

Synopsis

*Socialist Realism in the Poetry of Poland, Estonia, and Finland from the First Half of 1950s:
an analysis of the poems of W. Szymborska, J. Smuul, and E. Sinervo.*

Key words: socialist realism, poetry, Estonia, Finland, Stalinism

The primary purpose of this research is to verify whether it is possible to identify the features of socialist realism in Elvi Sinervo's *Oi lintu mustasiipi* book of poems and to establish whether socialist realism was present in Finland during early 1950's. However, to prove this, one must first ascertain what socialist realism really is and how it influenced literary life in countries where it was declared as the only official trend.

The research consists of six parts: an introduction, four analysis chapters and the summary. The appendix of the thesis contains Sinervo's poems; translations of Juhan Smuul and Wisława Szymborska into Finnish a table summarizing my analysis of the poems. The introduction explains the relevance of and approach used to investigate this topic, what sources and materials will be dealt with, and the methodology of the study.

The first chapter of the dissertation, titled "At the Core of Socialist Realism", focuses on the historical background and role of socialist realism in Soviet politics. This part of the research presents *inter alia* the first Congress of the Union of Soviet Writers and the features of socialist realism determined during that event. I summarize and analyze congressional speeches that elaborate on concepts such as 'the art method' and 'dialectical materialism' for socialist realism. In the next part of the chapter, I explain why socialist realism was called an art method and how it was related to dialectical materialism. Then, based on Edward Możejko's literary and historical study, I discuss the two most important determinants of Soviet socialist realism: *narodnost'* and *partijnost'*. The last part of this chapter focuses on Vladimir Mayakovsky, who became the most popular estate approved author of socialist realist works, and Soviet criticism and propaganda related to writers and their works.

The next chapter provides an in-depth discussion on the theory and historical background of socialist realism. It describes the state of literary life in Soviet-Estonia and in the Polish People's Republic. In the case of Soviet-Estonia, I elaborate on how Estonia became a part of the Soviet Union and what impact its incorporation had on the state's cultural policy on literature, literary life, the press, and education. Using a similar scheme, I examine the cultural policy of the Polish People's Republic. I focus on how the institutions of culture in Poland began to function after

socialist realism was declared the only formal art trend at the 4th Congress of the Writers' Union in 1949. I also describe the role of the author role in society of the Polish People's Republic and Soviet Estonia. The last part of this chapter focuses on the phenomenon of socialist realism in the West. In this section, I outline the views of Louis Aragon and the members of the British Communist Party on socialist realism.

In the chapter titled "Socialist Realism in Practice", based on the theoretical chapters, I present *the red star chart* which represents the five features of socialist realism. As an analysis material for the development of the theory, I use Juhan Smuul's *Luuletused. Poeemid.* and Wisława Szymborska's *Dlatego żyjemy* books of poetry. As both works were approved by the authorities and the poets received certain benefits for their achievements, these poetry books can be considered to fulfill the features of socialist realism completely. Both poets also claimed an honest belief in communism and Soviet cultural policy during the period at question. The analysis has a certain structure that corresponds to the image of *the red star chart*: 1. Ideological context 2. Topics 3. Language and figures of speech 4. Genre 5. The speaker of a poem and lyrical situation.

The next chapter deals with Finland's literary life and left-wing poetry after the Second World War. Here, I describe the tradition of proletarian poetry born during the workers' protests in Finland before switching focus to the history of the Kiila group, a left-wing poetry group. The Kiila group is thus a key phenomenon in the light of the leftist poetry of Finland and of socialist realism. In the context of the Kiila group and the political situation in Finland, I describe Elvi Sinervo's eventful biography and career as well as her contacts with the Finnish Communist Party and other left-wing associations. Next, I re-use *the red star chart* to analyze Elvi Sinervo's poetry. In the analysis, I used two editions of *Oi lintu mustasiipi* book of poems (from 1950 and 2012), which differ slightly from each other. I analyze and identify the features of socialist realism present in the book. I then move on to separately address selected poems. First, I present two poems: *Kivinen laulu (The Rocky Song)* and *Ylistän neuvosto ihmistä (I Praise the Soviet Human)* that, according to Finnish publishers, were full of communist propaganda, and verify whether they belong to the socialist realism trend. At the end I will examine which of Sinervo poems contain elements of socialist realism.

The final part of the thesis answers the questions: to what extent do the poems of Elvi Sinervo's meet the requirements to be classified as works of socialist realism and, if it can be found on the basis of the analysis, whether the socialist realism of the Eastern Bloc or the Western version of it, could be adapted in Finland. In conclusion based on my analysis and examination of the sources, I suggest the term *Finlandized socialist realism*.

