



# Between 'Föglö' and 'Fölisön'

## Carl Björkman's Political/Performative Project of Autonomy c. 1880–1938 and the Location of the 'Finland-Swedish Nation'

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Through my deconstructive analysis of the individual case of the Swedish-speaking Finnish solicitor and joint leader of the Åland movement for reunion with Sweden, Carl Björkman, I show in this article that the phenomenon of Finland-Swedish nationalism (which began to gain firm ground in the late nineteenth century) was the challenged object of a supplementary national process with utopian characteristics from the very beginning. Björkman's personal negotiation of the central Finland-Swedish discursive constituents of coastal-cum-insular imagery led him to distance himself from Finland-Swedish nationalism and ultimately to be successfully engaged with the Åland movement for reunion with Sweden in the years 1917–1921. In its later inverted variety, however, Björkman's vision contributed to his own defeat in 1938, when he had to resign from his long-held position as the first *lantråd* of the autonomous islands. Björkman's personal national performance, with far-reaching political consequences, can nevertheless be said to have dislocated 'the Finland-Swedish nation' by strongly contributing to the – from a 'Finland-Swedish perspective' – ironically tautological establishment of an autonomous Swedish-speaking community on Finnish territory. Since 1922, this community has had remarkably stronger legislative as well as symbolical means of action than the remaining Swedish-speaking population in Finland.

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Narrating nationalist ideologies as the performances of individual members of a nation is a way of negotiating the idea of the nation as chronologically and culturally coherent. This is one valuable result of Homi Bhabha's study on the discourse of nationalism "Dissemination: Time, Narrative and the Margins of the Modern Nation" (Bhabha 1994). Through the discovery of tropology as an effective means to analyse historiography, Hayden White has contributed the scholarly insight that national histories are made to appear in literary modes invested with particular subjectivities (White 1973, 1982, 1999).<sup>1</sup>

In this article, I shall discuss a number of Swedish past phenomena in Finland in the terms of post-colonialism and tropology.<sup>2</sup>

By introducing a few fragments of a particular Swedish-speaking world more than a hundred years old, I will place it in the critical discourse of nationalism. In that, I shall read the nearly forgotten leader of the so called Åland movement for reunion with Sweden,<sup>3</sup> the solicitor and politician Carl Björkman,<sup>4</sup> as *one* characteristically constitutive and yet atypical case of that phenomenon of nationalist ideology which in the beginning of the previous century came to be called 'Finland-Swedishness' (Sw. finlands-svenskhet, Fin. suomenruotsalaisuus).<sup>5</sup> Björkman's personal project of national performance can be seen to have challenged the Finland-Swedish nation in becoming by forming a supplementary national process eventually resulting in the autonomous Åland islands.<sup>6</sup>

## The 'Finland-Swedish' 1890s: Supplementing a Nation in Becoming

At the open-air museum of *Fölisön* (Fin. Seurasaari) in the Finnish capital, eighty-five old buildings have been preserved, considered to have been particularly representative of the cultural landscapes in the various rural provinces of Finland between the 18th and the 20th century.<sup>7</sup> One of the museum buildings is the 18th century manor of *Kahiluoto*, which was moved to *Fölisön* from its original surroundings of *Töfsala* (Fin. Taivassalo) at the southwestern coast of Finland. In this manor Carl Björkman's family spent their summers during the second half of the 19th century.<sup>8</sup> The *Fölisön* Open-Air Museum was founded in 1909 by which time Finnish nationalism had flourished for some sixty years. By 1909 Swedish nationalism in Finland was reaching the point of its full self-awareness, i.e. the point of time when the coinage of the very concept of 'Finland-Swedishness' was made and entered the nationalist discourses. Accordingly, Swedish national sentiment in Finland had been looming well before that.

