



UDC 821.511.111+821.113.6

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### LITERARY REMINISCENCES AND THE SYMBOLS OF MODERN FINLAND IN ISMO ALANKO'S POETRY\*

**For citation:** Soini H. Literary reminiscences and the symbols of modern Finland in Ismo Alanko's poetry. *Scandinavian Philology*, 2020, vol. 18, issue 2, pp. 356–371. <https://doi.org/10.21638/11701/spbu21.2020.210>

The article discusses the imagery system in the work of the modern Finnish poet Ismo Alanko. Literary and folklore traditions in his poetry are well researched. The poet has created a rather critical image of Finland as a Lutheran country full of national markers, but well-aware of its literature: “Martti Luther ja muovipussi” (Martin Luther and a plastic bag). Images of Finnish architecture, gray buildings in glass and metal, and a heavy gray northern sky connect Alanko's poetry to Russian culture, to the name of Isaak Levitan who negatively described Finland as a kingdom of gray. Alanko clearly knows about Levitan's words “Gray water and gray people, gray life”, but he gets into a debate with the artist, proving that gray has many shades of joy. One of the leaders of Finnish expressionism, Uno Kailas, associated the nature and people of Finland with gray. But Kailas' gray is clearly negative and lifeless. Alanko, on the other hand, distinguishes in gray all kinds of positive signs of life. His poems are characterized by the description of the lyrical hero's irrational states against the background of the fantastic landscapes of Lapland, creating mythological images not immediately amenable to interpretation. For example, in the image of Mooneye from the North (*kuusilmä pohjoisesta*), there is a motif of turning a girl into a fish, typical for Finnish and Karelian epic songs, also familiar to us from Kalevala and Eino Leino's poetry. Alanko comprehends serious worldview problems with poetic elegance, with the power of poetic word removing the contradiction between religious and common, rational, and irrational. Alanko revives Kalevala meter not in a “museum” form, but with modern accents and in his native Finnish language.

**Keywords:** rock poetry, reminiscences, Kalevala meter, the revival of neo-romantic imagery, sentimentality, topicality.

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\* The study was carried out under state order of Karelian Research Centre RAS 2018–2020.

It has long been accepted in Finland to sing poems. Kalevala and Kanteletar are known to have been used as songbooks for students in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Paul Zumthor in his famous *Introduction à la Poésie Oral (Oral poetry. An introduction)* confirms this: “An ancient poetic text accompanied by musical notation” [Zumthor, 1983, p.60]. The tradition of reciting and performing poems is still preserved today. Musical poetry (verbal music) is taken as seriously as literary poetry. At one time or another, poets singing their poems became more popular than authors who only publish them. A striking feature of modern Finnish poetry is the combination of a poet who publishes and a poet who sings. “We must listen to poetry more than read it, otherwise we lose a significant part of its beauty,” writes Finnish researcher Satu Grünthal, referring to Amy Lowell [Grünthal, 2010, p. 19]. Perhaps this explains the interest of Finnish audiences of different generations in rock poetry. Many Finnish rock poets prefer to write and sing in English or Swedish. They often justify their decision by the irrelevance of Finnish lyrics in the sound of rock. To them, the language sounds too soft and homey, not aggressive enough to create violent imagery so often found in Finnish rock poetry. Finnish singer-songwriter Ismo Alanko would not agree with this statement.

Born in Helsinki in 1960, Ismo Alanko grew up in Joensuu, Finnish Northern Karelia. He liked to listen to poems read aloud by his mother, a professional spoken word artist. In Finland, the spoken word is a very popular genre. Since 1979 Alanko has been involved in various musical, visual and literary projects. He released many successful albums and is the author of two books, *Rakkaus on ruma sana (Love is an ugly word;)* [Alanko, 2004] and *Sanat (Words)* [Alanko, 2011]. In 2003 Alanko won the Juha Vainio Writer’s Award (*Juha Vainio-sanoittajapalkinto*) for his lyrics.

Alanko’s multifaceted lyrics evolve as the poet ages. His early works were characterized by reflections on love and the fate of a rocker character and his experiences. The poet was not alien to urban themes either, creating a rather critical image of Finland. Clearly, sharply and shockingly he portrays the country in his 1990 poem “Kun Suomi putos puusta” (When Finland fell from a tree), using literary reminiscences and finding the symbols of modern Finland.

