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**By making visible certain entities, phenomena, changes and continuities as being relevant to vocational education, researchers are joint definers of work and education at their sub-national, national and supranational levels. Which stories and mappings are going to have currency in transnational discourses on VET? Studies about transformation of vocational education in Europe speak about systems, even when based on sector-specific perspectives. VET is seldom considered as an internally complex field and as an outcome of wider educational, political and social programmes. The aim of the article is to show the need of cross-cultural research on emergence of meanings and functions of vocational education. Critical to this may be studies on historical periods when VET has been confronted with other forms of education. Through discussion on continuing education in Finland, Nordic countries and Germany, historicisation and contextualisation of models of VET is suggested.**

(<sup>1</sup>) For example in Finland vocational education has come to have much wider meaning - including all branches of industry, most levels of occupational hierarchies, etc. - than in many other countries. The concept of VET school or school-based VET has referred to all occupational fields, although the terminology has shifted towards the dominant English language discourse. Cf. Heikkinen, 1995; Heikkinen et al., 1999; Heikkinen et al., 2000; Heikkinen et al., 2002.

# Models, paradigms or cultures of vocational education

## Enabling, legitimising, marginalising: history as VET policy

The aim of this paper is to question the role of educational researchers and educational history as joint constitutors of political and practical discourses of vocational education. The globalisation of the economy and utilisation of human labour are challenging the patterns and practices of developing occupational competences and identities, which have been constituted in the contexts of building national political, industrial and occupational orders. Policies responding to challenges - on improving competitiveness, mobility, transferability and flexibility - commonly take 'countries' as their starting point. Common criteria, single frameworks and principles for developing VET and good practices for implementation are searched across countries. (White Paper, 1995; EU, 2002). When countries are compared, the patterns and practices of VET are interpreted as systems. When high quality and good practices are recognised, they are attributed to the VET system of a country. However, the dissemination of good practices and adoption of single frameworks raises the question of why countries differ and what can be done to improve systems. This is where the discourse on 'models' enters the picture. The connection of education and history to political or cultural programmes is less transparent at the transnational than at national level. By recognising and making visible certain phenomena, changes and continuities in VET, researchers are its co-definers. As long as the possibilities of cross-cultural collaborative historical research on VET are marginal, there are temptations to adopt universalising interpretations of occupational work and VET, even if they were developed from certain, selected cultural frameworks.

Most studies about transformation of VET in Europe focus on systems, even when they are taken from specific sector (mainly technical) perspectives.<sup>(1)</sup> VET is seldom con-

sidered as an internally complex field composed of different sectors related to wider educational, political and social programmes. One popular typology of VET systems in transnational discussion and policy making is based on Wolf-Dietrich Greinert (1990): in characterising the German VET system he distinguished between a market or liberalist model (Japan, UK, US), a bureaucratic or school model (France, Italy, Scandinavia) and a dual model (Austria, Germany, Switzerland). Later Greinert (1999) renamed the types into classical models of vocational education. According to him, after the second industrial revolution the models started to mix, but the classical models remained their core. Less popular has been the critically improved version by Thomas Deissinger (1995), who introduced, in contrast with output factors of VET, input factors called qualification styles with their structural and functional dimensions:

- (a) political and organisational regulation frameworks for vocational training processes;
- (b) didactic-curricular orientation of vocational training processes;
- (c) the place of vocational training process in the context of socialisation.

As an example of qualification styles, Deissinger characterises Germany as representing:

- (a) cooperation of state and industry in giving competing regulations;
- (b) aims and contents of training oriented towards complex qualification profiles (occupational principle, Berufsprinzip);
- (c) pedagogical relevance of socialisation in VET, which mediates between general schooling and employment and establishing a learning environment separate both from school and employment.



The unique strength of German VET and VET research has given good reasons for researchers and policy-makers at national and trans-national level to adopt such typologies. (e.g. Koulutus ja tutkimus vuosina..., 2000; Stenström et al. 2000, Copenhagen process, first report of the Technical Working Group Quality in VET 2003). The building of models is fundamental in constructing theories to understand and shape the world. Their theoretical value is undermined, however, if their primary function becomes applicability for dominant definitions of the world <sup>(2)</sup>. For example Greinert <sup>(3)</sup> argues that beside the three classical models, no others have developed in Europe, and that systems in all other countries are their national versions. Beside decontextualisation, model approach in comparing leads into a-historical use of history: certain moments are selected as unquestionable points of the origin of the models. The aim of this article is to show the need of historicising and contextualising approach - i.e. of questioning the emergence and transformation of educational meanings and functions of VET - in cross-cultural discussions. One way of trying it is to study historical periods when VET has confronted other forms of education.

The specific topic of this article is the transformation of continuing education approximately between the 1870s and the 1930s in Nordic countries and Germany. Throughout the history of educational policy-making, debates on the nature, length and universality of primary education and on the challenges of reintegrating people into employment and education, have provided platforms for discussions about the distinctiveness of different forms of education. One reason for focusing on continuing education is its importance in the history and historical research of VET in Germany. Another reason is the radical expansion of remedial programmes for problem groups in mainstream education and the European economy. The development of separate, corrective measures for low-achievers, the disadvantaged, the ageing, women and ethnic minorities implies disregard for critical analysis of mainstream educational, employment, social or youth policy (Evans et al., 2004). However, national implementation of remedial measures reflects controversies, embedded in the historical development of the wider educational landscape. What kind of instruments does the history of education

provide for policy-making with interpretations of continuation education?