Walking into the manor of *Kahiluoto* we step into Carl Björkman's early world. The interior of the present day museal manor, however, has little to do with the original.<sup>9</sup> What was also – unknowingly – lost to the new owner, the National Board of Antiquities, was a document which would have added yet another thrilling layer of meaning to the manor had it been possible to preserve it in the reconstructed building at *Fölisön*. Upon his departure from *Kahiluoto* for *Åbo* (Fin. Turku) in August 1892, the nineteen-year-old student Carl Björkman wrote a poem in ten stanzas into the so-called book of *Kahiluoto* which his younger sister Gerda Maria had made by hand (Isaksson 1988). The motif of the poem was the dwarfed pine-tree with its gnarled branches. What is striking about Carl Björkman's poem is not only the fact that this was the one piece of poetry he ever wrote, or the fundamentally important fact that the poem cut right into that tradition laden with Swedish nationalist sentiment first appearing in the 1860s with this very tree at its core; a tradition which came to persist until

1946 (Zilliacus 1991, 2000). Crucial in this context is Björkman's variation of the motif. In at least one of the stanzas, the dwarfed pine with its gnarled branches on the cliff in its marine Western locale is returned as a thrillingly *ambiguous* metonym of the Finland-Swedish nation in becoming.<sup>10</sup>

Later on in this article I shall answer the question as to how, tropologically speaking, Carl Björkman's relation to the category of 'Swedishness' could be defined. Suffice it here to say that the well-known element of noble suffering inherent in the image of the marginalised but ancient Swedish-speaking (superior) servants of Finland is important. Nevertheless, this is not the most important aspect of the stanza. The idea of 'outpost' is indeed stressed; Björkman actually uses that very word, but there is a crucial twist in his use of the notion of 'outpost'. The dwarfed pine is constructed as the lonely 'outpost of the forest' on its cliff. The dwarfed pine with its threateningly gnarled branches points both backwards and forwards, inwards and outwards: to the Finnish inland and away from it; to a different, as yet unknown, place. The one thing impossible for the metonymic 'Finland-Swedes' of Björkman's poem is to remain in this condition of marginalization as it is connected with an immanent death. In Carl Björkman's poem, the branches of the pine-tree are gnarled in a threatening way due to its reinforced lack of community.<sup>11</sup> The poem accordingly gets the character of breaking point, point of departure and farewell. The dwarfed pine thus becomes not only threatened but *threatening*, to 'itself'. That is if it remains and persists in its condition of 'gnarliness', isolation. In other words, the achievement of Carl Björkman's vision is the very rupture in the nationalist imagery – threatened/threatening, marginalised/marginalising – and of the Finland-Swedish self-image in the making. It could be said that by perceiving the image of the dwarfed pine as expressing a threat to the 'itself' of a Finland-Swedish nation in becoming – a nation that found its symbolical expression through that tree – Carl Björkman was highly sensitive to the Finland-Swedish nation's need for imaginary nourishment; the soft embrace of cultural and linguistic community.

In his discussion of the modern nation, Homi Bhabha points out that “the nation fills the void left in the uprooting of communities and kin, and turns that loss into the language of metaphor.” Bhabha (1984: 139). The metonym of the dwarfed pine can be translated into kiplingesque imagery: here we find the white man’s burden as a Scandinavian construct, the educated, upper middle-class, Swedish-speaking *man*’s burden as the guarantor of Westernness in Finland.<sup>12</sup> The Finland-Swedish educated, upper middle-class discovery of the ‘common’ Swedish-speaking people and its oftentimes coastal and insular locations in Finland as an ideological property serves to form a Finland-Swedish nationalist “pedagogy”, in Bhabha’s words. He finds the construction of the nation since the mid-19th century to be ambivalently vacillating between the discourse of pedagogy and the discourse of the “performative”, between the two of which a shadow would appear (Bhabha 1994: 145).

“The pedagogical founds its narrative authority in a tradition of the people (...) as a moment of becoming designated by *itself*, encapsulated in a succession of historical moments that represents an eternity produced by self-generation. The performative intervenes in the sovereignty of the nation’s *self-generation* by casting a shadow *between* the people as ‘image’ and its signification as a differentiating sign of Self, distinct from the Other of the Outside” (Bhabha 1994: 147–148).

