



KAISA HÄKKINEN

Spreading the Written Word

Mikael Agricola and the Birth of Literary Finnish

Studia Fennica
Linguistica

Studia Fennica
Linguistica 19

THE FINNISH LITERATURE SOCIETY (SKS) was founded in 1831 and has, from the very beginning, engaged in publishing operations. It nowadays publishes literature in the fields of ethnology and folkloristics, linguistics, literary research and cultural history.

The first volume of the *Studia Fennica* series appeared in 1933. Since 1992, the series has been divided into three thematic subseries: *Ethnologica*, *Folkloristica* and *Linguistica*. Two additional subseries were formed in 2002, *Historica* and *Litteraria*. The subseries *Anthropologica* was formed in 2007.

In addition to its publishing activities, the Finnish Literature Society maintains research activities and infrastructures, an archive containing folklore and literary collections, a research library and promotes Finnish literature abroad.

STUDIA FENNICA EDITORIAL BOARD

Pasi Ihalainen, Professor, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Timo Kaartinen, Title of Docent, Lecturer, University of Helsinki, Finland

Taru Nordlund, Title of Docent, Lecturer, University of Helsinki, Finland

Riikka Rossi, Title of Docent, Researcher, University of Helsinki, Finland

Katriina Siivonen, Substitute Professor, University of Helsinki, Finland

Lotte Tarkka, Professor, University of Helsinki, Finland

Tuomas M. S. Lehtonen, Secretary General, Dr. Phil., Finnish Literature Society, Finland

Tero Norkola, Publishing Director, Finnish Literature Society, Finland

Kati Romppanen, Secretary of the Board, Finnish Literature Society, Finland

EDITORIAL OFFICE

SKS

P.O. Box 259

FI-00171 Helsinki

www.finlit.fi

KAISA HÄKKINEN

Spreading the Written Word

Mikael Agricola and the Birth of Literary
Finnish

Translated by Leonard Pearl

Finnish Literature Society • SKS • Helsinki



Studia Fennica Linguistica 19

The publication has undergone a peer review.



VERTAISARVIOITU
KOLLEGIALT GRANSKAD
PEER-REVIEWED
www.tsv.fi/tunnus

The open access publication of this volume has received part funding via Helsinki University Library.

© 2015 Kaisa Häkkinen and SKS
License CC-BY-NC-ND 4.0 International

A digital edition of a printed book first published in 2015 by the Finnish Literature Society.

Cover Design: Timo Numminen

EPUB: Tero Salmén

ISBN 978-952-222-674-7 (Print)
ISBN 978-952-222-755-3 (PDF)
ISBN 978-952-222-754-6 (EPUB)

ISSN 0085-6835 (Studia Fennica)
ISSN 1235-1938 (Studia Fennica Linguistica)

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21435/sflin.19>

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons CC-BY-NC-ND 4.0 International License.
To view a copy of the license, please visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>



A free open access version of the book is available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.21435/sflin.19> or by scanning this QR code with your mobile device.

