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# Christian Education in the Thought of Johann Michael Reu

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One of the great educational classics of early twentieth-century American Lutheranism was Johann Michael Reu's *Catechetics, or Theory and Practice of Religious Instruction*. By the time it appeared in its third edition in 1931 it was a 658-page manual on the history, theory, and practice of education in the Lutheran church. Reu's *Catechetics* was the first and is still the only work by an American Lutheran author which attempts to survey the whole field of sacred and secular educational theory and practice and then seeks to combine these different perspectives into a systematic, scholarly whole. First making its appearance in German in 1915, it went through three editions over the subsequent twenty-five years and was a staple in Lutheran seminaries and teacher-training institutions for two generations. Yet today this book is virtually unknown to all but a handful of historians in Lutheran circles and beyond.

One of the reasons usually put forward as to why Reu's *Catechetics* has not been reprinted and is not studied widely today is that the author depends too heavily on the discredited educational psychology of Johann Friederich Herbart (1776-1841), which was extremely influential especially in the United States at the time Reu did his initial research for this book. This observation has led American Lutheran scholars to ask a further question that is even more important: To what extent does Reu demonstrate an indebtedness to Herbartian psychology and philosophy in constructing his own educational system? Until now, no research has been undertaken to document the citations of Herbart in Reu's literary corpus or analyze Reu's use of Herbartian terminology. Hanging in the balance is Reu's reputation as an innovative thinker concerned with the "progress" (*Fortschritt*) of ideas over time, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, for the good of the church through seminal dialogue and synthesis with the ideational constructs of the secular world of the day.

This study will attempt, then, the first systematic evaluation of Reu as a Herbartian educator. All actual references to Herbart and elaborations of key Herbartian concepts to be found in Reu's educational writings will be examined, including his references to Herbartian ideas in the *Catechetics*, to see whether Reu understood

and used key Herbartian ideas as these were commonly understood in the ideational world of educators in both Germany and the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

### I. Reu's Understanding and Use of Herbartianism

By his own admission Reu took his educational bearings from the Herbartian school of educational psychology—maintaining this position for a quarter-century after the Herbartian movement spent its brief but brilliant ascendancy in American educational circles. Especially prominent in Reu's understanding of the educational task is the theoretical base he found in Herbart with its emphasis on arousing the pupil's interest in new material by relating it to what he already knows, and the place which ideas or "concepts" have in forming the whole content of the mind and, thus, of education.<sup>1</sup> This section will chronicle all discernable references in Reu's writings to Herbart and his school to attempt to determine Reu's understanding and use of Herbartian psychology in educational praxis.

The name of Herbart seldom appears in Reu's educational literature, although he does refer often to a number of principles such as the "law of concentration" or some similar expression, which can be attributed as an indirect reference to Herbartian psychology. Reu does give a general overview of what he understands the key pedagogical elements of Herbartian doctrine to be, among which intuition and the practical moral life occupy first place:

Sponsored by the psychology and pedagogy of Herbart, as developed especially by Ziller . . . , the thought gradually gained ascendancy that the way from the "concept" to the "conception" . . . is through the intuition, and that therefore a fundamental principle of a correct catechetical method must be first to feed the intuitive faculty of the child, and thus to enable him to make progress by independent thinking and judgment. Another factor making for a change in the method of instruction was the increasingly advocated fundamental idea of religious psychology that specifically religious conceptions can exert vitalizing power upon mind and soul only as there is a beholding—an intuition—of the

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religious and moral life, of which such conceptions are the expression.<sup>2</sup>

One of Reu's most important educational writings does include some statements which indicate his evaluation of some of the specific elements of Herbart's pedagogical framework. This article, which Reu entitled "Grundsätze zur Herstellung von Sonntags-Schul-Literatur" (Principles for the Production of Sunday School Literature), was commissioned by the Sunday School Committee of the Iowa Synod as a study paper preliminary to the preparation of Reu's *Wartburg Lesson Helps*. It is the longest as well as the most sophisticated journal article Reu ever wrote concerning his philosophy of education.

