

Argumentation on the Image of Finland in the EU,  
The Ministry of Education as a rhetorician, 1994-2005.

Elise Lemaire

Master's thesis

Political Sciences

May 2009

NACS Master's programme

Department of Social Science and Philosophy

University of Jyväskylä

Title: Argumentation on the Image of Finland in the EU, The Ministry of Education as a rhetorician, 1994-2005.

Author: Elise Lemaire

Master's thesis

Political Sciences

May 2009

NACS Master's programme

Department of Social Science and Philosophy

University of Jyväskylä

Supervisor: Professor Pekka Korhonen

Number of pages: 93

This work aims at showing differences, if any, in the argumentation on the image of Finland in the European Union in the texts from the Ministry of Education between the years 1994 and 2005.

In this work, I studied texts from the Ministry of Education between the here above mentioned dates. My study was limited to texts written in English, as my language skills did not allow me to study texts written either in Finnish or Swedish. My main research question is: "Has there been any changes in the representation of the image of Finland in the texts of the Ministry of Education during the period going from 1994 to 2005?" This question leads to more questions such as: who does the term "Ministry of Education" refer to? What are the objectives of these texts? What have they been written for? Has Finland changed the way it describes itself? Is there a difference of argumentation depending on whether the writer(s) is (are) Finnish or a foreigner?

My part on methodology reflects on why I decided to use a qualitative research method, what does it bring, and the use of rhetoric. I develop on main rhetoric works in order to show how rhetoric is relevant to my research. In the second part I develop on my research questions and provide some answers to them. I then study the possible changes in image construction, and I study specific topics which appear in the texts written by the Ministry of Finland: the land; and this part includes the geography, the history and the economy. I then study the society, still concerning the argumentation of the image of Finland. In this part, I study the notion of equality, the information society, and of course, education. I finally conclude my research by answering my research questions, evaluating my findings and evaluating my research.

I have come to the conclusion that the image of Finland has indeed changed in the texts written by the Ministry of Education between 1994 and 2005. The modesty which appeared at first has been replaced little by little by a strong will to show the qualities and strengths of Finland to the other European members, and establish itself as a key member of the European Union.

<b>TABLE OF CONTENT</b>	<b>Pages</b>
<b>SUMMARY</b>	1
<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	4
<b>2. THE SETTING</b>	7
2.1. RESEARCH MATERIAL	7
2.2. METHODOLOGY	8
2.3. THEORETICAL APPROACH: RHETORIC	13
2.3.1. MODERN RHETORICAL CRITICISM	14
2.3.2. CHAIM PERELMAN AND THE NEW RHETORIC: A TREATISE ON ARGUMENTATION	19
2.3.3. HERMENEUTICS	25
2.4. RESEARCH PROBLEMS	32
2.4.1. HOW ARE THE MATERIAL, METHODOLOGY AND THEORIES CONSONANT WITH ONE ANOTHER?	32
2.4.2. WHO DOES “MINISTRY OF EDUCATION” REFER TO?	35
2.4.3. WHO IS THE AUDIENCE THE TEXTS AIM AT?	41
<b>3. CHANGES IN IMAGE CONSTRUCTION</b>	44
3.1. IMAGE CONSTRUCTION OF FINLAND: 1994-1999	44
3.2. CHANGES IN IMAGE CONSTRUCTION: 1999-2005	50
<b>4. ARGUMENTATION OF THE FINNISH IMAGE</b>	57
4.1. LAND	58
4.1.1. GEOGRAPHY	58
4.1.2. HISTORY	61
4.1.3. ECONOMY	66
4.2. SOCIETY	70

4.2.1. EQUALITY	71
4.2.2. INFORMATION SOCIETY	74
4.2.3. EDUCATION	78
<b>5. CONCLUSION</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>6. BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>85</b>

# 1. INTRODUCTION

My thesis is entitled Argumentation on the image of Finland in the EU; The Ministry of Education as a rhetorician, 1994-2005. I first decided on this topic for as a foreigner living in Finland, my vision and knowledge of this country has changed from when I used to live in France to the moment when I moved here. I therefore became interested in knowing if the image of Finland had changed and how. I chose to study the Ministry of Education as a rhetorician, as it meets the topics of cultural policy and political science.

In Finland, the Ministry of Education is responsible for the following matters:

- Audiovisual Policy
- Culture
- Education and Training
- Sports
- Research
- Youth

In my thesis, I will study all texts available in English in all fields.

The topic of the evolution of the image of Finland in the EU is a large and vast one. Even though I had already reduced my field of study by defining the Ministry of Education as my main source of study, I had to decide of a time line. I chose to study the following period: 1994-2005 for several reasons. As I decided to study the image of Finland inside the EU, it became obvious that I should start my research in 1994, the year of the Finnish referendum about Finland's EU membership. I felt it was a more interesting year to be a starting point for my research than 1993, year when the membership negotiations with the European Community began. My research ends at the year 2005, as it is the year when I started this research, and I believe that 11 years is a long enough period to study the image and possible changes. Furthermore, 2005 is a relevant year for in this year Finland was preparing itself to the presidency of the EU, which it has occupied in 2006.

The research question is another important element of the process of the writing of the thesis. As Strauss and Corbin state, "The way one asks the research question is extremely important because that determines to a larger extent the research method used." (Strauss Corbin 1990:36). They further add: "Another important aspect of the research question is the setting of boundaries on what will be studied. It is impossible for any investigator to cover all aspects of a problem. The research question helps to narrow down the problem to a workable size." (Strauss Corbin 1990:37). Following these guidelines, my main research question is "Has there been any changes in the representation of the image of Finland in the texts of the Ministry of Education during the period going from 1994 to 2005?" This question leads to more questions such as: who does the term "Ministry of Education" refer to. Does it involve the highest official or the section officials? Or do these texts just involve propaganda specialists "marketing" Finland abroad? This question leads to another question: what are the objectives of these texts? What have they been written for? Obviously, I will also study the difference of argumentation of the image of Finland, if any. Has Finland changed the way it describes itself? Is there a difference of argumentation depending on whether the writer(s) is (are) Finnish or a foreigner?

Finland has changed, this is a fact. Finland, which was previously just thought of as a far away country up north and very close to Russia has succeeded in becoming a top country as far as education is concerned for instance. A simple look at the results of the PISA studies proves this fact. Has the argumentation of the image of Finland followed this evolution? This is what I will study in my thesis.

I will start by studying the setting of my thesis. This means that I will talk about my research material, the methodology I used and the problems I faced during my research. I will then study the changes in the image construction of Finland, if any, before entering the European Union and at the beginning of its membership, and after Finland joined the European Union. I will finally study the argumentation of the image of Finland. I will start by studying the land, and this part will include the geography, the history and the economy. I will next devote a part on the study of the society, still concerning the argumentation of the image of Finland. In this

part, I will study the notion of equality, the information society, and of course, education. I will finally conclude my research by answering my research questions, evaluating my findings and evaluating my research.

## **2. THE SETTING**

It is essential, in order to write the best thesis possible, to put a stress on the choice of the research material, on the methodology used, on the theoretical background used in the thesis, and on the research problems. In this chapter I will develop on each point here above mentioned. I will start by explaining the choice of the material I have been working on, mostly the texts from the Ministry of Education, but also methodology books and works on rhetoric. I will then explain my methodological choice, which consists mostly of the use of the qualitative method, and explain which theories I based my analysis and research on. I will finish by discussing how well the material, methodology and theories I have chosen fit together, and answer the questions: “Who is the Ministry of Education” and “Who are the texts aimed at?”

### **2.1. Research material**

As I am studying the Ministry of Education as a rhetorician during the following period: 1994-2005, it was evident that my prime research material would consist mostly of texts by the Ministry of Education which were available, at least partly, in English. The texts published between 1994 and 1997 were to be found at the University Library of Helsinki and the Parliament Library, and texts from 1997 onwards are available on their website [www.minedu.fi](http://www.minedu.fi). I will study the rhetoric used in these texts, I will find out which elements are present in these texts, and which elements are absent, for it is important when studying a text to also notice the missing elements, which can be even more interesting than the present elements. I shall also study who actually wrote these texts, at which group of readers they have been aimed and, of course, in what is the image of Finland given in these texts.

In order for my research to be complete and perfectly academic, I had to widen the scope of my research material and include other texts from different authors and period. I studied texts from earlier than 1994 in order to get a better idea of the change that had occurred in the representation of the image of Finland, if such a change ever occurred. I also included in my

research PISA assessments performed by the OECD and other statements by the OECD, for I believe they are relevant to my research and offer an explanation to possible changes.

I also studied works concerning methodology and rhetoric. I also studied many works on qualitative research method, which is the research method I decided on using in my thesis, as I will later on develop.

## **2.2. Methodology**

When looking for the best approach for my thesis, I came through the following statement from Ingerman Arbnor and Bjorn Bjerke in *Methodology for Creating Business Knowledge*: “You can never empirically or logically determine the best approach. This can only be done reflectively by considering a situation to be studied and your own opinion of life. This also means that even if you believe that one approach is more interesting or rewarding than another, we as authors of this book do not want to rank one approach above another. In fact, we cannot *on any general ground*. The only thing we can do is to try to make explicit the special characteristics on which the various approaches are based.” (Arbnor and Bjerke 1997:5) Therefore, I had to take a deep look into my research topic, analyze my material, my research questions and the nature of my research problem and get informed in details about the various research methods available in order to define which method would become the one I will use during my research. As stated by Dr Keith Punch in his work *Introduction to Social Research. Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches*, “The question ‘quantitative or qualitative’ is commonly asked, especially by beginning researchers. Often, they are putting the ‘method cart’ before the ‘content horse’. The best advice in those cases is to step back from questions of methods [and tools], and give further consideration to the purposes and research questions, bearing in mind that the way questions are asked influences what needs to be done to answer them.” (Punch 1998:245)

Considering the nature of my research problem, I decided to use the qualitative research method. My research questions are not based on pure facts and numbers, but on a description and interpretation of facts. In order to answer those questions, I need to critically analyze and

to question all my findings. However, during the course of my research I used a small amount of statistics and thus a small amount of quantitative method, as it is common for researchers to use more than one method.

As Cassel and Symon said in *Qualitative Methods in Organizational Research: A Practical Guide*, “Only qualitative methods are sensitive enough to allow detailed analysis of change.” (Cassel and Symon 1994:5) As my research is greatly based on the idea of change, this sole quote could justify my choice to work using the qualitative research method.

But what exactly is the qualitative research method? The two major approaches to research methodology in social sciences are qualitative research and quantitative research. According to Punch, “Quantitative research is empirical research where the data are in the form of numbers. Qualitative research is empirical data where the data are not in the form of numbers.” (1998:4) Sherman and Webb state in *Qualitative research in education: a focus that* “‘Qualitative’ implies a direct concern with experience as it is ‘lived’ or ‘felt’ or ‘undergone’. (In contrast, ‘quantitative’ research, often taken to be the opposite idea, is indirect and abstracts and treats experiences as similar adding or multiplying them together, or ‘quantifying’ them.) (Sherman and Webb 1988:7)

As for Strauss and Corbin, they define qualitative research in *Basics of Qualitative Research, Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques* as: “By the term *qualitative research* we mean any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification. It can refer to research about persons' lives, stories, behaviour, but also about organizational functioning, social movements, or interactional relationships.” (Strauss and Corbin 1990:17). It is often said that qualitative research is subjective whereas quantitative research is objective, that qualitative research is based on interpretation and description whereas quantitative research is based on pure facts and numbers.

Finally, one could sum up the definition of qualitative research as Cassel and Symon said: “In summary, qualitative research can be said to have a number of defining characteristics which include: a focus on interpretation rather than quantifications; an emphasis on subjectivity rather than objectivity; flexibility in the process of conducting a research; an orientation

towards process rather than outcome; a concern with context \_ regarding behaviour and situation as inextricably linked in forming experience; and finally, an explicit recognition of the impact of the research process on the research situation.” (Cassell and Symon 1994:7).

The major components of qualitative research are the data, which can come from interviews and observations, and in my case from political texts, the coding, which is the analytic or interpretive procedure, in this case the analysis of the texts studied, and written or verbal reports, in my case, my thesis as explained by Strauss and Corbin (1990:20). Many methods exist in qualitative research; however, one can name three major methods:

- Qualitative interviews
- Direct observation
- Case studies

Interviews include questionnaires and conversations, direct observations include participant and non-participant observation, ethnographic diaries, photos and videos, and case studies may use either of the above methods in order to compile a comprehensive and systematic picture of a particular case, which may be events, policies, organizations...

I decided to use the case study method as I have to answer a broad and complex question and for I am seeking an individual outcome. To do so, I performed data sampling and data analysis. My data consists of my research material, more particularly the texts from the Ministry of Education, and texts and results from the OECD.

As implied in my topic, I am also using rhetoric in my thesis. Rhetoric is not a method per se; however I believe I shall discuss here how it affects the methodology used. Should I wish to briefly define rhetoric, I could say that rhetoric is the study of effective speaking and writing and the study of the art of persuasion. However, I believe that I shall develop this definition of rhetoric some more, in order to explain my use of rhetoric.

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary (<http://www.m-w.com/dictionary/rhetoric>, 15.5.2007), rhetoric is:

1. the art of speaking or writing effectively as:
  - a. the study of principles and rules of composition formulated by critics of ancient times
  - b. the study of writing or speaking as a means of communication or persuasion
2. skill in the effective use of speech
3. a type or mode of language or speech
4. verbal communication

In its broadest sense, rhetoric is the theory and practice of eloquence, whether spoken or written. Obviously, my thesis deals with written rhetoric. Rhetoric defines the rules that should govern all prose composition or speech designed to influence the judgment or the feelings of people. Aristotle defines rhetoric in *The 'Art' of Rhetoric* (1947:3) as “a counterpart of Dialectics; for both have to do with matters that are in a manner within the cognizance of all men and not confined to any special science.” In *Poetics and Rhetoric*, Aristotle defines rhetoric as “that faculty by which we understand what will serve our turn, concerning any subject to win belief in the hearer.” (Potts, L.J, *Aristotle on the Art of Fiction, An English Translation of the Poetics with an Introductory Essay and Explanatory Notes*, London, Cambridge University Press, 1953:80) In *The 'Art' of Rhetoric*, he states three kinds of rhetorical speeches: deliberative, forensic and epideictic (1947:33) He also asserts that every rhetorical speech is composed of three parts: the speaker, the subject the speaker treats, and the person to whom the speech is addressed, that is to say the hearer. This applies to all texts I am studying: they are all written by the Ministry of Education or writers acting under its command, all discuss a topic which deals with education and politics, as does for instance, the text *Cultural tourism and sustainable development, Results of the cooperation of the state authorities of Finland and the Republic of Karelia on cross-border* which has been written by Tarja Mäkinen Natalia Reunova, Merja Niemi, Paula Tuomikoski, Pirkko Liisi Kuhmonen, and Olli Saarela as a committee for the Ministry of Education in 2003. This text addresses an audience (a group of readers) which we can say is international, as the text is in English, and obviously shows an interest in the matters of cultural tourism, sustainable development,

Finland and Karelia. One could therefore conclude that although the text is available to a wide audience, it will be only read and is targeted at a specific audience which shares a common interest with the writer.

Aristotle adds later on that “There are three things which require special attention in regard to speech: first, the sources of proof; secondly, style; and thirdly, the arrangement of the parts of the speech.” (1947:345) In *Poetics and Rhetoric*, Aristotle states that “there are three kinds of orations: Demonstrative, Judicial, Deliberative.” (Potts, 1953:81) Although this refers to orations, I believe it also applies to written discourses. The three rhetorical appeals, which were first developed by Aristotle, are pathos, logos, and ethos. Pathos appeals to the emotions of the audience, logos appeals to the facts or evidence and ethos exhibits the credibility of the writer. Therefore, one could come to the conclusion that when the authors of the texts are specifically introduced at the beginning of the publication, such as in *Means for Overall Assessment of Cultural Life and Measuring the Involvement of the Cultural Sector in the Information Society* (Ministry of Education, 2003) where it is specified that the text was written by Prof. Robert G. Picard, Mikko Grönlund and Timo Toivonen, The Media Group, Business Research and Development Centre, Turku School of Economics and Business Administration, are counting on the ethos to convince the reader. I come to this conclusion by the fact that other texts are presented as works of the Ministry of Education, or a committee, as a general writer. Those texts, such as for instance *Management and Steering of Higher Education in Finland* (Ministry of Education, 2004), therefore rely more on pathos and more certainly logos. An example of the use of pathos can be found in the following quote: “Other strengths include Finland's unspoilt natural landscape and the use of natural materials, traditional Finnish values such as simplicity and functionality and ethically and ecologically sustainable production.” (*Staying Power to Finnish Cultural Exports - The Cultural Exportation Project of the Ministry of Education, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Trade and Industry*, Ministry of Education, 2005:14) The mention of traditional Finnish values seems not only to be present of the eyes of the international reader, but also and mainly for the Finnish reader that can identify to them and feel a sense of pride from it. As for logos, it can be found in many texts in instances such as: “2000, a total of 16,800 people moved to Finland, 5,400 from the EU, 4,700 from the Nordic countries and 6,700 from

elsewhere. Of those who moved to Finland in 1998, some 2,400 had a higher educational qualification. The majority of these, around 80%, came from another European country and 22% from Sweden alone.” (Background report; Polytechnic education in Finland, Ministry of Education, 2002:13)

Rhetoric has evolved a lot since its creation. Until well into the 19th century, rhetoric was a fundamental area of academic study and a direct influence on the compositional styles of poets, playwrights, and novelists. Thus, an understanding of rhetoric can improve our understanding of literary works. In a persuasive essay, rhetorical appeals are a very important tool to influence the audience toward the author’s perspective. The practices and meanings in contemporary studies on the topic of rhetoric vary a lot. Rhetoric has always been involved in the fields of law, public relations, lobbying, marketing and politics, and is nowadays also linked to the fields of history, literature and journalism. Rhetoric is a method which is used to study and understand the way humans use language and communication to vehicle an idea and influence the understanding of these ideas and the world around us.

I shall use rhetoric’s method of inquiry called discourse analysis. According to the University of Texas, as found on the internet on the website

<http://www.gslis.utexas.edu/~palmquis/courses/discourse.htm> on August, 6th, 2007:

“Discourse Analysis will enable to reveal the hidden motivations behind a text or behind the choice of a particular method of research to interpret that text.” It seems therefore to be perfect for my research. However, I shall mention that I am neither a philosopher nor a linguist, and I will stick to a study of the ideas present in the text, with a focus on some formulations and key words. The content of the texts will be carefully studied. Nonetheless, I will not proceed to a detailed text analysis as one could perform in literature studies.

### **2.3. Theoretical approach: rhetoric**

All observations are theory related. Theories allow us to look in certain directions, and the phenomenon thus becomes understandable. In my thesis I decided on using various theories from different theoreticians, mostly rhetorical theories. One of the works that I used the most

is Modern Rhetorical Criticism by Roderick P. Hart. I shall start by developing on this work. Other important works and theories I worked on are theories by Chaim Perelman from the *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation and the Hermeneutics*. All these theories and works have had a vast influence on the way I decided to proceed with my research. Hence, it is essential to develop on those theories.