In this context concepts like continuing education (Coffey, 1992; McCulloch, 1989), jatko-opetus (Heikkinen, 1995; Jauhiainen, 2002), Fortbildung (Greinert, 1990), fortsättningsskola and fortsettelse/framhaldsutdanning (Michelsen, 1998), refer to institutional solutions and pedagogical definitions about education and training related to transition (typically from initial/compulsory education) into employment and society. Even if educational systems are nowadays figured as age-bound student flows or pathways, it is anachronistic to limit the concern of continuing education with participation in social, political and occupational life to contemporary definitions on ages or stages of (vocational) education.

### Continuing education in Finland

Finnish research on continuing education has been overshadowed by the interest in transforming of the binary system of folk school and gymnasium into a unified system of comprehensive education. Studying this system together with VET would offer new insights into the complex functions of education in general. While the popular-democratic elements of Finnish vocational education are widely ignored, the focus in this article is on relations between folk education and vocational education, though both increasingly have had to compete and compromise with academic education.

The development of Finnish VET started after the wars between France, Russia and Sweden-Finland, when Finland became an autonomous grand duchy of the Russian empire in 1809. For decades, society was reorganising and developing basic structures in the economy, education and governance. The first efforts in a large country with few factories and schools, with a mostly self-sustaining, poor rural population, were holistic programmes (Heikkinen, 1995, 1999, 2000). For a long time, the same networks were responsible for all initiatives towards developing industries and education. The focus of emerging VET was on more efficient and rational farming and healthy living and on the creation of industrially enlightened civil servants and leaders for the country. It was indicative of the connection between state and industry that the first schools for crafts and industry

<sup>(2)</sup> In his analyses of the culture of virtualism, Daniel Miller argues that abstractions and models of reality are no longer required to understand and shape it. On the contrary there is a market for abstractions which replace rather than model the phenomena they purport to represent. Research and researchers increasingly adopt a consultative approach in legitimisation of managerial governance, which has the power to modify reality according to the abstractions by which politicians wish to interpret it. (Miller 2002.)

<sup>(3)</sup> See the article published in this issue which corresponds to a modified version of his contribution to the Florence conference in 2002 on the History of VET in a comparative perspective (2004).

<sup>(4)</sup> In 19th-century Finnish history, a nationalist movement that contributed to the development of the Finnish language and literature and achieved for Finnish a position of official equality with Swedish, the language of the dominant minority. Fennoman Movement. Encyclopædia Britannica. Retrieved April 24, 2004, from Encyclopædia Britannica Premium Service.: <http://www.britannica.com/eb/article?eu=794> (note of the editor).



(1842 Act on the training of craftsmen and manufacturers for the country and the 1847 Act on technical schools) were established by the Board of Manufacture, one of the first national boards with the explicit task of promoting vocational education. The Act was based on initiatives from the crafts sector and the schools had a clear vocational mission.

Organising folk education remained, until the 1860s, the duty of the Lutheran Church, homes and municipalities. The differences between rural communities and towns were large until the gradual liberalisation of trade and industry from the 1860s. However, the first non-religious inspectors of folk schools were appointed in 1861 and the independent Board of Schools Affairs (Education) was established in 1869. The national decree on folk schools in 1866 was an outcome of a wider Fennoman <sup>(4)</sup> programme on folk enlightenment, which was permeated with economic and practical aims, especially concerning the rural population.

The debate on relations between VET, folk and continuing education took off during 1880s. Despite the politicised nature of the Finnish popular-democratic enlightenment – connected to the language struggle between Swedish and Finnish – it was more pragmatic and vocationally oriented than in other Nordic countries. The activation of the Fennoman movement motivated some bigger towns to start more systematic teaching of general subjects, home economics and handicraft in continuation classes. The 1879 Act on liberation of trade obliged employers to release employees under 15 to attend school in the evenings. Depending on the region, this could mean either continuation classes in the folk school or the school for crafts and industry. Education was considered to have two different aims (Teollisuushallituksen, 1888). First, it was to provide all children with general education and education for citizenship, which was also the prerequisite for vocational training: this is what the decree on continuation classes meant. Second, the Trade Act referred to school-based vocational education, which aimed at providing occupational knowledge and support for learning at work. Some civil servants and crafts associations suggested obligatory attendance at schools for crafts and industry until the age of 21, but with little consequence. The few crafts had little influence and industrial workers none in the

project of Industrial Finland, whose main focus for some time was developing Finnish engineers, then foremen and skilled workers, through full-time VET.