In this article, Reu clearly elaborates his position vis-a-vis such Herbartian ideas as the culture-epoch theory and the theory of formal steps. He discusses the attempts of Ziller, Rein, and of the school of the Young Herbartians in general to do away with the format of three concentric circles in the religious curriculum. In the older method of concentric circles (one which Reu himself favored), the pupils and the biblical stories which they were to learn were divided into three levels of instruction. The most easily understood stories and the smallest number of them were assigned to the lowest level; these stories were repeated for students at the middle level; and instruction in the original number of stories was deepened and all the additional new stories in the lesson book were added to form the curriculum of the highest level. This method of organizing the curriculum was replaced by the Young Herbartians with a succession of culture-epochs, notes Reu. He defines the culture-epoch theory in this manner:

According to this theory, one wants to let the children inwardly live through the development of the human race from the stage of naive heathenism to the patriarchal religion, and from there all the way to the stage of evangelical-reformatted faith-life. . . .<sup>3</sup>

In a way typical of how the Herbartians applied the culture-epoch theory to religious instruction, they specified in an example cited by Reu that fairy tales and some narrative account like *Robinson Crusoe*

be used in the first two or three years and that accounts of Moses and the judges of Israel be introduced in the fourth year, followed in the fifth year by the history of the kings of Israel. In the sixth and seventh years pupils under the Herbartian curriculum plan were to study first the life of Christ and then the Book of Acts as well as selections from some of the New Testament epistles. The eighth year was to be reserved for presenting the history of the Reformation and the Lutheran catechism.<sup>4</sup> After acknowledging the validity of the Herbartian fear of killing pupil interest should the method of concentric circles be used to arrange the curriculum, Reu goes on to say which parts of the notion of culture-epochs he rejects and which he accepts:

Nevertheless the curriculum proposed to take its place, the curriculum according to the stages of cultural history, is for us simply not acceptable. Decisive against it is the fact that its basic idea, which takes no account of baptism, introduces the children to biblical materials only in the third or even the fourth school year, and it makes them acquainted with the life of Jesus only during the fifth and sixth school year. For us this idea needs no discussion; a one-time running through the biblical historical materials can by no means produce that familiarity with them with which the young people should be equipped as they go forth into life, for the otherwise, of course, valuable and always to be fostered "immanent repetition" is not sufficient for this end. It is well worthy of note that here, instead of singling out an individual story now here, now there, the attempt is made to present the Bible stories in large groupings, which is an indispensable condition for the very important familiarization with the history of the individual biblical characters and therewith the awakening of a many-sided interest. . . . A curriculum which accordingly includes both of these advantages and avoids the defects as much as possible must be the most pertinent one.<sup>5</sup>

Reu thus commends the culture-epoch theory for the way it arranges the Bible stories according to large groups of related stories, but distances himself from the theory's underlying assumption of a

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gradual development of the human religious consciousness paralleled by various beliefs over time which can be ranked as more or less correct according to the stage of their historical development. In fact, in this same article Reu argues for the practical utilization of the method of grouping the narrative historical accounts in Scripture which characterizes the culture-epoch theory:

The materials of the biblical history dare not be taken from who knows how many periods of the course of the history of salvation [*heilsgeschichtlichen Verlaufs*], but should be presented in *large groupings*, in coherent, undismembered thought-masses taken from at most two or three periods, because only in this way can a deeper penetration into the material, a familiarity with the life of the individual biblical characters, and therewith the indispensable fostering of the various kinds of interest be achieved. . . . therefore precisely such entities can be located as the curriculum according to the stages of cultural history demands.<sup>6</sup>

In addition, Reu commends the kernel of truth implicit in the Herbartian use of fairy tales at the lowest level of religious instruction, believing as did the Herbartians that the biblical accounts themselves contained too many ideas foreign to the mental realm of children. Reu, however, wishes to see a substitution of simpler concepts in the biblical stories rather than the substitution of different kinds of stories, for to his way of thinking the material of the story is sacred.<sup>7</sup> These comments are the most extensive treatment which the Herbartian doctrine of culture-epochs receives in Reu's literary corpus.

