Ilona Pikkanen (SKS, Research Dep.): A Premodern Popular Rebellion and the Fiction/Fact Divide: An Intermedial Approach to Knowledge Transfer in the Early Nineteenth Century

In this paper I will discuss four historical plays depicting the events of the Club War, a premodern popular uprising that took place in the Finnish part of the Swedish kingdom in 1596–97. After the Napoleonic Wars, this peasant rebellion quickly became one of the canonical events in the emerging Finnish historical culture. I have previously studied the diachronic cultural memory of the event in Swedish and Finnish historiography, c. 1600–1860. This talk will ask, 1) What will be gained by adding nineteenth-century historical fiction, and particularly historical plays, in the research corpus? 2) How can we study such fictional texts in a systematic manner, in a way that can enable a transtemporal and intermedial comparisons of such revolt depictions? It will be argued that one methodological alternative is offered by digital humanities and particularly by social network analysis (e.g. Gephi), where the characters of the play form the nodes and their interactions (speech lines) the connections or the edges of the network (see also Mark Algee-Hewitt 2017: Distributed Character: Quantitative Models of the English Stage, 1550-1900). Such algorithmically generated networks, their metrics and visualizations can for example offer a novel way to analyze the dynamics between historical and fictional characters and pinpoint the central themes of the plays.

Heini Hakosalo (University of Oulu): The Role of Anatomical Studies in the Socialisation of Novices at the Medical Faculty of the University of Helsinki, 1870–1914

Until the mid-20th century, all Finnish doctors were trained in the same institution, namely the Medical Faculty of the Helsinki University. Medical studies fell into three parts, consisting of preparatory studies, theoretical studies and practical (clinical) studies. The weightiest part of the theoretical studies was constituted by the anatomy course, which consisted of practical dissection exercises and an examination. The course was the weightiest in the simple quantitative sense of being the longest and the most laborious, taxing the student’s memory like no other course.

But the anatomy course was also formative in other – emotional and social – respects. The prolonged dissection exercises constituted a rite of passage which turned a student into a medical student and future medical professional. The course provided experiences that were unique to medical students, welding them together as a group and setting them apart from lay people and also from the rest of the student population. They learned to think and feel about the human body, and death, in new ways.
Based mainly on contemporary and retrospective descriptions and photographs, the paper asks what the student learned at the anatomy hall, not only in term of anatomical knowledge but also in terms of sensory experiences, emotional preferences and ethical principles, how this knowledge was conveyed and how it contributed to the formation of the medical student's disciplinary and professional identity or persona.

Katariina Parvi (University of Helsinki): Travelling for Knowledge: Finnish Medical Visitors Looking at German Psychiatric Clinics, 1900-1914

Wenn jemand eine Reise thut
so kann er was erzählen

When one travels, one has something to tell. Finnish physician Ernst Therman started the description of his study trips by quoting the German poet Matthias Claudius. Undoubtedly his travel experiences were eye-opening and mind-broadening, after all, the destination of his travel was the breeding ground for modern psychiatric knowledge. Around the turn of the twentieth century, Finnish physicians were particularly active in psychiatric study trips, and German Reich was the most common destination for physicians who wished to increase their expertise in psychiatry. Between the years 1900 and 1914, before the breaking of World War I, those Finnish physicians who specialised in psychiatry travelled abroad altogether 21 times, mostly to Germany, but also to Sweden and Denmark. The physicians reported their observations to the national Board of Health. My paper focuses on the Finns' perceptions about German psychiatry. What were they like and did German psychiatry exceed expectations? Which theories were central and did the Finns learn something new? How did the physicians position themselves as Finns in Germany? My aim is to portray a significant phase in the history of German psychiatry from the outsiders' perspective, as transnational transfer of knowledge. My ultimate (read: desperate) goal is to write an article in German and publish it in a German journal as part of transnational exchange of ideas.