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*Keywords: Estonia; fiction; exile; publishing*

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## Introduction

The Estonian diaspora was formed by two major completed waves of emigration that led to formation of the Eastern and Western sub-diasporas. The first mass emigration started in the mid-nineteenth century and lasted until World War I when Estonia was part of the Russian Empire. Estonians moved to Russia for farmland, for better employment and study opportunities. The majority of them stayed in Soviet Russia after the Bolshevik revolution in 1917 and establishment of the Republic of Estonia on February 24, 1918. This was opposed only by Estonian communists (or Bolsheviks), who would have preferred Estonia to be part of Soviet Russia. Wanting to establish Bolshevist power, Soviet Russia invaded Estonia in November 1918. The following armed conflict between Soviet Russia and the Republic of Estonia is known as the Estonian War of Independence that lasted until February 1920. On February 2, 1920 the Tartu Peace Treaty was signed – the Republic of Estonia and the Soviet Russia recognised each other and declared the end of the war. Thus, the attempts of the Estonian communists to come to power with the help of the Red Army had failed. As a result, it became impossible to establish Soviet power in Estonia that urged many Estonian communists to move to Soviet Russia, becoming part of the Estonian diaspora.

The Western sub-diaspora was formed mainly towards the end of the World War II. The Republic of Estonia was occupied by the Soviet Union in 1940 and the Soviet regime was re-

[1] This work was supported by the Estonian Research Council's grant PRG1206 ("Translation in History, Estonia 1850-2010: Texts, Agents, Institutions and Practices").

established in 1944 after a brief period of German occupation (1941–1944). In order to escape the Soviet rule about 80,000 Estonians, including many intellectuals, fled to the West, settling down mostly in Sweden and in Canada. Both these diasporas were culturally active, establishing, among other institutions, Estonian-language publishing houses. Their production also included a small number of literary translations.

The publishing activities and book production of Estonian émigrés in the Soviet Union in 1918–1937 first attracted the attention of Estonian scholars already in the 1930s (ANTIK 1939). Oskar Urgart (1934) has studied literary works by Estonian writers that were published in Leningrad. During the 1960s–1980s when Estonia was part of the USSR the most comprehensive study of publishing and book production in the Soviet Union in 1918–1937 was authored by book historian Kyra Robert (1975). At that time the topic was treated as the first stage of Soviet-type publishing and book production in the Estonian language. Since Estonia regained independence in 1991, research on the cultural life of Estonian émigrés in the Soviet Union has been modest. Aile Möldre and Tiiu Reimo (2008) have studied the activities of the Estonian publishing houses in Leningrad.[2]

The Estonian-language publishing activities can be compared with Finnish-language publishing in the Soviet Union in the 1920s–1930s, treated in the study by Pauli Kruhse and Antero Uitto (2008). Their book deals with the history of Finnish publishing bodies in the Soviet Union, especially the leading publishing house Kirja that operated in Leningrad and Petroskoi. It also includes the bibliography of Finnish-language book production issued in the Soviet Union between 1918–1944 where translated literary titles can be identified. The work by Natalia Rudnytska (2022) on the formation of the Soviet canon of world literature enables to study the literary translations into Estonian published in the Soviet Union in the context of Soviet translation policy of the period.

The publishing and book production of the Western diaspora after the World War II has been studied by Anne Valmas (1993; 2003a, 2003b) who has provided data on all the publishers of Estonian-language books in the West as well as characteristics of different publication types. Vallo Kelder (2000) researched the translations of Finnish literature published by the publishing house Orto in Toronto in the 1950s–1970s. The literary scholar Hilve Rebane (1996; 2008) has treated the features of translations from different source literatures, characterising the authors and works selected for publishing.

Like Estonians, nearly 175,000 Latvians fled their homeland during the final year of World War Two, forming the Latvian diaspora in the West (Latvians 2016). They organised several publishing houses issuing literary works both by Latvian authors as well as translations. The literary translations issued during the 1940s–1950s have been studied by Viesturs Zanders (2020). He has also studied the Latvian publishing house Imanta active in Copenhagen in 1946–1971 (ZANDERS 2021).

The article addresses the publishing of literary translations in the framework of book and translation history. It aims to study the publishing of literary translations into the Estonian language in different contexts – the Soviet Union in the 1920s–1930s and the Western countries in the 1940s–1980s, the motives and functions of the publishers of diasporic literature as well as their reception by readers. The study also includes the statistical data on the output of book translations and its analysis by source literatures. In line with the outline for the

[2] Saint Petersburg was renamed to Petrograd (1914–1924) and later Leningrad (1924–1991).

sociology of translations by Johan Heilbron and Giséle Sapiro (2007), production and reception of literary translations is studied considering the political, social and economic conditions where the Eastern and Western émigré publishing houses operated, characterising the political and economic constraints that affected the output of translations.

Literary translations into Estonian were published in Soviet Russia and in the West both as separate books as well as in periodicals. For example, the literary and political journals *Oras* (1923–1927), *Leegid* (The Flames, 1927–1936), *Klassivõitlus* (Class Struggle, 1919–1936) issued in Petrograd/Leningrad included translations just as the literary journals *Mana* (1957–1999) and *Tulimuld* (1950–1993) issued by Estonian diaspora in the West. In order to illustrate the publishing trends in exile, the present study uses literary translations that were issued as separate books.[3]

## Estonian-language Publishing and Literary Translations in the Soviet Union in 1918–1937

Since the middle of the 19th century the Russian Empire attracted migrants to its new agricultural lands. The emigration potential was high in Estonia and more than 300 Estonian settlements were established all across the empire, mainly in the neighbouring European parts of Russia. Estonian remained the main language for both everyday communication and the schooling of children in the Estonian villages in Russia. Estonians also settled in urban areas, the most important ethnic concentration emerged in the city of St. Petersburg. The Eastern sub-diaspora included about 200,000 Estonians in 1917 (TAMMARU et al. 2010: 1159–1164).

Estonians living in Soviet Russia and Soviet Ukraine could opt for Estonian citizenship and repatriate to Estonia and about 37,500 people were able to do so (Tammaru et al. 2010: 1164) while the majority of the Estonian population of Russia stayed in their new homeland. 154,666 Estonians were living in the Soviet Union according to the census of 1926. The number of people who declared Estonian to be their mother tongue was 139,500 (Kuddo & Laas 2002: 248). These people formed the potential readership of Estonian-language publications in Russia. The publishers, editors and translators of these publications mainly came from among the émigré communists.