Although Reu makes reference to Herbart throughout his educational writing, it is interesting to note that he apparently quotes Herbart only once. This single quotation is one sentence in an article published by Reu in 1914, unidentified either as to place or date in Herbart's works:

Oh, that we might learn to return to Luther's virtue of self-restriction and to his emphasis upon those ideas that are central of Christian life. Herbart says: "That is a teacher's greatest glory, to know how to attain great results with

simple means," and we add: That is the catechist's greatest glory, that he will not consent to be guided by anything else, but by the real necessities of Christian life.<sup>8</sup>

Although Reu recognizes the attempts of "the Herbart-Ziller school of pedagogy" to replace Luther's Small Catechism with a textbook of religious truths more in keeping with the modern scientific viewpoint, he takes note as well that some of the best-known Herbartians of their day rose to the defense of Luther's catechism as an effective pedagogic tool in the formation of definite, propositional religious concepts.<sup>9</sup>

What did Reu think of the doctrine of formal steps? He tips his hand in the *Catechetics* when he remarks about the five steps: "It must be conceded that these grades conform to the process of mental acquisition as it actually transpires; for here the faculties in operation are apperception (preparation and presentation) and abstraction (association and generalization). . . ." <sup>10</sup> While generally adhering to this division of the curriculum and to its attendant psychological assumptions concerning human nature, Reu still expresses reservations about adverse pedagogical effects which implementation of the five steps could or often does have on the all-important narrative structure of the lesson. In his opinion, the steps can have the effect of breaking up the narrative thread of the biblical story, thus severely curtailing its effect upon the emotions and the will.<sup>11</sup> The remark Reu makes in connection with his evaluation of the work of Swiss author Gottfried Fankhauser may be considered typical in this regard: "It is of course true: the fact that he follows the theory of 'formal steps' and continues to narrate and to repeat section by section causes Fankhauser to break up the material unduly, so that he is not able to influence the soul with the same power and permanence with which he otherwise aroused the emotions and awakened the interest."<sup>12</sup> Here, as in the case of the culture-epoch theory, Reu adopts the general commonsense theoretical outline of Herbartian teaching, but changes elements of its content to agree with his own philosophy of education. In the case of the formal steps Reu says he inclines much more toward the "portraying method" of organizing the curriculum of biblical history around vivid narrative description with many ties to the child's world of

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interests, rather than to the Herbartian paradigm. In a section in the *Catechetics* he remarks that the doctrine of formal steps was an expression by Herbart and his followers of one-sided attention to the "peculiarities of the child's soul life" which needed to be "reduced . . . to sane limits."<sup>13</sup> Reu makes it clear that he feels free either to take or to leave the doctrine of formal steps, depending on the kind of impact they have on the vividness of the narration of the story. He observes in this regard:

. . . I say that the chief emphasis lies on the oral presentation of the religious material by the leader of the school. In saying this we do not, however, make the concept "presentation" as narrow as it is taken, for example, by the school of the Young Herbartians, which makes the entire process of instruction five progressive steps ("Formalstufen-theorie"): (1.) preparation, (2.) presentation, (3.) knotting together, (4.) summarization, (5.) application. Rather, we understand here the vivid telling of the story in question, which under some circumstances may include all of these steps, but does not need to do so.<sup>14</sup>

Perhaps the commentary on the Herbartian formal division of curriculum most revealing of Reu's position is found in an article of 1913 published in the *Kirchliche Zeitschrift* where he records in specific terms how he would conduct a class session in biblical history. In the introduction Reu says:

Where a preparation for the whole thing proves desirable, it can take place, in which case at the same time a *loose* connection with the so-called "formal stages" also comes more to light. In the weekday school the separate "absorption" and "application" take the place of the conventional mechanical questioning, which is extremely inferior for spiritual development. The "presentation" takes place on one instructional day, but on the next, after the text of the appropriate story is gone through by the pupils, the "absorption" and "application" occur.<sup>15</sup>

Reu goes on to organize the lesson given in this article in precisely the manner which he describes in the introduction—a "preparation"



based on experiences already known to the children, followed by a presentation of the biblical history lesson and then "absorption" and finally "application." In a discussion, again, of how best to present a lesson on church history, Reu notes in a rather casual manner that, if time permits, "one may readily accommodate himself to the 'formal steps,' among which presentation and association require the greater amount of care."<sup>16</sup> All of these comments by Reu reveal that, although he does not feel constrained to follow the Herbartian paradigm of the five formal steps of instruction to the letter in either his theory or his practice of education, still he chooses to use it as a general pattern according to which the lesson can—and, one could even say, should—be constructed.