“The peatland, the hoe — and Jussi, / Martin Luther and a plastic bag...” that is the way Alanko sees Finland in 1990. Before us is a con-

cise image of an agrarian, Lutheran country full of cultural markers, but well-aware of its literature. “The peatland, the hoe — and Jussi” are the words from the opening line of the famous novel *Under the North Star* by Väinö Linna, “In the beginning, there was the peatland, the hoe — and Jussi”. Completed in 1962, the novel covers half a century of Finnish history; however, its action takes place in the 1880s, and the images of the marsh and hoe as markers of Finland adhere to those distant times. But Alanko sees them in his modern country and describes Finland with a phrase from the literary work familiar to every Finn. However, the poet drops the adverb “in the beginning”, depriving Lynn’s phrase of its “biblical” form, and combines the name of Martin Luther with the name of a shopping bag in one line:

Suo, kuokka ja jussi	The peatland, the hoe and Jussi.
Martti Luther ja muovipussi	Martin Luther and a plastic bag.
Saksa ja Ruotsi ja Venäjä huokas kuin	Germany, Sweden and Russia, will
yhdestä suusta	merge into one mouth
kun Suomi putos puusta	When Finland fell from a tree

[Alanko, 2011, p. 196–197].

Alanko is prone to sentimentality. The traditional look of contemporary Finnish architecture, gray buildings constructed in glass and metal, and a heavy gray northern sky — all this is reflected in the poem “Harmaa on hyvä väri” (Gray is a good color). “Love for dark gray is not a sign of illness,” writes the poet, “Because gray is a good color”.

<p>Harmaalokki lentää yllä harmaan kaupungin          harmaa taivas huokuu turvaa talvipäivän          pehmeuteen          harmaapartainen mies astuu          ryhdikkäänä Merihakaan          jonka silhuetti sulaa lohdulliseen          harmaaseen          [Alanko, 2013].</p>	<p>A gray gull flies over the gray city          The gray sky radiates serenity on a soft          winter day          A gray-bearded man strides towards the          sea          His silhouette disappears in calming          gray</p>
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Alanko plunges the reader into the winter twilight, finding calm, serenity and beauty in everything. He “paints” Helsinki, the Finnish capital, gray: Helsinki on harmaa, kaikki tunnustavat sen (Helsinki is gray, everyone admits it).

Here one can notice Alanko's quite artistic sensibility and find several reminiscences, one of which is on Russian culture, associated with the name of Isaak Ilyich Levitan. The artist's encounter with the nature of Finland was so unsuccessful that it left him terrified. And thanks to Levitan, a stereotypical image of Finland as a kingdom of gray has been ingrained in the minds of many: "gray water and gray people, gray life ...you don't need anything!" [Levitan, 1956, p.61]. A terrible impression was made on Levitan not so much by the color itself, abundant in Finland, but by the glacier-smoothed rocks. In the artist's hypersensitive soul, they caused a morbid fear of eternity as well as an awareness of the futility of human existence and the pointlessness of everything. "An eternity, a formidable eternity where generations have drowned and more will... What terror, what fear!" [Levitan, 1956, p. 61].

Isaac Levitan's words about the country being gray are no less known in Finland than his paintings. Alanko, obviously aware of Levitan's reasoning, enters into a debate with the artist, arguing:

Mutta kuinka moni näkee kaikki sävyt harmauden Tai keltaista, vihreää, syvänpunaista [Alanko, 2013].	But how many shades of gray can you see: Yellow, green, dark red
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As a result, the truth remains on Alanko's side. Perhaps Levitan himself would agree with the poet who gives people hope and encouragement. Of course, Finnish poets wrote about the color gray even before Alanko. For example, one of the leaders of Finnish expressionism, Uno Kailas, in his poem "Autio maa" (Desert land) associated the nature and people of Finland with color gray:

Sieluni maa on... Harmaata hiekkaa, Hiekka ja harmaita paasia [Kailas, 1966, p. 140].	The land of my soul... Gray sand, Sand and gray rocks.
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But Kailas' gray is clearly negative and lifeless. Alanko, on the other hand, distinguishes in gray all sorts of shades and a healthy start. Kailas connects his mother's hands and his face to gray:

Olin nuori. Ja kasvoin <i>harmajin</i> ... (Olin nuori) [Kailas, 1966, s. 47].	I was young. And I rose with a <i>gray</i> ... (I was young)
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To him, northern people in general seem to appear exclusively as “harmaa kansa”, “harmaa suku” (gray folk) “Synnyinseutu” (Native land):