### **2.3.1. Modern Rhetorical Criticism**

Roderick P. Hart, a professor at the University of Texas, has published *Modern Rhetorical Criticism* in 1980, and its second edition, which is the one I used, was published in 1996. Although Hart is very much interested in the political discourses in his own country, the United States of America, many of his statements and theories on rhetoric and rhetorical criticism apply to a wider range of political discourses, and other discourses. Since the texts I study all come from a Ministry, which is a political agency, theories which apply to political discourses apply to my thesis. In his preface to this work, Hart explains the goals of this book: “(1) to broaden the reader's conception of persuasion so that its uses in law, politics, religion and commerce are seen as different in degrees *\_not in kind\_* from its less obvious uses in literature, science, education and entertainment” and “(3) to equip the reader with the critical tools and attitudes needed to see how rhetoric works its magic.” (Hart, 1996:vii) It was obvious from the start that this work would prove of great importance in my research.

Hart defines rhetoric as “the art of using language to help people narrow their choices among specifiable, if not specified, policy options.” (Hart, 1996:2) It is thus clear that rhetoric implies a use of language with a goal, it is clear that rhetoric is used to influence people’s thoughts, in this case in the field of politics. However, one should keep in mind that “communication is not something that is *done* to others. Rather, it is something that people choose to do to themselves by consenting to communicative contact.” (1996:8) Communication is also “an attempt to build community by exchanging symbols” (Hart, 1996:36). Here we have the notion that communication is an activity human beings perform on their own free will and with the idea of a community at stake. This is an essential notion to remember that communication is an action people agree to perform. No one is forced to read these texts, they agree to do so.

Furthermore, the idea of community is present in communication. What community is the Ministry of Education communicating with? Is it the Finnish population? Is it an international community? Is it a community of experts?

Hart keeps on by stating that “(1) Rhetoric is a special sort of human activity; (2) it takes a special kind of talent to understand it; and (3) by understanding it, one acquires a special perspective on the world itself.” (Hart, 1996:6) Here we get the idea that rhetoric is not understandable by everybody. It requires work and effort to study it, and a special talent to understand it. It is however a human activity, and thus could be practiced by any human, even though its practice and its understanding are different in the sense that rhetoric could be used without really knowing that one is using rhetoric, whereas to understand it one shall concentrate on it.

Understanding rhetoric allows oneself to acquire “a special perspective on the world itself.” (1996:6) According to Hart, “rhetoric uses common ideas, conventional language, and specific information to change listeners’ feelings and behaviours. The story rhetoric tells is always a story with a purpose, it is never told for its own sake.” (Hart, 1996:7) I would like to underline two key elements of this sentence: rhetoric does not use complicated language and/or facts; instead, it makes it easy for everyone to understand it. Indeed, should the discourse not be accessible by everyone, the persuasion would not be effective, or it would only be effective on a smaller scale. Furthermore, a text is never innocent. Rhetoric, especially in political texts, is always present; hence political texts have a purpose and aim at persuading their audience. It is an essential point and a key theoretical element in my thesis.

It is necessary to understand the theories of rhetoric in order to understand how a rhetorical discourse is created and what I shall look for when studying the texts from the Ministry of Education. “Normally, three features make a message rhetorical: (1) delineations of the good, (2) resonance for a particular audience, and (3) clear or clearly implied policy recommendations.” (Hart, 1996:12) These features are features I shall be looking for in the texts I chose to study. The ones that interest me the most are "resonance for a particular audience" as I shall define who are the texts aimed at, and "clear or clearly implied policy

recommendations". The texts I chose have been written or published or ordered by the Ministry of Education in Finland. The author of the text can also be what Hart refers to as an "Agent", a rhetorical character "who speaks on behalf of some institution". (Hart, 1996:219) It is very interesting to find out if a policy is clearly recommended in these texts, or a policy line, and if there is what is the policy or the policy line and which direction does it aim at turning Finland to. Hart states that "formulating rhetoric involves reflecting and arranging message elements and predicting how listeners will react to these elements additively." (Hart, 1996:110) Rhetoric is thus definitely a way of communicating, and not communication pure and simple. Of course, my research involves readers and not listeners, but the process is very similar whether one is talking or writing. Rhetoric is a way to vehicle ideas and to persuade the audience. However it is important to remember that a rhetoric text is not brainwashing or hypnotizing its listeners or readers. The author of a rhetoric text vehicles his/her ideas and intends for the audience to agree with these ideas.

Several other rhetorical theorists are quoted in Hart's book, and I shall now use a quote that I found on page 213 of Hart's work: "As Kenneth Burke [1962] says: "motive is never not an issue in rhetoric, that all such situations prompt the questions: what is this person trying to do to me?" I shall myself play the part of the reader and ask myself this same question in order to discover the goal of the texts I am studying. I shall also keep in mind Aristotle's theory that, as quoted by Hart, the rhetor uses "all the means of argumentation available, not just those recommended by the logic books." (Hart, 1996:10) I shall therefore think further than what I have read in logic books, and look for every mean of argumentation that might have been used.

I am, during this research, playing the part of a rhetorical critic, as I am studying texts using rhetorical theories. What is a rhetorical critic, and what does rhetorical criticism imply? According to Hart, "Rhetorical criticism is the business of identifying the complications of rhetoric, then explaining them in a comprehensive and efficient manner." (Hart, 1996:23) I shall therefore identify the rhetoric in the texts I study, and explain the rhetoric used so that my readers will be able to understand it. "Rhetorical criticism provides general understanding via the case study method." (Hart 1996:25) In my research, the case study will consist in the

study of the texts from the Ministry of Education. However, as there are many long texts, I cannot study everything, and will focus on the findings I find the most relevant, the ones that could prove an evolution in the depiction of the image of Finland in the texts from the Ministry of Education. One key theory I shall bear in mind all through my research is that, as Hart states, “No message is too modest for careful inspection”. (Hart, 1996:25) According to this theory, one should, when studying rhetoric, study meticulously each and every message. Moreover, “Like all research activities, criticism requires that one (a) *isolate* a phenomenon for special study, (b) *describe* special aspects of that phenomenon, (c) *classify* features of that phenomenon, (d) *interpret* the patterns noticed, and (e) *evaluate* the phenomenon. (Hart, 1996:26) Even though those steps might appear as obvious to some, I find it essential to name them, as they define the major stages of my research.

“There are many similarities between literary criticism and rhetorical criticism. Both require acuteness of perception, both demand textual exploration, and both explore human wants and desires expressed in language.” (Hart, 1996:26) I have been doing literary criticism several times during my previous studies. Following the theory that there are many similarities between literary criticism and rhetorical criticism, I should possess an asset for performing this research. Finally, “Rhetorical criticism is criticism of life itself, of our own participation in the experience of living.” (Hart, 1996:26) This theory is interesting in my opinion for it broadens the scope of rhetorical criticism, as one could understand it as a plain study of discourses. It is my attempt in this thesis to describe more than the way the texts are written. I want to find in these texts answers on the Finnish society and Finnish policies. According to this theory, we could find in these texts by studying them using rhetorical criticism elements on the society we live in. This is a critical theory in the sense that it defines the range of my possible findings on a larger scale.

As a critic, I will have several tasks. “The most basic job of the rhetorical critic is to be able to discover when rhetoric is being used.” (Hart, 1996:11) Indeed, this is part of what I will try to achieve in my study. However, if we assume that all texts have a purpose, I shall be able to find means of rhetorical argumentation in the majority of the texts I am studying. The question will be to find in which context and in what purpose. I shall be careful not to modify the

meaning of the text and extrapolate, as “The good critic magnifies without distorting, focusing on rhetorical characteristic that, while humble, may nevertheless be important.” (Hart, 1996:24) One more challenge that I will face as a critic is to remain objective and attentive in the description of my findings, and look in every part of one sentence for important information, for the obvious is not always the most important. Also, what is not present can also be important, as stated by Hart: “Also revealing is what is not found in the text. [...] Not *doing* is being done.” (Hart, 1996:27) and “All texts are filled with data [...] (2) what is *not* present in a message is often more important than what is present; and (3) how an idea is phrased may sometimes be less important than the fact that the idea is mentioned at all.” (Hart, 1996:32) When performing a rhetorical critic, one should, according to this theory, look beyond the obvious and question everything: what is present, what is not present, how it is present, why it is present, and so on. The critic himself/herself shall be cautious of his/her attitude towards the discourse. Hart declares that “the good critic is sceptical but not cynical” (Hart, 1996:30) It is easy to fall into the trap of over criticizing a discourse. According to Hart’s theory, one should be sceptical but avoid personal comments and thus mocking. “In a way, all rhetorical critics study ideas.” (Hart, 1996:61) I intend myself to study ideas and the way they are presented in the discourse. According to Hart, I am therefore following the theories of rhetorical criticism.

To sum up, according to Hart, rhetorical criticism consists in analyzing ideas and telling what is present and what is not, provided that it is relevant, analyzing ideas so that one can find rhetorical patterns, and analyzing ideas as to explain the rhetorical tone of the discourse. One should also look at the speaker or writer, depending on the discourse, in my case the writer and study if the writer’s employment, political vision, strategic mindset and social power affect his/her style. I will do my best to define who the writer is and if indeed his/her discourse was affected by the above mentioned elements, or if there is a difference depending on who is the author of the discourse.

### **2.3.2. Chaim Perelman and The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation**

Chaim Perelman wrote a study with Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca in 1958 named *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation*. However, this work would be translated into English only in 1969. Perelman disagreed with some ancient approaches to rhetoric. He stated that “Among the ancients, rhetoric appeared as the study of a technique for use by the common man impatient to arrive rapidly at conclusions, or to form an opinion, without first of all taking the trouble of a preliminary serious investigation.” (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969:7) For him, it seems that in the Antiquity, rhetoric was more about the style than about the reason. He particularly disagreed with the epideictic oratory as defined by Aristotle, where the skill of the orator was judged by the audience for they did not have any way to judge the values at stake in those oratories. Perelman thus felt the need for a theory of argumentation where values could be assessed the same way as facts and policies were: rationally. According to Perelman, rhetoric is a theory of argumentation. He differentiates argumentation and demonstration by stating that demonstration is impersonal while argumentation is personal.

One of the key elements of *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation* is Perelman’s focus on the audience. For instance, as said by Perelman, facts are not facts until an audience recognizes them as facts. He thus rejects the idea of having the possibility of writing a work that is just reporting facts, as expressed when he states that such a mind-set “rests on the illusion, widespread in certain rationalistic and scientific circles that facts speak for themselves.” (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969:17) I believe this is an important theory in the process of understanding and interpreting the texts I chose to work on, for many facts are stated. I shall thus wonder why these facts were chosen and not other facts, what did the author have in mind when choosing these facts and what effect does it have on the image of Finland depicted in these very texts. It is also essential to know who the audience is. Perelman defines the audience “for the purposes of rhetoric, as *the ensemble of those whom the speaker wishes to influence by his argumentation.*” (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969:19) It is an essential concept for it refers to more than the audience physically present, the audience refers to all those the author thinks of when in the writing process.

Perelman distinguished two sorts of audience: the universal audience and the particular audience. Since argumentation is “the discursive techniques allowing us to induce or to increase the mind’s adherence to the theses presented for its assent.” (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969:4), it is essential to define the audience. The main difference between the particular audience and the universal audience is that the particular audience is subject to persuasion, whereas the universal audience holds to its convictions (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969:28-29). The particular audience is physically present and consists of one segment or another of humanity (for instance a political party, citizens of a particular nation) whereas the universal audience is a mental concept that the author creates, his conception of an audience most reasonable and most competent with respect to the issues under discussion. The universal audience is generated by the author’s knowledge of other people. Each author has a different conception of the universal audience.

Moreover, it is important to recognize the fact that “The status of an audience varies with the concept one has of it.” (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969:34). The sort of audience the author aims at will define the argumentation the author will choose. For instance, if one can convince a particular audience, it is not granted that the universal audience will adhere. However, if the universal audience is persuaded, then the particular audience will be too. In addition to this, Perelman states that “In argumentation, the important thing is not knowing what the speaker regards as true or important, but knowing the view of those he is addressing.” (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969:23-24). This theory clearly states the importance of the audience. It is therefore essential for me to keep this theory in mind when performing my research and the question: ‘whom are these texts aimed at?’ becomes an essential factor for interpretation.

Perelman also states that the essential in argumentation is not to convince the audience of the truth of the discourse, but to get the audience to adhere to the argumentation process. An argument aims at persuading an audience, and an important element of this persuasion is the fact that the audience should be transformed and should evolve during the argumentative discourse. If a speaker attempts to acquire the adherence of a particular audience, the speaker

is said to try to persuade the audience. If the target is the universal audience, the speaker is attempting to convince. The audience, according to Perelman, basically creates the meaning of the text, or at least influences the content of a text for the greatest part, and for an argumentation to be effective, the author should adapt himself or herself to the audience. The author chooses his/her argumentation in order for the audience to adhere to it. Knowing the audience is the key in knowing how to gain this audience's adherence. As Perelman asserts, "knowledge of an audience cannot be conceived independently of the knowledge of how to influence it" (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969:23) and adds shortly after that "knowledge of an audience is also knowledge of how to bring about its conditioning as well as of the amount of conditioning achieved at any given moment of the discourse" (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969:23) The argumentation is thus targeted at one audience, and this argumentation varies from one audience to another. The argumentation becomes effective when the rhetor knows the audience and aims his/her argumentation at this very audience. One should also keep in mind that, for an argumentation to become successful, the audience must be willing to listen to the rhetor, or to read the rhetor's discourse.

Facts become facts only if the audience sees them as facts. However, Perelman declares that "From the standpoint of argumentation, we are confronted with a fact only if we can postulate uncontroverted, universal agreement with respect to it."(Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969:67) This means that for a fact to be a fact, no justification from the audience is required. Facts are also better arguments when located at the beginning of an argumentation rather than in its conclusion. Perelman classifies premises of argumentation as facts, truths, suppositions, values and their hierarchies and commonplaces. Facts, truths and presumptions hold the adherence of the universal audience, whereas values and hierarchies hold the adherence of the particular audience. Facts, truths and presumptions all deal with reality and their use in argumentation is an advantage for the orator or author for unless one can prove them wrong, the audience has to adhere. This is especially true for facts and truths. Presumptions might require some reinforcement in the minds of the audience.

Values, hierarchies and commonplaces, or loci are used only to gain the adherence of a particular audience. Values, in the framework of rationally compelling argumentation, are

subjective and arbitrary and are usually used in the political, judicial and philosophical fields and are shared by a certain number of persons. However, one difficulty with the use of values is that “Most values are indeed shared by a great number of audiences, and a particular audience is characterized less by which values it accepts than by the way it grades them. Values may be admitted by different audiences, but the degree of their acceptance will vary from one audience to another.” (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969:81) In other words, one should think carefully of the values used in relation to the particular audience targeted. Hierarchies refer to the way values are organized. It is a hierarchy of values. Commonplaces, or loci of the preferables, are the equivalent of the Aristotelian *topoi*, which arguers use as premises in classifying and formulating their arguments. Loci are most general premises which are often implied yet justify choices rhetors make. In order to truly understand an audience, one must understand the loci, which serves as an audience’s foundation for values and hierarchies as well as the intensity to which they privilege and adhere to these loci. One could say that loci are a classification of the hierarchies. In my research, I shall thus follow this theory and look for the type of argumentation used by the various authors. This will give me an insight as to who the texts were aimed at. It will help me find out if the texts were aimed at a specific audience or at a particular audience.

Perelman also introduces the notion of presence and communion. Presence is choosing to stress certain facts and ideas instead of others, and to get the audience to follow those facts and ideas. Because Perelman’s theory of rhetoric seeks a communion between the rhetor and the audience, the part taken by the audience becomes significantly important. Furthermore, since the aim of argumentation is to persuade by means of adherence, an argumentative discourse must contain arguments that the audience will adhere to so strongly that the rest of the discourse can be based upon it. That is to say, a rhetor must first create a presence to which the audience adheres and, if successful, he or she can include some more disputable elements to the discourse. What is present is important, and if the rhetor uses arguments the audience adheres to and gets the audience to focus on them, these elements will appear as important to the audience. Perelman defines presence as “the displaying of certain elements on which the speaker wishes to centre attention in order that they may occupy the foreground of the hearer’s consciousness.” (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969:142) With the concept of presence, the

rhetor is seen as being able “to make present, by verbal magic alone, what is actually absent but what he considers important to his argument.” (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969:117) Indeed, it is not always what is physically present which is the most important, as Perelman implies in his work that abstract ideas are often the most persuasive and that, therefore, the argumentation and techniques used in a discourse are very important in order to get the audience to see those ideas as present and in consequence important. Communion is mostly the ability of the rhetor to identify with the audience, the communion of minds of the rhetor and the audience. Communion is seen as a major quality for the rhetor to get the audience to adhere. Communion also has to do with the linguistic style of a culture (1969:163-164) and is created by “the needs of argument which explain the tendency to form into a group and so band together all those who are seen to share the same attitudes, the supporters and opponents of a certain viewpoint, a certain person, or a certain way of acting.” (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969:323) This all gives me a very good insight on the importance of audience for the rhetor. I shall once again look for present elements and elements which are not present, and interpret the choice of arguments made by the rhetors.

Perelman also describes various techniques of presentation and techniques of argumentation, which are divided in techniques of liaison and techniques of dissociation. Liaison brings together elements that were seen as separate whereas dissociation does the opposite; it separates elements previously assumed to be part of a whole. The techniques of presentation refer to the style of the argumentation used to establish the communion. As Perelman asserts, “The presentation of data is necessarily connected with the problems of language. Choice of terms to express the speaker’s thought is rarely without significance in the argumentation.” (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969:149) He even adds that “the study of argumentation compels us to take into account not only the choice of data but also the way in which they are interpreted, the meaning attributed to them.” (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969:120-121) Indeed, one should be careful about the way the data is presented, why the data is presented that way, and what does it mean.

Concerning the techniques of argumentation, the techniques of liaison which create a bond between the different arguments of the rhetor, include the quasi-logical arguments, the

arguments based on the structure of reality, and the arguments that establish the structure of reality. Quasi-logical arguments use the persuasion strength of logic. However, they are not logical but only quasi-logical and thus aim at getting the audience adherence whereas purely logical arguments are not concerned with getting the adherence of the audience. Quasi-logical arguments are used to give a meaning to a term as well as to emphasize some part of a discourse in order to gain the adhesion of an audience. A first kind of quasi-logical argument is very similar to syllogism (an example of syllogism is: major premise: all men are mortal. Minor premise: some philosophers are men. Conclusion: some philosophers are mortal.) Another type of quasi-logical argument is incompatibility, with which one is faced with a position in conflict with a position previously held. The second technique of liaison is to use arguments based on the structure of reality. These arguments make connections between accepted structures of reality and structures that are the conclusions of their arguments. They are based on associations of succession and coexistence. Associations of succession deal with the relationship of phenomena on the same level, and an example of this sort of argument is the ‘pragmatic argument’, which presumes that the value of an act can be determined by its consequences. Associations of coexistence involve the relationship between phenomena on different levels. These associations are similar to those between persons and their acts, and since the phenomena are not on the same level in these associations, time is irrelevant to their connections. The last technique of liaison involves arguments that establish the structure of reality. The first type is argumentation by example, illustration, and model, and the second is argumentation by analogy and metaphor.