Contents

Preface 8

Abbreviations and Symbols 11

1. From a Pre-Literary to a Literary Culture 13

1.1 Mediaeval Heritage 13

1.1.1 A Literary Culture Arrives in Finland 13

1.1.2 Finnish in Texts of Other Languages 17

1.1.3 Finnish in the Middle Ages 18

1.2 The Reformation Progresses to Finland 21

1.2.1 New Teachings in Wittenberg 21

1.2.2 The Reformation Expands to Scandinavia 23

1.2.3 The First Reformation Messengers and Strongholds
in Finland 25

1.3 The First Finnish Manuscripts 27

2. The Life of Mikael Agricola 31

2.1 Family Background and Early Schooling 31

2.2 A Schoolboy in Vyborg 34

2.3 Work as Secretary to the Bishop 35

2.4 A Student in Wittenberg 37

2.5 A Cathedral School Headmaster 41

2.6 From a Bishop's Assistant to Bishop 46

3. The Finnish Works of Mikael Agricola 53

3.1 Agricola's Primer / *Abckiria* 53

3.2 Agricola's Prayer Book / *Rucouskiria Bibliasta* 58

3.3 Agricola's New Testament / *Se Wsi Testamenti* 60

3.4 Agricola's Agenda / *Käsikiria Castesta ia muista Christikunnan
Menoista* 63

3.5 Agricola's Missal / *Messu eli Herran Echtolinen* 66

3.6 Agricola's Passion / *Se meiden Herran Jesusen Christusen Pina* 68

3.7 Agricola's Psalter / *Dauidin Psaltari* 70

3.8 Agricola's Collection of Canticles and Prophecies / *Weisut ia
Ennustoxet Mosesen Laista ia Prophetista Wloshaetut* 73

3.9 Agricola's Three Minor Prophets / *Ne Prophetat Haggai
SacharJa Maleachi* 74

- 4. Finnish in the Works of Mikael Agricola 76**
 - 4.1 Agricola's Alphabet and its Characters 76
 - 4.2 Phonetic Length 80
 - 4.3 Individual Characters by Phonetic Class 82
 - 4.3.1 Stops 82
 - 4.3.2 Fricatives Not Known in Contemporary Finnish 83
 - 4.3.3 Semivowels *j* and *v* 84
 - 4.3.4 Other Consonants 85
 - 4.3.5 Vowel Quality 85
 - 4.3.6 Phonetic Phenomenon and Inflectional Forms 87
 - 4.4 Nominal Inflection 89
 - 4.4.1 Declension: Case Inflection 90
 - 4.4.2 Pronouns 93
 - 4.5 Conjugation: Finite Verbal Inflection 96
 - 4.5.1 Main Classes 96
 - 4.5.2 Moods 97
 - 4.5.3 Tenses 98
 - 4.5.4 Personal Inflection 98
 - 4.5.5 Two Important Features 100
 - 4.6 Infinitive Verbal Forms 103
 - 4.7 Possessive Suffixes 107
 - 4.8 Special Syntactic Features in Agricola 108
 - 4.8.1 Word Order 108
 - 4.8.2 Passive Constructions and Reflexive Expressions 110
 - 4.8.3 Congruency 111
 - 4.8.4 Conjunctions 113
 - 4.8.5 Non-Finite Clauses 117
 - 4.9 Vocabulary in the Works of Agricola 120
 - 4.9.1 Statistics on Agricola's Vocabulary 120
 - 4.9.2 Basic Vocabulary 122
 - 4.9.3 Word Formation 123
 - 4.9.4 Dialectical Vocabulary 125
 - 4.9.5 Loanwords and Calques 126
 - 4.9.6 Remnants of the Past in Agricola's Vocabulary 127
 - 4.9.7 Cultural-Historical Evidence 128
- 5. Mikael Agricola's Networks in Finland and Abroad 130**
 - 5.1 Agricola's Teachers, Assistants and Supporters 130
 - 5.2 Agricola as a Representative of Finland 135
 - 5.3 Agricola as a Provider of Information and Influence from Abroad 139
- 6. The Legacy of Mikael Agricola 144**
 - 6.1 The Literary Legacy of Mikael Agricola 144
 - 6.2 Research on Michael Agricola and His Life's Work 148
 - 6.3 Mikael Agricola as a National Figure 157

Timeline of Events in the Life of Mikael Agricola	163
Bibliography	164
Source Materials	164
Literature	165
Historical Personal Names	174
Place Names in Past and Present Finland	176
Naming in Finland	176
Historical Provinces	177
Inflectional Paradigms in Finnish	178
Nominal Inflection	178
Possessive Suffixes	178
Nominal Inflection with Possessive Suffixes	179
Personal Pronoun Inflection	179
Verbal Inflection	180
Infinitive (Non-Finite) Forms	184
Abstract	186
Index	187
The most important places throughout Mikael Agricola's life	

Preface

Finnish culture has ancient roots, but it was not until the 16th century that Finnish had begun to be written down. The Protestant Reformation began in Germany in 1517, and the expansion of Lutheranism was the decisive impetus for literary development. The principle was that the people had to get to hear and read the word of God in their own mother tongue. If there previously was no literary language, it had to be created.