Kailas praises the land of *gray* people and calls it holy because mother’s ashes lie there:

<p>Ah, sinne, sinne kätkeyt luut äitini on armaan. Siks ain’ on pyhää maata nyt se seutu kansan harmaan. Mä siunaan sen, mä siunaan sen... [Kailas, 1933, p. 140–141].</p>	<p>Ah, it’s where my dear mother’s bones are hidden, And therefore this land will be holy at all times, This land of <i>gray</i> people. I bless it, bless it...</p>
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Kailas associates the image of his homeland with gray, but he does not see any cheerful shades in the color itself. On the contrary, despite the gray color, in Kailas’ perception, Finnish people have a golden soul, but the woman rocking a child in her “anxious gray arms” (*huolen harmailla käsillä*) has “polar blue eyes” (*silmin jäämeren-sinisin*) (“Lapin-laulu” [The Lappi-song]) [Kailas, 1966, p. 214–215]. Kailas’ gray is in opposition to gold, blue and red. There is a parallel with 20<sup>th</sup> century Karelian poetry. According to N. V. Chikina’s observation, Vladimir Brendojev, the author of books in the Livvi dialect of the Karelian language, associates gray with negativity. For example, in the poem “Каменотёс” (Stonecutter), notes the researcher, “Brendojev does not recommend the weaver to use gray, as it is associated with negativity; there can be enough gray in life already... V. Brendojev emphasizes with gray the burden of human labor” [Chikina, 2017, p. 202].

Tukat harmuat kivenpölys,  
Harmuat pölys sovot...

Hair gray with stone dust,  
Dusty gray clothes...

The peculiarities of summer in Karelia are also described with gray in the poem “Myöhästynnyh keza” (Late summer):

On harmai ku sygyzyl taivas,  
A joves on d’iähiine vezi  
[Chikina, 2017, p. 202].

It is gray as the sky in autumn  
And the river water is icy.

Alanko’s gray is self-sufficient, containing different colors and their shades. This kind of poetic discovery by Alanko is a further sign of his poetry being paradoxical and innovative.

Ismo Alanko’s lyrics are exceptionally original and almost devoid of any outside influence. They are also patriotic. Each poem addresses

Finland or the nature of the North at least partly. And, of course, his poems are characterized by mythological images, description of character's irrational states and fantastic landscapes. The poet is transported to Lapland, describing the overflows of the cold rivers of the North, where the silver Mooneye swims:

Hän on kuusilmä pohjoisesta	Mooneye from the North,
Joko velho tai jumalatar	Either a sorceress or a goddess,
Tule mun luokseni, kun huhuilen	Come to me when I call.
Kuusilmä jostain on kuullut jo sen	Mooneye heard it before.
Ja taivaankannella tanssii valkoinen kyy	And a white viper is dancing on the
[Alanko, 2013].	vault of heaven.

The image of mooneye is so ambiguous that it is not interpreted immediately. Who or what did the poet mean by that? First of all, mooneye is a tiny silver fish. And if Alanko writes about it, then in his poem one can trace the motif of transformation into a fish for a girl who threw herself into the water — a motif typical for Finnish and Karelian epic songs. In the opinion of folklorists, “through the poetic layer here one can clearly see the most ancient mythological basis for the totemistic notions” [Krinichnaya, 1986, p. 89]. In runes 4 and 5 of Lönnrot's *Kalevala*, the salmon girl is known to be connected to the motif of Väinämöinen's unsuccessful matchmaking:

Lohi loimahti merehen <...> Olinpa minä tuleva kainaloiseksi kanaksi, ikuiseksi istujaksi, polviseksi puolisosksi... [Kalevala, 5: 85–86,109–113]	Sprang the salmon in the water <...> Therefore 'tis that I have sought thee, in thine arm like dove to nestle, By thy side to sit for ever, on thy knee, as consort sitting... (Transl. by W. F. Kirby) [Kalevala, 1923, I, p. 51]
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Neonila Krinichnaya writes, “The anthropomorphic essence of the fish maiden is marked mainly by her ability to speak, as well as possibly, though remaining unrealized functions: she goes out of the water to marry the fisherman who caught her” [Krinichnaya, 1986, p.90]. According to the researcher, the motif of marriage between a man and a zoomorphic character “proves that man is not isolated from the natural world”. In Eino Leino's novel *Ahven ja kultakalat* (*The Perch and the Goldfish*), the prince turns into a perch. And the character in Uno Kailas' poem “Verkossa” (In the net) called his fate a net, and associated

himself with a fish caught in the net, dreaming only of becoming the “salmon’s rival” swimming in the vast waters:

Olen verkon silmässä kala. En pääse pois  
 Ovat viiltävät säikeet jo syvällä lihassa mulla <...>  
 Vesiaavikot vapaat, en voi minä luoksenne tulla!<...>  
 Mikä autus ois lohen kilpaveikkona olla! [Kailas, 1966, p. 57].