While the emerging VET institutions in the late 19th century increasingly integrated the promotion of different areas of industry to the projects of Agriculture/Farmers, Industrial and Welfare Finland, the paradigms of VET started to diverge accordingly. All parties had their headquarters in the expanding national governance. One of the main proponents of continuing education during the 1890s to 1920s was Mikael Soininen (Johnsson), head of the Teacher Seminar, inspector and head of the Board of Education <sup>(5)</sup>. His prime concern was education for the nation and from this perspective he considered all forms of education. In his article, written after the reform on general election rights 1905, he summarises his educational programme.

‘On reaching adulthood, every young man and woman has to vote about the fate of the country ... Where is s/he going to get comprehension from the structure and needs of the society, in order to become able as its legislator and governor? ... Social science, which is so important for our nation during these times, must be taught after the folk school. For that reason we need continuing education after initial school years. But this is not the only reason why continuing education is needed ... Technical drawing and other preparatory instruction for different industries has become quite usual for urban youngsters in all countries; the rural population needs general instruction in the basics of rational, up-to-date agriculture; future farmers’ wives should have education in the affairs of the household; everybody should know the basics of general healthcare, including many special areas, which are deeply related to the physical and ethical livelihood of the nation.

This kind of continuing education is not strange for us any more ... But in a more mature age they need educational workshops, where the mentality and ability for citizenship can grow freely and thoroughly. We have these workshops ready: the folk high schools ... From these workshops should those men and women grow, who as the closest stewards of the common people are guiding it in its economical enterprises, in life of municipalities and the nation state

<sup>(5)</sup> Mikael Johnsson/Soininen belonged to the progressive Young Fennomans and was active e.g. in promoting the Finnish cooperative movement and developing the folk school into a ‘school for life’.



and in its material and spiritual efforts. They have to establish the educated estate, which is independent from the bureaucracy and which in any hardship will be the nearest support and guardian of the people.' (Johnsson, 1906).

Between the 1880s and the 1910s, the promotion of the Finnish economy and industries and the provision of education happened as parallel projects in Finland. The consensual defence against pressure from Russification was channelled through shared efforts to develop national industries and education. Along with new branch departments and boards, a great number of schools, institutes and advisers in all branches of industry were established. The proponents of distinctive VET, especially in the Ministry of Trade and Industry, and developers of folk and continuation school in the Ministry of Education, managed for some time to collaborate in planning national reforms for post-compulsory education. Jalmari Kekkonen, the pioneer and inspector of VET in crafts and industry (1908-1932), suggested that continuation school should serve as preparation for apprenticeship schools, for vanishing evening/part-time schools and followers of the schools for crafts and industry, which in towns had become substituted by full time vocational schools for boys and girls since 1899. The inadequate apprenticeship schools could be turned into real vocational schools instead of being substitutes for continuation school. The mission of vocational schools was to promote the development of occupations; they had to be practical and authentic workplaces, but dominated by pedagogy. (Teollisuushallituksen, 1923; Heikkinen, 1995).

However, the tensions between various projects in Finland were activated after the Russian revolution, the establishment of the independent nation state and civil war. Consensual reform plans from the turn of the century were implemented in the 1920s in a completely new political and economic situation. The contrasts between the urban and rural areas, life forms and industries became visible, the popular movements started to split into communist, social democratic and agrarian parties and the confrontations between workers and employers moved to the national level. Also, the Act on universal obligation to attend folk school was prolonged till 1921 <sup>(6)</sup>. The Act stated the obligation to attend (folk

continuation school for two years after compulsory schooling, if the young person did not continue her/his studies. The question was whether vocational schools could be considered as other schools. Once the folk school had taken off and the political and labour market associations were established beside the popular-democratic movements, the divisions between citizenship education, academic education and vocational education became institutionalised. Advocates of the comprehensive continuation school, conceiving themselves as the followers of the Fennoman programme of universal citizenship, defended it as a general, practical school for the majority of the age group (except grammar school students) and as education for citizenship. Many proponents of the farmers of Finland saw continuation school also as an alternative for initial VET in rural communities, because of the difficulties in providing full-time vocational schools for the peasantry. Their opponents, the proponents of VET for crafts and industry, defended the distinctiveness of vocational education against education for citizenship and academic education and emphasised its vital link to industry. In urban municipalities, VET schools were favoured as substitutes for continuation schools until the 1940s.

Between the 1920s and the 1940s there were repeated initiatives from the Ministry and Board of Education and Teacher Seminars about developing continuation school into practically oriented general vocational school, which would substitute the former institutes of lower VET (Salo, 1944). They connected to a wider political cleansing and domestication of administration, which increased the power of rural and popular parties and associations, which at that time were holding positions in the Ministries of Education and Agriculture, with close links to the folk enlightenment movement (Heikkinen et al., 1999). The proponents of women's VET in crafts and industry and in agriculture, animal husbandry and household economy strongly protested against suggestions of transferring only female branches of VET into continuation school under the governance of Board of Education. However, the most aggressive proponent of the continuation school during 1926-64, folk school inspector Alfred Salmela, saw it as a part of comprehensive, patriotic folk education. The mission of the continuation school was, in the first place, education for citizenship, sec-

<sup>(6)</sup> However, the preparatory schools in towns and first classes of gymnasium, 'middle school', maintained their status as substitutes until the 1950s and the 1970s, respectively.