By placing the image of the dwarfed pine-tree at the centre of the Finland-Swedish nationalist discourse it becomes possible to witness in this metonym the bhabhaian ‘split’ of the nation into the poles of pedagogy and the performative, the ‘shadow’ growing in between them.<sup>13</sup> This is a process which could be seen taking place already in the late 19th century. At this time a Finland-Swedish ideology was beginning to be firmly established among other things through those narratives of past greatness when Finland belonged to Sweden, and through the exhortations for Swedish unity in Finland, both of which were mediated by the Finland-Swedish schoolteachers.<sup>14</sup> Simultaneously, however, at

least one more kind of thinking and feeling about Swedishness in Finland was beginning to appear. This meant that those both far- and wide-reaching political activities which were to produce their final results in 1921 were beginning to be initiated. 1892 was the year when Carl Björkman started to imagine and document a different variety of ‘Finland-Swedishness’. In having made its author “break with the environment into which he was born”, as Carl Björkman himself once expressed his radical step of moving to Åland in 1902 and there becoming the leader of the movement for reunion with Sweden fourteen years later, the poetic fragment highlights the split between the national pedagogy and the national performative (Isaksson 1988: 30).

“We then have a contested conceptual territory where the nation’s people must be thought in double-time; the people are the historical ‘objects’ of a nationalist pedagogy, giving the discourse an authority that is based on the pre-given or constituted historical origin *in the past*; the people are also the ‘subjects’ of a process of signification that must erase any prior or originary presence of the nation-people to demonstrate the prodigious, living principles of the people as contemporaneity: as that sign of the *present* through which national life is redeemed and iterated as a reproductive process” (Bhabha 1994: 145).

Carl Björkman’s poetry writing and his move to Åland were two sides of the same coin, constituting a utopian act in a quest for cultural community and linguistic unity. This was a quest for the people-as-one-in and at-one-with its space and a different negotiation of the image of the dwarfed pine-tree with its, in Carl Björkman’s view, threatening gnarled branches. What is central about the image of threat here is that the Finland-Swedish self-image was thus not constituted simply in terms of *noble* loneliness, hardness and endurance, but also in terms of *dangerous* hardness and endurance, of an immanent or foreboding death in the life of the nation and its people. Consequently: Carl Björkman’s political manifestation of enacted utopianism at the individual level, as the

necessary step in a process of personal autonomy which was to be constitutive in the production of political autonomy for a particular insular population later on, also helped to open up the national 'split'. By acting out the hope for the nowhere of the somewhere else in a radically concrete way, Björkman could be said to have been writing a "supplement" to the Finland-Swedish nation at a very early stage of that nation's existence.

In Bhabha's words:

"Once the liminality of the nation-space is established, and its signifying difference is turned from the boundary 'outside' to its finitude 'within', the threat of cultural difference is no longer a problem of 'other' people. It becomes a question of otherness of the people-as-one" (Bhabha 1994: 150).

What was later – in 1922 – to become the autonomous Åland islands was produced as *the* supplement to the Finland-Swedish nation, the autonomous province of Åland continuously thereafter at least implicitly insisting on being the 'proper' nation of Swedish-speakers in Finland.<sup>15</sup>

## Tropes of 'Swedishness' in Finland

What remained of the Swedish-speaking nation in Finland thereafter can be said to have been no more than the genres of national tales as expressions of tropologically analysable modalities of 'Swedishness'. Bhabha states that "such an apprehension of the 'double and split' time of national representation" that he has proposed, "leads us to question the homogeneous and horizontal view associated with the nation's imagined community" (Bhabha 1994: 144). In her article "Hayden White: The Form of the Content" (Partner 1998), Nancy Partner takes White's ideas of historiographical texts as structured through tropes thus giving rise to narratives governed by literary genres into Bhabha's postcolonial world by means of the following statement: "In a rather abstract way, the culture wars, as played out between multicultural narratives of identity politics and national narratives of civic identity, are narrative

wars" (Partner 1998: 171).