### *The impact of national and cultural policy on publishing in minority languages*

Literature, publishing and book production in minority languages functioned in the context of national and cultural policies of the Soviet Union. At first the Soviet national policy favoured ethnic minority (socialist) cultures and supported publishing in minority languages. According to Jörg Baberowski, in order to secure the success of the revolutionary project,

[3] The statistical data has been calculated on the basis of existing research (ROBERT 1975; VALMAS 2003a), bibliography (VALMAS 2003b) and the Estonian national bibliography database (https://www.ester.ee/search~S95*est). Data on the Estonian-language publications issued in the Soviet Union was gathered by the leading libraries of Estonia during the Soviet period. The Tallinn University Academic Library includes the Estonian Expatriate Literature Centre that has carried out bibliographic work based on its rich collections of publications issued by the Western diaspora. All the bibliographic records gathered over the decades have been included in the electronic national bibliography database turning it into a trustworthy source for research.

Lenin considered it inevitable to gain the trust of the oppressed nations of Tsarist Russia by introducing socialism to them in their own languages and cultural forms (Баберовски 2006: 182). While on the one hand the Bolsheviks sought homogeneous orders, on the other hand the multi-ethnic empire was remodelled into a nation-state where ethnic groups and cultures were ascribed everlasting qualities.

The so-called *korenizatsiia* or indigenization entailed identifying, classifying and bounding ethnically defined administrative units that would be staffed by "natives" (Blitstein 2006: 209). The Twelfth Congress of the Bolshevik Party, held in 1923, hierarchized nationalities based on territory as the primary marker of identity, from federated republics endowed to some nationalities to merely the right to schooling in their national language in regions where they enjoyed high population density (Laruelle 2021: 18). The populations that had a kinstate outside Soviet borders were referred to as national minorities (ibid. 2021: 22), a category that also Estonians belonged to.

Thus, socialism was to acquire national forms and according to Stalin the Bolshevik programme of modernisation was "socialist in content, national by form" (Баберовски 2006: 186, 196). Peter A. Blitstein (2006) argues further that the national policy of the new Soviet elite sought to simultaneously create difference and sameness. In order to achieve unity, the Soviet state did not inject content into ethnic categories, for example, the curriculum and organization of non-Russian schools were, from the late 1920s, designed to be as close as possible to those in Russian schools. Language was understood to be merely a transparent medium rather than reflective of cultural "content" (Blitstein 2006: 210).

The cultural revolution was considered an integral component of the Bolshevik conquest of power. Cultural work, spreading of knowledge that was interpreted as the propaganda of the progressive class' (that is the proletariat's) ideology was to secure the cultural development (*kulturnost'*) (Khestanov 2014: 130). *Kulturnost'* was part of a broader Soviet civilizing mission addressing the Russian peasants, but also native "backward" peoples, including certain educational background, level of literacy, and basic knowledge of communist ideology, but also certain conduct in public and dressing. Political and economic support for ethnic minority culture became an obligation of the Soviet state and the Communist Party (Shneer 2003: 198).

By the mid-to-late 1930s, however, the practices of Sovietization emerged, designed to crafting the Soviet uniformity, the Soviet People, moulding standardized, culturally-interchangeable individuals suitable for modern politics and economics, based on Russian language and culture (Blitstein 2006: 212). This process coincided with the onset of mass repressions during the 1930s. The Politburo decree from December 14, 1932 had initiated the beginning of ethnic cleansing among the Soviet Union diaspora nationalities with cross-border ethnic ties to a foreign state and abolition of many national institutions (Martin 2001: 311). The campaign also led to the arrest and execution of numerous Estonians, including Comintern employees and communist leaders. According to 1939 census the number of Estonians who declared the Estonian language to be their mother tongue had diminished to 91,492 (Мусаев 2009: 191).

***Estonian-language publishing houses and book production in the Soviet Union in 1918–1937***

Publishing houses occupied a central place in the Soviet cultural production in the 1920s as printing was the most important means of circulating knowledge in the Soviet Union (SHNEER 2003: 199–200). Estonian-language publishing in Soviet Russia concentrated in Petrograd/Leningrad where two Estonian publishing houses Eesti Kirjastuse Ühisus (The Estonian Publishing Community, 1922–1926) and Külvaja (The Sower, 1922–1934) were established in the 1920s by two groups of Estonian communists. While Külvaja was the publishing house of the Central Committee of the Estonian Communist Party, the Estonian Publishing Community was a cooperative publishing house (82 members in 1924) (AGARMAA 1967: 9) the establishment of which was made possible by the New Economic Policy, NEP (1921–1928), marking a turn to mixed-market economy. However, the Estonian Publishing Community was not able to secure the necessary distribution to generate sufficient revenue and went bankrupt, merging with Külvaja in 1926 (NIINOJA 1984).

A small number of Estonian-language books were issued in Siberia and by the central publishing houses in Moscow. Külvaja in its turn was merged with the Leningrad Department of the Publishing Society of Foreign Workers of the USSR in the beginning of 1934. The Estonian section of this department continued to publish Estonian-language books until the end of 1937 (MÖLDRE & REIMO 2008: 126, 128). By the beginning of 1938 Estonian-language publishing had come to a halt and the majority of Estonian communists active in publishing had been executed.