<sup>(7)</sup> The enrolment rate indicates the function of education: like VET schools and folk high schools, continuation schools were also recruiting adults, before compulsory education covered whole age-cohorts.





ond, to give occupational guidance and, third, to provide practical and occupation-oriented education. Salmela only accepted the gymnasium as an alternative for intellectually talented children (Kailanpää, 1962). His programme was seemingly successful: continuation school became obligatory for applicants for other schools in 1943 and in the 1958 reform it was renamed the School for Citizenship *kansalaiskoulu* (Kailanpää, 1962). The period between the 1930s and 1945 was the peak for continuation school, especially in rural areas, where the enrolment rate could be 140 % of the age group (\*). The victory was short (Jauhiainen, 2002): the popularity of gymnasium and middle school exploded and vocational schools had expanded and gained national recognition in the modernising of Finnish VET. The reforms for comprehensive schools and a system for school-based VET, integrated to the project of Welfare Finland, were just about to be implemented.

## Continuing education and models of VET

### The German heritage

In Germany, historical research on continuing education has focused on the relations between social partners and state and between sites of learning in VET; there has been little on its function in the wider educational landscape (Stratmann, 1990; Greinert, 2002; Greinert, 2004). In contrast, Nordic political and research discussion has concentrated almost exclusively on the relations between gymnasium/middle school and folk school and on the unification of the compulsory school through its academisation (e.g. Rinne, 1984; Jauhiainen, 2002; Jarning, 2002). To illustrate the potential of reflections on continuing education for cross-cultural research on VET, this section comments on developments in Germany and other Nordic countries. The attempt is biased, since there is considerable literature on the topic in Germany, compared to the marginal interest among Nordic researchers.

The German struggle on continuing education during late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century ended with transformation of *Fortbildungsschule* (continuation school) into *Berufsschule* (vocational school), but nowhere in Nordic countries did the initiatives and discussions lead to this solution. In Germany, the crucial issue was the governance of

urban, male youngsters. Apprenticeship training, controlled by the crafts and industry, was still the dominant form of vocational education in the period of rapid industrialisation, urbanisation and migration of in the late 19th century. However, in many regions attendance of general – often religious – continuation school had already become obligatory for young people. Because of the erosion of familial forms of upbringing, the integration of occupation and citizenship was endangered among small entrepreneurs and workers (e.g. Greinert, 1990; Stratmann, 1990; Wahle, 1994). Furthermore, industrialisation threatened the prevailing social, economic and political order: big, export-oriented industry undermined the status of crafts; the industrial workers represented the danger of socialism and revolution. Interestingly, however, instead of crafts and industry, vocational schools were initiated by the alliance of primary school teachers and politicians (*Deutscher Verein für das Fortbildungswesen*, founded 1892-96). Later they became supported by educationalists, accepted by industrialists and gradually also by the crafts sector.

In Germany, in striking contrast to other cultures, educationalists like Georg Kerschensteiner and Eduard Spranger made serious efforts to develop a genuine pedagogical alternative for VET, which would include societal aspects (Kerschensteiner, 1901; Spranger, 1922). Being vocational, continuation school became a politically, legally and pedagogically legitimate alternative in continuation education. The crucial point in the stabilisation of vocational schools was that, in connection with apprenticeship, they became part of compulsory education after primary education. However, the price was the dominance of industry – or corporations/chambers – practices of apprenticeship in VET and the supportive and general nature of vocational schools in relation to occupation and industry. At the same time, the religious and bourgeois conceptions of female work incorporating citizenship into being a *Hausfrau*, geared women's VET into a system of full-time, educational vocational schools, which diverged from the apprenticeship-dominated system for men (Mayer, 1998). Being the heir of continuation school has had a long-standing impact on the image of vocational school in German vocational education. Being a school for *Staatsbürgerschaft* (occupational citizenship) it

(\*) And as part of their personal history, are closer to their life form and self-concept as well.



remained occupationally secondary, general in nature, and compensatory to academic forms of education instead of becoming a distinctive component of institutions developing occupational identity and qualifications.

### Imported frameworks and Nordic developments

The lack of reflection on relations between continuing education and VET tempts Nordic researchers to adopt existing comparative frameworks developed in Germany (cf. Greinert, 2002; Luhmann, 2002). According to these, VET is typically considered first from the perspective of regulation, systems and institutions. Legislation, financing and institutionalisation into interest groups are taken as criteria for matters such as recognising and differentiating between systems of VET. Second, crafts and manufacturing industry become standards for occupational work, because of their crucial political and economical role in the making of the German nation state and economy. Third, occupational forms of work become exclusively defined as male Beruf in manufacturing. Fourth, the analyses of VET interest groups concentrate on the role of Mittelstand, for the organisation workers/employees and companies/employers as social partners negotiating their interests in VET. Fifth, the role of the state is reduced to a separate, bureaucratic player in the tripartite interest struggle on regulatory power and financial obligations (Madsen, 1988; Larsson, 1995; Saksliind, 1998; Heikkinen, 1995). The first criterion explains why Nordic researchers tend to copy universalising models, while the focus on systems and institutions has enforced their exclusive interest in folk school, gymnasium and university, which all have been organised and discussed as national issues under church or state governance<sup>(8)</sup>. However, the development of Nordic VET in relation to continuing education may raise questions about the universality of adopted models.