Other portions of the external trappings of Herbartian thought find a ready home with Reu. Again and again Reu talks about the childhood mental concepts being arranged in a "circle of ideas" which, in turn, has "points of contact" that can be reached through use of similar concepts which act as "aids to apperception."<sup>17</sup> The interest that is to be aroused in the soul of the child is always a "many-sided interest,"<sup>18</sup> and it is only this type of interest which has an abiding influence on the learner, Reu believes. Reu in his pedagogy separates this many-sided interest of the soul into components such as sympathetic interest, ethical interest, religious interest, and the like. In his textbook on preaching Reu elaborates his understanding of interest and its cultivation "in the sense of the Herbartian psychology and pedagogy."<sup>19</sup> The perception of new concepts by means of existing concepts in the mind Reu calls "the most significant fruit of the Herbart-Ziller school of pedagogics."<sup>20</sup> He refers to the "principle of perception" or "apperception" as though it were a necessary assumption in choosing and arranging a curriculum. For example, Reu maintains, in an article detailing the principles involved in constructing the curriculum of a Sunday school, that using vivid examples is sure to "stir up" the emotions and "thereby a many-sided interest" assuming that "the careful use of all aids to apperception present in the circle of ideas of the children is not lacking."<sup>21</sup> The Herbartian doctrine of perception also figures prominently in Reu's defense of the use of pictures and illustrations as part of instruction in biblical history:

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We know very well that the principle of contemplation [*Anschauung*] can receive its rightful due also without the use of pictures, for there is also a mental viewing [*Anschauung*] which is even more important than that of the senses; we know also that with a one-sided cultivation of the latter, the former will be shortchanged. . . . and therefore, no matter how much the intellectual viewing [*geistige Anschauung*] by means of plastic narration is to be emphasized, we consider it as self-understood that instructional materials must be accompanied by pictures and that the schools cannot afford to be without this auxiliary aid to understanding.<sup>22</sup>

Reu claims that, when the teacher gives attention to putting biographical elements into the narrative, children "enter into 'conceptual association' with them"; and he adds:

The so-called "immanent repetition" is to be practiced, by which one, when new ideas are introduced to the soul, latches onto the concepts already present in the mind of the child and thereby strengthens and deepens these, where one explains the new with the aid of the old and thus always lets the old recross the threshold of consciousness.<sup>23</sup>

He also maintains that no concept should be included in the narrative presentation of the biblical story which does not have a counterpart in the child's world of experience, because he needs to have a "means of apperception" in order to understand it.<sup>24</sup> Reu advises would-be preachers to become familiar with the "circle of sense-impressions" of the hearers so as to be able to lead them from the known to the unknown "by the method of apperception."<sup>25</sup> This same point is stated also in an essay of 1929 in which Reu asserts that, for religious instruction to be successful, the child must have sufficient knowledge to serve as "fulcrums of apperception" to aid his comprehension.<sup>26</sup> The Herbartian concepts of interest and threshold of consciousness appear in his elaboration of the aim of religious education.<sup>27</sup> And in his longest article on educational philosophy Reu espouses a doctrine of interest that is closely allied to Herbart's own.<sup>28</sup> Reu refers to "the principles of Herbart" in a passing reference in an article of 1901 on the history of the Sunday

school movement,<sup>29</sup> but this single reference, coupled with the ones noted above in his article of 1912, "Grundsätze zur Herstellung von Sonntags-Schul-Literatur," form the extent of the attention which Reu devotes to Herbart and Herbartianism in his articles on educational topics in the *Kirchliche Zeitschrift*.

Reu considered a consciousness of history as an immensely important prerequisite and concomitant to the educational task. He was greatly influenced by the historical approach which he understood Luther to have used, as well as that demonstrated in the writings of Johann Christian Konrad von Hofmann of Erlangen. However, Reu seems never to have discussed the pedagogical use of history in connection with any of his published assessments of Herbartianism.

## II. Reu and Herbart: Summary and Analysis

There are a number of important similarities and differences between elements of the hermeneutical paradigms of Herbart and of Reu which suggest themselves as a result of the preceding study. The purpose of this summary is, firstly, to present a brief synopsis of the respective positions of the two men. Simultaneously, an analysis of some of the more salient points of agreement or disagreement will be attempted.