A return to Fölisön to rediscover Carl Björkman's poetic fragment, which by now has been *imagined into* the manor of Kahiluoto by means of this article,<sup>16</sup> will contribute to the understanding of Carl Björkman's project as productive of a certain variety of 'Swedishness' in Finland. The manor of Kahiluoto is a space belonging in the discourse of the 'lost Swedish earth' in Finland at the beginning of the 20th century.<sup>17</sup> Kahiluoto in its post-1920s musical location of Fölisön is a dystopian image, housing, however, the utopian potential in shape of the poem. Carl Björkman's poetic fragment does underline the image of a centered 'tragic' in Finland-Swedish history, but the poem read together with his future biography strongly enough expresses his project of autonomy which appeared to have taken the shape of an outright desire for the pastoral in a seemingly regressive move for many years.<sup>18</sup> The former family estate at Fölisön therefore manifests the end of an age whereas the poem indicates the contested space of Finland-Swedishness in becoming but also points beyond that space into a new order of national time. What can, consequently, be concluded about Carl Björkman's relation to the category of 'Swedishness'?

By leaving for Åland for good in 1902, Björkman opted fully for the pastoral. At the same time he turned down the tragic heroicism of the Finland-Swedish pedagogical narrative. His move would contribute to producing the future Finland-Swedish ideology as pale pastiche locked by a negative pedagogy. As such this ideology would appear to be wanting in national vitality due to its negotiation of the category of 'Swedishness' in terms of synecdochic runebergianism, an ideology constructed over an image in which the male Swedish-speaking and Swedish-writing authors of an idealised past Finland under Swedish sovereignty were central constituents. Moreover, also the reductive coastal spatiality of the new Finland-Swedish ideology could have been perceived to suffer from the same disease in that semiotic quest for 'Swedishness' where there always seemed to be something even more 'Swedish' to the west. Here I propose that the image of the sea became essential for the

different qualities which the expression of the category of 'Swedishness' in Finland took. The image of the waves of the sea having touched no previous insular or coastal locations before reaching those of the Åland archipelago (or the other way round: Åland was always in the way so to speak) was necessarily powerful within such an imaginary loaded with national narcissistic desire. This particular logic of 'Swedish' imagery can be explicitly witnessed in the biography of Julius Sundblom.<sup>19</sup> Such connective imagery indicated a particularly intimate relationship. The name of 'Åland' became the sign of a privileged presence: that of Sweden. Björkman thus opted for a metonymic 'Swedishness' in which Åland became the name (nearly) substituted for Sweden itself, the imagined affluent part characterised by the spatial unity of language and culture – representing the absent 'Same' of Sweden. Carl Björkman, in other words, claimed what had been constructed as a more unmediated access to the exclusive/inclusive space of 'Swedishness', whose front page, back and centre fold undeniably were occupied by the former 'mother country' of Sweden. The Åland islands suggested a different order of time. The struggle between the national 'performative' and the national 'pedagogy' had not yet entered the scene and things remained like that up until about 1917, when the movement for reunion with Sweden was a fact. The life of the islands had been pre-modern or, expressing it tropologically, pre-generic. Up until this breaking point there had been one voice – that of the epic. One text in which the historical point of transition from unspoken, unimagined and pre-generic 'natural' space to spoken, imagined and generic national space can be concluded to have been marked was the fisherman Erik Karlsson's sentimental poem "Reunion".<sup>20</sup> The poem was recited at a reception in Stockholm in 1918 which was hosted by the Swedish king in honour of a delegation led by Björkman. The delegation presented the Swedes with an address which had been signed by an overwhelming majority of Ålanders expressing their intense wish to be reunited with the old 'mother country.' The well-known image of intimacy between Åland and Sweden was stressed: the Åland islands of the war in 1808–

09 are pictured as "the baby being torn away from its mother's arm". The poem drew a full regressive circle. However, the outcome of the mentalities and events which it voiced was to be much more than so.