To begin with, the formation of Nordic VET, relations between interest groups and state cannot be understood without linking them to the transformation of cultural context. Schools were no more separate than the state from cultural, political and economic movements, with their diverse aims and objectives concerning the future nation state. The Nordic solutions to continuing educa-

tion were all influenced in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by the distinctive enlightenment, a popular-democratic movement with its principle of *folkelighed* (Slumstrup et al., 1983; Gudmunsson, 1995; Jarning 2002). It has been argued that, especially in Norway, the popular education movement hindered the development of technical institutes, which would integrate technology, theory and practice and would serve national industry, because the politically most influential popular-democratic movements maintained their focus on agricultural education. (Korsnes, 1997; Michelsen, 1991, 1998) However, Norwegian trade, craft and manufacturing industries also developed quite independently from rural industries (Saksliind, 1998; Gudmunsson, 1995). While, in the technical sector, part-time schools for apprentices (*lærlingskoler, tekniske afterskoler*) were maintained by local crafts and manufacturer associations, obtaining independence from Denmark in 1814 and from Sweden in 1905, became the shared interest of the state, church and popular-democratic movement. Folk enlightenment and societal participation, which were promoted through folk schools and folk high schools, were fundamental. While the gymnasium held its superior status, continuing education gradually became preparatory or complementary to academic education (Jarning, 2002). According to Michelsen (1998) female teachers initiated specific vocational continuation schools in Norway, as part of the bourgeois-feminist movement. Women had organised separately from male teachers, who were primarily from agrarian backgrounds. During the 1910s to 1930s, female teachers tried to establish an obligatory, practical youth school (*ungdomsskole*) to continue folk school based on pedagogical ideas of *Arbeitsschule* in the style of Kerschensteiner. Being part of women's emancipation and professionalisation, the initiative received minor attention from crafts and industry and no support from the state. It never became a real predecessor for institutionalised vocational education (*yrkeskoler*), while the crafts defended their apprentice-training system and the labour-movement prioritised development of the comprehensive school. Initial VET remained divided into fragmented local part-time schools loosely controlled by industrial associations, and into a state-controlled school-based system. The dominance of educational programmes promoting political and social participation remained strong and lead to creation of com-



prehensive upper secondary school during the 1970s.

In Denmark, the liberation of trade and industrialisation in the middle of 19th century took place largely as a grass-roots process, integrating peasantry and crafts in small towns. The expansion of agro-industry, the cooperative movement and regional self-governance went hand-in-hand with industrialisation. The popular-democratic movement and *folkelig* enlightenment promoted continuity in collective and cooperative social and productive activities. Craft and technical associations took the leading role in vocational education and in establishing the first technical institutes (*tegneskoler* -> *tekniske skoler*) (Laegring, 1985; Moeller, 1991). The emergence of a new type of small *stationsbyer* along the railways since the 1870s, adjusted rural crafts and industries to the guild traditions of *koebstader* and became crucial in establishing VET schools for apprentices up to the 1940s (Hentilä et al., 2002; Kryger Larsen, 2001). Initial VET became part of a wider concept of popular (community-based) education, which integrated political, industrial and educational aims. The same networks initiated the expansion of vocational schools, and later of work camps/youth schools and production schools, as the various forms of folk education (Laegring, 1985; Mayer, 1999; Slumstrup, 1983). The technical associations, which represented occupations, controlled the inspection of schools, the training of vocational teachers and the distribution of state subsidies for technical education. The national Council for Vocational education (*Tilsynet med den tekniske Undervisning for Håndværkere og industridrivende*), established in 1916, recruited half its members from working life as well as those from the state. However, occupation-specific schools have until today remained subsumed in the apprenticeship system controlled by the social partners. In contrast, the establishment of youth schools (*ungdomsskoler*) since the 1930s represented a change in conceptions of VET: it was not initiated by crafts or local actors, but by national policy-makers. Its target group were 14-18 year olds and its aim was to combat social problems and unemployment. The employment political function of the school was indicated by the development of technical schools and work camps into voluntary alternatives for youngsters after compulsory education. It became the duty of the municipalities to establish schools for boys

and girls to prepare them for work in most common occupational fields.

From the 19<sup>th</sup> century, VET in Finland was embedded in the projects competing for developing industries, occupations and governance, which potentially would become national and constitute a system (Heikkinen, 1995, 2000; Heikkinen et al., 1999). The school context of VET was important precisely in its potential to promote industries and the occupationalisation of work. Even with varying power and influence, the projects were operating through administration: the ministries, departments and boards became the headquarters for their articulation and stabilisation. The promotion and governance of VET remained integrated in the promotion of industry in branch-ministries until the 1970s. The state was engaged in different programmes promoting industries and politics. For instance the main parties debating continuing education - the followers of the Fennoman movement representing Farmers Finland and the proponents of Industrial Finland - channelled their political and economical projects through the Board of Education and Ministry or Board of Trade and Industry respectively.