It appears that Reu comes closer than Herbart to understanding the ontologically important entity of "concept" as an innate faculty or predicate of the human soul. Both men agree that most concepts which make up the store of knowledge of self and of the environment are produced by means of sense impressions received which are external to the soul, but Herbart maintains a much more exclusive understanding of the capacity of the soul, considered in itself, to generate or to reorganize concepts. Herbart holds that the concepts themselves form the entire basis of both the act of knowing and of what can be known, with the soul as mere potentiality for being prior to the reception of concepts. Reu, on the other hand, is able to speak of the powers of the soul as "invisible and independent" from both external stimuli and from concepts or their reception. Herbart also is more of an idealist than Reu is; he believes the various "presentations" of thoughts and objects external to the soul

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are only representations of objects which in their essential nature are unknowable, while Reu prefers to see the world more in terms of an Aristotelian direct perception of real objects by the senses. Both agree on a threefold division of their ontological categories: Herbart's schema of conception, feeling, and desire corresponds in more than outline to Reu's configuration of intellect, emotions, and will. Perhaps the most significant similarity in their common threefold division is the primacy which each accords the intellectual component, based on concepts, as being foundational to the rest.

Most of the epistemological assumptions used by Reu are so similar to those employed by Herbart that one would have a difficult time showing any independence in his thought in this category. Terms such as "apperception," "interest," "threshold of consciousness," and "circle of ideas," as well as the image of concepts rising and sinking into and out of consciousness, appear to be used by both men in the same way. Reu appears to hold a more Aristotelian view of the knowability of substance and matter than Herbart does, judging from their respective treatments of this topic. The extraordinary importance given to the idea of the concept in the theoretical thought of both causes each one to view the task of education as being a reconstruction of consciousness based on the input of correct concepts and the suppression or inhibition of incorrect ones. For both, concepts have an immutable and eternal nature, although Reu views the essentiality of eternity as predicated more upon the life of the entire personality than does Herbart. Reu goes much further than Herbart in his elaboration of the subcategories of the concept—for example, his division of the intellectual capacity of the soul into sensation, concept, and thinking.<sup>30</sup> Both thinkers, however, understand the reproduction of concepts from the unconscious reservoir of the mind in a similar—if not identical—way, by means of the doctrine of apperception. It is no exaggeration to assert that the Herbartian teaching concerning the apperception of new concepts by means of the aid of concepts already present in the mind is to Reu the very heart and soul of the Herbartian pedagogy—and the component of Herbart's thinking which he elevates to a controlling principle in his own educational theory.<sup>31</sup> The evidence suggests that both men view the process of apperception in the same way. If new concepts are to be correctly and easily apperceived, then it is

necessary that they be presented in as clear and as vivid a manner as possible and their connection with previously-learned concepts pointed out as clearly as possible to the learner. Both Herbart and Reu develop their doctrines of interest out of their respective understandings of assimilation and of its corollary, the law of concentration. And they both put a special emphasis on clarity and interconnectedness in the presentation of concepts and on the formation of apperceptive masses which exemplify "many-sidedness of interest."

A totally opposite understanding of ethics and ethical life characterizes the axiologies of Herbart and of Reu. Reu understands the motivation behind the outward act to be the prime factor involved, while Herbart wishes to train pupils to habituation in the good deeds, with the act itself being the standard of what it means to be ethical.<sup>32</sup> The sharp contrast between the two on this point is demonstrated by this passage from an address which Reu gave on Luther's Small Catechism:

It does not require the outward deed alone, but points to the inmost attitude of the heart from which the outward deed is to spring. It does not stop at the various manifestations of Christian life; but it demands a heart filled with fear and love as the only God-pleasing root of all. . . . If your people, young and old, are not impressed again and again with this truth that the person of a man must be good before his works can be pleasing to God, that all morality not growing forth from this one root, the fear and love of a good, that is, a regenerated and justified heart, is entirely worthless in God's sight, then in your teaching and preaching you do not follow Jesus nor Paul nor Luther; you are an exponent not of evangelical or Christian, but of medieval, Roman Catholic, natural and heathenish ethics.<sup>33</sup>

Morality and its cultivation are a fairly simple process to Herbart: if the right concepts have been presented and assimilated by the soul, proper morality will result. For Reu, on the other hand, the whole domain of morality in educational theory and practice is far more problematic. Reu agrees with Herbart that the soul must have a fund of basic intellectual concepts without which morality is impossible either to define or to achieve. But Reu's definition of