The first Finnish books were produced by Mikael Agricola. He was born an ordinary son of a farmer, but his dedication to his studies and subsequent work in the office of the Bishop of Turku opened up the road to leading roles in the Finnish Church. Agricola became a respected headmaster of the cathedral school in Turku, a Finnish Reformer and finally Bishop of Turku. He was able to bring a total of nine works in Finnish to print, which became the foundation of literary Finnish.

Finnish in Agricola's time was, in many respects, different than it is today. There still was no standard language because the Finns were scattered throughout a vast, scarcely settled country and spoke local dialects. For their whole lives, many of them interacted only with the inhabitants in their own home regions. Literary Finnish became a connective thread between the different dialects. A standard language independent from these regional dialects began to develop on the basis of the works of Agricola.

In practice, literary Finnish was essentially created through the translation of Latin, Swedish and German spiritual literature. In translating scripture, it was important for the original content of the text to remain unchanged, and for this reason, translating was done verbatim as accurately as possible. There were structural features that came into literary Finnish through translations that were not in the true vernacular. Furthermore, the literary language required a great amount of new vocabulary because its subject matter was different from that of the ordinary, everyday language. The lands and events found in the Bible were alien to Finnish culture as well. In describing these phenomena, Finnish means of expression had to be developed to be more diverse than before.

We divided *Spreading the Written Word: Mikael Agricola and the Birth of Literary Finnish* into six chapters. The first chapter outlines the historical background necessary to understand the life's work of Mikael Agricola and its importance. The second chapter describes Agricola's life in chronological order. Chapter three presents the Finnish works published by Agricola

and their most important non-Finnish exemplars. The fourth and most extensive chapter is a depiction of Agricola's Finnish: we divided it into sections according to linguistic level, starting with an examination of his orthographic system and its relation to phonetics, then describing nominal and verbal inflection, syntax, vocabulary and word formation. Agricola carried out his life's work as part of a Finnish and non-Finnish network of influential connections, which is described in chapter five. The sixth and final chapter examines the importance of Agricola's work, research on Agricola and his life's work and Agricola's role in contemporary Finnish culture.

Our book is not a translation of a previously published work in Finnish. We wrote it specifically with an international audience in mind. There has indeed been a depiction of Mikael Agricola, his literary work and his Finnish in published studies, but a majority of them has been released only in Finnish. Therefore, reading them requires prior knowledge on both Finnish history and culture, in addition to Finnish language skills. We provided background information on both history and language so that it will be possible for the international reader to understand the core content of the book. However, it is not possible to introduce analyses in great detail in a non-academic book. Nevertheless, the bibliography can provide the reader with the possibility to find further information.

Chapter four on the language in Agricola also introduces the main features of the structure of contemporary Finnish. This way, it will be possible to concretely highlight the differences between Agricola and contemporary Finnish. As a compliment to this, we provided paradigm tables of nominal and verbal inflection at the end of the book. There is also a list of historical figures at the end of the book, whose names in Finnish literature are found in different forms than those in international contexts. It is customary in Finnish to use Fennicised personal names adapted for historical persons, which is why it can be difficult to recognise a figure in Finnish literature on the basis of his or her internationally known name. Furthermore, as there is a bilingual tradition of place names in past and present Finland, we also provided a short guide to explain their use and nature.

Not all Finnish inflected words on their own can or could be translated without context. In this case, we used glosses in chapter four to clarify the morphological content of those words, striving to keep them as clear and simple as possible. On the other hand, we occasionally used glosses with a regular translation for clarification or to show a comparison. We provided a list of glossing abbreviations along with other symbols on pages 11 and 12 to help the reader become familiar with the nature of Finnish words.