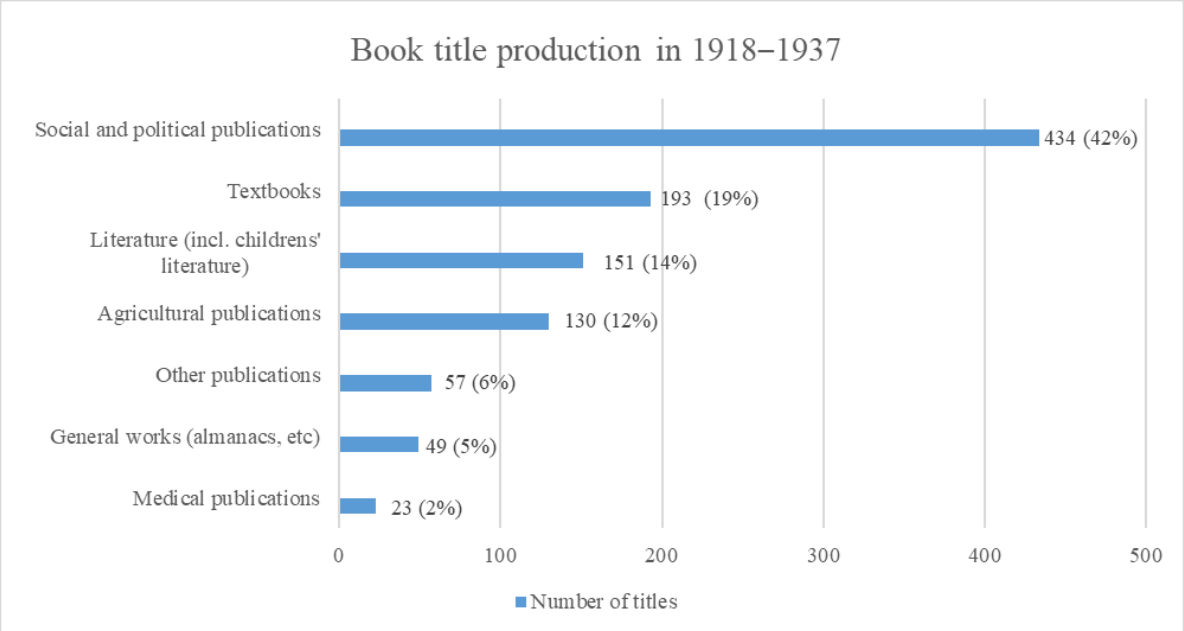


Figure 1. Estonian-language book title production in 1918–1937 (calculated on the basis of Robert 1975)

The quantity of Estonian-language books published in the Soviet Union was rather modest – 1037 book titles issued in 1918–1937. The content of book production in Estonian was a typical selection of a national minority publishing house, dominated by political publications and textbooks for schools (Figure 1). There were 169 Estonian schools in the Soviet Union in 1924 (RAUDSEPP & HIIEMAA 2013: 85). Textbooks were also issued for adults participating in political education or agricultural courses. Estonians were mostly farmers and national

collective farms were organised since 1928/1929. Numerous agricultural instructions and handbooks had to guide the work in newly created collective farms, thus also being political in essence.

***Literary translations for the Estonian Diaspora in the Soviet Union in 1918–1937***

Beside political literature a cultured Soviet citizen was also supposed to read literature. The book production of the Estonian-language publishers included 126 titles of literary works for adult readers. The proportion of books by Estonian authors formed 42% (53 titles) including mostly works by the authors living in the Soviet Union while 58% of the titles (73 titles) were translations (Figure 2). Although publications of prose were represented by the largest number of titles, the figure draws attention to a notable position of plays among the publications of literary works.

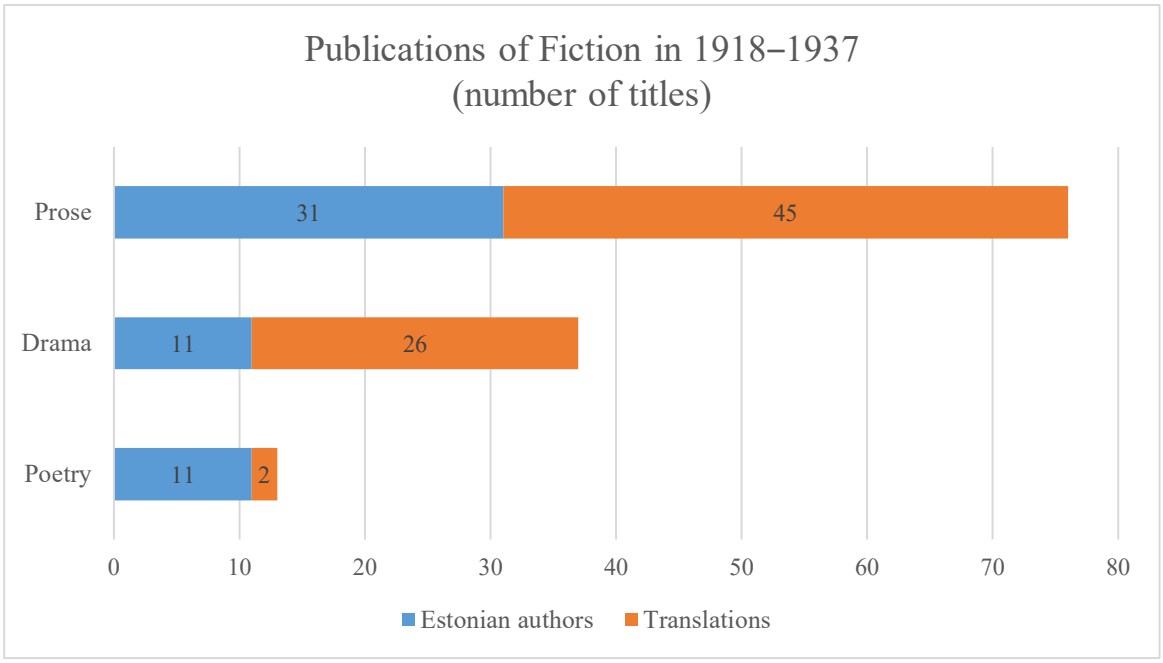


Figure 2. Literary works by Estonian authors and translations of literature for adult readers in 1918–1937 (calculated on the basis of the Estonian national bibliography database)

Theatrical activity had attracted Estonians already since the rise of Estonian nationalism in the second half of the 19th century, when numerous song and drama societies were established. Amateur theatrical associations as well as choirs and orchestras were also organised in St. Petersburg and in the Estonian villages in Russia. During the Soviet period, clubs became the most massive form of cultural work among the population that operated in different directions – political education, sports activities, libraries and reading rooms as well as traditional theatrical associations and choirs, although now used for Soviet propaganda and agitation. In addition, a professional Estonian theatre was active in Petrograd/Leningrad in 1921–1936 (Мусаев 2009: 138–140, 142).

These theatre troupes were in need of ideologically suitable repertoire which the publishers obtained primarily from Soviet Russian, but also from some foreign authors. The largest number of titles of translated plays was issued in the years 1923–1925 when the Estonian Publishing Community published the series *Töörahva näitekirjandus* (Plays for Workpeople). The drama translations by other than Russian writers include, for example, works by

Danish (*Folkene på Dangården* by Martin Andersen Nexø), Irish (*The Playboy of the Western World* by John M. Synge), Latvian (*Balss un atbalss* by Andrejs Upīts) or French (*Les mauvais bergers* by Octave Mirbeau) authors. The selection holds plays by acknowledged authors containing social critique, depicting hard life of working men and women, thus being ideologically appropriate for the working masses.

An anonymous reviewer evaluated the plays issued in the series in the Estonian-language communist daily newspaper *Edasi* (Forward), describing their topic and suitability for staging by amateur theatrical associations in the villages (Töörahva näitekirjandus 1924). Commenting on Georg Engel's drama *Sturmglocken* that treats the revolution of 1848 the reviewer recommends starting the performance with a historical introduction and comments on the petit-bourgeois character of this revolution. Clara Viebig's play *Fräulein Freschbolzen* has been characterized as a comedy about petit-bourgeois love that includes no revolutionary element, but as it does not overtly glorify bourgeois society, it could be acceptable for staging alongside more serious repertoire. That kind of leniency towards entertainment was, however, rather exceptional.