Carl Björkman himself accordingly became the one to perform the intervention, or to intervene by means of that performance, first as foregrounded fighter for reunion, and then in his capacity as *lantråd* from 1922 up until 1938. He became a firm defender of the Åland act of autonomy and took a persistently opposing, not to say hostile, attitude to the Finnish state. But what is more important: in that, as the performer of the autonomy which nearly granted Åland the profile of one more independent Swedish nation, Björkman gave in to the old heroic vision with tragic overtones. In 1938, the contours of a well-known image could be perceived in Björkman's new national pedagogy. The martyred dwarfed pine-tree of the Finland-Swedish coast had persisted after all – or returned. Facing the increasing threat of war, Björkman now wanted the demilitarised Åland islands armed.<sup>21</sup> The tragic, solitary load of the Finland-Swedish pedagogical national narrative turned up in Carl Björkman's new environment in the shape of a serious mis-reading on his part. But the lessons of this new, post-1922 national story were nothing like tragedy; they were rather comic and carnivalesque with strong spots of georgics in between. And he should have known: in Åland a mighty mass of dwarfed pine trees shared their own abundant space, as it were, with wooded meadows containing more varieties of flora than any place in Finland. In a way, Carl Björkman thus became the victim of that symbolical archipelago which he himself had known so well as to make it doubly supplement the Finland-Swedish national narrative.

These events find their appropriate comment in Homi Bhabha:

"The recurrent metaphor of landscape as the inscape of national identity emphasizes the quality of light, the question of social visibility, the power of the eye to naturalize the rhetoric of national affiliation and its forms of collective expression. There is, however, always the distracting presence of another temporality that

disturbs the contemporaneity of the national present (...)” (Bhabha 1994: 143).

Through my investigation of the case of Carl Björkman by means of Homi Bhabha’s post-colonial deconstruction of the modern nation and Hayden White’s tropological analysis of nationalist historiography, I have shown in this article that what has been recognized as a ‘Finland-Swedish nation’ was a highly contested phenomenon already at an early stage of its history. Whereas Carl Björkman’s early biography can be considered a perfect case study out of the Finland-Swedish nationalist pedagogy, his personal national performance must be seen as exceptional in the Finland-Swedish perspective. The particular example of nationalist ideology which Carl Björkman posed can be understood to constitute a utopian strand within the Finland-Swedish discourse of 19th and 20th century spatial marginality. This strand became instrumental to the production of the autonomy of the Åland islands and the political practices of its earlier years. Through that process, however, ‘the Finland-Swedish nation’ became neither extended nor strengthened, but subverted and supplemented by another Swedish-speaking ‘nation’ which governed itself on Finnish territory.

In the 1980s the ‘Finland-Swedish’ publishing company Schildts published a three-volume encyclopaedia with the title of *Finland*.<sup>22</sup> In that work Carl Björkman’s dystopian and utopian national spaces – ‘Fölisön’ and ‘Föglö’ – can be found together; after one another, in the columns next to each other. Bearing Homi Bhabha’s words in mind, this seems to be the appropriate space where to finally locate the historical phenomenon of ‘the Finland-Swedish nation’: between the columns of an encyclopaedia of *Finland* published in the Swedish language.

## Notes

1. Whereas *Metahistory. The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (1973) might be White’s most influential work, his two latest books *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (1982) and *Figural Realism. Studies in the Mimesis Effect* (1999) have been the more important to

my understanding of the historical phenomenon of Swedishness in Finland during the previous century.