I’m the fish in the net. I’m not getting out:  
 The rope’s threads are deep into my flesh<...>  
 Free open waters, I can’t get to you!<...>  
 What bliss would it be to become the salmon’s rival!

The Russian poet Velimir Khlebnikov also “dreams of a salmon girl”. In Khlebnikov’s 1915 poem “Midnight Estate...” an image of a salmon girl appears almost by chance, where the famous “strong faced” are mentioned: Genghis Khan, Zarathustra, Mozart and Goya. The protagonist calls them out of oblivion at night, meanwhile “bringing [the drowned women] back” from the rivers. The next day he dreams of a salmon girl:

Мне снилась девушка-лосось В волнах ночного водопада [Khlebnikov, 1987, p. 99].	I dreamed of a salmon girl In the waves of the night waterfall
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The image of a salmon girl goes back to Finnish and Karelian folklore, while the images of Khlebnikov’s mermaids and fish people are connected with the Russian fairytale tradition:

Я рыбою бьюся в их вершинах, Русалка нездешней воды <i>Zangezi</i> (1922) [Khlebnikov, 1987, p. 499].	I’m like a fish caught in their verses, A mermaid of the foreign waters.
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Звезды — невод, рыбы — мы «Годы, люди и народы» (1915) [Khlebnikov, 1987, p. 94].	The stars are the seine, the fish are us “Years, people and nations” (1915).
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In general, the motif of a man identifying with a fish is common for the peoples living by seashores and riverbanks [Krinichnaya, 2000, p. 341]. The fish maiden is one of the oldest archetypes often found in Finnish and Karelian epic songs.

*Kuusilmä* can also mean moonlight or mooneye. Although in this case there should be two words, the first one written with the letter *n*:

*kuun silmä*. A girl with shining eyes is sometimes called a mooneye in Karelian epics. In Alanko's case, it is either a sorceress or a goddess who must heed his call, "for there is a white viper dancing in heaven". The image of a celestial white snake is found in the cultures of different peoples. The characters in Alexis Kivi's *Seven Brothers* recall the legend of a celestial snake that invokes fear in people. In Chinese mythology, such a character controls the riches of the world.

Alanko only uses Finnish in his work. His lyrics are on the border between the existential immersion in oneself and the subtlest nuances of love for art, country and woman.

Alanko's poems sound relevant and innovative; they are close and clear to his Finnish contemporaries. He comprehends serious problems of worldviews with poetic elegance, with the power of poetic word removing the contradiction between religious and common, rational and irrational and spiritual and material:

Jos jumala on olemassa	If God exists,
Se lepää nyt mun vierelläni	Then he's lying next to me,
Naisen muodon ottaneena	Taking at that moment
Niin tässä hetkessä	The shapes of a woman.
[Alanko, 2015].	

The beauty and particular melodiousness of Finnish allow Alanko to masterfully play with sounds, mixing simple everyday words and turning lines into a whole metaphorical and harmonious picture:

Väritän värityskirjaa	The coloring book
Vedän viivan pisteestä toiseen	I'm pulling a line from point to point
Kokoan palapeliä josta puuttuu paloja	Assembling a puzzle without pieces.
[Alanko, 2011, s. 274–275].	

Alanko senses Finnish words subtly; his poetry is characterized by tone-painting and alliteration. The latter has traditionally been used by Finnish poets since the Kalevala runes. This is one of the main distinctions of poetry created in Finnish. And Alanko continues this tradition, which is especially evident in the poem "Värityskirjaa" (Coloring book): 'Vär-vär-ved-viiv', **Il-ilm-ilm** / muu-mur-muo'.