Techniques of dissociation divide wholes into separate elements by differentiating concepts from something that they were part of before. One use of dissociation is to avoid an incompatibility. Making an argument by dissociation consists of using philosophical pairs. Those pairs divide what Perelman calls “term I” and “Term II”, term I referring to appearance while term II refers to reality. Term II is understood in comparison to term I. The aim of this technique is to split concepts that would produce, if not split, a conclusion incompatible with the rhetor's argument.

I have now explained the main lines of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's theory of argumentation. This theory gives me an insight on what to look for in the texts I study for my

research. It stresses the importance of the audience in the mind of the arguer, and established various techniques and arguments used in order to gain the adherence from the audience.

Thanks to this theory, I will have a greater view on the texts and will be able to perform a better analysis and interpretation of those texts.

### **2.3.3. Hermeneutics**

Hermeneutics could be defined as the theory and methodology of interpretation, especially of texts. Hermeneutics started as the theory and methodology of interpretation of scriptural texts, especially the Bible. The term hermeneutics comes from the name of the Greek god Hermes, who was Zeus's messenger. Even though various antique philosophers such as Aristotle and Plato are believed to be the originators of hermeneutics, the term as we know it only appeared in the 16<sup>th</sup> century during the Protestant reformation. Hermeneutics has three different layers of meanings and concerns: namely, 1) theory, which is concerned about the epistemological validity and possibility of interpretation; 2) methodology, which is concerned about the formulation of reliable systems of interpretation; and 3) praxis, which is concerned about the actual process of interpreting specific texts. The theory originated from the Antiquity, the methodology and the praxis from the Renaissance. In hermeneutics, the subject (the interpreter) studies a text (the object) to find the truth/meaning (the goal). Hermeneutics is important in my research process as it is a theory of interpretation and thus gives me another background for my research.

Among all the individuals who had an influence on the evolution of hermeneutics, some have developed theories which inspired the way I performed the interpretation of the texts I am studying. The first one is Friedrich Schleiermacher. Among his many theories, I focused on the following ones:

- In order to execute a proper interpretation of a text, the interpreter must acquire a good knowledge of the text's historical context.
- Hermeneutics is a method of interpretation for oral and written texts.

- Hermeneutics is a universal discipline and thus does not only involve the interpretation of the Bible or other religious texts.
- Interpretation is more difficult a task than generally thought: it is easier to misunderstand than to understand and therefore “understanding should be willed and thought at every point.”

For Schleiermacher, as stated in *Hermeneutics and Criticism* in Mueller-Vollmer (1997:83) the interpretation of a text requires “to understand the text at first as well as and then even better than its author” This is a very interesting point which suggests that one can, through interpretation and hermeneutics, understand a text better than the author himself. Even though it might seem supercilious to understand a text better than its author, I believe that the education, status and background of the author of a text have an influence on the way the text is written and on the elements present or not in this very text, and that the author may not have realized the meaning of his way of writing or his or her choice of words. While I might not always know who wrote the text that I study, I shall take into account the author himself or herself when interpreting the texts. "The meaning of each word of a passage must be determined by the context in which it occurs." (Schleiermacher in Mueller-Vollmer, 1997:90) It means that I shall not study only the texts per se, but I shall also study the historical and political context in which it had been written. It is an essential point. Some persons analyze a text as words following one another, but I will determine the impact of the society and the situation at the time on the texts. I deeply believe that the writing of a text is influenced by the author's background and the situation in which it has been written.

Schleiermacher also states that “the more we learn about the author, the better equipped we are for interpretation” and “that a text can never be understood right away [...] every reading puts us in a better position to understand.” (Schleiermacher in Mueller-Vollmer, 1997:84) Thus, I shall read each text several times and try to learn about the author as much as possible, in order to produce the best interpretation possible of each text. Once I have studied and understood each text, I can define the important elements present in each text and present and analyze them in my thesis.

I was also influenced by some theories of Wilhelm Dilthey. "Dilthey called the systematic coordination of elementary acts of understanding in order to comprehend the meaning of complex, permanent expression 'interpretation' and its methodology 'hermeneutics'." (H.P. Rickman, 1976:10) He also developed a theory of hermeneutics for the interpretation of historical texts. Dilthey first drew a line between science and the humanities, between the *Naturwissenschaften* (natural sciences), and *Geisteswissenschaften* (human sciences). Science aimed at explaining, and did so by recognizing laws exterior and indifferent to man: invariant, mathematical, and historical. The humanities aimed at understanding what was relevant to the individual man: his life experiences, affections, character, social and historical setting. One could therefore say that, according to Dilthey, the *Geisteswissenschaften* were the sciences of understanding. For Dilthey, "Understanding man and society is more like interpreting a text than acquiring knowledge of the physical world by using the methods of physics or chemistry." (1976:269) Here once again, we get a theory that, through the interpretation of a text, one can understand the world, and therefore that the world and the text are linked to one another. H.P. Rickman even states that, according to Dilthey, "The study of the human world involves not only the extensive interpretation of texts and verbal utterances but also the treatment of many other social phenomena *as if* they were texts to be interpreted." (H.P. Rickman, 1976:10) According to this theory, if I can understand a text, I am able to understand the world. I am not going as far as saying that I am intending on giving an understanding of the world in my thesis, but I will try to give an understanding of the Finnish image.

The 'theory' part of Dilthey's methodology which interests me the most is the theory of the 'hermeneutic circle'. The 'hermeneutic circle' refers to the continual movement between the implicit and the explicit, the particular and the whole, as seen on [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wilhelm\\_Dilthey](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wilhelm_Dilthey) on the 18th of April 2007. It means that to understand an isolated part, one has to understand the whole, and that to understand the whole, one has to understand each individual part. It also implies that, in order to understand a text, one shall understand its outside influences, such as its historical context. In his second aporia in the Volume V of his essay on *The Development of Hermeneutics*, Dilthey stated that "The whole must be understood in terms of its individual parts, individual parts in terms of the

whole. To understand the whole of a work we must refer to its author and to related literature. Such a comparative procedure allows one to understand every individual work, indeed, every individual sentence, more profoundly than we did before. So understanding the whole and the individual parts are interdependent.” (Dilthey in H.P. Rickman, 1976:262) Hence the notion of circle. I believe this theory is important in my thesis for it shows, once again, how various elements are related and how I shall always consider the texts from the Ministry of Education in relation to outside elements which might influence it.

It would be impossible to discuss hermeneutics and quote hermeneutic theories without examining the hermeneutic theories of Martin Heidegger and of Hans Gadamer. I shall start by reviewing Heidegger's contribution to the hermeneutic field. It is often said that the radical turn in hermeneutics was made by Heidegger. Before him, hermeneutics was all about technique, about a method for properly understanding texts. Heidegger's main concern was ontology or the study of being. Thus, Heidegger brought hermeneutics to a philosophical level, with what is nowadays referred to as philosophical hermeneutics. Heidegger disagreed with the Antique philosophies of Aristotle and Plato for, according to him, they did not put a stress on 'Being' as the true subject of philosophy. It is essential to get acquainted to Heidegger's philosophical view, for according to him hermeneutics is philosophy, and so once we understand his philosophy, we understand his theories on hermeneutics. His ultimate goal was the understanding of 'Being'. For him, it could only be achieved by the phenomenology of the Dasein (the human being) and the analysis of the ontological structure of the Dasein. In *Being and Time*, his major work, he assesses that the hermeneutical task is to use a phenomenological analysis of Dasein in order to make 'Being' understandable. To reveal Dasein is the first step to unveil the truth of Being. Heidegger emphasized the ontological aspect of understanding and did not consider it as one of a human being's act only as it was previously assumed. It could be said that phenomenological analysis of understanding and its ontological conditions is the topic of philosophical hermeneutics, Heidegger's theory of hermeneutics.

If we believe Heidegger's theory of hermeneutics, it is more ontological than methodological. He also established a new approach on hermeneutics. For instance, he ascertained that every

kind of understanding is preceded by a pre-structure. Interpretation is, according to him, already pre-established by something we have in advance (fore-having), something we see in advance (fore-sight) and something we seize in advance (fore-conception). He declares that: "Whenever something is interpreted as something, the interpretation will be found essentially upon fore-having, fore-sight and fore-conception. An interpretation is never a presuppositionless apprehending of something presented to us." (Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 1962:191) Therefore, all interpretation is influenced by our beliefs, our culture, and the world surrounding us. Therefore, no interpretation is purely objective. I do not fully follow this theory, but I do believe that interpretation is influenced by various elements, and that interpretation of a same text for instance varies through the ages and depending on the interpreter. I also believe that, since interpretation is influenced, writing is also influenced. I do not either completely agree with the theory that the aim of hermeneutics is to understand the truth of Being, but I do believe that hermeneutics help understanding society and the world we live in. I believe my interpretation might give an alternative view of the mainstream image of Finland.

Heidegger also offered a turning point in the understanding of the hermeneutical circle. I previously discussed the notion of hermeneutical circle. Let's now examine Heidegger's view of the circle. His circle refers to our self-understanding and the understanding of the world. It is not a tool anymore, but an existential task affecting each and every human being. Furthermore, every understanding occurs in this hermeneutical circle, there is no human understanding without the hermeneutic circle. Heidegger describes the circle in terms of existential grounding. He states that "As the disclosedness of the 'there', understanding always pertains to the whole of being-in-the-world. In every understanding of the world, existence is understood with it and vice-versa. All interpretations, moreover, operate in the fore-structure. This circle of understanding is not an orbit in which any random kind of knowledge may move, it is the expression of the existential fore-structure of *Dasein* itself." (Heidegger, 1962:194) One could say that, for Heidegger, the hermeneutic circle is the fore-structure of understanding. We can agree to this theory which reminds me of some other theories I previously quoted: it is necessary to know some elements previous to the interpretation process in order to understand the subject properly, which is what I will do with my texts.

This circle of understanding begins from us, and leads to self-understanding. According to Heidegger's circle, a person who understands, for instance, a text, eventually understands himself. He states that "Understanding is the existential being of Dasein's own potentiality-for-being, and it is so in such a way that this being in itself is what its being is capable of." (Heidegger, 1962:184) Dasein need to understand itself in order to be able to understand other entities in the world, that is to say that understanding oneself is a mandatory step in order to understand, for instance, a text. Heidegger also claims that "we never perceive equipment that is ready-to-hand without already understanding and interpreting it." (Heidegger, 1962:190) Finally, it is important to enter the circle the right way in order to understand properly. We shall not get rid of presuppositions, but start our interpretation with the right ones. Heidegger writes that "What is decisive is not to get out of the circle but to come into it in the right way in the circle is hidden a positive possibility of the most primordial kind of knowledge. To be sure, we genuinely take hold of this possibility only when, in our interpretation, we have understood that our first, last and constant task is never to allow our fore-having, fore-sight and fore-conception to be presented to us by fancies and popular conceptions." (Heidegger, 1962:265) One shall thus carefully choose the predispositions used for the interpretation. Even though Heidegger's hermeneutical theories are somewhat questionable, and I shall particularly disagree to the theory of no objectivity being possible, I shall inspire myself from some of his theories in my interpretation process, especially from the theories that an interpreting a text for instance is more than a plain explanation of a text but that it helps understanding greater issues such as society and the world, and that all interpretations are influenced by some elements that we already have in us. I shall also presuppose that writings are also influenced by some elements already present in the writer.

Gadamer is a decisive figure of the development of hermeneutics, and was a follower of Heidegger. His main work is *Truth and Method*, and this is the work which theories I concentrated on. He studied with Heidegger and shared many of his thoughts; however, some of Heidegger's positions were too extreme for his taste, and we went further than the limitations of Heidegger's theories. He is also the one who first talked about philosophical hermeneutics while referring to Heidegger's work. Gadamer rehabilitated the notion of

prejudice. He disagreed with the negative connotations usually linked to the notion of prejudices and argued that prejudices are what open up to what is to be understood. The goal of understanding is not the elimination of prejudices, but rather in the discernment between false and true prejudices. True prejudices help the understanding of the whole, whereas false prejudices are unable to produce a coherent interpretation. Some prejudices can be considered true and can lead us on to comprehension; others are false and lead to misunderstandings. It is necessary to work with our prejudices interpretively, not to put them aside and ignore them. In this way, an integral part of comprehension in understanding oneself, one's culture, one's biases. According to Gadamer, "A person who believes he is free of prejudices, relying on the objectivity of his procedures and denying that he is himself conditioned by historical circumstances, experiences and the power of the prejudices that unconsciously dominate him as a vis a tergo. A person who does not admit that he is dominated by prejudices will fail to see what manifests itself by their light." (Gadamer, 2003:360) This theory helps me to achieve gaining a full understanding the texts I study by acknowledging my prejudices.

Gadamer established the notion of horizons. The horizon is defined as, "...the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point" (Gadamer, 2003:302). The vantage point refers to a point in time, but also to the belief system, desires, and imaginings of an individual. The horizon is thus formed by history both personal and socio-cultural. The variety of vision brings comprehension. The horizon is "...something into which we move and moves with us" (Gadamer, 2003:304). Gadamer also states that "understanding begins [...] when something addresses us." (Gadamer, 2003:299) In addition, a horizon is, for Gadamer, what extends meaning from what is directly given to the whole context in which it is given, including a sense of a world. One could also define horizons as providing perspective and as marking the limits of what can be seen from a particular point of view. Horizons provide perspective by being the implicit and explicit beliefs that provide the context for understanding a sentence; they establish what is significant for understanding (those in the foreground), and what is insignificant (those in the background).

When comprehension is achieved, Gadamer speaks of the "fusion of horizons" (Gadamer, 2003:397). This fusion is dynamic and self-transcendent, and creates new views and rules that

are used to create new horizons. A 'fusion of horizons' is therefore comprehension, and it is a continuous process. For the fusion of horizons to take place, it is necessary for our prejudices to be challenged. Comprehension is a basic rhetoric experience, and it involves a question and an answer. For Gadamer, “a person who thinks must ask himself questions.” (Gadamer, 2003:397) Conversations thus apply to all the experiences of life, for it is the way in which human beings produce meaning. Gadamer also asserts that “A person who is trying to understand a text is always projecting. He projects a meaning for the text as a whole as soon as some initial meaning emerges in the text. Again, the initial meaning emerges only because he is reading the texts with particular expectations in regard to a certain meaning.” (Gadamer, 2003:267) During the ‘fusion of horizons’, the voice of the other is heard. This does not mean that an agreement from the listeners or readers is needed, but the point of view of the author is understood.

It would be interesting for my thesis to know if the texts I study have had any effect on the evolution of the Ministry of Education of Finland. I shall concentrate on the policies and see if any policy has been enforced due to these texts. A meaning is never objective and the meaning is always dependent on the interpreter. The meaning I shall find in the texts is dependent on my prejudices and experiences.

## **2.4. Research problems**

In this part, I will discuss how my material, methodology and theories fit together. I will also discuss two questions essential to the good proceeding of my research: ‘who is the Ministry of Education’ and ‘at whom are the texts aimed’.

### **2.4.1. How are the material, methodology and theories consonant with one another?**

I previously established the facts that my material mostly consists of texts by the Ministry of Education, that I chose to use a qualitative research method and that I follow theories from the

fields of rhetoric and hermeneutics. The question now is to know how these elements interlock and will contribute to the success of my research.

For obvious reasons earlier detailed, I am studying texts from the Ministry of Education. These texts have been whether published by the Ministry of Education, written by members of the Ministry of Education, or ordered by the Ministry of Education. Their authors are Finnish and foreigners. For the majority, they discuss the policy followed by the ministry, study the situation at the time of the writing of the texts, and offer suggestions. Some include facts, but they mostly consist of texts, interpretations and opinions. It has already been established that qualitative research involves the use of qualitative data, such as interviews, documents, and participant observation data, to understand and explain social and cultural phenomena. The phenomenon in question in my thesis is the argumentation of the image of Finland in the EU, and for this I study mostly written documents. The qualitative research method is the appropriate method to proceed with my research since it allows me to study documents and texts, and takes into account the researcher's impressions and reactions, hence mine. It allows me to interpret the texts and understand the various contexts involved. The most pertinent philosophical assumptions linked to qualitative research method are positivist, interpretive and critical. I will mostly use interpretive and critical researches. Interpretive research rests on assumptions such as ontological assumptions. According to interpretive research, a text must be read to make sense: one must first know the language in which it is written. Second, any text is open to more than one reading. Third and last, texts are read in context: the text/context relation is a crucial one that will be central to our investigations. Interpretive research works with action as well as texts.

Interpretive research is linked to hermeneutical theories. One could even say that interpretive research is hermeneutical. Language and preconceptions are at the heart of it. Interpretive research will allow me to find in those texts which one could see as innocent, meanings and elements that have been unnoticed. This is therefore a perfect research method for my thesis. As for critical research, it will be in my case a mix of literary criticism, for the obvious reason that I am studying written texts, and social criticism. I intend not only to describe the meaning of the texts, but I also intend to be critical without being sarcastic. The critical theory aims at

improving the understanding of society, and this is what I intend to do. The theories of rhetorical criticism are extremely useful to that end.

Critical research is based on the firm belief that “societal conditions are historically created and heavily influenced by the asymmetries of power and special interests, and they can be made the subject of radical change.” (Alvesson and Skölberg, 2000:110) Furthermore, “All in all, critical theory research aims to increase our awareness of the political nature of social phenomena and to develop the ability of researchers to reflect critically upon those taken-for-granted realities which they are examining and of which they are also — as members of society — an inevitable part” (Alvesson and Skölberg, 2000:111) These texts are the product of a political institution. It is impossible that they have not been influenced by power and special interests. Critical research will be useful in case I find elements which belong to the 'taken for granted' category as to become critical of them. However, my criticism shall have a reason to exist and not be there for purely negative purposes. I will also use grounded theory. Grounded Theory is most accurately described as a research method in which the theory is developed from the data, rather than the other way around. This is why I believe it fits my purpose.

Hermeneutics is considered as a method of analysis of the qualitative method. As a philosophical approach to human understanding, it provides the philosophical grounding for interpretivism. As a mode of analysis, it suggests a way of understanding textual data. The hermeneutic analysis and hermeneutical theories help me understand and interpret the texts. It is a continuous interpretation of the texts in the light of the historical and social context. It puts a stress on the need to understand the whole to understand a part and the need to understand a part in order to understand the whole. Therefore I will not only make sense of the texts but I will link them to outside elements which I believe are interconnected with the texts.

Hermeneutics is relevant on the following fields:

- Reading (as reading is relevant to hermeneutics)
- Rhetoric
- Literary criticism
- Understanding

Since these fields are all involved in my research, one could say that hermeneutics is right for my research.

Rhetoric is clearly suited to my thesis and my material as it is stated in the title of my thesis that the whole matter is rhetoric orientated. I evidently use rhetorical theories for my study is linked to the topic of argumentation. It will help me see what sort of image is given of Finland, the vocabulary and methods used, and find out what is the aim of the texts.

#### **2.4.2. Who does “Ministry of Education” refer to?**

In order to perform the best research possible, it is essential to define who the Ministry of Education is. Does it refer to the governmental body? Or does it refer to persons who are in charge of the public relations of the Ministry of Education? If we refer to the governmental body, then the Ministry of Education is one of the thirteen Finnish ministries. It is defined on their website [www.minedu.fi](http://www.minedu.fi) as being “responsible for developing educational, science, cultural, sport and youth policies and international cooperation in these fields. The Ministry creates favourable conditions for education, know-how, lifelong learning, creativity, civic participation, and well-being.”, as seen on May, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2007. From the same website, we learn that the different departments and units of the Ministry of Education are divided as follow:

At the Ministry of Education

- The Minister of Education and Science leads education and science policy.
- The Minister of Culture leads cultural, sport and youth policy, matters relating to copyright and student financial aid, and church affairs.
- The Permanent Secretary assists the Ministers in the direction of the Ministry.