Both in Sweden and Finland crafts remained marginal compared to export - metal and wood-processing - industry and rural industries. Popular-democratic movements united small farmers, rural workers and the landless with industrial labourers and gained a strongly political character (Kettunen, 1998; Hellspong et al., 1995). The Nordic social-democratic ideology and the idea of comprehensive school were most influential in Sweden from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The concept of *folklighet* may even, in its later social-democratic versions, be influenced by the heritage from a military superpower state, big export industry and large landowning gentry. The Swedish solutions indicate the emerging self-conception of the state as having a privileged and progressive perception of people's educational needs. 'As a matter of fact, social democracy has not been interested in school as such, but only in how it has functioned as an instrument in reforming society' (Lindgren, 1997, p. 2). However, it is also argued for the importance of general education, which was initiated bottom-up by the agrarian population (especially prosperous farms) because of utilitarian and pragmatic reasons, not because



of top-down implementation of mass schooling for citizens of a democratic nation state (Lindmark, 1996; cf. Boli, 1989). In either case, vocational training became subsumed to other forms of education. Evening schools for apprentices/trainees (*Söndagsskolar* -> *Lärlingsskolar*) became, instead of craft and industry-led institutions, institutes maintained by municipalities, supported, and controlled by the state (Larsson, 1995; Englund, 1986). The National Board of Education (*skolöverstyrelse*) was established for grammar schools in 1904, but since 1918 it has included a department of VET for trade, crafts, industry and home economics. Initial VET became increasingly developed through workshop schools as part of state-supported, full-time municipal school-system (*praktiska ungdomsskolar* -> *verkstadskolsystem*). The initiatives were socio-political in combating unemployment and labour migration, but they were also supported by modernising industry, which preferred technological training and more advanced skills to the experiential learning provided in the evening schools. Other branches of VET were linked to their branch administration, but since the department transformed into National Board of VET (*yrkesskolöverstyrelse*) in 1943, they have gradually become integrated into the vocational component of comprehensive education.

A second issue is that Nordic expressions for occupation are wider than German ones. Finnish, until late 19<sup>th</sup> century used *elatuskeino* - means of livelihood - then *elinkeinoammatti* - occupation as a means of livelihood - and finally just *ammatti*. Until the 20<sup>th</sup> century, occupation referred to all kinds of tasks, necessary for independent life, in the totality of an agrarian (type) household. At the individual level, *elatuskeino* could be a craft, office or service. Even in later conceptions of wage-labour and the individual worker, the collective aspect of occupation remained important. For example, wagework in a factory could be conceived as a family occupation, and other members of the family, especially women and children, could substitute or support the person actually contracted. Where an agrarian household was a collective enterprise, women in particular could change tasks and roles (Heikkinen, 1995, 2001; Peltonen, 1992; Apo, 1995). In Swedish and Norwegian the holistic expression *närings* - activity for livelihood/nutrition in rural household - was slowly substituted by *yrke* - occupation - as specialised and individualised work (Hellspong et al., 1995). Also

the Danish still use the old word *erhverv* for occupation in VET. It seemed to be common for Nordic countries in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to integrate the concept of collective industrial labour into the ideal of an independent farmer and owner of one's work, opposing both with the capitalist employer (Kettunen, 1995). Despite the increasing importance of occupational work, the Nordic concepts cannot really be substituted by the German concept of *Beruf* (°).

In Denmark and Norway, as in Germany, religion had more influence in defining female occupations and education than in Finland and Sweden. While the bourgeoisie was more broadly based in Sweden, there was a stronger interest in separate gymnasium education for girls, transmitting proper patterns of family life. As a consequence, at least in Norway and Sweden, household education developed closer to general education and female citizenship than other areas of VET, indicating similarity with the German concept of female *Beruf* (Michelsen, 1998; Mjelde, 2001; Mayer, 1998). Despite bourgeois initiatives, in Finland household and home industry were conceived as parts of the occupational totality of rural work, later as distinctive occupations. Home industry was not labelled as female work, but was potentially mediating the sub-project of crafts with the projects of Industrial and Farmers Finland. Important inputs to Finnish conceptions of work and occupations also originate from nursing and social work. They amalgamated the popular concept of care in production-consumption of agrarian households with the androgenic concept of skilled occupational work and with bourgeois idealisation of exclusive feminine occupational dispositions. In Finland the principles and practical forms of female-dominated occupations and VET developed in parallel with the male-dominated. Therefore, the schooling paradigm in women's VET need not indicate its integration with citizenship, as in standard VET, but its occupationalisation of work and differentiation in education should be noted (Henriksson, 1998; Heikkinen, 2001).