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morality in terms of the regenerated heart which motivates one's whole activity, not only in the commission of discrete acts but in the area of volition as well, is something unknown in Herbart's system of axiology. Reu repeatedly states that it is impossible for the religious educator to expect to succeed in achieving results (i.e., producing a genuinely moral consciousness and life) in every single one of his pupils, even if he has presented all his concepts clearly and has taken the apperceptive masses of his individual students into detailed account in his presentations. It is true that Herbart's ultimate goal in moral education is the production of the "good will" whose primary attributes are self-control and sympathetic regard for the sensibilities of others. For Reu, however, the moral end of self-control is subsumed under the rubric of saving faith in Jesus Christ, immersed in the concept of cultivation of the feelings of sympathy and active in the service of God and others in attitudes, words, and works which glorify God and serve the neighbor. Put in another way, Herbart's moral ideal stresses self-sufficiency and filling; Reu's stresses self-sacrifice and emptying. The Small Catechism of Luther, says Reu, "teaches this truth and thereby the nature of true morality so beautifully, impressively, and forcibly as you hardly can find it anywhere else in all human literature. . . ."34 For Herbart, on the other hand, catechism instruction and even instruction in biblical history are simply the highest stages of a process of religious development that also includes the writings of Plato in which everything teaches the same morality and ought to be studied by the pupil in a program of religious education.<sup>35</sup>

Both Herbart and Reu stress the educative benefit of narration, and both organize their ideal curriculum around the discipline of history as its chief component. In addition, both call for biography to be used as the premier way to teach history and morality to children. Very great differences emerge between the two, however, when the role of history in religious education is considered. While Herbart understands human morality to be in a state of progression, diversity, and change over time, with humankind as the determiner and shaper of religious truth, Reu decisively rejects the Herbartian notion of culture-epochs and sees religious truth as unitary, static, and revealed by God. As has been shown, however, Reu enthusiastically recommends Herbart's understanding of history as the

unfolding of conceptually unified masses of material, in which isolated events are tied together into a whole which (in both men's thinking) contains more meaning and significance than the sum of its individual parts. The striving for organic connection among isolated facts is a priority in Reu's educational as well as in his theological thinking. The idea of *Heilsgeschichte* as the organic unfolding of history constituting not only the way in which religious history should be conceived, but also the paradigm for interpreting universal history, bears many points of similarity to Herbart's hypothesized unitary historical world view which Reu so highly favors.

Was Reu a Herbartian? One finds in Reu's writings, to be sure, an Americanized version of Herbart's doctrine of concepts and its corollary of the apperceptive mass being the philosophical and psychological foundation upon which education should be built. Reu used the Herbartian teachings of apperception of concepts and of five formal steps in constructing his own educational psychology, but without the heavily metaphysical trappings which are associated with these ideas in Herbart's own works. The historical record, when examined, demonstrates that here again Reu was an original thinker who used some of the key ideas of the schools of thought which he had studied, but for his own ends and in combination with other ideas in ways which were totally his own. It is the conclusion of this study that, although Reu was influenced by Herbartian psychology, he remained historically Lutheran in his ideational tack when understanding and defining the educational task of the Christian church.

### Endnotes

1. Reu observes: "Whatever fault one may find with the school of Herbart and Ziller, and the modern religious philosophy, it must be clear . . . that the principle: 'from the intuition of the religious-moral life to the religious-moral conception' has to be a dominant and indispensable rule of the catechetical method." J. M. Reu, *Catechetics, or Theory and Practise of Religious Instruction*, third ed. (Chicago: Wartburg Publishing House, 1931), p. 521.