The Department for Education and Science Policy comprises

- General Education Division
- Vocational Education Division

- Division for Higher Education and Science
  - Higher education
  - Research
- Division for Adult Education and Training
- Department's Office

The Department for Cultural, Sport and Youth Policy comprises

- Arts and Cultural Heritage Division
- Culture and Media Division
- Cultural Export Division
- Sports Division
- Youth Policy Division
- Division for Cultural Legislation and Finance

The Ministry's internal services are

- Internal Administration and Church Affairs
- Finance Service
- International Relations
- Information Management
- Communications and Public Relations.

Directly under the Permanent Secretary are

- Local Economy and Administration
- Structural Funds Management Group
- Development of Swedish-language Education and Culture
- Library Administration Group
- Premises Group
- Internal inspection

According to the texts written and published by the Ministry of Education, it is also defined as “The Ministry of Education sector is characterised by the especially important role played by local education and cultural services. In addition, registered associations and foundations may act as local education providers. The government contributes to financing within the scope of the statutory state grant system, but decision-making has largely been devolved on the local level. The Ministry of Education primarily steers education through norm- and information-based guidance. Over the past few years, a large number of operative tasks and decision-making have been devolved on the education providers, agencies, organisations, private-law bodies and expert bodies. The committee notes that most decision-making and duties which can be delegated from the Ministry of Education have already been delegated.”

(Opetusministeriön, Opetushallituksen ja lääninhallitusten tehtäväjaon kehittäminen (Division of labour between the Ministry of Education, the National Board of Education and the provincial state offices), Ministry of Education, 2004:Abstract).

It is also further on defined as “As the expert agency of education, science, culture, sport and youth policy, the Ministry of Education has a social responsibility for promoting education and culture and enhancing the wellbeing of the population. The impact of the Ministry's action extends far and wide to the functions of society, concerning the whole population and their life spans. (Ministry of Education Strategy 2015, Ministry of Education, 2003:4). The image that comes through these descriptions is the one of an active Ministry which has a big responsibility towards the population of the country and which is very well organized in and helped by several agencies. This is very similar to the image given on the very website of the Ministry of Education. One could conclude that therefore the Ministry of Education has an influence on what is written even by committees.

There are also several agencies which are subordinate to the Ministry. Among them one can find the Academy of Finland, the Centre for International Mobility (CIMO), the National Board of Education, the Polytechnics of Finland, and the Universities of Finland. This is an essential point for it implies that texts from these agencies can also be treated as texts from the Ministry of Education.

There is also a number of advisory councils and boards attached to the Ministry of Education, among which the Adult Education Council, the Committee for Public Information, the Finnish

National Commission for the UNESCO, the Higher Education Evaluation Council, and the Education Evaluation Council. Again, it is important to mention this fact for any text from one of these advisory councils and boards can also be included as a text from the Ministry of Education.

In my thesis, I focus more on the texts from the Education department than on the texts from the cultural department. The authors of the texts I study are not always named. They are named in the case of reports completed by foreign participants. In that case, it is explained who they are and why they perform an evaluation. However, in most cases, it is only written that the text has been written by a committee, and the names given are the ones of the head of the committee and the secretary. Some texts are written by evaluation teams and some by working groups. Nonetheless, they all belong to a committee. One text has been written by the OECD. Another has been written by Tarmo Lemola from the company Advansis Oy, a Finnish research and consulting company. Tarmo Lemola is not just a neutral researcher, he is a specialist on technology policy, management and evaluation of research institutions and programmes, and he has been engaged in several governmental and other expert groups, working groups and committees, as found on [www.advansis.fi](http://www.advansis.fi) on May, 9<sup>th</sup>, 2007. I have no doubt about the qualities and expertise of this man, it is however important to notice that he is linked to the Government. They have not chosen a neutral expert. One might wonder the reasons for this choice. Was he just the most qualified for this report or was he on the same policy line?

The texts are mostly reports. They are all but one published by the Ministry of Education. In some texts the publisher is not mentioned, but the information given suggests that the text has been published by the Ministry of Education. The one that has not been published by the Ministry of Education has been published by the Science and Technology Policy Council of Finland. We can strongly assume that it is related to the Ministry of Education.

Each one of these texts has a purpose. None of it has been written without any intention. Even the texts which are mostly stating facts and figures include some text and the choice of facts and figures has been made with a purpose in mind. These texts have been written by institutions belonging or related to the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Education is in

charge of all matters related to laws and decisions related to education in Finland. Therefore, one can assume that these texts have been written and published with the intention of later on passing a law or making changes in the educational system. The texts show which changes are needed and why they would be needed. The five previous Ministers of Education of Finland have been:

- 26.4.1991–11.2.1994: Riitta Uosukainen (Kokoomus, National Coalition Party)
- 11.2.1994–15.4.1999: Olli-Pekka Heinonen (Kokoomus)
- 15.4.1999–17.4.2003: Maija Rask (SDP, Social Democratic Party)
- 17.4.2003–23.9.2005: Tuula Haatainen (SDP)
- 23.9.2005–19.4.2007: Antti Kalliomäki (SDP)

The Minister of Education however shall follow the political line of the Government, and it is interesting to notice that from 1994 to 2005, the presidents have all been from the SDP, and the prime ministers from the SDP and the centre party (keskusta). The political line must have had an impact on the topics chosen for the reports, and on the content of these reports.

It is my belief that the Ministry of Education I am referring to is a political institution influenced by the government and the political line of Finland. I cannot know how the texts are edited before publication or if the texts have been edited, as explained to me by Ministry of Education employee Ville Heinonen in an email on May 28<sup>th</sup> 2007. However, it is my belief that as texts published by the Ministry of Education their content have been approved by higher instances in the Ministry before publication. When the texts are evaluations and reports performed by foreign participants, those participants have been chosen by agents of the Ministry of Education on several grounds which I do not know. Nonetheless, the single fact that they have been chosen by the Ministry of Education proves that there is an intention behind the choice. To sum up, I believe that the Ministry of Education I am referring to is, as Roderick P. Hart described it, an “Agent, who speaks on behalf of some institution.” (Roderick P. Hart, 1996:219) All the councils and committees which wrote the texts belong to the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Education is part of the Government. The committees speak on behalf of the Ministry. The themes chosen by the Ministry and the

decisions taken by the Ministry are influenced by the political line followed by the government. Therefore, nothing is neutral; everything is there for a reason.

Some elements in the texts particularly tend to show that some line has been chosen by the Ministry of Education, some vision of Finland was meant to be shown, and some issues meant not to. A clear example of that fact can be found in the text LUMA-ohjelman kansainvälinen loppuraportti (An evaluation report on the LUMA programme prepared for the Ministry of Education) written by a committee of foreign representatives obviously chosen by the Ministry of Education, in order to write a report for the Ministry of Education. In this report, one of the committee member states that: “We have looked also at the work in the University of Jyväskylä Institute for Educational Research. In their presentation to us, the staff chose to give strong emphasis to their analyses of the international comparisons produced by the TIMSS and PISA programmes. We find it hard to understand why these comparisons received such priority, given that they provide little information that can be useful in programmes to improve educational outcomes rather than merely to measure them.

We were informed subsequently that the Institute is conducting other educational research projects and in particular was responsible for oversight of the relevant research of Irma Aroluoma. Given that such projects may well have been directly relevant to the evaluation of the LUMA programme, the main purpose of our visit, we would have liked to hear more about them” (LUMA-ohjelman kansainvälinen loppuraportti (An evaluation report on the LUMA programme prepared for the Ministry of Education), Ministry of Education committee reports, 2002:22). This quote is extremely important for it clearly shows that stress was put on the positive results Finland receives from the PISA researches (in which Finland is constantly at the top of the list) rather than actual facts that would have helped the committee evaluate the LUMA programme. One could wonder: the committee being composed of foreigners was this presentation intended in shaping their vision of Finland? Were the actual studies on the LUMA programme showing a result which was not putting Finland in such a good light and thus hidden? Here we have a clear case of some information being chosen over others.

Obviously, I am not talking of a plot; the presentation was, after all, given by members of the University of Jyväskylä. However, it is clear that the University itself depends on the Ministry of Education and tends to show the policy line followed by the said Ministry. I believe this is a

clear sign that the Ministry of Education wants to show some specific image of Finland, a sign that the texts are biased.

### **2.4.3. Who is the audience the texts aim at?**

As previously stated, it is of uttermost importance to define the audience of a discourse, or in this case the reader(s) of a text, in order to understand the said text perfectly. The readers of these texts are not clearly defined in the texts, or in the introduction to the texts. Only one text clearly states who the text is directed at. However, certain elements allow me to formulate deductions.

The first issue I will mention is the issue of language. Most of the texts are originally written in Finnish, and most of them are available only in Finnish. In 1994 it was quite rare to find a text which had been fully translated in English, but as the years go by, it is more and more common. This fact may be due to Finland's membership in the European Union. The fact that the texts are mostly written in Finnish implies that they are for domestic use only. And even though the texts are available to everyone on the internet, I believe their primary audience was officials from the Ministry of Education or from the Government. The texts are then aimed at a wider audience, the population, and in that sense they may serve as justifications for political needs or changes. The evolution of the language availability of the texts is as followed:

- 1994: 82 texts, 74 in Finnish, four in English and four in Swedish.
- 1995: 90 texts, 78 in Finnish, six in English, four in Swedish, one in German, one in French.
- 1996: 81 texts, 68 in Finnish, seven in English, four in Swedish, one in French, one in German (Figures obtained on the search engine of the Helsinki University library, <https://helka.linneanet.fi> on May, 10<sup>th</sup>, 2007.)
- 1997: 45 texts, 42 in Finnish, three in English, one in Swedish.
- 1998: 51 texts, 47 in Finnish, two in English, two in Swedish.
- 1999: 65 texts, 62 in Finnish, two in English (one of them is just an abstract of a text in Finnish), one in Swedish.

- 2000: 104 texts, 77 in Finnish, 16 in English (among them eight are only abstracts), ten in Swedish, one in French.
- 2001: 105 texts, 79 in Finnish, eight in English (among which seven are abstracts), 17 in Swedish, one in German.
- 2002: 163 texts, 98 in Finnish, 19 in English (among which 12 are only abstracts), 46 in Swedish.
- 2003: 133 texts, 65 in Finnish, 28 in English (among which 16 are only abstracts), 37 in Swedish, one in German, one in Spanish, one in French.
- 2004: 144 texts, 71 in Finnish, 27 in English (among which 19 are abstracts), 46 in Swedish.
- 2005: 169 texts, 76 in Finnish, 38 in English (among which 30 are abstracts), 55 in Swedish. (Figures obtained on the publications search engine of the Ministry of Education, [www.minedu.fi](http://www.minedu.fi) on May, 10<sup>th</sup>, 2007)

These facts clearly show an evolution in the language availability of the texts from the Ministry of Education. Even though the majority of texts in English consist of abstracts of texts available in Finnish only, it shows that the themes and main facts are nowadays more and more available to foreign readers. It is also interesting to note the fact that the number of texts available in Swedish has also increased. Obviously, Swedish being the second official language of Finland, it renders these texts more available to the population of Finland and to the population of Sweden.

The second issue I will raise is the issue of the availability. I already discussed the question of the language availability. I will now discuss the issue of the material availability of the texts. One can hardly find these texts by accident. They can be found mostly on the website of the Ministry of Education and in Finnish libraries. The texts available on the website from the Ministry of Education include the texts published between 1997 and 2007. For texts written earlier on, one has to look for them and search in libraries, notably in the library of the Ministry of Education. Concerning the texts available on the internet, several of the titles mentioned do not have a full texts available on the internet, and one has again to perform a research in order to find the said text. These facts imply that the reader is a motivated reader.

The texts are available but not freely distributed to everyone. In that sense, the texts aim at readers who show a genuine interest in the issues addressed in the texts.

I shall also raise the issue of the content addressed in the texts. Most of the topics dealt with are of national interest, even regional interest. Texts such as “Management and Steering of Higher Education in Finland” or “Media Art in Finland” are obviously dealing with national issues. However, they are available in English so that someone interested in learning about these questions can be informed. Other texts are dealing with international issues. Texts such as “International strategy of higher education institutions” and “International Strategy for Sport 2003 – 2005” aim at a wider international audience. Some international texts are aimed at a Finnish audience, such as “International Evaluation of the Academy of Finland” and “An International Evaluation of the Finnish System of Arts Councils”.

One particular text visibly defines the audience it aims at. The text “The Financing of lifelong learning: Finland’s country report for the OECD” is a text clearly prepared for the OECD. Finland was not obliged to compose this report. “In April 1997 the OECD Secretariat sent final instructions to the Member Countries and asked them to express possible willingness to compile a report. Mr Olli-Pekka Heinonen, Finland’s Minister for Education, decided in May 1997 that Finland will draft a country report.” (Ministry of Education, 1998:foreword) It is thus on its own will that Finland decided to draft this report. One might suggest that Finland, who had recently joined the EU at the time of this draft, was eager to show good will to international organizations such as the OECD in order to gain credit and be heard.

The majority of the texts however do not aim at a particular audience. The terms used are not specifically topic related and no special knowledge is required in order to understand the texts. Even more, several texts include a summary of the history of Finland and facts about the geography of Finland, such as in “Background report; Polytechnic education in Finland”. This means that the texts are aimed not only at professionals from the Ministry of Education or from the Government, but also at outsiders who do not know whether about Finland, or about the topics. One could say that the texts are mainly aimed at a universal audience.

### **3. CHANGES IN IMAGE CONSTRUCTION**

The question of changes in the image construction of Finland is an essential part of my thesis. I will divide this question in two parts: the image construction of Finland in the EU between 1994 and 1999, year of the first Finnish presidency of the EU, and between 1999 and 2005. Finland has been eager to be part of European organisations since a long time. Already in 1961 Finland signed the FINNEFTA agreement and became an associate member of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). In 1973 Finland signed a free trade agreement with the European Economic Community. It became a full member of EFTA in 1986 and joined the council of Europe in 1989. Finland officially applied to join the European Community in 1992, and became an official member in 1995, after a referendum in 1994 where 56, 9% of the voters were in favour of the membership and 43, 1% were against it. The Parliament voted in favour of Finland's accession also in 1994 with 152 votes for and 45 against, as found on <http://presidency.finland.fi/> on May, 14<sup>th</sup>, 2007. Finland joined the European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) in 1999. The same year, Finland took over the presidency of the Council on the first of July. The membership of Finland in the European Union has thus been the finalization of a long process. Finland seems to have been keen on joining various unions since a long time. In addition to being part of the European Union, Finland is also a keen participant in NATO's Partnership for Peace Programme and has been a member of the Nordic Council since 1955. I believe that the image of Finland in the European Union has changed between 1994 and 2005. I shall now study the changes in the image construction of Finland during that time, dividing it in two parts in order to study if the first Finnish presidency of the Council has had an impact on the image construction of Finland.

#### **3.1. Image construction of Finland: 1994-1999**

The first element that I find relevant to this topic and which clearly plays an important role in the image construction of Finland is the matter of language availability. Obviously, due to the smaller amount of texts available in English during this period, the image of Finland was spread only through limited sources from the Ministry of Education. I previously studied the number of texts available in Finnish, English and other languages year by year. Between 1994

and 1999, 350 publications came from the Ministry of Education. Among them, 309 were in Finnish, 22 were available in English, and 15 were available in Swedish, two in French and two in German. One can notice a tremendous difference between the number of publications available in Finnish and those available in English, Swedish, and other languages. One can also notice that in 1995 and 1996, 2 texts were made available in French and German. As the dates correspond to Finland's access to the European membership, one can come to the conclusion that this very membership created a need to enlarge the range of languages in which the publications from the Ministry of Education were made available.

Another interesting element is the fact that many texts from this period start with a detailed presentation of Finland. For instance, *Developments in Education 1992-1994* (Reference Publication 17, Ministry of Education, 1994) starts with three pages called "Finland in a nutshell". *Education in Finland 1994* (Tilastokeskus, 1994) also starts with a presentation of Finland. Does this fact imply that potential readers of these texts did not know about Finland? Does this mean that the government felt the need to present Finland through these texts? In some cases a map of Finland is included. In this presentation we are told that the Finnish industrial culture and the preconditions for livelihood have been influenced by the location and by the climate. We also learn that Finland is the seventh largest country in Europe, and on a religious note that the large majority of Finns belong to the Evangelical Lutheran Church (94%). The presentation given is large and vast, for we are even given the birth percentage in Finland in 1946 (Tilastokeskus, 1994:9)

It is interesting to note that there is a reference to the number of immigrants present in Finland. Remarkably enough, the foreigners living in Finland are referred to as "aliens". This term is mostly a legal term. This term does not sound particularly friendly or welcoming, and rather 'alienates' the foreigners from the local population. Voluntarily or not, the use of this term denotes a somewhat negative attitude towards immigrants. One could also notice that the number of "aliens" present in Finland then was very small: 50 000 or 1% of the population. Compared to other European countries at the time, it was very little. For instance, the percentage of foreigners in France has been about 6.5 percent since 1970, as found on [http://migration.ucdavis.edu/mn/more.php?id=948\\_0\\_4\\_0](http://migration.ucdavis.edu/mn/more.php?id=948_0_4_0) on May, 16<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

One can also notice the large amount of adverbs used in the description of Finland and in the developments in education: for instance “When Finland became independent its governance was already *fairly* sophisticated. [...] In Finland, urbanisation came *fairly* late, in the sixties.” (Ministry of education, 1994:8) or “The level of education among the population has risen *substantially* in *recent*<sup>1</sup> years.” (Ministry of Education, 1994:56) The impression given by the use of this sort of adverbs is an impression of vague, of whether not knowing the precise fact, or not willing to give more details. This impression is reinforced by the presence in the text of very unclear expressions such as “food stuff” (Ministry of Education, 1994:8). This expression is not one that a reader would expect to find in a political text. Although the aim might have been to sound friendly, the result does not look much professional.

Only very little is mentioned about the economic crisis faced by Finland in the nineties. Although Finnish history, geography and society are detailed, little is said about this crisis which had a huge impact on the country. In the 1990s, Finland underwent a deep depression as its GDP dropped about 14% and unemployment rose from 3 to almost 20%. One can wonder why it is not mentioned more often. In the text from 1994, Finland was still affected by the crisis. All that is said about it is that “The foreign debt has grown to the extent that the debt service alone is equal to the public expenditure in education and research.” (Ministry of Education, 1994:8) It is however mentioned that Finland is an old nation. For instance, “there have been settlements in Finland for nearly 10,000 years.” (Developments in Education 1992-1994 Finland, 1994:1) and even though “urbanisation came fairly late” in Finland, “Finland has rapidly developed into an industrial services society.” (Developments in Education 1992-1994 Finland, 1994:8) Finland is thus an old country which overcame the obstacles to develop into a strong nation and an important member of the EU, one which can bring a lot to the EU.

I also include in my research a text from the Tilastokeskus (Statistics Finland), which is one of the oldest Finnish governmental agencies, as seen on [www.stat.fi](http://www.stat.fi) on May, 17th, 2007.