In "Värityskirjaa", the poem is born as a drawing, but it is a poetic drawing. You can see how the phrase is flowing, how the sounds are combined, how one syllable is flowing from another, how a poem is born. Alanko's poetic graphics have nothing to do with graphic exper-

iments or with the alternation of fonts. The verses can be sung and recited:

<p><b>Ilo ilman ilmoitusta</b>  <b>muuttaa murheen muotoa&lt;...&gt;</b>          Kunpa voisin tatuoida taivaan iholleni          [Alanko, 2011, s. 274–275].</p>	<p>Sadness followed          by unexpected joy &lt;...&gt;          Too bad I can't get a tattoo of the sky on          my skin.</p>
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In the 1990 poem “Taitelijaelämää”, the poet passionately describes his artistic life. The popular theme of drugs was raised in almost all the books and albums of the 1990s. Alanko’s creator is a drunkard or a drug addict trying to create through intoxication, or perhaps fighting off the abyss of the hedonistic joys that both help and destroy him.

Kolme grammaa hasista on päiväannoksein Amfetamiinia muutama viiva livahtaapi yksintein [Alanko, 2011, s. 242–243 ].	Three grams of hash is a daily dose I alone have done a few lines of amphetamine.
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Alanko places himself at the same level as famous Finnish and American poets. All of them, to varying degrees, were subject to harmful passions.

Artistic life — me, Melleri and Morrison  
 [Alanko, 2011, s. 242–243].

Here, references are made to Arto Melleri, a Finnish poet, and Jim Morrison, an American singer.

What are three grams of hashish for? Why search for artificial inspiration? The pithy answer that Alanko provides to his character seems to defeat the poet’s purpose. The purpose of his character is not so high: “Taiteilijaelämää — nimeni historian kirjoissa pian on” (Artistic life — my name in the history books). It is no longer necessary to save the world, to bring people joy and comfort with poems, and, finally, to fight for justice. No, just the name in the books although the characters of other modern Finnish poets have no higher goals.

Alanko compared himself to Eino Leino more than once, not only in a good but also in a bad sense, by saying Leino had a life like that, too:

Taiteilija elämää — niin kuin Eino, Pena sekä John [Alanko, 2011, s. 242–243].	Artistic life — like Eino, Pena and John.
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The first names of two Finnish poets, Eino Leino and Pentti Saarikoski, are mentioned here. Alanko intentionally does not mention their last names. It is assumed that the listeners or readers know who he is talking about. John Lennon is also mentioned. Despite this, the poem ends pessimistically enough. The life of the creator, who gave himself to the power of drugs and alcohol, quickly and tragically comes to an end. As a result:

Taiteilijaelämää

historian kellastuneet lehdet puista putoaa  
ja lumi peittää maan. [Alanko, 2011, s. 243].

(Artistic life

the yellow leaves of history fall from the trees  
and the snow covers the ground).

In Romanticism, as early as the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there was “an idea of death confirming the choice of doom for a poet, an artist and a musician” [Rahimova, 2001, p. 113]. In the aesthetics of Finnish neo-romanticism, creativity is a voluntary self-immolation, while the artist is a “tragically doomed seeker of truth”, which has been repeatedly pointed out by critics [Karhu, 1972, p. 184]. But the artist has always had an impersonal ideal. A poet, if he is a poet, “sings of happiness to others” not expecting gratitude in return. In Alanko’s “Taiteilijaelämää” the painter character is doomed, not by burning himself in the creative fire and certainly not by trying to make someone happy. The theme of a drug related death is interpreted with sarcasm and ridicule. This position is perceived by the reader as a message to society that is better than any moral pedagogical instructions and leads to positive results in the end.

In the 2015 poem “Aivokääpiö” (*Foolish*), after a break of twenty years, there once again appears an artist doomed to loneliness — an image familiar to us from neo-Romantic poetry with an individualistic character. In analyzing this work, we must turn to the Finnish historical and literary context. Alanko touches upon the “eternal” theme of the artist’s loneliness, continuing the tradition of neo-Romantic poets. The themes of the relationship between artist and society, art and life, lies and truth were particularly strong in their work. This is especially pronounced in Leino’s 1905 poem “Morituri”:

Me viihdymme, missä tähti viimeinen tuikkaa,  
raikuu ranta autio ja meripedot luikkaa

[Leino, 1962, p. 106].

We can only live where the last star shines,  
The desert shore rings, and the sea beasts scream.

