoleja vai germaaneja – rotuteorioiden suomalaiset*.

- Ed. Aira Kemiläinen. Historiallinen arkisto 86. Suomen historiallinen seura: Helsinki 1995. For a comprehensive study on the relations of class, language, and the civil war in Finland, see Pekka Hämäläinen, *Luokka ja kieli vallankumouksen Suomessa*. Historiallisia tutkimuksia 107. Helsinki 1978.
- 25 Tuija Aro, Suomalaisten rotu saksalaisissa ja pohjoismaisissa tietosanakirjoissa. In *Mongoleja vai germaaneja – rotuteorioiden suomalaiset*. Ed. Aira Kemiläinen. Historiallinen arkisto 86. Helsinki 1985, 195-208; Kemiläinen 1993, 168-183; Markku Mattila, Suomen ruotsinkieliset ja laadukkaamman väestön vaatimus. In *Uusi uljas ihminen eli modernin pimeä puoli*. Eds. Marja Härkämaa & Markku Mattila. Jyväskylä 1998, 117-136; Markku Mattila, *Kansamme parhaaksi. Rotuhygieniä Suomessa vuoden 1835 sterilointilakiin asti*. Bibliotheca Historica 44. Suomen historiallinen seura: Jyväskylä 1999; Molarius 1998, 97-99, 110-111.
- 26 It is interesting to note that Professor Lille's son, Axel Lille, became a radical advocate of the Swedish-minded movement, founder of the Swedish-minded party in Finland and he shared the ideas of the racial superiority of the Swedish-speaking Finns. Kemiläinen 1993, 149, 169, 217-218.
- 27 In the Faculty of Theology 1853-1868.
- 28 Hroch 1985, 75; Hobsbawm 1994, 27, 99, 117, 119.
- 29 Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood. Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism*. Cambridge University Press 1997, 3, 12-13, 185-209.
- 30 HUL, Minutes of the Theological Student Body, Feb 7, 1853.