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2. Reu, *Catechetics*, p. 520.
  3. J. M. Reu, "Grundsätze zur Herstellung von Sonntags-Schul-Literatur," *Kirchliche Zeitschrift*, 35 (April-May 1911), p. 171.
  4. See Reu, *Catechetics*, pp. 409-410, where Reu specifically identifies this program of studies with "Ziller and his followers"; see also his comments on pp. 291-293 about Ziller and the neo-Herbertians as the ones responsible for proposing this restriction of biblical history to only certain grades. The notion of such an arrangement and content of the curriculum of religious instruction is also implausible to Reu because it ignores baptism as a living force in the lives of children which is at work at even the most elementary levels of instruction. Reu provides reasons why it could be dangerous to use fairy tales for purposes of religious instruction in *Catechetics*, p. 292.
  5. Reu, "Grundsätze zur Herstellung," pp. 173-174. Later on in this same article Reu also speaks of "the absurdity of the theory of cultural stages." *Ibid.*, p. 175.
  6. *Ibid.*, pp. 177-178. Reu recommends Ernst Linde's work in the area of the "portraying method" of organizing the religious educational curriculum around the concrete reality of the biblical stories themselves, "in contrast to the developmental procedure followed by the Young Herbertians." *Ibid.*, p. 205.
  7. Reu goes on to make the point that ". . . no matter how much we emphasize that the truths for faith and life which are contained in the individual stories must be pointed out and many-sided interests aroused in the child, we know also that the story has its own reality; yes, it serves us as a means of education precisely because it is a link in the chain of the events which happened for our salvation; we would not even use them as a means for education if it were to be only the garment in which ethical thoughts are clothed; then it would be better if we used fairy tales or stories from the present." *Ibid.*, pp. 204-205. See also p. 182 of this same article for Reu's elaboration on the same theme.
  8. J. M. Reu, "The Significance of Luther's Small Catechism," *Lutheran Church Review*, 33 (April 1914), p. 323.
  9. J. M. Reu, *Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism: A History of*



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*Its Origin, Its Distribution, and Its Use: A Jubilee Offering, with Eighteen Plates* (Chicago: Wartburg Publishing House, 1929), pp. 270-271, 288, 345-346, 350, 358-359.

10.     Reu, *Catechetics*, p. 449.
11.     Involved is Reu's criticism of two books of stories written by Otto Zuck, *Der gesamte Religionsunterricht auf der Unterstufe* (Dresden 1897), and *Der Religionsunterricht auf der Mittelstufe*. See Reu, "Grundsätze zur Herstellung," p. 209.
12.     Reu, "Grundsätze zur Herstellung," p. 212.
13.     Reu, *Catechetics*, p. 151. He observes also that the constant and often artificial application of the formal step of association by Herbartians has "largely occasioned the discrediting of the formal-step theory." *Ibid.*, p. 484.
14.     Reu, "Grundsätze zur Herstellung," p. 199. Reu notes elsewhere that the step of preparation may be left out of the biblical history lesson if there is a lack of time, without serious damage to the learners. Reu, *Catechetics*, p. 492.
15.     J. M. Reu, "Aus dem biblischen Geschichtsunterricht," *Kirchliche Zeitschrift*, 37 (July 1913), p. 330. It is interesting to note that as late as 1929 Reu recommends that catechism instruction proceed according to Eger's four-step plan: development, comparison, evaluation, and application; *Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism*, pp. 391-392. And in the third edition of his *Catechetics* (1931) Reu promotes a catechetical method consisting of presentation, penetration, application, and drilling, as well as a three-step method of presentation, penetration, and application advocated by F. W. Doerpfeld; *Catechetics*, pp. 439-448.
16.     Reu, *Catechetics*, p. 537.
17.     Reu, "Grundsätze zur Herstellung," p. 205. See also p. 185, where Reu says that it is the nature of children to jump "from one circle of ideas to another."
18.     For example, see Reu, "Grundsätze zur Herstellung," pp. 169-170, 204, 215.
19.     J. M. Reu, *Homiletics: A Manual of the Theory and Practice of Preaching*, trans. Albert Steinhäuser, fourth ed. (Chicago: Wartburg Publishing House, 1934), p. 124.

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20. Reu, *Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism*, p. 346.
  21. Reu, "Grundsätze zur Herstellung," p. 209. Earlier in this same monograph Reu cautions his readers: ". . . don't forget the aids to apperception, the points of contact which are present in the circle of ideas of the child." *Ibid.*, p. 205.
  22. *Ibid.*, pp. 190-191. He even states that "the internal intuition is enhanced and prolonged when the external intuition is facilitated by a really good picture." Reu, *Catechetics*, p. 494. Reu also frequently recommends that the teacher use maps to enhance understanding of the narrative. J. M. Reu, *How to Teach in the Sunday School: A Teacher Training Course* (Columbus: Lutheran Book Concern, 1939), p. 75.
  23. Reu, "Grundsätze zur Herstellung," p. 188. In his profile of religious instruction in the ancient church, Reu remarks that Chrysostom's pattern of presentation of the biblical story is "in the form of free and embellished narration that takes the circle of concepts familiar to the children into consideration. . . ." J. M. Reu, "Die alte Kirche und der kirchliche Jugendunterricht," *Kirchliche Zeitschrift*, p. 37 (April 1913), p. 214.
  24. Reu, "Grundsätze zur Herstellung," p. 182.
  25. Reu, *Homiletics*, p. 136. Apperception is also cited on p. 392 of this volume as one of four pedagogic principles which Reu considers important in sermon construction. He refers to "the law of apperception" in *How to Teach in the Sunday School*, p. 383.
  26. J. M. Reu, "The Origin and the Significance of Luther's Catechisms," in *The Second Lutheran World Convention: The Minutes, Addresses, and Discussions of the Convention at Copenhagen, Denmark, June 26th to July 4th, 1929* (Philadelphia: United Lutheran Publication House, 1930), p. 37. See in addition Reu, *How to Teach in the Sunday School*, p. 216, where he uses the term "fulcrums of the apperceptive faculty," and Reu, *Catechetics*, p. 422. Reu appears to use the term "the principle of association" with much the same meaning in *Catechetics*, p. 385.
  27. J. M. Reu, "Revealing the Heart of God: The Final Aim of Our Religious Instruction," *Lutheran Herald*, 8 February 1930, p. 52.