“Statistics Finland's tasks are defined in the Statistics Finland Act, according to which the function of Statistics Finland is to compile statistics and reports describing the conditions in society and to provide for the general development of official statistics in collaboration with

---

<sup>1</sup> Italics added by me.

other central government authorities”, as seen on [www.stat.fi](http://www.stat.fi) on May, 17th, 2007. It is therefore possible, or even likely, that the Tilastokeskus collaborated with the Ministry of Education. I have included the work “Education in Finland 1994” in my research. It is an interesting document for the statistics are produced from documents from the OECD and comparisons are made with other countries from the OECD. When one reads this document, one might have the impression that the Government was trying, with the production of this work, to establish a comparison with other European and global powerful countries; a positive comparison.

One common element in the image construction during this period is the stress put on internationalisation and Finland's cooperation with other countries and international organizations. For instance, it is mentioned that, in spite of its being neutral, Finland is part of the United Nations, the OECD, the Nordic Council, the European Union, and takes an active part in organizations such as COMETT, ERASMUS and TEMPUS (Education in Finland, 1994:1). In the same text, it is also mentioned that the goals of the Finnish educational policy of the time were to increase the international mobility of students, teachers and experts on education. (Education in Finland, 1994:1) The statements of these facts at this moment in history gives us an impression, at a time when Finland was not yet officially part of the European Union, that the authors of this text were trying to show their international readers that Finland was opened to abroad (if not through immigration, by means of exchanges) and already part of many international organizations and a good partner. In this same text it is mentioned that Finland is a Nordic country, establishing Finland as similar to other Nordic countries such as Sweden, Denmark or Norway. We have an impression that in the texts prior to the entry of Finland into the European Union, or at the very beginning of Finland's membership in the European Union, the authors were trying to give a positive image of Finland, and to show the rest of the European Union that Finland was to be a good member and bring a lot to the community. Many positive facts are displayed, and many positive adjectives used. For instance, one learns in these texts that in the eighties, Finns spent more time reading books than in any other countries in the comparison. (Education in Finland, 1994:9) It is also stated that before the recession “the Finnish economy grew faster than the OECD average.” (Education in Finland, 1994:10), that in 1990 the employment situation was

“good” (Education in Finland, 1994:12) and that “The enrolment rates for education are high in Finland.” (Education in Finland, 1994:24)

It is interesting to notice that numbers or statistics are not always given in order to justify these statements, and thus we just rely on the positive adjectives being used. It is also remarkable to notice that when a fact that could be perceived as negative is stated, it is followed by an explanation or an excuse. For instance, in Education in Finland, it is established on page 19 that “the number of children in pre-school programmes in proportion to the population of the same age was in Finland among the lowest in 1991.” However it is explained right after that the reason for it is that children in Finland enter school at a later age, as to answer any critic or question that may arise from this fact. Also, it is stated that “In the World Competitiveness Yearbook (1998) [...] the ranking of Finland among other countries is excellent in many respects.” and that “In many areas, Finland ranks first in the World Competitiveness Yearbook (1998): in new technology, in development and application of technology, cellular mobile telephony, female labour force percentage of total, and connections to the Internet.” (Educational Innovations in Finnish and European Contexts, Seppo Tella and Kirsi Tirri, 1999:39) Finland also wants to bring something to the rest of the European Union members, as stated in the following quote: “Hopefully, the Finnish expertise in modern technology and MICT reflected in the case studies could serve the other European countries in their effort to take better advantage of modern information and communication technologies in their educational systems.” (Educational Innovations in Finnish and European Contexts, Tella and Tirri, 1999:74) This shows well that not only does Finland want to enforce its membership in the EU, but wants to show that it is an active and important member.

This feeling of openness to abroad and stress on internationalisation is reinforced by statements such as “The possible accession to the European Union will boost international cooperation and competition. The Finns have learnt to trust in the power of culture and education. Increasingly difficult challenges will have to be met with dwindling economic resources.” (Education in Finland, 1994:10) It can also be perceived with the establishment of CIMO (Centre for International Mobility) in 1991. The objective of this organization is “to promote the internationalization of education, training and working life by means of exchange programs.” (Report on the Evaluation of the Centre for International Mobility CIMO,

1997:10) Three elements were taken into account in the strategic planning of CIMO: “the preparation for the administration and coordination of the education, training and youth programmes opened up to Finland along with first the EEA-agreement and then with the membership of EU. Secondly, the aim has been to create and develop exchange programmes with Russia, Baltic countries, countries of Central and Eastern Europe and Far East. Thirdly, CIMO wants to help the polytechnics and vocational institutes to develop their international interaction by providing them with support services.” (Report on the Evaluation of the Centre for International Mobility CIMO, 1997:15) One can find in this quote some key elements of the important political lines of Finland at the time: the opening to abroad, due to the EU membership, and the stress on Finland’s relation with Russia and the Baltic, partly due to its new status inside the EU.

Through CIMO, the internationalisation of Finnish students has increased since CIMO joined the Erasmus programme of the European Communities in 1991. “During the first year of operation, 1992-1993, 810 Finnish students participate in the exchange programme. In the academic year 1995-1996, the number was already 2530.” (Report on the Evaluation of the Centre for International Mobility, CIMO, 1997:21)

Once again it is established that Finland is an active member of international organizations. For instance, through CIMO, Finland participated in more than 20 projects, and “thanks to the successful dissemination of information, Finland was proportionally the most active participant in the programme in Europe.” (Report on the Evaluation of the Centre for International Mobility, CIMO, 1997:23) Not only is Finland an active participant, but it is the most active participant.

In this period, it is also stated that the notion of “equality” is a very important in Finland and for the Finnish government. “The Finnish emphases were mostly on “equality of opportunities” and “training of teaching personnel”, though some attention was also paid to the foreign language component and modern information and communication technologies.” (Educational Innovations in Finnish and European Contexts, Tella and Tirri, 1999:13) The motto of the Ministry of Education of Finland also used to be “Finland toward Information Society”. (Educational Innovations in Finnish and European Contexts, Tella and Tirri, 1999:38) Finally, and to sum it up, the main themes addressed in the texts of the Ministry of

Education between 1994 and 1999 are as such: “Major longer-term challenges facing Finland are to implement the principle of sustainable development; develop international networking; respond to the transition in work; develop the national innovation system; implement the strategy of lifelong learning; provide for the pensions of the large post-war age groups who begin to retire in about ten years; and keep the society functioning despite the economic traits.” (Developments in Education 1992-1994 Finland, 1994:9)

### **3.2. Changes in image construction: 1999 – 2005**

Once again I will start by discussing the question of language availability of the publications by the Ministry of Education. The first element I wish to mention is the bigger number of text published and written by the Ministry of Education, and the number of these texts available in languages other than Finnish. During this period, 883 texts were written and published by the Ministry of Education, against 350 during the 1994-1998 period. Among the 883 texts, 138 were made available in English (among which 93 are abstracts of texts which are only available in Finnish), 212 were available in Swedish, 2 in German, 2 in French and one in Spanish. It is interesting to notice that the amount of languages in which the texts were translated has not differed from the previous period studied, apart from 1 text which was available in Spanish. On the other hand, many more texts were available in Swedish and English. Even if many of the English texts were only introductions in English of Finnish texts, one has to admit that the very fact that a foreign reader could read abstracts in English is significant of the factor that some elements of each of these texts were significant to foreign readers. As for the fact that many more texts were available in Swedish, it may be due to three elements in particular: the long history between Finland and its Swedish neighbour, the Swedish membership of the European Union (Sweden accessed the European Union at the same time than Finland) and Swedish being the second official language of Finland.

Generally speaking, many more texts were published or written by the Ministry of Education between 1999 and 2005. During this very period, Finland experienced its first presidency of the European Union (between July and December 1999) and was preparing for its second presidency (which took place between July and December of 2006). I believe that these two

elements are deeply linked to the multiplication of texts from the Ministry of Education, and their greater availability in foreign languages, especially in English and Swedish. During this period, Finland really became an active member of the European Union, thus its political decisions were of greater importance to the rest of the member countries of the Union.

Fewer texts included a historical and geographical presentation of Finland, and the presentation offered was smaller. For instance, the text *Background Report, Polytechnic Education in Finland* (Ministry of Education, 2002) still included a presentation of Finland, but this time there was no paragraph on the geographical position of Finland. This textual element has been replaced by a simple map of Finland. In *Finnish Polytechnics in figures* (Ministry of Education, 2004), the presentation of Finland has been shortened to the point where one can only find a list of key facts about Finland, such as its population, economy, languages, GDP and area. It is interesting to notice that, this time, the key facts about Finland are to be found in the end of the text, and not in the introduction as they have previously been. The text *Intermediate Report on the Implementation of the Socrates Programme in Finland* (Ministry of Education, 2003) also features a very short presentation of Finland and its main traits such as in the sentence “With a surface area of 338,000 square kilometres extending 1,160 km from north to south, Finland is a large country with a population of approximately five million inhabitants” (Ministry of Education, 2003:16). Interestingly enough, depending on which text one reads, it is not very clear what sort of country Finland is, as in the above quote it is mentioned that “Finland is a large country”, whereas in another text one can find the following statement: “a small country like Finland” (Knowledge, innovation and internationalization, Science and Technology Policy Council of Finland, 2003:9).

This confusion is to be found again with statements such as “The first inhabitants settled in Finland after the last Ice Age” (*Background Report, Polytechnic Education in Finland*, Ministry of Education, 2002:9). It is obvious that the objective of this sentence is to establish Finland as an old country. However, when one reads *Discussing architectural quality. European Forum for Architectural Policies 21 May 2002 Helsinki, Finland* (Ministry of Education, 2003), one can find on page 5 the following statement: “Finland is a young nation”. It seems

that depending on the texts, and depending on the objectives of the texts, different elements about Finland are being presented, or the same elements are presented but in a different way, giving a very different image of Finland. Could it be that the image of Finland given in the texts from the Ministry of Education depends of the political agenda behind the texts?

The topic of internationalisation is to be found. Finland is still shown as being active in looking for cooperation opportunities with other countries, in participating in programs with other countries and in showing to other countries what it can bring to them. Finland, for instance, participated in the LUMA programme. This “project is a part of the national joint action launched by the Ministry of Education for raising mathematical and scientific knowledge in Finland to the international level” (An Evaluation Report on the LUMA Programme Prepared for the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Education, 2002:foreword). Finland is again viewed as always looking to improve its situation to excel internationally, when it is not already on the top of the field on the international scale. For example, “In international comparisons of information and communications technology, Finland comes in the top third among EU countries in use of computers and the Internet” (Background Report, Polytechnic Education in Finland, Ministry of Education, 2002:30). Finland also “leads Europe in the number of mobile phone connections in relation to population.” (Background Report, Polytechnic Education in Finland, Ministry of Education, 2002:30) and “Though work participation has declined as a result of the recession in the 1990s, it is still above the OECD average.” (Background Report, Polytechnic Education in Finland, Ministry of Education, 2002:20). Finland is thus among the top countries in the world in various fields.

Finland has also become a real European member and follows the European policies and benefits from financial helps, as shown in the following quotes: “The Structural Funds available for the activities since Finland's accession to the EU and the economic recession in the early 1990s gave impetus for the development of the workshops to their present form.” (The Youth Workshop Committee: Financing of Youth Workshops - Proposal for A Permanent Model, Ministry of Education, 2002:abstract), “In common with recent thinking on public governance elsewhere in Europe, Finland has applied 'New Public Management'

principles in the steering, budgeting and management of national government ministries and agencies since the early 1990s.” (An International Evaluation of the Finnish System of Arts Councils, Ministry of Education, 2004:9) and “Finland has abolished all restrictions on foreign ownership, and competition policy is now in line with EU provisions. As a member of the European Union, Finland is part of the single market. EU membership has meant closer industrial connections with Europe and with Member States in particular.” (Background Report, Polytechnic Education in Finland, 2002, Ministry of Education:19) These quotes clearly show that Finland is still opening to abroad and that changes were made in order to really fit in the European Union and become a ‘model’ member country.

To conclude with this topic, I will add that the important feature of equality is yet again extremely present in the texts from the Ministry of Education published and written between 1999 and 2005. The importance of the notion of equality is at least as importantly treated as in the previous period. For instance, in the abstract of “Cultural Heritage in Knowledge Society. Final report of the Digitisation of cultural heritage committee” (Ministry of Education, 2003), it is stated that “Important cultural heritage will be made available to all on information networks (...)” in order to “give citizens equal opportunities to learn to know their own cultural heritage and to obtain reliable information”. One can also find in the text Education and Culture 2004 the following quote: “A key factor in this success is thought to be Finnish basic education, which gives every child an equal chance in the field of education. Equality in educational and cultural services ensures that all people have the basic right to an all-round education.” (Education and Culture 2004, Ministry of Education Annual Report, The Vision of the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Education, 2004:Introduction).

Both quotes clearly show that the notion of “equality” is deeply rooted in the Finnish society, and is presented as a fundamental basis for a successful country. This equality affects men, women, and immigrants, native, young and old citizens. It is a very large notion of equality, and shows an image of an almost dreamlike society where everybody is treated equally. I shall develop the notion of equality more thoroughly in the next chapter. However, this insistence in referring to the notion of equality in many texts of the Ministry of Education shows that the

Ministry of Education has the ambition to really show Finland at its best and the result is that some of the texts really have commercial-like descriptions of Finland and the Finnish society.

The main changes that one can notice between the periods 1994-1998 and 1999-2005 are the greater availability of texts from the Ministry of Education in the second part, the decrease of the detailed geographical and historical descriptions of Finland in these texts, and a common line of writing intending in showing a positive image of Finland to the rest of the world.

I would also like to add that a common feature during both periods is typographies and mistakes of various sorts. For instance, in the text Cultural Heritage in Knowledge Society. Final report of the Digitisation of cultural heritage committee, one can find the following error: “Ensuring that digitised cultural heritage remains our national property which is acaccessible to all entails that the materials in museums, archives and libraries are digitised with public financing. The materials thus digitised will be made available free of charge to all on the net<sup>2</sup>.” (Kulttuuriperintö tietoyhteiskunnassa. Strategiset tavoitteet ja toimenpidehdotukset (Cultural Heritage in Knowledge Society. Final report of the Digitisation of cultural heritage committee (KULDI), Committee, Ministry of Education, 2003:abstract). Worse, the English abstract of the text Virtuaaliopetuksen haasteet ja niihin vastaaminen is filled with mistakes: “VirtuaaliOTE is an anticipatory project funded by the European Social Fund (ESF). The project has developed models and method for initial and continuing training virtual enviroment for universities and polytechnics. The aim of the project is to find out what skills are needed in virtual teaching. Teachers use very different tools and method in virtual enviroment than in traditional face-to-face teaching. The school system faces new challenges when reacting to the requirements of information society. Teaching methods must be more flexible and diverse than befor. Working life requires modern and more demanding skills of tomorrow's professionals. Educational institutions must also be inviting because the competition for students is growing.

The VirutaaliOTE projcet has trusted the knowledge an vision of experts. The project has created the picture of virtual teaching and the future role of a virtual teacher by interviewing

---

<sup>2</sup> Underline and italics added by me.

experts, making future scenarios and working in seminars. In the project recent research and litarature have been studied. Close co-operation with interest groups and an active steering group have played a very significant role in the project.

Virtual teaching brings within so many new challenges that nobody can meet them alone. Teamwork is the keyword here. Educational institutions must together develop their teaching menus by making teaching strategies and setting long-term goals for the contents and the methodology to be offered to future students. The Finnish Ministry of Education presupposes in its "Education, Training and Reserach in the Information Society -A National Strategy for 2000-2004" that every educational institution have to create its own strategy for the use of information and communication tehcnoology in education. The VirtuaaliOTE project has prepared a web-based questionnaire to help educational insitutions find out their staff training needs and make it easiear for the staff to develop their professional skills.

Since virtual teching changes the teachers' duties we must redefine how teachers are paid. Much more than intraditional teaching, the virtual teacher must devote his or her time to turtoring students and planning and preparing teaching. Thus the teacher' salary shold no be paid for contact teaching only, but for the whole of the teachers' work.

When financing the educational system by public money it is important to support co-operation projects between universities and polytechnics and between their various departments. Furthermore, it is important for the staff to have access to adequate and regular training.<sup>3</sup>" (Virtuaaliopetuksen haasteet ja niihin vastaaminen, Ministry of Education, 2002:abstract).

One can even find mistakes in the title of the work, as in Report on the evaluation of The Centre for International Mobillity, CIMO<sup>4</sup> (The Centre for International Mobility, CIMO, Ministry of Education, 1997)

What can we conclude from these mistakes? Some suggestions can be made. The first one would be that the writer just didn't know how to write properly in English. Another would be that the author wasn't familiar with typing in English. Either way, the fact that these mistakes appear, even in titles, shows that not enough care was given to the English presentation of

---

<sup>3</sup> Underline and italics added by me.

<sup>4</sup> Underline and italics added by me.

these texts. It does not show great professionalism from a Ministry of Education which praises the level of education of its citizens and wants to be a strong nation in the European Union and increase its internationalisation.

I shall now talk in great details of the following topics, which I find to be the most important in the argumentation of the image of Finland, of its land and society: the geography, the history, the economy, the notion of equality, of an information society, and of education.

## 4. ARGUMENTATION OF THE IMAGE OF FINLAND

I have previously studied the differences between the texts written between 1994 and 1999 and 2000 and 2005. I have also described the methodology used and the research problems.

It is now time to study the way various aspects of Finland are described in the texts from the Ministry of Education. It will include a description of the land, with a focus on the geography, the history and the economy. I will also study the description of the society of Finland, with a focus on equality, information society, and education. In order to have a better knowledge of the main elements described about Finland, I will know quote a short presentation of Finland from Wikipedia, the free online encyclopaedia. Finland is described in it as follows:

“Finland, or the *Republic of Finland*, is a Nordic country situated in Northern Europe. It has borders with Sweden to the west, Russia to the east, and Norway to the north, while Estonia lies to its south across the Gulf of Finland. The capital city is Helsinki.

Finland has a population of 5,238,460 people, spread over an area of 338,145 square kilometres (130,559 square miles). The majority of the population is concentrated in the southern part of the country. Finland is the sixth largest country in Europe in terms of area, with a low population density of 15.5 persons per square kilometre, making it the most sparsely populated country in the European Union. As their mother tongue, most Finns speak Finnish, one of the few official languages of the European Union that is not of Indo-European origin. The second official language, Swedish, is spoken natively by a 5.5 percent minority. Previously part of Sweden and from 1809 an autonomous Grand Duchy within the Russian Empire, Finland declared its independence in 1917. Today, Finland is a democratic, parliamentary republic and has been a member state of the United Nations since 1955 and the European Union since 1995. Finland has thriving services and manufacturing sectors and is a highly democratic welfare state with low levels of corruption, consistently ranking at or near the top in international comparisons of national performance.

Finland is eleventh on the United Nations' Human Development Index and ranked as the sixth happiest nation in the world. According to the World Audit Democracy profile, Finland is the freest nation in the world in terms of civil liberties, freedom of the press, low corruption levels and political rights. Finland is rated the sixth most peaceful country in the world by the

Economist Intelligence Unit, and since 1945, Finland has been at peace, adopting neutrality in wartime.