The translations of prose included predominantly Soviet Russian literature and the list of authors includes the popular and most translated writers of the day (RUDNYTSKA 2022: 50) topped by Maxim Gorky with the largest number of translations into Estonian (six book titles), followed by Mikhail Sholokhov, Dmitry Furmanov, Alexander Serafimovich, Alexander Fadeyev, Alexey Novikov-Priboy, Fyodor Panfyorov, etc. The few publications by pre-revolutionary authors were represented by Mikhail Saltykov-Shchedrin and Alexander Pushkin, whose novella *Дубровский* and fairytales were published in the centennial year of Pushkin's death, 1937. While the authorities had paid quite modest attention to Pushkin in the 1920s, the centennial of his death was celebrated on a wide scale. By the 1930s, when the Soviet-Russian identity was no longer submerged, he had become a bearer of Russian ideas, culture and language within the framework of the Soviet state, expected to bolster the regime's legitimacy, used as an ideological tool to cement the role of Russia as the "ethnic glue" of the Soviet state (FELCHER 2012: 780–781).

The majority of literary translations from literatures other than Russian were published during the 1920s (Table 1). The translation trends into Estonian were similar to the general Soviet translation policy. Up to 1928, the number of translated literary works increased considerably due to the favourable cultural and economic policy. Since the end of NEP in 1928/29 the sphere of literary translation experienced severe reduction (RUDNYTSKA 2022: 43). The activities of the publishing houses were taken under strict control by the communist party and special administrative bodies. The role of planning grew and the role of market demand decreased as publishers became more dependent on state subsidies.

Natalia Rudnytska (2022: 42) has listed several topics of appropriate works from world literature for the Soviet mass reader and some of them can be detected among the translations into Estonian, e.g. lives of ordinary people (Octave Mirbeau, Clara Viebig, Herman Heijermanns) and fight for freedom (Georg Engel, Robert Schweichel). Literary translations into Estonian also treated the emancipation of women (Victor Margueritte) as well as publications of science fiction and utopia (Herbert Wells, Soviet Russian authors Jakov Okunev,

Nikolai Mukhanov). Many of the foreign authors chosen for translation held socialist or communist views (Martin Andersen Nexø, Kurt Eisner, Herbert Wells etc.).[4]

In the 1930s, the translation policy was defined by the establishment of a new Soviet identity (RUDNYTSKA 2022: 48). In reality, it led to cultural homogeneity and the Russification of different "Soviet peoples" (MONTICELLI & LANGE 2014). As a result, the majority of literary works translated into the languages of non-Russian Soviet peoples were by Russian authors. For example, they made up 74.8% of all the translations into the languages of non-Russian Soviet peoples in 1935, while the proportion of translations from foreign languages was 16.7% and that from the other languages of the Soviet peoples was 8.5% (RUDNYTSKA 2022: 49). The turn from a relatively diverse selection of source literatures in the 1920s to the dominance of translations from Russian literature can be also followed in the literary translations into Estonian. While in 1920–1929, the proportion of literary translations from Russian literature was 52% of all translations (24 titles) and other source literatures were represented with 48% (22 titles), the literary translations published from 1930 to 1937 included 22 titles of Russian literature (92% of all literary translations) and only two titles (8%) from foreign literatures – Hungarian (*Ég a Tisza* by Béla Illés) and French (*Tartarin de Tarascon* by Alphonse Daudet).

| **Source literature** | **Prose** | **Drama** | **Poetry** | **In all** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Russian | 30 | 17 | 2 | 49 |
| German | 4 | 4 | | 8 |
| French | 4 | 1 | | 5 |
| American | 3 | | | 3 |
| Danish | 1 | 1 | | 2 |
| Hungarian | 1 | | | 1 |
| English | 1 | | | 1 |
| Altai | 1 | | | 1 |
| Dutch | | 1 | | 1 |
| Irish | | 1 | | 1 |
| Latvian | | 1 | | 1 |
| **In all** | **45** | **26** | **2** | **73** |

Table 1. Literary translations into Estonian (excl. children's literature) published in the Soviet Union in 1918–1937 by source literatures

The editors of the Estonian publishing houses were Estonian communists, faithful to the Marxist-Leninist world view and loyal to the party line whose publishing activities followed the instructions and requirements of the bodies governing publishing. One of the top-ranked communists, author and translator of political writings and, editor of the literary journal

[4] Among the more prolific translators of literature were the stage manager Valter Rätsepp, writers Karl Treufeldt, Eduard Päll (pen-name Hugo Angervaks) and Karl Trein who had fled to Soviet Russia after the War of Independence. They had participated in labor movement in tsarist Russia and were members of the communist party. However, about a quarter (27%) of all the translated books do not provide any information about the translator in their paratexts.

*Oras* and poet Hans Pöögelmann (1933: 3) stated in the preface to his book *Kirjanduslikult rindelt* (From the Literary Front), that every creative work is inevitably part of class struggle, functioning as a combat unit on the ideological front. Pöögelmann (1933: 9) admits that some art works, some ideas from the earlier eras are acceptable for the proletariat, but the new proletarian literature adopts only works which serve the interests of the revolution. Thus, at least by the beginning of the 1930s, the expectations for literature were driven primarily by the needs of communist propaganda.

That was hardly the content that most Estonians living in the Soviet Union were interested in. According to the report for the communist party bodies of the Leningrad region dating from 1927, Estonians were moderately loyal to the Soviet power, but indifferent towards politics (Мусаев 2009: 143). Other documents demonstrate the dominance of a petit-bourgeois mentality among Estonian peasants. During the political literacy lectures they were primarily interested in economic issues (Мусаев 2009: 145–146), hence the weak dissemination of political publications that were distributed mainly to organisations and institutions (Möldre & Reimo 2008: 23). However, fiction could attract wider audiences, for example 2,500 copies of the translation of Pushkin's *Дубровский* were sold in a couple of days (Мусаев 2009: 182). Books were meant for ideological education of the readers, they had to be affordable to everyone and were sold for a cheap price guaranteed by state subsidies. After the New Economic Policy ended in the late 1920s, buyer demand no longer played a notable role in book publishing.