2. The debates on which forms the expressions of the category of ‘Swedishness’ in Finland should, are allowed to or must not take are still in 2003 highly laden with ideological and dramatic sentiment. The choice of postcolonialism as my theoretical platform here is a deliberate attempt to distance myself from those debates and thus provide a radically widened perspective on such phenomena. A tropological reflection on the modalities of the category of ‘Swedishness’ since the 19th century and the age of nationalism seems more than motivated as that category continues to appear as a complex web of parts and wholes in varying degrees and constellations.
3. An extensive and detailed account in English of the far-reaching political effects internationally that this movement had throughout its existence is James Barros’s *The Åland Island Question: Its Settlement by the League of Nations* (1968).
4. Who was Carl Werner Björkman? Carl Björkman was born into an educated Swedish-speaking upper middle-class family in the oldest city and former capital of Finland, Åbo (Fin. *Turku*), in 1873. Both Carl Björkman’s father Werner Björkman and his uncle Herman Ithimacus were solicitors and occupied central positions at the High Court in Åbo. His maternal grandmother Sofia Margareta Ithimacus, née von Lode, was of Baltic-German noble ancestry and the owner of several large estates and manors in the south-west of Finland. Among those manors was that of Kahiluoto, inherited by Carl Björkman’s mother Aina Björkman. The manor became the summer residence of the Björkman family for the latter half of the 19th century and the earliest years of the twentieth. Carl Björkman studied law at the University of Helsinki and graduated in 1902. Instead of following in the steps of his many prominent relatives he did the unexpected. Moving to the little municipality of Föglö in the Åland archipelago where he would live for ten years after which he was appointed mayor of the capital of the islands, Mariehamn, he became together with Julius Sundblom the primary leader of the Åland movement for reunion with Sweden in 1917–21. After the conflict had been resolved by the League of Nations in 1921, stating that the demilitarised Åland islands were to belong to Finland, the islands were granted a far-reaching autonomy and Carl Björkman was elected the first *lantråd*, i.e. chairman of the provincial government in 1922. This position he held until 1938, when he did not gain the support of the parliament of the islands, the *landsting*, any longer. He died in 1948 in the Åland islands. Before that, he had become *persona non grata* in the political life of the autonomous province despite his achievements for the islands and his



consistently radical defense of the autonomy. An enduring and gradually worsening conflict with his companion from the days of the movement for reunion with Sweden, the influential speaker of the *landsting* Julius Sundblom and his circle, contributed to Björkman's defeat. In 1936, Björkman became subject to attempted murder in his home due to this conflict. The single existing work on Björkman is Martin Isaksson's biography *Carl Björkman – Ålands första lantråd*, published in 1988.