Finland was rated the best country to live in by Reader's Digest study released in October 2007, which looked at issues such as quality of drinking water and greenhouse gas emissions as well as factors such as education and income.” as seen on <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finland> on October 17th, 2007.

These are the facts Wikipedia chose to quote to describe Finland. I shall now study the elements which appear and/or do not appear in the texts from the Ministry of Education.

## **4.1. Land**

The land is one of the most basic yet essential feature to study. In my research it includes a study of the representation of the Finnish geography, history, and economy.

### **4.1.1. Geography**

As previously stated, the geographical description of Finland reduced in size in the text from the Ministry of Education as time passed. However, it is interesting to notice that such a description is present, and to study what elements are present and which ones are not. All these elements aim at showing Finland in a certain manner. My job is to find which one.

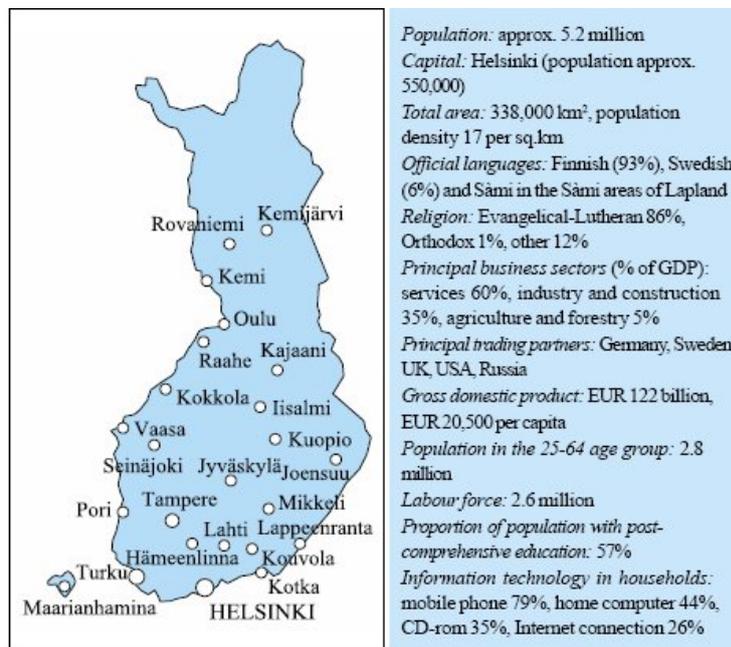


Fig. 1: Presentation of Finland, Background report; Polytechnic Education in Finland, 2002, Ministry of Education: 9

Obviously, most texts being written in Finnish, there is no presentation of Finland in them; at least, not a geographical one. The presentation is also absent from the texts in Swedish, for the obvious reason that, Finland having been a part of the Kingdom of Sweden and Sweden and Finland being neighbours, such a presentation is unnecessary. The geographical presentation of Finland as per shown above is only present in texts published in English. This fact speaks for itself: unsure of its status abroad, and feeling it is not well enough known, the Ministry of Education of Finland feels the need to literally put Finland on the map and give precise details on its situation.

Another recurrent element which appears in the texts is the mention that Finland is a ‘small country’. It appears as “For a small country like Finland” (Review 2000: The Challenge of Knowledge and Know-How, Science and Technology Policy Council of Finland, 2000:22), “For a smaller country” (referring to Finland, Knowledge, Innovation and Internationalisation, Science and Technology Policy Council of Finland, 2003:6), “A special challenge for a small

country” (Knowledge, Innovation and Internationalisation, Science and Technology Policy Council of Finland, 2003:18), “A small country like Finland” (Background report, Background report; Polytechnic education in Finland, Ministry of Education, 2002:9). As previously established, it is as important to study what is said as what is absent. I am intrigued by this presentation full of reserve. One could have said, for instance, that as far as the land size is concerned, Finland is one of the largest European countries (Finland is the eighth largest country in Europe in terms of area as seen on <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finland>, on March, 31<sup>st</sup>, 2008.). However, one can only find a brief mention of this fact in the text Intermediate report on the implementation of the SOCRATES Programme in Finland in the sentence: “With a surface area of 338,000 square kilometres extending 1,160 km from north to south, Finland is a large country with a population of approximately five million inhabitants (Population density = 17/ km<sup>2</sup>).” (Intermediate report on the implementation of the SOCRATES Programme in Finland, Ministry of Education, 2003:16). However, it is a single mention outnumbered by the mentions of Finland being a small country. Therefore the image which prevails is the one of a small country.

It is also true that population wise, Finland is indeed a small country. It has a “low density in population” (Cultural tourism and sustainable development. Results of the cooperation of the state authorities of Finland and the Republic of Karelia on cross-border territories, Ministry of Education, 2003:35) and is the “most sparsely populated country in the European Union”, as seen on <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finland>, on March, 31<sup>st</sup>, 2008. Finland is also presented as a country with a “harsh climate” (Discussing architectural quality, European Forum for Architectural Policies 21 May 2002, Helsinki, Finland, 2003:12).

The general image given is thus the one of a small country with a dense population and where the climate is rough. Why this presentation? Why not presenting Finland as a large country? Why not trying to play on its strengths rather than its weaknesses? One could come to the conclusion that the Ministry of Education chose to present these facts instead of others in order to show Finland as a country which has to fight to be strong, so as to increase the value of its achievements, as if to say “look at us, we started with little and achieved a lot, better than bigger countries”.

One other geographical element presented concerning Finland is its being up North, its being a neighbour to Russia and its being a Nordic country. One could interpret quotes such as “In common with its Nordic neighbours” (An International Evaluation of the Finnish System of Arts Councils, Ministry of Education, 2003:9) as a guarantee for the foreign reader. Indeed, Nordic countries have a reputation of being countries with a welfare society, a good economy, and of not being involved in any war. By allying itself to its Nordic neighbours, the Ministry of Education can be seen as wanting the reader to assume that Finland is the same economic and political state than the other Nordic countries, and with a similar society. As for being North and sharing a border with Russia, one could come to the conclusion that the Ministry of Education wants to take full advantage of this situation which is unique in Europe and play a role of a mediator between the European Union and Russia, as a ‘gateway’ to Russia. This fact can actually be seen in the following quote: “In accordance with its Programme, Prime Minister Vanhanen's Government will continue to develop good relations between Finland and the Russian Federation and actively influence the content of EU-Russia relations. Cooperation with Russia is one of the priorities for the Ministry of Education, which has recorded relevant objectives in its Strategy 2015. Within the scope of the strategy, the Ministry has devised a separate Russia strategy "Finland, Russia and International Cooperation".” (Taiteen ja kulttuurin Venäjä-ohjelma (Russia programme in art and culture), Ministry of Education, 2005:34).

Therefore, to conclude on this part, Finland is hereby presented as a small country with a small population and a tough climate which is up north and close to Russia but is at the same time a real Nordic country, with all the positive elements linked to it.

#### **4.1.2. History**

Interestingly enough, several texts from the Ministry of Education also include historical presentations of Finland. I shall once again study which elements are present and which are not, and what image is given of Finland through these historical elements.

The first element worthy of note is the fact that such presentations are indeed present in the texts. Should the texts be for Finnish use only, or only targeted at a 'specialist' audience, such presentations would not be necessary. Their very presence shows that they are destined at being read by an audience which is not very familiar with Finland and its history.

Through these presentations, one can learn that Finland is a very old country: "The first inhabitants settled in Finland after the last Ice Age, about 10,000 years ago, and Finland became part of Sweden during the time of the Crusades." (Background report; Polytechnic education in Finland, Ministry of Education, 2002:9) In the meantime, we also learn that Finland is "a young nation" (Discussing architectural quality. European Forum for Architectural Policies 21 May 2002 Helsinki, Finland, Ministry of Education, 2003:5).

Therefore, one is given a mixed image: how can a country be old and young at the same time? It seems that the mention of Finland's existence in the prehistoric age is meant to give some legitimacy to Finland, to show other countries and in particular other members of the European Union that Finland did exist at the same time than they did, that it did not just appear. Furthermore, it is important to establish the difference between the country of Finland and the nation of Finland. As expressed on the website <http://geography.about.com/>, "While the terms country, state, and nation are often used interchangeably, there is a difference." as found on <http://geography.about.com/cs/politicalgeog/a/statenation.htm>, on May 5<sup>th</sup> 5.2008. They further explain this difference: a country "Has space or territory which has internationally recognized boundaries (boundary disputes are OK). Has people who live there on an ongoing basis (...)" whereas a nation "is a tightly-knit group of people which share a common culture." (Found on <http://geography.about.com/cs/politicalgeog/a/statenation.htm> on May 5th 2008) Therefore, in spite of being an old populated territory, Finland is a young nation.

Indeed, Finland was independent from the Prehistoric Age until the Crusades, when it became part of Sweden, as previously quoted: "(...) Finland became part of Sweden during the time of the Crusades." (Background report; Polytechnic education in Finland, Ministry of Education, 2002:9) It is interesting to notice that Finland "became part of Sweden". The image given by this sentence is the one of Finland maybe voluntarily joining the Kingdom of Sweden. Finland

does not at all seem oppressed by this move. On the contrary, one gets the feeling of two nations joining forces. However, this is not entirely mirroring reality, as can be seen on the Wikipedia website: “Later medieval legends describe Swedish attempts to conquer and Christianize Finland sometime in the mid-1150s. In the early 13th century, the missionary Bishop Thomas apparently managed to bring some stability and order. At the same time, there were several secular powers who aimed to bring the Finns under their rule. These included the young Swedish kingdom, Denmark, the Republic of Novgorod in North-western Russia and probably the German crusading orders as well.” (Found on [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finnish\\_history](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finnish_history) on April, 12th, 2008) Therefore, there seems to have been some sort of fight. In the Wikipedia article, there is a clear idea of Sweden wanting to “conquer” Finland. The verb ‘to conquer’ means “To defeat or subdue by force, especially by force of arms, to gain or secure control of by or as if by force of arms.” (Found on <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/conquer> on May 5th 2008) There is a clear image of Sweden fighting Finland to gain control of it. One could wonder why the Ministry of Education wants to give such a smooth image of this move. Is it by fear of Sweden? To hope that the reader will not know Finland was beaten? Or in order to show a very good relationship and partnership with its Swedish neighbour? Obviously, one cannot know for sure, but all the above suggestions are legitimate and may be true.

Finland had to fight to remain independent, and it had to fight more than once. Wars are in that sense obviously mentioned in the texts. “Finland became independent in 1917, but was driven into civil war the following year, with the nation divided into Reds and Whites. Russian soldiers were expelled from the country at the same time. The events of 1918 claimed the lives of over 30,000 people, but Finland became a democratic republic with a parliamentary form of government (Background report; Polytechnic education in Finland, Ministry of Education, 2002:10) Obviously, the result of this war, despite the huge loss of men, had a positive result for Finland. Finland also went to war during the Second World War, as stated on April 17<sup>th</sup> 2008 on the website [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_Finland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Finland): “In autumn 1939, Finland got into war when attacked by the Soviet Union, thus becoming involved in the Second World War. The Winter War with the Soviet Union lasted until March 1940 and, when it ended, Finland was forced to cede considerable areas of territory to the USSR, but was able

to preserve its independence and prevent the country from being occupied. Finland went to war with the USSR again in 1941, the year Germany attacked the Soviet Union, to try and regain the territory it had lost.” (Background report; Polytechnic education in Finland, Ministry of Education, 2002:10-11) The element I find striking in here, is that obviously the enemies are Russians and Germans, but it is omitted that Finland used German help in order to fight the Russians, and before fighting the Germans. As stated in the following quote: “During World War II, Finland fought the Soviet Union twice: she defended herself against the Soviet Union in the Winter War of 1939-1940, resulting in the loss of Finnish Karelia, and again in the Continuation War of 1941-1944 (with considerable support from Nazi Germany resulting in a swift invasion of neighbouring areas of the Soviet Union), leading also to the loss of Finland's only ice-free winter harbour Petsamo. The Continuation War was, in accordance with the armistice conditions, immediately followed by the Lapland War of 1944-1945, when Finland fought the Germans to force them to withdraw from northern Finland back into Norway (then under German occupation).” I think it is very interesting to notice that there is an omission of this fact. The reason can easily be that the Ministry of Education prefers to show Finland as a brave nation which defeated the Great Russian Empire on its own, rather than admitting it used Nazi help, which they seem to be ashamed of. Obviously, the Finnish population has fought greatly and did defeat the Russian army, and then the German army, but they did also use the help of Nazis. This omission may also translate into the wish from the Ministry of Education to present the history of the country on the best light possible, therefore this presentation is not objective and is influenced by some agenda.

It is also interesting to learn that Finnish culture and education is also fairly old. As stated, “Religious reformation took place at the same time and this marked the first step in the creation of a national language and literature. Finland’s first university was founded in Turku in 1640.” (Background report; Polytechnic education in Finland, Ministry of Education, 2002:10) Once again, the mention of these facts is not innocent. One could think that mentioning that the first university in Finland was founded in 1640 could be showing foreign readers specialists or not a sense that Finland can legitimately give advice on education.

Moreover, Finland is very advanced when the place of women in the society is concerned. Indeed, “The crucial event from the point of view of the country’s political system was the parliamentary reform of 1906, when a single-chamber system of parliamentary representation was created. General and universal suffrage for all, including women, came into force (...)” (Background report; Polytechnic education in Finland, Ministry of Education, 2002:10) For instance, Finland is the first European country to give the right to vote to women. Only two other countries gave the right to vote to women earlier: New-Zealand and Australia. Finland is thus shown as a country giving equal rights to its citizens, women or men.

The image which mostly appears out of the historical descriptions of Finland is however the image of internationality. The international situation of Finland is very well explained in the following quote: “In the decades following the Second World War, dramatic changes have taken place in Finland’s international status and operating environment.

In 1955, Finland joined the international community by becoming a member of both the United Nations and the Nordic Council. Finland also took part in the integration of Europe from the very beginning by becoming a member of EFTA, the European Free Trade Area, and entering into an agreement on free trade with the EEC, the European Economic Community, in 1973.

Following a referendum, Finland joined the European Union in 1995. Membership of the EU has helped to make Finland more accessible and increased its cooperation with other countries.” (Background report; Polytechnic education in Finland, Ministry of Education, 2002:10) Therefore, after hundreds of years of being under the Swedish rule and under the Russian rule, Finland not only achieves independence but also opens to internationality, as early as in 1955 officially, when it became a member of the United Nations and of the Nordic council. After this Finland joined many more international organizations, to finally join the European Union in 1995. Once a member of the European Union Finland proved to be an active member of the Union, as shown in the following quote: “The Forum was established on the initiative of Finland and France during the Finnish EU Presidency in Paris in 1999” (Discussing architectural quality. European Forum for Architectural Policies 21 May 2002 Helsinki, Finland, Ministry of Education, 2003:4)

To conclude with the presentation of the Finnish history in the texts from the Ministry of Education, one may say that Finland is presented as a country with a long existence but a young nation, which has been under the rule of Sweden for a very long time, and under the Russian rule, which has fought for its independence and earned it, which is open to abroad and a member of international organization, a precursor in the rights for women, and which has an old education system. I shall now concentrate on the presentation of the Finnish economy.

### **4.1.3 Economy**

The Finnish economy has been changing a lot since the independence of the country. Finland's accession to the European Union must have had an impact on it. It is interesting to study the representation of the Finnish economy in texts coming from a Ministry, which points have been highlighted and which have not, and how they have been shown to the readers. I will start by discussing the representation of the Finnish economical crisis of the 90s.

It is important to first give actual facts on the crisis that deeply affected Finland in the 90s. Wikipedia describes this period as “a Great Depression-magnitude depression caused by a combination of economic overheating, depressed Western, Soviet and local markets, and disappearance of Soviet barter system. Stock market and housing prices declined by 50%. The growth in the 1980s was based on debt, and when the defaults began rolling in, GDP declined by 13% and unemployment increased from a virtual full employment to one fifth of the workforce. [...] Politicians struggled to cut spending and the public debt doubled to around 60% of GDP. Much of the economic growth in the 1980s was based on debt financing, and the debt defaults led to a savings and loan crisis. Total of over 10 billion euro were used to bail out failing banks, which led to banking sector consolidation. After devaluations the depression bottomed out in 1993.” (As found on [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economy\\_of\\_Finland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economy_of_Finland) on May, 2nd, 2008)

In the texts from the Ministry of Education, we learn that the crisis was “a difficult time economically for Finland as the Government struggled to reduce the level of unemployment, which had rocketed following the collapse of the country's major trading partner, the Soviet

Union. Moreover, it was being undertaken in the context of a reform of the State and its financial relations with the local authorities, which had risen fears concerning the latter's continuing commitment to partnership with central government - a partnership which had yielded a high level of public funding for the cultural sector.” (An International Evaluation of the Finnish System of Arts Councils, Ministry of Education, 2004:13) It is also mentioned that “In the early 1990s, Finland found itself in a period of deep recession, when the bubble of asset values financed by foreign borrowing burst, as it had done a little earlier in the neighbouring countries and as it did in Asia in the latter half of the decade. The situation was worsened by the fact that there was a decline in the trade cycle in Europe and Finland’s trade with the Soviet Union collapsed when the Soviet Union broke up.” (Background report; Polytechnic education in Finland, Ministry of Education, 2002:12) Later on, in the same text, one can read that “Finland’s employment situation deteriorated rapidly as the country’s economic status declined in the early 1990s.” (Background report; Polytechnic education in Finland, Ministry of Education, 2002:25)

These are the most specific mentions of the deep crisis which affected the Finnish society which are to be found in the texts I studied. Other mentions, much more brief, can be found now and then, such as “In the early 1990s Finland underwent a severe economic recession” (Knowledge, Innovation and Internationalisation, Science and Technology Council of Finland, 2003:5), which doesn’t give any explanation on the reasons which led to the crisis, or on the impact of the crisis.

The first element to mention is that there are not many mentions of the economic crisis which occurred in the 90s. For an event which has had such an impact on the Finnish society, one might say that the mentions of the event are very minimal. However, the texts being written by the Ministry of Education and its subsidies, it is pretty clear that Economy is not the primary concern of the texts. Nevertheless, I still believe it would not have been shocking to find longer mentions of the crisis. When the crisis is mentioned, it is clear that it was due in great part to the collapse of the Soviet Union. Hence, the relations between Finland and the Soviet Union were close ones, at least economically. It is also interesting that in the quotes here above, one can notice a comparison made by the author between the crisis affecting Finland,

and an economic crisis which affected Asia during the end of the 90s and similar events which happened in Finland's neighbouring countries a little earlier. It is interesting to notice that the Finnish events are being compared to events which occurred later on. It is as if the author wanted to minimize the events, or wanted to show that Finland was not to be undermined because of these events, since it happened even in Asia, which is becoming a powerful region of the world. It is also interesting to highlight the fact that there is a mention of Finland's neighbouring countries, but the names of the countries affected have not been mentioned. One can only assume the countries targeted are other Nordic countries. After researches, it seems that Sweden and Norway were the neighbouring countries which were equally affected. The fact that there is no mention of who these countries are might be due to a wish that the reader would think more countries were affected, and thus that Finland was not guilty of any malfunctioning which would have led to the crisis. They were a victim of the elements, like its neighbouring countries and like Asia.