The translations of literary works that were published in the Soviet Union in the Finnish language provide another example of the general trends in translation policy (Kruhse & Uitto 2008). The similarities with the literary translations into Estonian lie both in the proportion of source literatures as well as the selection of writers and works for translation. Like the translations into Estonian, the translations into Finnish included predominantly (more than 70%) translations of Russian literature. Among the Russian authors issued both in Finnish and Estonian were classics like Alexander Pushkin, Leo Tolstoi and Anton Chekhov, but the recurrences in the list of the Soviet Russian authors were much more numerous. Although the choice of specific works by many authors (e.g. Fyodor Gladkov, Lidiia Seifullina, Aleksey Novikov-Priboy) could have differed, the main works of socialist realism were published in both languages (e.g. *Мать* by Maxim Gorky, *Против течения* by Alexander Fadeev, *Железный поток* by Alexander Serafimovich, *Поднятая целина* by Mikhail Sholokhov, etc.). Among foreign writers translated both into Estonian and Finnish were Jack London and Upton Sinclair, who were among the most popular foreign authors in the Soviet Union at that time as well as Martin Andersen Nexø and Béla Illés. In general, the number of literary translations issued in Finnish for adult readers (more than 180 titles) exceeded the number of translations into Estonian about two times and included a more varied selection of authors and works than in Estonian. Although the publishing activities in Finnish and Estonian were carried out in similar political and cultural conditions, within the same constraints, there was some space for the selection of texts and agency of editors and translators.

A comparison of literary translations into Estonian in the Republic of Estonia 1918–1940 and in the Soviet Union enables us to identify some coincidences in the list of writers and works. For example, Alphonse Daudet was also popular in Estonia and is represented with numerous translations. The novel *Tartarin de Tarascon* was published both in Estonia and

in Leningrad in two different translations by Johannes Semper and Eduard Päll. Likewise, the novel *A Captain of Industry* by Upton Sinclair was translated both in Leningrad by Karl Treufeldt as well as in Estonia by Erna Normann.

In the case of several Western authors, different works were selected for translation in Estonia and in Leningrad. Many works by Herbert Wells were translated in Estonia, but his novel *Men like Gods* was issued only in Leningrad. The same applies to Jack London, whose works, especially the Klondike and South Sea stories, were issued in Estonia in numerous editions (28 book titles in all) while his political fiction (the stories *The Apostate*, *South of the Slot*) were published in Leningrad. However, translations by some Western writers, for example Martin Andersen Nexø, Kurt Eisner, Clara Viebig and Robert Schweichel were published only by the Estonian-language publishers in Leningrad during the years 1918–1940.

The situation was similar with Russian and Soviet Russian authors. Authors like Pushkin, Anton Chekhov and Maksim Gorky were translated in both in Estonia and in Leningrad, but the selection of works was different. For example, the translations of *Дубровский* and fairytales by Pushkin were published in Leningrad while poetry and *Капитанская дочка* were translated in Estonia. Translations of Russian classical authors like Nikolai Gogol, Ivan Turgenev and Fyodor Dostoevsky were published only in Estonia. Especially the attitude towards Dostoevsky differed in the two political and cultural spaces, his works being out of favour in the Soviet Union at that time. The publishing houses in Estonia also published the translations of several contemporary Russian exile authors, for example, Aleksandr Kuprin, Evgenii Chírikov, Mikhaíl Artsybashev and Ivan Bunin who were not issued by Estonian-language publishers in the Soviet Union. The selection of Soviet Russian writers in Estonia preferred works that dealt with moral issues of the Soviet society (e.g. Panteleimon Romanov, Lev Gumilevskii, Nikolai Nikitin) rather than the politicized texts which were translated into Estonian in the Soviet Union.

Thus, although the most popular contemporary as well as classic authors were translated into Estonian both in the Republic of Estonia and in the Soviet Union, the selection of works for translations was mainly different. Outside of these top authors the preferences of homeland and exile publishers diverged considerably, eventually resulting in a more varied, complementary corpus of texts. However, during the 1920s–1930s the exchange of literature published in the Republic of Estonia and the Soviet Union was limited. After the war, in Soviet Estonia a large part of the translations that had been issued in independent Estonia were placed in closed special collections, unavailable to ordinary readers. The canonical works translated into Estonian in the Soviet Union were already retranslated in Soviet Estonia during the 1940s, thus the translations published in exile disappeared from circulation.

The publishing of Soviet books in the Estonian language continued during World War II. The Republic of Estonia was occupied by the Red Army and incorporated into the Soviet Union as a union republic in the summer of 1940. The German Army conquered Estonia by October 1941 and the country was subjected to civilian occupation power. The German occupation lasted until September 1944 when Estonia was again occupied by the Red Army.

After war broke out between Germany and the Soviet Union in June 1941, the staff of the communist party bodies and Soviet institutions as well as pro-Soviet intellectuals were evacuated to the rear areas of the Soviet Union. Together with the men mobilised by the Soviet government, their number reached about 60,000 people (Nõmm 1992: 229). The publishing

of Estonian-language publications was concentrated in Leningrad and Moscow where 241 book titles were issued in 1941–1944. Literary works were represented by 45 titles including 12 collections, 17 titles by Estonian authors and 16 translations of Soviet, predominantly Soviet Russian authors (13 titles). These were mostly stories about the ongoing war by authors like Boris Gorbatov, Vadim Kozhevnikov, Leonid Sobolev, Mikhail Sholokhov.

**Literary translations published by Estonian diaspora in the West**

The formation of the Western sub-diaspora took place during World War II when about 80,000 Estonians (about 7% of the whole population) left for the West, fleeing from the Soviet occupation forces (KUMER-HAUKANÕMM 2014: 53; VAIK 2014: 69). At first, they moved to Finland, Sweden and Germany, where they settled in the displaced persons' (DP) camps (VALMAS 2003a: 21). The camps were closed down in the early 1950s, when a considerable number of refugees resettled in the USA, Canada, Australia and Great Britain. Most of the refugees who had reached Sweden stayed there (22,000), but there was also some onward migration, mainly to Canada (TAMMARU et al. 2010: 1167). Larger Estonian communities developed in Sweden, the USA (about 30,000 in the end of the 1950s), Canada (18,500 in 1961), Australia (6,549 in 1954) and Great Britain (3,418 in 1951) (VALMAS 2003a: 21–24).