5. In that, I shall (dis)place myself within the ambivalent home (lessness) of the English language, the *lingua franca* which provides me with a position from where to look at 'my own' space from the 'outside'.
6. The Åland movement for reunion with Sweden had a dual leadership. (See also note 4). The editor, school-teacher and native Åland islander Julius Sundblom was the other leader. In practice, however, Björkman's role was decidedly more active than Sundblom's during the *initial* years of the history of what in 1921 would become the autonomous Åland islands. This was partly due to Sundblom's obvious reluctance to accepting any visible role in the movement until the mid-phases of its four-year-existence. Sundblom, nevertheless, was one of the three representatives of the islands speaking for reunion with Sweden at the League of Nations Headquarters in Geneva before the League made the decision which granted the islands autonomy. Julius Sundblom was subsequently to become the most influential politician and celebrated public character of the autonomous islands, helped therein by his position as owner and editor-in-chief of the only newspaper in the islands, *The Åland*. Johannes Salminen's biography *Ålandskungen* (1979) is the one full-length study on Sundblom. I wish to emphasize that the aim of this article is not to take a stand on the truth value of the previous research in the field of the various aspects of the history of the autonomy (where Martin Isaksson's and Salminen's biographies on Björkman and Sundblom respectively are centrally included), but rather to open up that discussion for a discursively analytical approach. My reason for focussing on Björkman here is dual: his case is dramatically and problematically relevant to the very idea of *Finland-Swedishness*. Björkman's primary cultural context became influential for the processes eventually resulting in the autonomy but also for his own defeat. Accordingly, the historiographical category to which this article belongs is primarily that of mentalities, emotions and psychology.
7. <http://www.nba.fi/MUSEUMS/SEURAS/Seurseng.htm> 22.4.2003.
8. At the time when the manor of Kahiluoto was donated to the open-air museum of Fölisön in 1926 it had not been in the possession of the Björkman family for some twenty years. After the death of Carl Björkman's father Werner Björkman in 1893, the family's seven-room flat in Åbo was sold whereafter Aina Björkman moved to the Finnish capital with her children. There she had constant, occasionally severe, economic problems as well as problems with housing. She had ultimately to rely on economic assistance from her brother Herman Ithimacus, vice-president at the High Court in Åbo and the owner of the manor of Tenhola in Lemo (Fin. Lemu) on the west coast which was not far from the island of Töfsala.
9. The 'museum' is one of those spaces in Western civilization which Foucault defines as heterotopias or 'other spaces' (Foucault: 1985–86; 1986). Foucault's essay on heterotopias was first published as "Des Espaces Autres" in the French journal *Architecture-Mouvement-Continuité* in 1984. The heterotopia reinvents the order between itself and the social space 'outside' of it. Heterotopias thus invert orders of perception. There are at least two English translations of Foucault's article – "Other Spaces: The Principles of Heterotopia" (1985–86) and "Of Other Spaces" (1986). When compared, these translations of the French original contain some important variations, among other things in the use of the attributes "different" and "other".
10. The stanza in question goes as follows in Swedish: "En tall med glesa och hotfullt vridna, / förkrympta grenar / på branten står. / En skogens utpost på enslig klippa" (Isaksson: 1988: 27). (A pine-tree with sparse and threateningly twisted, / dwarfed branches / is standing on the precipice. / An outpost of the forest on a solitary cliff. My transl.)
11. This is the well-known literary *topos* of Swedish 'solitude' in Finland after the rise of Finnish nationalism and russification. This *topos*, which is intimately connected to that of coastal and maritime symbolism, has attracted the interest of Finland-Swedish literary historians, critics, scholars and writers since its earliest days and continued to do so throughout the previous century. For a seminal reading of the *topos* as formative of a Finland-Swedish male prose tradition, see Mazzarella, Merete: 1989. *Det trånga rummet*.
12. Whereas the East-West dichotomy can be said to have been blindingly strong in Finland and partly continues to be so, phenomena such as Finnish and Swedish nationalisms as well as questions of identities and subjectivities do not yet seem to have been discussed in the terms of orientalism and postcolonialism to any extent or at all within the academy. Such a discussion would indeed be motivated as the Finnish strong need to continuously prove its status as a country of the 'West' stands in direct proportion to the cemented, twentieth-century-image of Finland in that 'West'