The cross-cutting romantic theme of an artist's loneliness remained fundamental to Johannes Linnankoski, as well as to Volter Kilpi and L. Onerva. In *Small Catechism* Linnankoski demanded from the artist "loneliness, poverty <...> unhappy fate" [Linnankoski, III, p. 655]. However, along with the desire to rise above society, the neo-Romantics had a dream to merge with society.

Like many characters of neo-Romantic works, Alanko's character in the poem "Aivokääpiö" is lonely; he is above the people, he is a knight. However, his goal is not to distance himself from the world, but rather to save it. It is a song about loneliness and doom, about wanting to be needed by the world. He is prepared to fight for peace, but he does not see any reciprocity in humanity, or the world: "Here we are all powerless, no matter how much strength we have".

Olen yksinäinen ratsumies joka pelastaa tään maailman muttei maailma halua pelastuu, ei haluu eikä mullakaan voimat riitä vaikka niitä on niin paljon, paljon [Alanko, 2015].	I am a lonely knight That saves the world But the world does not want to be saved And I don't have enough strength Although there is so much, so much
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A reader familiar with Finnish literature will see in the poem an analogy with Eino Leino's "Auringon opetus" (Lessons from the sun). The sun teaches the poet that one only has to shine over the curses, misunderstanding and rejection:

Tee kuin minä, paista vaan, syttyvi sydänkin kylmin [Leino, 1931, II, p. 118].	Do as I do — just keep shining, And the coldest heart will light up.
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The poet is convinced that the singer's duty is to give himself to people. The singer is lonely, but at the same time striving for people, wanting to be understood by them.

Unlike L. Onerva's character, Alanko's character does not call his work saintly. On the contrary, the poet deliberately understates the language by writing about himself in a humiliating tone in the poem "Aivokääpiö" ("A foolish"):

Mä olen hölmö, pelle, aivokääpiö  
kaikkien aikojen idiootti  
[Alanko, 2015].

I'm stupid, a clown, a fool,  
An all-time idiot.

But even in that state, the people still need him. He can fix something, because “the taste of the world is poisonous”: “Maailman maku myrkyllinen” [Alanko, 2011, s. 162].

The desire to portray himself as a clown, fool and even idiot connects the work of Alanko with the tradition of Swedish poetry in Finland, reminding us of the great success of Bo Carpelan who shocked readers with his 1952 book *Minus sju* (*Minus Seven*). According to Thomas Warburton, “Carpelan’s penchant for parody and clowning greatly expanded his artistic range once he decided to use it.” [Warburton, 1984, p. 366]. Carpelan ironically described the political confrontations in society: “En gråter, en annan håller ett revolutionerande tal en tredje dresserar vita duvor där borta lagårdsknuten [Carpelan, 1952, p. 15] (One cries, another makes a revolutionary speech, the third breeds white doves around the corner of the barn). The poet “in the name of openness presents those who are “different” — children, the eccentric, the psychologically ill, authors and artists”, — writes Jan Hellgren [Hellgren, 2009, p. 200].

Alanko can be fully attributed to the words of the prominent Finnish-Swedish researcher who said, in regard to Carpelan, that the poet “alternates parodic inclusions with surrealistic combinations and unexpected sad reflections on the absurdity of reality” [Warburton, 1984, p. 366]. However, Carpelan did not dare to call himself an idiot. Alanko thinks a hero (“stupid, a clown, a fool, an all-time idiot”) is necessary for the people to be less afraid to live:

Supersankareita tarvitaan tiuhaan  
jotta kaikki voisi unohtaa ett’ pelottaa  
[Alanko, 2015].

Superheroes are often needed  
so that everyone can forget about fear

The character of Heli Slunga (the youngest contemporary of Alanko) is complaining as she cannot do anything by herself, especially as she is a woman. She can only “close her eyes” and “be absent”:

Taskussa pelkkä Parsinneula Jolla silmät Ommellaan umpeen... [Slunga, 2009].	I have in my pocket a darning needle To sew my eyes tightly...
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Alanko doesn't want to "sew his eyes", he is open to the world and to himself.

Alanko revives not only the images from neo-romantic poetry but also the Kalevala meter the poets used. Free verse liberated Finnish poets, but by abandoning it they stopped even thinking about working on the word. Musical poetry was the only genre where the form was given equal importance. And along with metrical freedom — which first led to the abandonment of poetic dimensions, then punctuation marks, and, ultimately, the word — in Finnish poetry, there was a desire to revive the poetic dimensions in one form or another. In Finnish criticism at various times, there was a desire that poets should not forget the rich heritage of epic poetry and use metrics.