Among the refugees were numerous cultural figures – writers, artists, musicians as well as politicians, healthcare professionals and educators. There were also many ambitious and talented young authors who made their literary debuts in exile. However, more than a half of all the émigrés were farmers, fishermen or unskilled labourers (KUMER-HAUKANÕMM 2014: 55–56; VAIK 2014: 69). The writing and publishing of Estonian texts already started in the temporary stopovers in Finland and in the refugee camps in Sweden and Germany (VAIK 2014: 69). The largest publishing house Kultuur (Culture) started to operate in Geislingen in 1946. The publications primarily included periodicals, textbooks for Estonian schools, works by Estonian authors, dictionaries and practical handbooks (VALMAS 2003a: 128). Later publishing activities were concentrated in Sweden and Canada, although publishing houses were established in all the countries with bigger Estonian communities. The largest number of Estonian-language publications was issued in Sweden, which is where many intellectuals and writers were located. Canada, a destination for business-minded Estonians with practical skills, followed with half the number of book titles (VALMAS 2003a: 29). Creative and publishing activities were enormously important and popular for exiled Estonians as in their understanding, the fate of real Estonian culture and language was in their hands, since the people at home were oppressed and Estonian culture was believed to be destroyed and replaced by the Soviet culture (VAIK 2014: 72). This attitude prevailed until the 1970s.

The total number of book titles issued by Estonian publishing houses, organisations and individuals in the West in 1944–2000 amounts to 4,040 titles, 3,567 (88%) of which were in Estonian and 473 (12%) in foreign languages (VALMAS 2003a: 151–152). Table 2 demonstrates its composition by types and topics. Literature (including 117 books for children) accounted for a significant proportion of the total book production with 1,188 titles (29% of the total book production), the majority of which were works by Estonian authors (1,018 titles, 86%). The most fertile period for publishing original literature were the 1950s and 1960s, the time of the greatest creative activity of different generations of exiled authors and numerous reprints of Estonian classics, including the authors who were banned or

disfavoured in Soviet Estonia. Since the 1970s, the older Estonian-language writers started to disappear and few young authors entered the literary field (VALMAS 2003a: 156).

| **Types and topics of publications** | **Number of titles** |
|---|---|
| Literary works (incl. children's literature) | 1,188 (29%) |
| Publications of various organisations (societies, student organisations, scout and guide organisations) | 581 (14%) |
| Textbooks | 314 (8%) |
| Memoirs | 301 (8%) |
| Political publications | 299 (7%) |
| Scholarly and popular-science publications | 276 (7%) |
| Religious publications | 255 (6%) |
| Thematic collections, albums | 244 (6%) |
| Applied publications | 225 (6%) |
| Reference books | 157 (4%) |
| Other | 200 (5%) |
| **In all** | **4,040 (100%)** |

Table 2. Book title production by Estonian publishers in the West in 1944–2000. Calculated on the basis of VALMAS 2003a: 175–176.

Literary translations were represented with only 170 titles (16% of all adult literature). The majority (144 titles) of these translations were issued by the publishing house Orto (calculated on the basis of Valmas 1993 and the Estonian national bibliography database). The idea to establish the publishing house Orto dates back to July 1944, when the Estonian writers Karl Ristikivi, Valev Uibopuu and entrepreneur Andres Laur discussed the need for Estonian-language books in exile in Helsinki. That led to a decision to reprint a novel by Ristikivi (VALMAS 1993: 548). The publishing activities of Andres Laur (1909–1973) continued successfully in Sweden as there was a high demand for Estonian-language books in European refugee camps, amplified by weak foreign languages skills among the Estonian émigrés at that time. Publishing and distribution of books was handled in a book club manner, operating according to the pre-orders made by Estonian émigrés all over the world (VAIK 2014: 72). Orto operated in Sweden until 1951; then the company moved to Toronto, Canada where the activities continued until the death of the owner in 1973.

During the first post-war years, Orto practically had the monopoly of publishing works by Estonian writers. Andres Laur has been characterised as a controversial and complicated personality whose pursuit of economic success, combined with a somewhat arrogant attitude towards writers, led to very small sums allocated for authors' fees. In response, Estonian writers established their own joint-stock association called Eesti Kirjanike Kooperatiiv (Estonian Writers' Cooperative) in Lund in 1951 (KRONBERG 2002: 22–24). Henceforth, numerous authors started to publish their works in this cooperative publishing house which became known for high standards in manuscript quality and significantly higher fees for authors and translators compared to what Orto used to pay. Still, the publishing house set an aim to

publish primarily Estonian authors and almost completely excluded the publication of translations (KRONBERG 2002: 208), issuing only seven titles of translated literary works.

These include translations by the outstanding Estonian literary scholar and translator Ants Oras (1900–1982) who was living in the USA: *Faust* by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1955; 1962) and *Aenēīs* by Virgil (1975), both among his top translations. His translation of Virgil's *Eclogae* was published by the Estonian Learned Society in America in 1970. Oras dreamt about the creation of the Estonian-language library of the classics. By the translation of *Aenēīs* he aimed to introduce to the Estonian readers the really great works, the heritage of the "Father of the West", also having in mind the Estonians living in Soviet Estonia. Indeed, some copies of the translation reached recipients in the translator's homeland (LANGE 2004: 378–379).

Thus, the shrinking of the ranks of writers willing to publish their works as well as the shortage of manuscripts was among the factors contributing to Orto's turn towards the publication of translated literature and reprints of Estonian classics. The foreign language skills of many Estonian émigrés were often insufficient for reading literature in English, German or other languages during the 1940s–1950s, thus securing demand for translations. By the 1970s they had already started to read books in English, Swedish or other languages of the host countries (KELDER 2000: 152). Statistical data (Figure 3) shows that the publication of fiction translations reached its peak during 1955–1964, but since 1965 the number of translated books started to decline, coming almost to a halt at the beginning of the 1980s.