Additionally, Nordic researchers tend to claim that the development of (technical) VET was hindered, because the 'middleclass' was forced to compromise with the popular-democratic movements (Heikkinen, 1996; Korsnes, 1997; Kettunen et al., 1995; Kettunen, 1998; Michelsen, 1998). However, the explanato-

(°) A hidden factor influencing the concept of occupational work is immigrant or guest labour. S. Narotzky (1997) compares the consequences of using cheap migrant labour for the divisions of work in Germany and France with those from slavery and cheap labour in countries like Spain, Portugal and Britain. Guest labour was remarkable in Germany and Sweden until the 1970s and enabled the conservation of divided qualification patterns, which favoured the labour aristocracy and ignored the unskilled work of immigrants. The holistic concepts of occupational work and VET may rely on the homogeneity of the population as workers and citizens.





ry power of the concept *Mittelstand* – a mediator between the upper and the lower groups in society – depends on its historical contextualisation. In 19<sup>th</sup> century Germany the central political role of small crafts and trade as a counterweight to industrial workers and unions had to be adjusted to the growing importance of the large export companies, which operated at the nation-state level. This was reflected in the tripartite governance and organisational VET solutions. In Denmark, with its small towns, strong cooperative movement and the domination of agro-industry and domestic manufacture, a *Mittelstand* integrating the traditions and interests of agriculture and crafts was developed (Moeller, 1991; Hentilä et al., 2002; Kryger Larsen, 2001). In other Nordic countries small enterprises and shopkeepers never became a quantitatively or qualitatively crucial societal group nor made up a *Mittelstand* in the German sense. In Finland, the collaboration was of big wood-processing and metal industry with politically important small farmer – *Mittelstand* was facilitated by the state. In Norway, local politics and administration were crucial in negotiating on the development of the nationally fragmented industries of seafaring, trade, fishing and wood processing. In Sweden domestic and export markets were both important for the national economy. Big farms, big industry and traditional (military) gentry facilitated the development of a strong consensual state, which promoted the ideology of a collective where all citizens become middleclass. The farmers, industrial and service workers together with civil servants became the typical Nordic nations of the middle class, with minor interest in crafts or small entrepreneurship. The programmes of industrial and educational modernisation had to recognise and respect them and adjust to their needs and aims: comprehensive experience and universal citizenship became primary in educational reforms.

At the turn of 20<sup>th</sup> century, Nordic social democracy and labour movement adjusted itself to the free peasantry tradition. Consequently, the concept of social partners had importance only in Denmark; in Norway, Finland and Sweden, instead of social partnership, legalistic patterns of negotiating work and VET were developed at the nation state level. For example, in Finland the demands of the labour movement for power and equity in industrial relations were largely

based on rural workers, crofters and landless people. The politicised nature of industrial relations after independence from Russia and the civil war (1917-18) pushed negotiations towards national legalistic, corporatist regulation of work conditions. The representative, consensual negotiations between the employers and employees at local and national level became moderated by the state.

### **Continuing education and the distinctiveness of VET**

Comprehensive primary education was a springboard in Sweden in the 1960s for integrating VET into a unified system of secondary education, covering also administration and teacher training. (SOU 28/1962) Consequently, the vocational strand of upper secondary acquired a prevocational character. Norway, and to some extent Denmark, followed the idea of comprehensive secondary education, even if the internal streaming of pathways continued. In Finland the idea covered only lower secondary, the initiatives on youth school in the 1970s did not succeed, and the distinctiveness of VET as a form of education, despite its school-based organisation, was maintained. Table 1 attempts to refer to some characteristics in the wider educational landscape, in the emerging concept of VET and in institutional solutions, during the period when the distinctiveness of VET was debated in relation to continuing education in Germany and in Nordic countries.

Denmark and Germany have maintained strong connections between industrial, technology and VET policies. In other Nordic countries the negotiation systems and actor-networks in different policy areas have, until recently, increasingly separated (cf. Korsnes, 1997; Larsson, 1995; Heikkinen et al., 1999). While popular-democratic ideas were dominating all Nordic educational programmes, the struggle against integrating vocational into comprehensive post-compulsory school was strongest in Finland. Although German continuing education transformed into separate systems of dual vocational and academic education, occupational citizenship became equally important in Germany and Finland. In Denmark and Finland vocational education became a real alternative for academic education: in Denmark integrating apprenticeship and school, controlled primarily by industry itself, and in Finland



| Controversies on continuing education and VET in Germany and Nordic countries                          |                                                                                         |                                                                                                    |                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                             | Table 1 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| Germany<br>1870-1920                                                                                   | Norway<br>1910-40                                                                       | Sweden<br>1920-40                                                                                  | Denmark<br>1880-1940                                                                              | Finland<br>1880-1930                                                                                                                        |         |
| Transformation towards double function of VET:<br><i>*Facharbeitertechnik und Staatsbürgerlichkeit</i> | Separation of<br>*VET from general education<br>*apprenticeship from vocational school  | Establishment of state-led educational system with socio-political function, including VET schools | Establishment of social partnership: journeymen/workers + masters/employers in VET + cooperatives | Establishment of distinctive VET system promoting national industries, networks between administration, industry, schools and civil society |         |
| Occupational form of work: <i>Beruf</i> as overarching pedagogical principle                           | Political control of work/division of labour: national tariff perspective dominates VET | Technological and political basis of occupation in VET                                             | Communitarian form of occupational work in VET                                                    | Combination of community and occupational citizenship in work and VET                                                                       |         |
| From continuation school to vocational school; VET as component of education                           | Rejection of vocational continuation school; marginalisation of VET as education        | Dominance of citizenship in continuation school; marginalisation of VET as education               | Towards Youth schools; VET increasingly into a labour market category                             | Defence of vocational schools against vocationally oriented continuation school; VET as a specific form of education                        |         |

as schools controlled by the state and networks of representatives of industry, occupations, civil servants, schools and teachers.