Fortunately, Finland rose from its ashes and grew stronger as ever. This economic development occurred rapidly, as stressed in the texts from the Ministry of Education. Let's take for instance an extract from the text Background report, Polytechnic education in Finland, Publications of the Department for Education and Science, Ministry of Education, 2002). In 13 pages describing the economic history of Finland, there are 8 uses of the word rapid or of adjectives and names coming from the word rapid, especially for describing the fast growing of the Finnish economy after the crisis: "Finland's economic development was characterized for decades by rapid growth coupled with a sensitivity to fluctuations in international trade cycles" (ibid, p 12). We are also told that "The Finnish economy has grown rapidly in the past few years (...) Unparalleled structural change lay behind the rapid growth that followed the recession and the output and exports of the electronics and electrical industry grew particularly vigorously" (ibid, 17). Shortly after, we learn that "Industrial production has grown rapidly since the mid '90s, and productivity has increased too." (ibid, 18) Other fields encountered a fast development, as "Entrepreneurship expanded rapidly in the information sector in the '90s." (ibid, 19) and "The process by which information and know-how became Finland's key resource is also reflected in the rapid increase in research and development spending." (ibid, 20) As for exports, "Exports by Finland have increased at an extremely rapid rate since the

early 1990s, and export growth has been a central element in economic restructuring.” (ibid, 20) To conclude, “Since the late 1990s, rapid economic growth has helped to reduce unemployment although the rate continues to remain higher than before the recession.” (ibid, 25)

This repetition of the word “rapid” is not innocent. One might argue its presence in the text is used in order to reassure foreign readers about the consequences of the crisis on the Finnish economy. It may be used as to say “do not worry, we are rapidly recovering.” Certainly the Finnish Ministry of Education did not want to lose the possibility of foreign investments and although acknowledging the impact of the crisis in the ‘90s, the texts make an effort in showing that through a speedy recovery the Finnish economy is strong and efficient.

How did Finland manage to overcome the crisis so efficiently? From what we learn from the texts, the Finnish economy changed its main focuses and its structure. “In Finland the change in the industrial structure has been rapid” (Review 2000: The Challenge of Knowledge and Know-How, Science and Technology Policy Council of Finland, Ministry of Education, 2000:6) Again, the text insists on the rapidity of the change: “The change in industrial structure in Finland over the past three decades has been exceptionally rapid even in international terms” (ibid, 10) Not only Finland is a country which economy adapts fast, but it also does so on a level which is very respectable even when compared to other countries.

One event which has played an important role in the shaping of the Finnish economy as it has been since the ‘90s is the free market. The free market may have been somehow helped by the collapse of the Soviet Union, a former very close economic partner to Finland. With its collapse, Finland may have opened new doors to new economic partners: “The Finnish economy and the structure of the business world in Finland have changed rapidly following the freeing up of the financial markets.” (Staying Power to Finnish Cultural Exports – The Cultural Exportation Project of the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Hannele Koivunen, Ministry of Education, 2005:32)

Therefore, Finland’s quick economic recovery is due to a change within the economic structure and an opening to new economic partners.

One of the main events which changed the Finnish economy is Finland’s accession to the EU. Belonging to the EU meant for Finland that it had to modify its commercial policies and open to more markets and thus to more competition. The EU is now one of Finland’s main

commercial partners: “Most exports go to the EU areas” (Background Report; Polytechnic education in Finland, Ministry of Education, 2002:22). The accession of Finland into the EU has had dramatic changes on its industrial policies and economy: “In practice, Finland has abolished all restrictions on foreign ownership, and competition policy is now in line with EU provisions. As a member of the European Union, Finland is part of the single market. EU membership had meant closer industrial connections with Europe, and with Member States in particular.” (ibid, 19)

One may say that the collapse of the Soviet Union has had a positive outcome on Finland and the Finnish economy, as Finland opened up to new partners and joined globalisation. Hence, it increased its potential. It also increased the impact of globalisation and internationalisation on Finland: “Internationalisation, the global economy and Finland’s integration into the European Union have meant that the fluctuations of the world economy and the effects of competition in the world market are increasingly felt in Finland.” (Ministry of Education Strategy 2015, Ministry of Education, 2003:4) This quote gives us the feeling that Finland used to be isolated from the rest of the world, as now effects are “increasingly felt”. We have here the idea that Finland didn’t feel these effects at all prior to globalisation and its joining the EU, or felt them very little.

This may be a reason why the texts insist on Finland being a part of the European Union and being globally competitive. It wants to show its readers that Finland is not an isolated country, that it is part of the global economy and successfully participates in it. It is as if the authors suffer from a complex from pre-globalisation and want to prove the audience that Finland is as good as other EU members or other countries from outside the EU, if not better.

## **4.2. Society**

One of the most relevant aspects of a nation is its society. In this part, I will study the notion of equality, the information society, and the education in Finland.

### 4.2.1. Equality

Equality seems to be one of the main features of the building of the Finnish society. Equality in education, in work, in the arts, it is essential for the society of Finland to promote equality in every field of the life of the society. “As a civilisation, Finland is built on knowledge and creativity and values such as equity, tolerance, internationalisation, gender equality and responsibility for the environment. [...] Everyone has an equal right to participate in education according to their ability in keeping with the principle of lifelong learning [...] Equality between people and equity between regions will be enhanced.” (Education and Research 2003-2008, Publications of the Ministry of Education, 2004:56). Equality is thus a key element in the foundation of the Finnish society. Finnish society is based on gender equality, but also on “equality between people and equity between regions” (ibid). The notion of equality involves each and every member of the Finnish population, and even parts of its land. Not one region can be favoured at the expense of another region. At least this is the image which the Ministry of Education wants to give, for the reality may be different, as we are not given any concrete fact.

In the same text we learn that “Everyone should have an equal right to participate in education according to their abilities and special needs and to develop themselves irrespectively of their financial standing.” (ibid, p.7) It is very interesting to notice that in this quote the author does not assert that everyone has an equal right to participate in education, but should have. This is a very interesting point as in the previous quote, the same author stated that “Everyone has an equal right to participate in education” (ibid, p.15). Which one is it then? Is equality an actual element of the Finnish society or a dream the government aims at fulfilling? Is equality a reality or is the Ministry of Education using references to this term as a way to give Finland an image of a nation where everyone and every place is equal to its international readers? The notion of equality is nonetheless a key element of the way the Ministry of Education wants the society to be, as “Equal opportunity in education underpins the Finnish welfare.” (ibid, p.19) Why did the notion of equality become an essential feature of the Finnish society? The answer, or one part of the answer, can be found in the following quote: “In the 1960s and 1970s many people emigrated from Finland, particularly to Sweden. [...] It was thought desirable to distribute growing prosperity evenly by creating a system of social security that

included guaranteed health care for all at next to no cost. Educational equality was increased by establishing the same comprehensive education for all, free of charge. Finland, too, had become a country within the characteristic Nordic tradition of the rule of law, with good social security and a high standard of living.” (Background report; Polytechnic education in Finland, Ministry of Education, 2002:136) Therefore, the notion of equality is not an inherent trait of the Finnish society. It has been established as a way to be like the other Nordic nations and fight the migration of the Finnish population to other countries like the Swedish neighbour. Nonetheless, even if the notion of equality has not always been an essential aspect of the building of the Finnish society, one must admit that the Finnish government, including the Ministry of Education, puts lots of efforts into the building of an equal society, by encouraging equality in various fields: “Awareness of the equality aspect must be raised at all levels of administration in the sports field. The committee proposes that according to the joint governmental policy the gender equality aspect in government budget preparations as concerns sport be assessed in 2008 on the basis of the guidelines to be issued by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and the Ministry of Finance.” (Tasapeli – Sukupuolten valise tasa-arvon edistäminen ja sukupuolivaikutuksen arviointi liikunta-alalla (A draw – Promotion and assessment of the gender aspect in sports), Raila Mattila, Mirja Virtala, Ministry of Education, 2005:abstract) “Important cultural heritage will be made available to all on information networks. This will give citizens equal opportunity to learn to know their own cultural heritage and to obtain reliable information, irrespective of their place of residence and financial resources.” (Kulttuuriperintö tietoyhteiskunnassa. Strategiset tavoitteet ja toimenpidehdotukset (Cultural Heritage in Knowledge Society. Final report of the Digitalisation of cultural heritage committee (KULDI), Ministry of Education, 2003:abstract). It is interesting to notice that both above mentioned quotes are taken from the abstracts of texts written in the Finnish language. These are the only parts of the text which are in English, and both treat of the notion of equality. Clearly, the Ministry of Education aims at giving the image of the Finnish society as an equal society to its fellow European members and other foreign countries.

Equality is an essential aspect of the political line followed by the Ministry of Education, as shown in the following abstracts taken from the text “Education and Culture 2004, Ministry of

Education Annual Report, Ministry of Education, 2005). In this text, the vision of the Ministry of Education is presented as being among other elements “Securing educational and cultural equality.” (Foreword) In the introduction, we learn that “Equality in skills was a notable feature, and differences between schools and regions were small. [...] A key factor in this success is thought to be Finnish basic education, which gives every child an equal chance in the field of education. Equality in educational and cultural services ensures that all people have the basic right to an all-round education.” (ibid, Introduction)

It can also be seen in the following abstract “On 1 October 2001, the Ministry of Education appointed a committee for the project “Equality in the Labour Market”. The project was set up in accordance with the Finnish National Action Plans for Employment (2000 and 2001) [...] Developing student counselling is an essential means of eliminating gender segregation [...] The equality plan required of workplaces can be supported by various modes of action which promote equality. Planning for equality in the workplace and in schools must be strengthened, and the good practices established in this field (such as the MIRROR project) must be made accessible to all. Information on equality must also be increased. As far as possible, the requirement for equality must also be included in all working life development projects which will receive public funding.” (Tasavertaiset työmarkkinat –työryhmän muisto (Memorandum by the Committee “Equality in the Labour Market”), Committee the “Equality in the Labour Market”, Ministry of Education, 2004)

It is interesting to note that the authors of this text speak about “eliminating gender segregation” when we are also being told that “Equal opportunity in education and culture underlie the Finnish welfare. Education and culture must be within the reach of everyone residing in Finland, regardless of their age, gender, origin, language, state of health or social and financial standing. (Ministry of Education Strategy 2015, Ministry of Education, 2003:8) We are also told that “Legislation guarantees the principles of equality.” (ibid, 9)

The image we thus get is a confusing image of a society where equality is extremely important, but where gender segregation is still present, even though the principles of equality are within the Finnish law. It seems that even if the notion of equality is present in every aspect of the Finnish society, it is not to be taken for granted. For equality to be constantly present in the educational, artistic and professional parts of the Finnish society, the Ministry of

Education must take measures. One must however remember that equality has been more present over the past than in many other European countries and many other countries worldwide. Finland was the first European country to give the right to vote to women in 1906. Only two other countries globally have given the right to vote to women earlier, and they are New Zealand in 1893 and Australia in 1902, as found on the website <http://finland.fi/netcomm/news/showarticle.asp?intNWSAID=25734>, on April 10th.2009. Finland is also one of the only European countries to have elected a woman as president when it elected Tarja Halonen as the president of Finland in 2000 and re-elected her in 2006. Finland is also an Information Society, and I will study how the Information Society is presented in the texts from the Ministry of Education.

#### **4.2.2. Information Society**

As found on the website [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Information\\_society](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Information_society) on April 10<sup>th</sup> 2009, “An information society is a society in which the creation, distribution, diffusion, uses, integration and manipulation of information is a significant economic, political, and cultural activity. The knowledge economy is its economic counterpart whereby wealth is created through the economic exploitation of understanding. Specific to this kind of society is the central position information technology has for production, economy, and society at large. Information society is seen as the successor to industrial society.”

One element I noticed during my research in the importance of the notion of Information Society in the recent history of Finland. The Information Society appears as one major element of today’s economy in Finland, as an outcome of the use of information in the Finnish society and as an accomplishment.

The Information Society started as being of importance in for the Finnish Government at the same period that Finland faced the economical crisis.

It is stated in the text Background report; Polytechnic education in Finland (2002:28) that: “The issue of the information society was considered central to the economic and public management reform of the early ‘90s. In its 1995 information society strategy, the

Government outlined measures to promote the information society. The strategy prepared comprised five main guidelines:

- 1) Information technology and information networks as tools in private and public-sector renewal
- 2) The information industry to become an important future sector of economic activity in Finland
- 3) Professional expertise in information and communications technology to be maintained at a high overall level, with selected peaks.
- 4) Access to information society services and basic skills for all
- 5) Ensuring competitiveness and service capacity for Finland's entire information infrastructure."

In this quote we can see how the Government planned to create an Information Society, and benefit from this industry as a major economical sector. It can be seen as a way to rebuild the Finnish economy after the economical crisis from the 90s. The Finnish economic sector was mutating and switching to an economy which relies greatly on information related products. The text *Review 2000: The Challenge of Knowledge and Know-How* states that "The change in industrial structure in Finland over the past three decades has been exceptionally rapid even in international terms. [...] Whereas in 1970 the electric and electronics industries represented two per cent of Finnish exports as a whole, the corresponding figure was 11 per cent in 1990 and 29 per cent in the first half of 1999. [...] For the first time in its history Finland finds itself on the crest of innovation, albeit in a fairly narrow field." (2000:10) This quote shows an interesting trend which emerges with the Information society: Finland competes in the international level. The mention that the change in the industrial culture of Finland was "exceptionally rapid even in international terms" shows that the author wants the reader to understand that this change was so rapid it could even compete with international markets. The author gives the impression to be amazed at the extreme rapidity of the change, "even in international terms." Once again, we have the impression of an author who wishes to establish Finland as an international player in the eyes of the foreign reader. We also get the impression that the author is not used to such a competitive state from Finland, a feeling which is confirmed by the expression "For the first time in its history". We thus assist to a major

change in the Finnish history: Finland is now “on the crest of innovation” for the first time. This change is due to the Information Society.

With the advent of the Information Society, Finland establishes itself as a competitive nation at the international level. “Finnish biotechnology research is of the highest international standard in many fields [...]” (2000:16), “From the international perspective, Finland is well-placed in terms of both resources and infrastructure.” (2000:21), “The World Economic Forum’s (WEF) 2003 comparison assesses the operational readiness of Finland’s information networks as being the best in the world.” (Staying Power to Finnish Cultural Exports - The Cultural Exportation Project of the Ministry of Education, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Hannele Koivunen, Ministry of Education, 2005:32) Even more precisely, “the penetration of the Internet both in Finland and Sweden is almost level with the USA. Finland leads Europe in the number of mobile phone connections in relation to population.”(Background report; Polytechnic education in Finland, Publications of the Department for Education and Science, 2002:30)

I believe that this listing of international acknowledging of the Finnish competence in the field of information is a way to show the international reader that one should invest in Finland and in the Finnish economy, that the economic crisis is no more; that Finland is now an international player, able to compete with the major international players, as stated in the following quote which can be found in the text Review 2000: The Challenge of Knowledge and Know-How, Science and Technology Policy Council of Finland , 2000:16: “The active R&D of Finnish enterprises and their highly trained work force have attracted direct foreign investments especially to companies with good growth prospects.”

The Information Society also has an impact on the Finnish population, as stated in the following: “Raising the level of know-how among the whole population will improve Finnish competitiveness and benefit Finnish civilisation.” (2000:1) The creation of the Finnish Information Society doesn’t only have an impact of the Finnish economy, but on the whole civilisation. It appears that it will have a strong impact on the future of the Finnish civilisation, that it will modify the whole civilisation. Indeed, “Extensive utilisation of ICT in different sectors of society enhances competitiveness and productivity, social and regional equality and

citizens' well-being and quality of life.” (Information Society Programme for Education, Training and Research 2004–2006, Ministry of Education, 2004:4) The Finnish government thus thinks not only of the economy of Finland, but also of the well-being of its citizens. The creation of the Information Society ensures equality, well-being and quality of life.

The advent of the Information Society is also linked to the European Union. One may notice first that the Information Society gained importance around the same time than Finland joined the European Union. As stated at the beginning of this sub-chapter, the Finnish government wrote its information society strategy in 1995, which is the same year as Finland joined the European Union. Obviously, the Information Society was a global trend and the fact that Finland wanted to join this movement was a way to ensure its economical survival and its competitiveness. However, Finland’s membership to the European Union had an effect on how the information society policy was shaped. For instance, “The European Social Fund (ESF) contributes to the implementation of the Lisbon strategy (2000) across the entire EU. In accordance with the Lisbon strategy, the objective of the member states is, through the development of human capital and the promotion of entrepreneurship and innovation activity, to be at the top of the development of the knowledge-based society by the end of the decade.” (Innovation activity in the ESF projects of Central Finland, Päijät-Häme, and Satakunta. Third intermediate report of the ALUEOSAAJA project, Jari Ritsilä, Jukka Haukka, Ministry of Education, 2005:7) As a member state, Finland shared the objective of the Lisbon strategy, and therefore must shape its policy to reach this target. Finland also had to work on its library strategy, as “The EU sees libraries increasingly serving the information society.” (Library Strategy 2010 - policy for access to know, Ministry of Education, Media Division, Ministry of Education, 2003:14) Finland also had to make changes to its policy as “[...] changes (were) required by the EU Information Society Directive 2001/29/EC, certain other amendments and technical revisions.” (Tekijänoikeustoimikunnan mietintö. Tekijänoikeudet tietoyhteiskunnassa (Report of the Copyright Commission, Copyright in the Information Society), Copyright Commission, Ministry of Education, 2002:abstract)

Not only is Finland a member state, but it is a good member state, as “according to the criteria of the Lisbon strategy - Finland is among the most competitive countries” (Innovation activity

in the ESF projects of Central Finland, Päijät-Häme, and Satakunta. Third intermediate report of the ALUEOSAAJA project, Jari Ritsilä, Jukka Haukka, Ministry of Education 2005:14) Finland has evolved into an Information Society, and recovered from the crisis at least partly thanks to this switch to an information society. As an information society, Finland is competitive and ranks among the top European countries. The Information Society plays an important part in the shaping of today's Finland, and certainly plays an important role in the shaping of tomorrow's Finland. Education also plays an important part in the shaping of a society. For that reason, I shall now study how education is depicted in the texts from the Ministry of Education.

### **4.2.3. Education**

One of the first elements which have stricken me during my research was the important place which the Finnish Ministry of Education, and thus the Finnish government, put on education. Indeed, according to them, "The future of Finland depends on knowledge, the ability to utilise knowledge and the capacity for new innovations. Higher education and research play an important part in the national innovation system." (Background report; Polytechnic education in Finland, Ministry of Education, 2002:7) Education thus plays a central role in the shaping of the Finnish society now, and in the future, as "Education and research are crucial to Finland's strategy for the future, which aims at the wellbeing of its citizens, cultural diversity, sustainable development and prosperity." (2002:40) Once again, the Ministry of Education stresses the importance of the well-being of the Finnish population, and the prosperity of the nation. A new element to appear is the element of cultural diversity. It may be due to the fact that, in 2002, Finland was an active member of the European Union and gained a new international status.