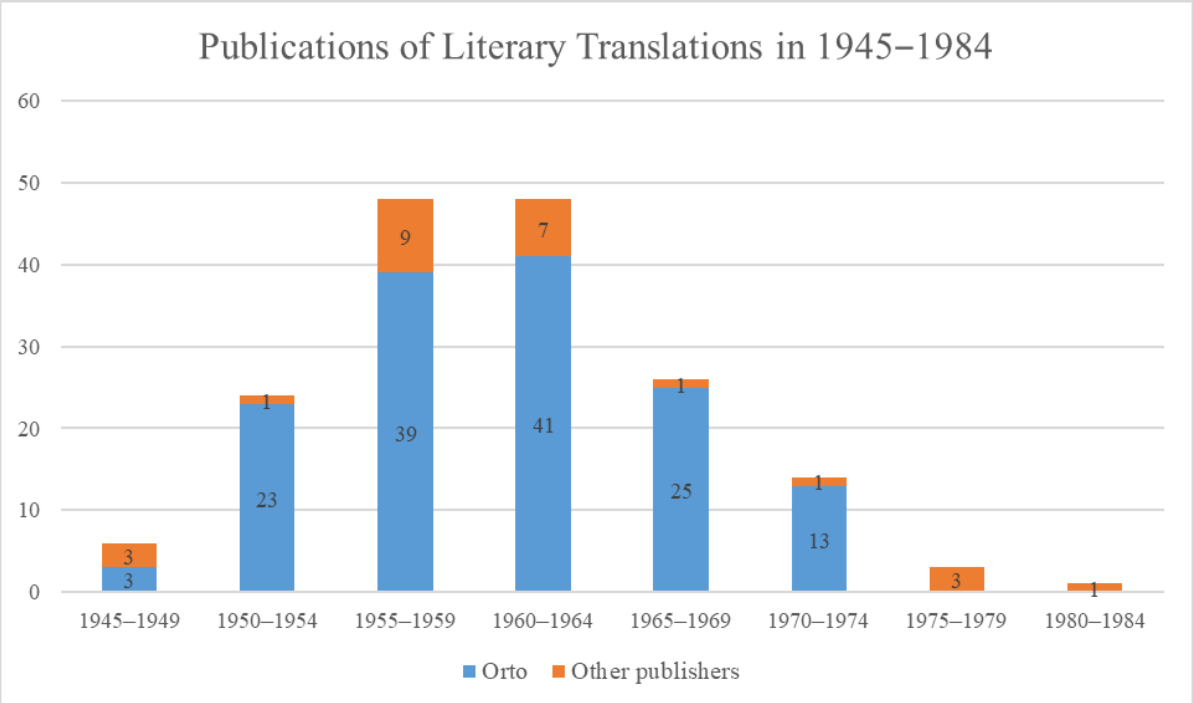


Figure 3. Publications of Literary Translations in 1945–1984. Calculated on the basis of Valmas (2003b) and the Estonian national bibliography database

Orto published both new translations as well as reprints of books which had been first translated into Estonian before 1940. The latter accounted for almost a third of all translations (Figure 4). Laur obtained many of these translations from Finnish libraries with the help of Finnish translator Kerttu Mustonen-Hukki (1899–1992) (KELDER 2000: 141, 148). Laur's

close ties with Mustonen-Hukki as well as his interest in Finnish culture, the feeling of tribal brotherhood with Finns led to a large number of translations of Finnish literature published by Orto – 43 titles were issued in 1945–1973 (30% of all literary translations by Orto). The most popular author was Mika Waltari with 18 titles. This interest in Finnish literature was also shared by Estonian readers and they were willing to buy translations of Finnish books, as the knowledge of the Finnish language was not common among émigrés (KELDER 2000: 152). The saleability of a book was always a very important argument for Laur. Preference was given to lighter readings which could appeal to a wide readership.

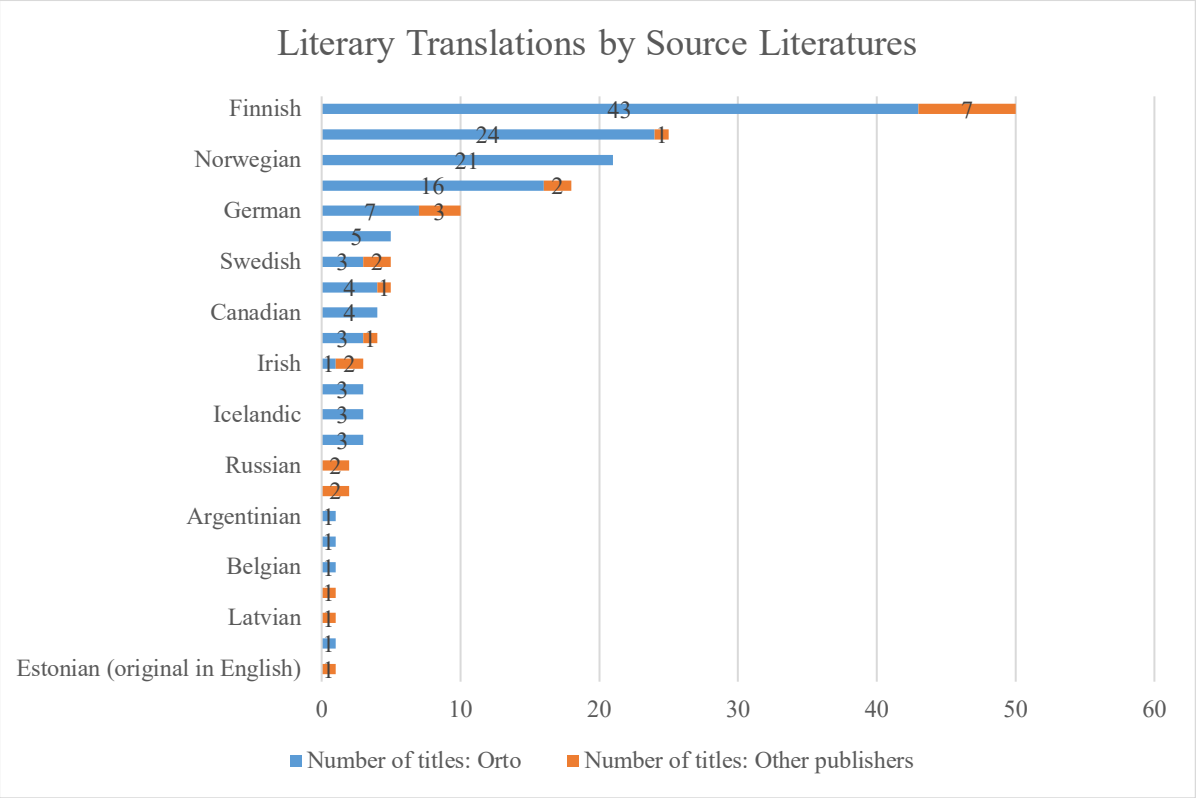


Figure 4. Literary translations published by Orto and other publishers by source literatures. Calculated on the basis of Valmas (2003b) and the Estonian national bibliography database

Research about the home interiors of Estonian émigrés in Canada found out that books by the publishing house Orto were very popular, nearly all the Estonian families in Canada bought them (KALAJÄRV 2012: 33). The production of Orto in Canada consisting largely of translations, the success of its publications demonstrates the favourable reception of literature by foreign authors among readers. Of course, buying Estonian-language literature was motivated both by literary interest as well as the desire to preserve Estonian identity.