- as either a part of the 'East' or as 'exotically' 'bordering' on the 'East'. The discourse of the image-of-Finland-abroad which circulated in the Finnish media throughout the second half of the previous century mediated an overwhelming national anxiety as to the inverted ideological imagery of the desired 'Same' of the 'West'.
13. I am grateful to Robert Crawshaw for his suggestions as to the status of Bhabha's notion of the 'national performative' at the conference 'Literature and Its Others' in Åbo, May, 2003.
  14. Johan Ludvig Runeberg's *Fänrik Ståls Sägner* (Eng. *The Tales of Ensign Stål*) and Zachris Topelius's *Fältskärens Berättelser* were central to this pedagogy. Despite the fact that Runeberg and Topelius were Swedish-speakers and wrote in Swedish they were not 'Finland-Swedes'. This ideology is a phenomenon of a later date. Runeberg's and Topelius's most popular works were also concerned with the whole country of Finland. However, these works told the tales of an idealised time when Finland was still a part of Sweden and, in the case of Runeberg's *Fänrik Ståls Sägner*, topicalised the tragic heroicism of the Finnish army in the war of 1808-09 when Sweden had to cede Finland to Russia. There was, accordingly, a shared quality of 'Swedishness' – which needed to be emphasized – between the Finland-Swedes in becoming and the earlier great national writers, their language, works, and ideology. Runeberg and Topelius could therefore well contribute to serving the purpose of constructing the self-image of a nation of Swedish-speakers in Finland. In other words, there is a synecdochic relationship between Finland-Swedish nationalism and the pre-Finland-Swedish, Swedish-speaking, Finnish 'national poets'.
  15. A rapidly increasing number of heavily loaded national symbols and emblems have been typical of the spatiality of this demilitarized Swedish-speaking autonomy on Finnish territory since 1957 when the islands were granted their official flag. In addition, the islands have been given increasing independent participation in certain international bodies. What is more, the autonomous Åland islands can legislate on almost any social and cultural phenomena within its borders. It would be motivated to investigate whether there is by now a surplus of 'Åland' symbols spilling over into the 'Finland-Swedish' category. Also, today the political and legislative autonomy of the Åland islands is known globally and recognized within the international community as a superior example of how to solve minority conflicts in a constructive way.
  16. This is, of course, a contrafactual procedure which contributes to the highlighting of what, in Raymond Williams's terms, could be called a particular "structure of feeling". By means of my imaginative move here the quality of the contested spatiality of the Finland-Swedish discourse since its earliest days is emphasized.
  17. The museum would be a heterotopia of time, according to Foucault's classification. By providing the illusion that what has been lost to history is still present in the secluded space of the museum, it compensates us for that loss. Heterotopias, claims Foucault, "are linked for the most part to bits and pieces of time" and begin to function "when men find themselves in a sort of total breach of their traditional time" (Foucault 1985–86: 17).
  18. The Finnish psychohistorian Juha Siltala (1999) has shown how the Finnish national awakening in the second half of the 19th century built on an image of Finland in which the 'Mother' came to be constituted as that transgressive motivation necessary for the outbreak and persistence of nationalist sentiment. This implied a temporary regression towards the position of the mother within the personality of the individual, however with the collectively productive consequences of bringing a new national culture to life.
  19. Sundblom's biographer Johannes Salminen has given major importance to an image which connected Sweden, the sea, motherliness and safety, thus continuing the construction of a cluster of images proposing a lyrical leitmotif of almost transcendental meaning in the life of his subject which, as it seems, was shared by the biographer himself. As a little boy Julius Sundblom used to listen to the waves of the sea rolling slowly against the shores of Hammarudda in the evenings. Asking his father what the sound meant he got the reply that it came from "the calm-sea which brought greetings from the mother country of Sweden". (My transl. Sw. "Det var 'lugn-sjön' som kom med hälsningar från moderlandet Sverige".) This image was lifted onto the clear blue cover of the biography within a square of bright yellow as part of a more extensive extract from the text telling how the child of Julius Sundblom used to climb the mountain of Kasberget by which his home was situated to look out over the landscape in which "the sea (was) flashing as the ultimate border in the West." (My transl. Sw. (...) med havet blänkande till som yttersta gräns i väster). The extract comes from the beginning of chapter one, thus doubly setting the tone for the biography (Salminen 1979: 7). Interestingly, similar aspects of sea imagery appears in Isaksson's biography on Björkman in connection with Nandor Stenlid, who was probably one initiator of the movement for reunion as well as an agent reporting to the Swedish ministry of foreign affairs. Isaksson repeatedly uses the construction "Nandor Stenlid had come over the sea" or similar slightly lyrical expressions to signify a highly prosaic fact throughout a book characterised by an otherwise dry and precise style.

20. Mariehamn: The Provincial Archive of the Åland islands, Carl Björkman's collection, 247/II. Erik Karlsson later took the surname Ramsdahl.
21. There is a similarity with the situation in 1917. Then it would have been the Russian revolution and the Finnish red guards which contributed to Björkman's feeling of threat. In his unpublished autobiographical notes written late in 1938 after his resign, he states that (in 1917) "it was only Swedish sovereignty that would save the small fragment of the Swedish population in the country which was represented by the Åland islands" (My transl. Mariehamn: The Provincial Archive of the Åland islands, Carl Björkman's collection, 261/I). However, in 1938 with the second world war approaching the Åland islands had been autonomous for sixteen years and Björkman found it essential that the islands should manage to protect themselves without Finnish interference. There is accordingly a stronger note of solitude and war rhetoric in his discourse at this date. As his biographer Martin Isaksson has pointed out, Björkman himself indeed helped to create the so-called New Åland Island Question – the question of the armament of the islands – in 1938.
22. (*Uppslagsverket Finland*: 1982: 433). A new edition of the first volume appeared in the year 2003. The remaining volumes are due within the next few years.

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