Because Agricola's Finnish-language works are liturgical books, many of the linguistic samples in chapter four are from the Bible. The Bible in English and its many versions are conveniently and readily available online. We found the easiest portal to navigate through to be *www.biblegateway.com*. The website can display the different versions of a biblical line in a list, easily comparing them to each other on one page. Our goal was to select the linguistically closest English equivalent to the passage taken from Agricola. Thus, multiple Bibles were used for these samples. Passages not from the books of the Bible – a biblical gloss or an excerpt from a poem, for

example – have been provided in English with their source by the translator of our book. Unless otherwise noted, the author provided all other samples or selected individual words or phrases from Agricola and the translator provided their English equivalents.

We would like to praise the book *Mikael Agricola: Suomen uskonpuhdistaja* (1985) by Viljo and Kari Tarkiainen and the biography *Mikael Agricola: Elämä ja teokset* (2007) by Simo Heininen as particularly noteworthy sources in the sphere of previous studies on Agricola. Moreover, Viljo Tarkiainen's and Simo Heininen's research have provided an excellent foundation to this general overview. We also wish to highlight the work of those scholars who are no longer with us and who provided multiple works on Agricola's Finnish: Heikki Ojansuu, Martti Rapola, Osmo Nikkilä and Silva Kiuru. Others who have carried out research on Agricola can be found in chapter six. We provided the bibliography with English translations of all the Finnish works noted in this book to help the reader get acquainted with these studies.

Finland observed the anniversary of the 450th year of Agricola's death in 2007 as a national commemorative year. There were various projects under way for the anniversary year, including a variety of new studies and multidisciplinary research co-operation as well as a great deal of books and articles on Agricola and his life's work. There has continually been active research even after 2007, and as the bibliography shows, we used new information produced by these studies in the creation of our book.

This overview of Mikael Agricola's life's work and the beginning stages of literary Finnish is especially geared towards researchers and students. It provides information required on the development of Finnish language and literary culture and the features that have influenced them upon the meeting of the Middle Ages and the modern era. The book mainly focuses on language, history and cultural history, but in terms of theology and Church history, it also provides an excellent review on the progression and arrival of the Reformation and Lutheranism to Finland. It was written with a broad audience in mind, as a work of non-fiction for anyone interested in these subjects.

The author of the book is Professor Kaisa Häkkinen, PhD, a Finnish language researcher of the University of Turku whose areas of expertise are the history of Finnish and the Finno-Ugric languages, etymology and old literary Finnish. She has written many scholarly and non-academic books and articles, as well as participated in various projects on Mikael Agricola. The translator is Leonard Pearl, MA, a linguist specialised in Finnish and who has previously translated a book on Finnish onomastics into English. We would like to thank the Varsinais-Suomi Regional Fund of the Finnish Cultural Foundation for funding the translation of our book, as well as our publisher, the Finnish Literature Society, for committing to support the project.

Kaisa Häkkinen and Leonard Pearl
Turku
May 2015

The arrival of the Reformation was the decisive impetus for literary development in Finland. The principle of Lutheranism was that the people had to get to hear and read the word of God in their own mother tongue. If there previously was no literary language, it had to be created.

The first Finnish books were produced by Mikael Agricola. He was born an ordinary son of a farmer, but his dedication to his studies opened up the road to leading roles in the Finnish Church. He was able to bring a total of nine works in Finnish to print, which became the foundation of literary Finnish.

This book describes the historical background of Mikael Agricola, his life, his personal networks, the Finnish works published by Agricola, research on Agricola and Agricola's role in contemporary Finnish culture. The most extensive chapter is a depiction of Agricola's Finnish. The book was written with a broad audience in mind, as a work of non-fiction for anyone interested in these subjects.



STUDIA FENNICA
LINGUISTICA 19
ISBN 978-952-222-674-7
88.2
www.finlit.fi/kirjat