John Fowles even believed that, poetry and traditional poetry, with "alliteration... assonance, rhyme" [Fowles, 1970, p.209] remains the source of truth and "more a nation's anima, its particular mystery, its adytum, than any other of the arts" [Fowles,1970, p.210].

Kai Laitinen, one of the prominent theorists of Finnish modernism, in the famous article "What's new in our poetry" wrote, "After free verse, Finnish poetry may find new forms of metric poetry, will return to the rhymed verse in its other varieties" [Laitinen, 1958, p.256]. This drew in the 1980s the attention of Eino Karhu, a Russian researcher of Finnish literature. Karhu himself linked the revival of metrics with the strengthening of the left movement and the changes of social atmosphere in Finland: "Among students and young people there was a need for socially active lyrics <...> The democratization of poetry and the changes in its social objectives have also affected metrics and poetics in general" [Karhu, 1984, p.288]. Paul Zumthor has similar thoughts, he connects certain forms of oral poetry with protest political actions [Zumthor, 1983, p.66].

The revival of metrics emerged in rock poetry, but the critics forgot to point out the main component: to revive the meter there needed to be poets with a sense of rhythm and words who mastered the technique of versification and knew the literature of their predecessors. The appearance of such writers is always rare. Alanko's trochaic tetrameter, Kalevala meter — of course, not in the pure "museum" form, but with a variety of caesurae and enjambments — sounded modern but was kept in his native language: *Ilo ilman ilmoitusta... Or: Suo, kuokka ja Jussi...*

Sarcasm and softness, humor and sadness, education and simplicity make him a diverse poet, demanded, needed, and loved by Finnish readers and listeners.

Now indeed, Alanko's name, like the poet joked in his youth, will go down in the history book — the one on history of Finnish poetry, at least.

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**ЛИТЕРАТУРНЫЕ РЕМИНИСЦЕНЦИИ И СИМВОЛЫ СОВРЕМЕННОЙ  
ФИНЛЯНДИИ В ПОЭЗИИ ИСМО АЛАНКО\***

**Для цитирования:** *Soini H. Literary reminiscences and the symbols of modern Finland in Ismo Alanko's poetry // Скандинавская филология. 2020. Т. 18. Вып. 2. С. 356–371. <https://doi.org/10.21638/11701/spbu21.2020.210>*

В статье анализируется образная система: литературные реминисценции, образы Финляндии в творчестве современного поэта Финляндии Исмо Аланко. Исследуются литературные и фольклорные традиции в его поэзии. Поэт создал достаточно критичный образ Финляндии как лютеранской страны, насыщенной следами маркетинга, но знающей свою литературу: «Martti Luther ja muovipussi» (Мартин Лютер и полиэтиленовый пакет). Образы финской архитектуры, серых зданий в стекле и металле, тяжелого серого северного неба связывают поэзию Аланко и с русской культурой, с именем Исаака Левитана, негативно описавшего Финляндию как царство серого цвета. Аланко явно знает о словах Левитана «Серая вода и серые люди, серая жизнь», но вступает в полемику с художником, доказывая, что в сером много оттенков радости. С серым ассоциировал природу и народ Финляндии один из лидеров экспрессионизма Ууно Кайлас. Но у Кайласа серый цвет — явно негативный, безжизненный. Аланко, напротив, различает в сером всевозможные позитивные знаки жизни. Для его стихотворений характерно описание иррациональных состояний лирического героя на фоне фантастических пейзажей Лапландии, создание мифологических образов, не сразу поддающихся толкованию. Например, в образе Луноглазки с Севера «kuusilmä rohjoisesta» прослеживается мотив превращения девушки в рыбу, характерный для финских и карельских эпических песен, знакомый нам также по «Калевале» и поэзии Эйно Лейно. Серьезные мировоззренческие проблемы Аланко осмыс-

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\* Работа выполнена по государственному заданию Карельского научного центра РАН 2018-2020.

ливает с поэтическим изяществом, силой поэтического слова снимая противоречие между религиозным и обыденным, рациональным и иррациональным. Аланко возрождает калевальскую метрику не в «музейном» виде, а, с современными акцентами и на родном финском языке.

**Ключевые слова:** рок-поэзия, реминисценции, калевальский размер, возрождение неоромантических образов, сентиментальность, злободневность.

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Received: June 7, 2020

Accepted: September 11, 2020