Other references to a "threshold of consciousness" in Reu are found in *Catechetics*, pp. 278, 279-280.

28. "The newer pedagogy has become more and more agreed that the ultimate purpose of all instruction is by no means the transmission of the accomplishments of the present culture to the growing new generation, but the arousal of a many-sided 'interest' of the soul. However, 'interest' is a personal participation of the soul in the subject which is treated in the instruction, an inner exchange of communication of the pupil with the instructional material, an intellectual association with it, an intellectual being in between (*inter-esse*), an inner immersion in it, so that the soul learns to love this material, becomes at home in it, and prefers it to other materials. Such an interest cannot be achieved nor become permanent without positive knowledge; for this reason instruction must always be given in such a way that together with it there is connected the appropriation of a certain knowledge-material, which will vary in amount according to circumstances. This is not, however, the ultimate purpose of instruction, let alone the only one. The chief thing is and remains that the soul of the pupil is stimulated, so that he becomes interested in what he is learning, so that he loves it. Of individual items of knowledge he may in the future lose and forget some; once this exchange of communication between the soul and the material has taken place, he will not only find his way about in it again and again, but the material also possesses enough attraction for him that he will sometime later return to it and become more and more at home in it. This 'interest' must be a many-sided one." Reu, "Grundsätze zur Herstellung," p. 169.
29. J. M. Reu, "Die Sonntagsschule," *Kirchliche Zeitschrift*, 25 (Number 1, 1901), p. 29.
30. Reu's three levels or forms of logical thinking (i.e., conception, judgment, conclusion) appear to be analogous to Herbart's hypothesized three levels of concept complexity (i.e., clearness, distinctness, and judgment), although they are not identical because Herbart's description of "distinctness" is phrased in terms of the sense perceptions which make up an individual concept rather than in terms of relations between or among concepts.
31. "All learning is based upon apperception . . . for this reason all

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teaching of new truth, if it is to be correct methodically, is bound to take place in connection with such truth as is already found in the soul." Reu, *Catechetics*, p. 526.

32. Reu describes and criticizes Herbart's morality in this passage from his *Ethics*: "Still another, the well-known master of pedagogics Johann Friedrich Herbart (†1841), attempted a different solution. He proceeded from the thought that our emotions call forth an appreciation of the morally good even as they produce a taste for the beautiful. This appreciation and cognition of what we ought to do would then stimulate the will to action. To be sure, this might be possible if the will to do what is morally good already existed; however, whence this will?" J. M. Reu and Paul H. Buehring, *Christian Ethics* (Columbus: Lutheran Book Concern, 1935), pp. 30-31.
33. J. M. Reu, "Why Luther's Catechism Is So Dear to My Heart," pp. 17-19 (J. M. Reu Collection, Dubuque).
34. Reu, "Why Luther's Catechism Is So Dear to My Heart," p. 22. It is instructive to compare this passage with Reu's criticism of Basedow and his school for their humanism and moralism in religious instruction. See Reu, *Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism*, p. 228.
35. See J. F. Herbart, "Letter IV: To Herr von Steiger; Autumn, 1798," in *Letters and Lectures on Education*, trans. and ed. Henry M. Felkin and Emmie Felkin (Syracuse, New York: C. W. Bardeen and Company, 1898), pp. 83-84.