"Education is used to promote cultural rights as well as knowledge and skills for active citizenship." (Education and Research 2003-2008. Development Plan, Ministry of Education, 2004:15) Not only is education a means for the development of a welfare society, but it is also a means to promote culture. "Finnish welfare is based on a knowledgeable and highly educated adult population. Finland's international competitiveness entails access to competent

work force and a constant effort to raise the level of education, all the while taking care of social coherence, equality and good prerequisites for civil society.” (2004:18) Once again we find here the notion of equality, which shows once again how important this notion is in the Finnish society. Finland’s international competitiveness is now stated as a fact, not as a target. The raising of the level of education seems to be however a constant goal for the Ministry of Education. Another reason why education is important according to the Ministry of Education is to prevent exclusion: “Education and training offer an important tool for preventing exclusion, because the lower the level of education, the more likely unemployment is.” (The prevention of children's and young people's exclusion in the field of education, Opetusministeriön työryhmämuistioita ja selvityksiä, Ministry of Education, 2003:abstract ) Education is portrayed as an essential feature of the Finnish society, as stated in the following sentence: “High-standard education and culture generate welfare and enable Finnish society to thrive now and in the future.” (Ministry of Education Strategy 2015, Ministry of Education, 2003:1) The better educated the population, the higher the level of the society gets. The welfare society depends of a good level of education from its population.

According to the Ministry of Education, internationalisation is linked to education. Internationalisation is a goal from the Ministry of Education, and a result from its policies. “International cooperation in education aims to raise the quality of education and provide students with study opportunities abroad. International exchanges have made students more internationally minded, and improved their language and communication skills.” (Background report; Polytechnic education in Finland, Ministry of Education, 2002:80) Internationalisation has thus had positive effects on the part of the Finnish population which studies. They are now more able to interact with international companies and have a mindset which goes beyond the Finnish borders.

The international aspect in education has been important in the eyes of the Ministry of Education for a long time, if we are to believe the following: “Internationalisation of education has long been one of the priorities of Finnish educational policy. The European dimension is clearly visible in language instruction in educational institutions and institutions of higher education. [...] Since the end of the 1980s, internationalisation has been one of the key

priorities in Finnish educational policy.” (Intermediate report on the implementation of the SOCRATES Programme in Finland, Ministry of Education, 2003:26-27) Europe is therefore linked with the internationalisation. It is even clearer in the quote: “The impetus was of course the changes in Finland's international position at the time, especially involvement in the European integration process.” (OECD thematic review of tertiary education; Country Background report for Finland , Ministry of Education, Ministry of Education, 2005:11) Therefore, the internationalisation in Finland was clearly linked to Finland’s accession to the European Union. However, the author doesn’t say if Finland’s desire to access to the European Union has been a factor of its wish for internationalisation, or if the internationalisation has led Finland to become closer to other European countries. Nonetheless, Finland has actively taken part in programs in cooperation with other European countries, such as the student exchange program Socrates: “The Socrates Programme provides an opportunity for expanding co-operation with European nations. Traditionally Finland has been strongly committed to co-operation with the Nordic and Baltic countries.” (Intermediate report on the implementation of the SOCRATES Programme in Finland, Ministry of Education, 2003:26) This once again shows that Finland has gone beyond its usual borders, and has learned to cooperate with other nation than its neighbouring nations. Finland is also portrayed as a model member state of the European Union, one which is abiding by the European policies in matters of education, as shown in the citation: “Finland will constitute a respected participant and influence both in European education and research policy and in European cooperation, developing competitive European knowledge and the EU Northern Dimension.” (Regional strategy for education and research up to 2013, Ministry of Education, 2004:19) The image given of Finland as a member of the EU is that of an active member, and of an influential member, which by its involvement and hard work will gain influence in the Union. To be recognized as such a member is unmistakably one of the goals of the Ministry of Education, as according to it: “The vision is that in 2010 Finland will constitute a well-known and influential part of the European education and research area and produce competitive knowledge. Its higher education community will be international, and the demands of internationalisation will have been taken into account in educational content.” (Korkeakoulutuksen kansainvälisen toiminnan strategia, Committee on the international strategy of higher education institutions, Ministry of Education, 2001: abstract)

But what have been the results of a stronger internationalisation and an active membership in the European Union? Participating in the Socrates program has had positive effects on the Finnish educational system as: “The impression is that participation in the Socrates Programme has been an important instrument for furthering internationalisation at all levels of education and training in Finland, particularly in higher education institutions.” (Intermediate report on the implementation of the SOCRATES Programme in Finland, Ministry of Education, 2003:27) As far as the polytechnics are concerned: “The polytechnics have expanded their international activities very rapidly, partly thanks to conscious efforts to promote internationalization, such as the development funds granted by the Ministry of Education, and specifically the opportunities to take part in EU exchange programmes opened up by Finnish membership of the Union.” (Background report; Polytechnic education in Finland, Publications of the Department for Education and Science 2002, 93, 2002:79) Internationalisation has allowed Finland to open itself to other countries, but also allowed other countries to hear about Finland: “The Finnish education system has been a target of great international interest owing to the success of the Finns in the process of international learning evaluation. Furthermore, Finnish culture was presented more visibly than ever around the world.” (Education and Culture 2004. Ministry of Education Annual Report, Ministry of Education, 2005:2) What success is the author referring to? According to the OECD, “The Finnish basic education system produces the world’s best results in learning, with only moderate costs. The skills of 15-year old pupils are at the top level in the OECD countries, according to the OECD’s PISA 2003 assessment.

According to the OECD’s PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) 2003 assessment, the skills acquired by Finnish 15-year old pupils from comprehensive schools are at the top level in the OECD countries in mathematics, sciences, reading and problem solving. Young Finns are the best in mathematical literacy in the OECD-countries. [...] The reading skills of Finnish young people maintained their position as the best.

The problem-solving skills of Finnish young people are amongst the best in the OECD countries.” (Education and Culture 2004. Ministry of Education Annual Report, Ministry of Education, 2005:5- 6) Even though the reader is not given any statistics or any actual result

from the OECD studies, Finnish pupils are clearly presented as among the best in the OECD countries. Obviously, this presentation is not innocent and has a purpose. Part of the answer can be found in the following extract: “In autumn 2000 the Finnish Centre for International Mobility and Exchange did a survey of exchange students at polytechnics and universities which established why they had chosen specifically Finland as a country to study. The respondents underlined the appeal of the large number of courses available in English, the good reputation of Finland’s higher education institutions, opportunities for studies not available in their home country, specialist know-how in areas of technology and industrial design, and particular interest in Scandinavian countries.” Indeed, these results give great publicity to the Finnish educational system. Students come from many other European and OECD countries to come to study in Finland.

Education is presented as a foundation of the Finnish society. A high level of education, offered to all citizens, prevents exclusion, creates social coherence, and ensures the competitiveness of Finland. Despite not being given statistics or the actual results of the OECD studies, we are clearly given the image of Finnish education being at the top level compared to other OECD countries. Obviously, the Ministry of Education is proud of this fact and mentions it throughout various texts. The Ministry of Education thus gains respect from other European Union members and OECD countries, and encourages cooperation with these countries.

## 5. CONCLUSION

I believe it can now be safely said that the argumentation of the image of Finland has changed between 1994 and 2005, with the Ministry of Education as a rhetorician. Even though it has been difficult to find texts which were published between 1994 and 1999 to study, due to the fact that most of them were written in Finnish and did not include enough relevant material in English, I have been able to demonstrate with the material at my disposal that during this early period, Finland was not as turned to the international as it would later be. Only few texts were available in English, and the texts which were in English included long descriptive sections on the history of Finland, the geography of Finland, the society of Finland, and so on. In the latter period covered by my study, there were more texts in English and the long descriptions were not to be found anymore. This shows that Finland has found its place in the international scene, particularly in the EU scene, and feels more confident in its argumentation.

I believe that Finland's membership in the European Union has had a strong effect on the changes of the argumentation of the image of Finland by the Ministry of Education. Finland first needed to introduce itself to the other member countries, which could also explain why the long descriptions, but after few years gained confidence as a member state and the image given in the texts was more free. The modesty which could be found at first slowly vanishes to leave place to a list of recognitions which Finland and the Finnish educational system received.

Many texts refer to cooperation with the European Union, membership in projects led by the European Union. This is another reason why I did feel important to put this argumentation in perspective with Finland's membership in the European Union.

It has been difficult to establish who the authors of the text were. Most of the time, the author is simply referred to as the Ministry of Education as a whole. In several occasions I have been able to find a certain committee as the author of a text, but in the large majority the Ministry of Education is the author. Nonetheless, this allows me to answer the question as to whereas the texts were written by only few people working for the Ministry of Education which would participate in some propaganda and marketing program by the Ministry of Education. One can notice that the authors are varied; they can belong to some specialized committee which

belongs to the Ministry of Education or a committee hired by the Ministry of Education. However one thing is for sure: they share the same line of conduct in the descriptions. Most texts contain elements which can be seen as being marketing elements, positive elements which are not so relevant to the text, and elements which comprise a real value which could convince people from abroad to invest in e.g. the Finnish educational system.

During the course of my research I have been able to notice that the image of Finland has evolved and that the image given is nowadays a stronger image, one of an independent country which was a lot to give to other countries especially to other European Union members. The image currently given in the texts from the Ministry of Education is far from the image given at the beginning. The image of Finland has clearly changed and evolved.

From a personal point of view, I regret that I did not finish my thesis earlier. Having to mix working life and studies is very challenging, and too often I came back home from a long day at work without feeling like studying. I also regret that I did not have the chance to study the texts written in Finnish, as my level of Finnish does not allow it. I believe it would have been very interesting to see if there is a difference in the way Finland is described in the texts written in Finnish and thus aimed at a local audience and the texts written in English, aimed at a wider audience. Had I to write this thesis all over again, I would write it as once, for it has been difficult to work on it for several weeks, then stop for few months, and work on it again. I wasted lots of time with this process, as I always had to go back to already studied elements and go backwards to remember what I had written and the material I was using. I would also work in closer contact with the Ministry of Education, maybe even creating a questionnaire for that purpose, where I could have asked some questions to the employees on which image of Finland they would give, why, and look for similarities in their answers, which could prove in a more obvious manner that the fact that the authors all work for the Ministry of Education has an impact on the way they describe Finland. I would also write my thesis faster, in a continuous process, which would have allowed me to have a smoother writing experience. I also would have liked to go deeper into a word analysis of the words used in the texts. I have also encountered difficulties while writing the theoretical part, as in my previous thesis I did not have to write such a segment. This has been a totally new experience for me.

All in all I believe I have been able to answer my research questions; that I have successfully given a new vision on the argumentation of the image of Finland in the texts from the Ministry of Education for the given period, and this even if I would write this thesis very differently if I had to.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

### **RESEARCH MATERIAL**

Adams, T., Ahonen, P., Fisher, R. (2004), An International Evaluation of the Finnish System of Arts Councils, Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Allen, A., Black P., Wallin Hans. (2002), LUMA-ohjelman kansainvälinen loppuraportti (An evaluation report on the LUMA programme prepared for the Ministry of Education), Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Committee of the Ministry of Education for a new international strategy for sport (2003), Liikunnan kansainvälinen strategia 2003-2005 (International Strategy for Sport 2003 - 2005), Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Committee on the international strategy of higher education institutions (2001), Korkeakoulutuksen kansainvälisen toiminnan strategia, Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Committee the “Equality in the Labour Market” (2004), Tasavertaiset työmarkkinat – työryhmän muisto (Memorandum by the Committee “Equality in the Labour Market”), Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Copyright Commission (2002), Tekijänoikeustoimikunnan mietintö. Tekijänoikeudet tietoyhteiskunnassa (Report of the Copyright Commission. Copyright in the Information Society), Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Gibbons, M., Dowling, Patrick J., Mirdal, G., Pettersson, Ralf F. (2004), International Evaluation of the Academy of Finland, Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Koivunen H. (2005), *Staying Power to Finnish Cultural Exports – The Cultural Exportation Project of the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Trade and Industry*, Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Mattila R., Virtala M. (2005), *Tasapeli – Sukupuolten valise tasa-arvon edistäminen ja sukupuolivaikutuksen arviointi liikunta-alalla (A draw – Promotion and assessment of the gender aspect in sports)*, Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Ministry of Education (1997), *Report on the evaluation of The Centre for International Mobility*, CIMO, Finland, Publications of the Department for Education and Science Publications.

Ministry of Education (1998), *The Financing of lifelong learning: Finland's country report for the OECD*, Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Ministry of Education (2002), *Background report; Polytechnic education in Finland*, Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Ministry of Education (2002), *LUMA-ohjelman kansainvälinen loppuraportti (An evaluation report on the LUMA programme prepared for the Ministry of Education)*, Finland, Ministry of Education committee reports.

Ministry of Education (2002), *Virtuaaliopetuksen haasteet ja niihin vastaaminen*, Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Ministry of Education (2003) *Cultural tourism and sustainable development. Results of the cooperation of the state authorities of Finland and the Republic of Karelia on cross-border territories*, Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Ministry of Education (2003) Means for Overall Assessment of Cultural Life and Measuring the Involvement of the Cultural Sector in the Information Society, Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Ministry of Education (2003), Cultural tourism and sustainable development. Results of the cooperation of the state authorities of Finland and the Republic of Karelia on cross-border territories, Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Ministry of Education (2003), Discussing architectural quality. European Forum for Architectural Policies 21 May 2002 Helsinki, Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Ministry of Education (2003), Intermediate report on the implementation of the SOCRATES Programme in Finland, Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Ministry of Education (2003), Kulttuuriperintö tietoyhteiskunnassa. Strategiset tavoitteet ja toimenpide-ehdotukset (Cultural Heritage in Knowledge Society. Final report of the Digitisation of cultural heritage committee (KULDI), Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Ministry of Education (2003), Ministry of Education Strategy 2015, Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Ministry of Education (2003), The prevention of children's and young people's exclusion in the field of education, Opetusministeriön työryhmämuistioita ja selvityksiä, Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Ministry of Education (2004) Management and Steering of Higher Education in Finland, Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Ministry of Education (2004), Education and Culture 2004, Ministry of Education Annual Report, The Vision of the Ministry of Education, Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Ministry of Education (2004), Education and Research 2003-2008, Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Ministry of Education (2004), Finnish Polytechnics in figures, Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Ministry of Education (2004), Information Society Programme for Education, Training and Research 2004–2006, Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Ministry of Education (2004), Management and Steering of Higher Education in Finland, Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Ministry of Education (2004), Nuorten työpajatyöryhmän esitys: Nuorten työpajatoiminnan vakinaistaminen (The Youth Workshop Committee: Financing of Youth Workshops - Proposal for A Permanent Model), Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Ministry of Education (2004), Opetusministeriön, Opetushallituksen ja lääninhallitusten tehtäväjaon kehittäminen (Division of labour between the Ministry of Education, the National Board of Education and the provincial state offices), Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Ministry of Education (2004), Regional strategy for education and research up to 2013, Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Ministry of Education (2005) Staying Power to Finnish Cultural Exports - The Cultural Exportation Project of the Ministry of Education, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Ministry of Education (2005), OECD thematic review of tertiary education; Country Background report for Finland, Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Ministry of Education, (2005), Taiteen ja kulttuurin Venäjä-ohjelma (Russia programme in art and culture), Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Ministry of Education, Media Division (2003), Library Strategy 2010 - policy for access to know, Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Mäkelä, T., Tarkka, M. (2002), Mediataide. Kotimaiset toimijat ja kansainväliset mallit (Media Art in Finland), Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Ritsilä J., Haukka J. (2005), Innovation activity in the ESF projects of Central Finland, Päijät-Häme, and Satakunta. Third intermediate report of the ALUEOSAAJA project, Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Science and Technology Policy Council of Finland (2000), Review 2000: The Challenge of Knowledge and Know-How, Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Science and Technology Policy Council of Finland (2003), Knowledge, innovation and internationalization, Science and Technology Policy Council of Finland, Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Tella S., Tirri K. (1999), Educational Innovations in Finnish and European Contexts: An Analysis of the Aims and Outcomes of “The European Observatory” of the European Commission (1994-1998), Department of Teacher Education, Finland, University of Helsinki.

Tilastokeskus (1994), Developments in Education 1992-1994, Finland, Ministry of Education Publications.

Tilastokeskus, Education in Finland 1994, Tilastokeskus.

## RESEARCH LITERATURE

Alvesson, M., Sköldbberg, K. (2000), *Reflexive Methodology: New Vistas for Qualitative Research*, London, Sage Publications

Arbnor I., Bjerke B. (1997), *Methodology for Creating Business Knowledge*, London, Sage Publications

Aristotle (1947), the "Art" of Rhetoric with an English translation by John Henry Freese, London, Heinemann.

Cassell, C. and Symon, G. (1994) (eds) *Qualitative Methods in Organizational Research: A Practical Guide*, London, Sage Publications.

Hart, Roderick P. (1996), *Modern Rhetorical Criticism*, 2nd Edition, Allyn and Bacon.

Heidegger (1978), *Being and Time*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell.

Gadamer, Hans Georg (2003), *Truth and Method*, Continuum Intl Publishing Group Ltd.

Lipponen P. (1999), <http://presidency.finland.fi/> [referred 14.5.2007]

Merriam-Webster dictionary, available in www-format: URL: <http://www.m-w.com/dictionary/rhetoric> [referred 15.5.2007]

Migration News, French Commission Recommends Immigration Restrictions (1996), Volume 2 Number 4. Available in www-format: URL:

[http://migration.ucdavis.edu/mn/more.php?id=948\\_0\\_4\\_0](http://migration.ucdavis.edu/mn/more.php?id=948_0_4_0) [referred 16.5.2007]

Perelman, C., Olbrechts-Tyteca, L. (1969), *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation*, Paris, University of Notre Dame Press.

Potts, L.J. (1953), *Aristotle on the Art of Fiction, An English Translation of the Poetics with an Introductory Essay and Explanatory Notes*, London, Cambridge University Press.

Punch, K. (1998), *Introduction to Social Research. Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches*, London, Sage Publications.

Rickman, H.P., *Dilthey (1976), Selected Writings*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Rosenberg, M., *Country, State, and Nation, Defining an Independent Country* [referred 5.5.2008] Available in www-format: URL:

<http://geography.about.com/cs/politicalgeog/a/statenation.htm>.

Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutics and Criticism* in Mueller-Vollmer, K (1997), *The hermeneutics reader*, New York, Continuum.

Sherman, R.R., Webb, R.B. (1988), "Qualitative research in education: a focus", in Sherman, R.R., Webb, R.B. (Eds), *Qualitative Research in Education: Focus and Methods*, Falmer Press, Bristol, PA.

Strauss, A.L., Corbin, J. (1990), *Basics of Qualitative Research, Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques*, Sage Publications, London.

Sulkunen, I. (2000), *Finland \_ A Pioneer in Women's Rights* [referred 10.4.2009]. Available in www-format: URL: <http://finland.fi/netcomm/news/showarticle.asp?intNWSAID=25734>.

URL: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economy\\_of\\_Finland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economy_of_Finland) [referred 2.5.2008]

URL: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finland> [referred 17.10.2007]

URL: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finnish\\_history](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finnish_history) [referred 12.4.2008]

URL: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_Finland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Finland) [referred 17.4.2008]

URL: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Information\\_society](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Information_society) [referred 10.4.2009]

URL: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wilhelm\\_Dilthey](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wilhelm_Dilthey) [referred 18.4.2007]

URL: <http://www.gslis.utexas.edu/~palmquis/courses/discourse.htm> [referred 6.8.2007]

URL: <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/conquer> [referred 5.5.2008]

URL: <https://helka.linneanet.fi> [referred 10.5.2007]

URL: [www.advansis.fi](http://www.advansis.fi) [referred 9.5.2007]

URL: [www.stat.fi](http://www.stat.fi) [referred 17.5.2007]