The old debates on continuing education have become up-to-date again. The attempts to develop the EU and its Member States into the most competitive knowledge and high skills area in the world accelerates the academisation of education and the polarisation of learners into winners and losers in the schooling game. The promotion of active citizenship, employability and social coherence has led to massive efforts at EU and Member State levels. The fight against educational and social exclusion and the challenge of integrating youngsters into VET demands new solutions in education for citizenship and VET (Evans et al., 2004).

### Political implications

Universalising models of VET are attractive because they provide simple answers to complex questions. They represent mythical thinking, which is necessary for people in trying to develop collective identities such as the making of Europe. However, when used to form policies, models are also realities which leads to real consequences (Korsnes, no date; Gudmunssen, 1995; Kryger Larsen, 2001). The constitutive role of educational researchers and historians has developed in a historical period when culture, society and nation-state have become increasingly synonymous and overlapping categories (Wagner, 2001). However, increasingly their interpretations and narratives are

being used in varieties of transnational VET projects. Which stories and mappings of the world are going to have currency in transnational discourses and with what consequences? What could be alternatives for developing universalising models of VET for transnational research and policy discussion?

Psychological and didactic approaches have always been attractive to educationalists and researchers, because they enable decontextualised and universalistic interpretative frameworks. The psychological approach to different forms of education persists, based on psychological differences among learners and learning. Whether it is abilities, attitudes and dispositions or motivation, the form and mode of education should be adjusted to the individual characteristics of the learner. Another attractive alternative are sociological and system-functionalist approaches, which consider different forms of education and their institutionalised modes in relation to societal and economic hierarchies and statuses. It provides an opportunity to compare the functioning of educational pathways and institutes cross societal and economic systems, ideally conceived as regimes or materialisation of societal laws, in practice as reductions into nation-state societies (cf. Korsnes, 2001) <sup>(10)</sup>.

What other alternatives could cross-cultural educational research have for psychological, economic or sociological universalisation than developing metanarratives on models of VET? Perhaps it could start from collaborative deconstruction of edu-

<sup>(10)</sup> For example Greinert and Deissinger defend modelling approach by the need of shared theories in comparative research and by referring to Weber's ideal types. Olav Korsnes has pointed out that Weberian ideal type is an ideational picture that is not historical reality, and absolutely not the real reality, and that it is even less suited to serve as a form into which the reality *qua exemplar* can be classified. (Korsnes, 2001)



cational myths at national and sub-national levels: The debates on continuing education can be considered as negotiations and struggles on definitions of education: whether it is one or many, and which forms it can take. In the Nordic context, a basic form of education emerging during the 19th century was popular or citizenship education. It materialised as initial education in folk (-> comprehensive) school and as folk enlightenment in adult education institutes. The basic pedagogical idea in popular education has been the promotion of participation in the life of the family (households), community and nation-state. According to the holistic concept 'means of livelihood', participation also included work and occupations. Another form of education was academic education in gymnasia and universities. Its guiding pedagogical principle has been to promote the participation in and the production of bodies of knowledge, which is organised into disciplinary structures and practices. It implies transcending and overcoming the boundaries of specific forms of life, including occupational life. Academic education has also included ideas of citizenship and occupation (profession), considering the good of the people, in a distinctive form of education only in relation to the others. It has focused on participation in the world of work in occupationally structured society through specialised skills, technical expertise and trade, which constitute people's occupational identities. A global historical tendency, which can be recognised in the Nordic and German

developments (Heikkinen, 1995; Englund, 1986; Greinert, 2003) is the penetration of academic education into all other forms of education. However, the imperatives of economic relevance and conditioning characteristics for globalising markets may furnish the instrumental version of academic education with distorted versions of vocational and folk education.

The systems of VET we identify today probably represent the hegemonic, victorious cultural programmes which, especially since World War II, have been jointly constructing nation-states, national economies and industries. Therefore, the commitment of researchers and policy-makers to certain models, derived from specific, selected contexts, may support promotion of new hegemonic programmes of VET as joint constituents of transnational policies, economies and industries. A non-conformist alternative would be to deconstruct the transformation of national systems as outcomes of competition between cultural programmes of VET, carried out by individual, collective and meta-collective actors striving for specified sub-national, national and supra-national aims. The differentiation of education is related to the complexities of such cultural projects. Reflections on the Nordic and German history of continuing education indicate the need for a more historicising and contextualised approach which would make different forms of education comprehensible in a wider educational and political landscape.

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### Key words

Cross-cultural research, historical periods, contextualisation, models of VET, continuing education, Germany and Nordic countries



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