According to literary scholar Hilve Rebane (1996: 69), the selection of works for translation was based on the fact that the readers were Estonian refugees who had to find their place in the societies of the receiving countries as well as to preserve their ethnic identity. Several translated novels depict the life of refugees in different countries, for example *Homo novus* by Anšlavs Eglītis, *An Answer from Limbo* and *The Luck of Ginger Coffey* by Brian Moore, *Kenen on syy* by Tuuli Reijonen, *Neiti talonmies* by Hilja Valtonen. Translations enabled readers to apprehend contemporary spiritual and social movements, as well as universal human issues. They provided readers with a sense of psychological security and fulcrum in the

world (REBANE 2008: 557). For example, many works by Mika Waltari (e.g.*Sinuhe, Turms, kuolematon*, *Mikael Karvajalka*, *Mikael Hakim*) issued by Orto treat the issues of human destiny against historical background.

Especially during the first years of exile, translations also served a practical function as an aid to learn the foreign language, for example, two books by Oscar Wilde (*Lord Arthur Savile's Crime* and *The Canterville Ghost* were issued with parallel texts in English and Estonian by the publishing house Kultuur in Germany. These also remained the only book translations published in the DP camps during the post-war years.[5]

Anne Valmas, researcher of Estonian publishing activities in the West, has listed the goals of émigré publishing as follows (VALMAS 2003a: 27):

- Preservation and development of culture
- Estonian-language education for Estonians
- Creating opportunities for self-expression for Estonians
- Introducing the problems of the Estonians to the world
- Mercantile motives

Most of these aims also apply to the publication of literary translations that contributed to the development of culture and education as well as served mercantile interests as the activities of the publishing house Orto demonstrate.

Political aspects also played a role in the selection of books for translation. Estonian researchers Anne Lange and Daniele Monticelli (2014: 98) have argued that authors in the Estonian exile community translated books that were banned in the Soviet Union and could not be published in Soviet Estonia; examples include Giovanni Guareschi's stories *Mondo piccolo. Don Camillo* (translation published by Estonian publishing house EMP in Stockholm in 1957) as well as Boris Pasternak's novel *Доктор Живаго* in 1960. They note that although the books produced by émigré publishers were banned in the Soviet Union, the material existence of a translation made it possible, in principle, to smuggle it into Soviet Estonia. It is interesting to observe that Andres Laur declined to publish the translation of the novel by Boris Pasternak due to it being "a communist propaganda work", clearly not having read the book. The right to its translation was obtained by another Estonian émigré publishing house, Vaba Eesti (Free Estonia). The translator of this novel into Estonian Artur Adson has claimed that Laur's criticism was motivated by disappointment as he had planned to publish the novel himself (VALMAS 2003a: 94).

Still, ideological considerations also emerged in the selection of works by Finnish authors. Laur was going to discard the novel *Hyvä on elämä* by the Finnish author Jussi Talvi because of its left-wing approach, stating that the attitude of Finns and Estonians towards socialism was totally different and Estonians hated it as communism in disguise (KELDER 2000: 149). Indeed, especially Estonians of the older generations in exile held anti-communist views.

[5] There were many people, writers and representatives of other occupations who translated literature for Orto and other Estonian publishers in exile. Among the more prolific translators were Harry Ingelman (1925–1976) who worked as a journalist in Australia and Valve-Saretok Ristkok (1911–2004), an author of light novels. The most prominent translator among the permanent collaborators of Orto was Johannes Aavik (1880–1973), a philologist who played a notable role in the modernisation of the Estonian language. They all translated from English and Finnish.

Nevertheless, the translation was published by Orto in 1963. But Laur never published the novel *Neito kulkee vetten päällä* of Finnish author Eeva Joenpelto that Mustonen-Hukki had recommended to him in 1955 (KELDER 2000: 149). Obviously, the story of unmarried mothers in a grim working-class environment did not correspond to Laur's taste.

The comparison of source literatures of translations published in exile in Latvian and in Estonian demonstrates a common interest in Scandinavian writers. This was a characteristic feature of Latvian and Estonian literary translations already before the World War II, when Knut Hamsun was among the most popular foreign authors in both countries. Apart from that, the proportions of source literatures of translations into Estonian and Latvian in exile were rather different. The Latvian-language publishers issued 265 titles of literary translations in the 1940s–1950s including numerous translations of German (30 titles) and French (27 titles), literature that was rare in Estonian (ZANDERS 2020: 21).

The publishing houses of both Latvian and Estonian diasporas published a notable number of translations from the literatures of their neighbouring countries – Finnish literature in the case of Estonia and Estonian literature for Latvians. Latvian exile publishers issued a large number of translations of Estonian literature, mainly reprints of pre-war editions, but also some new books by émigré writers (26 titles in all) (ZANDERS 2020: 21, 27). The differences in source literatures between translations into Estonian and Latvian demonstrate, beside cultural factors, the role of personal agents, publishers and translators, their preferences and interests.

The works of numerous writers were translated only in exile but not in Soviet Estonia, for example, Axel Munthe, Trygve Gulbranssen, Sigrid Undset, Kelvin Lindemann, Brian Moore, Herman Buller, Hilja Valtonen, Jussi Talvi, Esko Koivu, Kalle Päätalo etc. At the same time there were many authors (e.g. William Faulkner, John Steinbeck, Evelyn Waugh, Gerhart Hauptmann, Hermann Hesse, J. B. Priestly, Pär Lagerkvist, Frans Eemil Sillanpää, Mika Waltari, Eeva Kilpi, Pentti Holappa etc.) who were translated into Estonian both in exile as well as in Soviet Estonia, but the works selected for translation were different.

Still, as the two publishing contexts existed separately, there were some exceptions and different translations of the same work were published both in exile and in Soviet Estonia. For example, the novel *Don Segundo Sombra* by Ricardo Güiraldes was translated by Woldemar Mettus and published by Orto in Canada in 1961. In Soviet Estonia it was published in 1963 in translation of Tatjana Hallap. Other examples include a couple of translations from Finnish (Väino Linna, Mauri Sariola) and, most importantly, the translation of J. W. von Goethe's *Faust*. In exile it was translated by Ants Oras (mentioned above) and in Soviet Estonia by poet and translator of high-quality literature August Sang (1914–1969). The latter translation was first published in Tallinn in 1946 (I part) and 1967 (II part), reprinted in 1972 and 1983.[6] It is noteworthy that both these translations were reprinted in Estonia after it had regained independence in 1991 – the version by Sang in 2005 by the publishing house Tänapäev and

[6] Sang and Oras were both outstanding translators, who made a great contribution to the development of Estonian poetry translation. They had belonged to the same literary circle in the pre-war Republic of Estonia (SUMBERG 2006: 31). Oras emigrated in 1943, Sang stayed in Estonia. The translation by Sang was issued in the series of literature for schools and belonged to the list of required literature, thus it was widely known in Estonia. The sales of the translation by Oras in the limited Estonian diaspora market were rather low (SUMBERG 2006: 37–38).

by Oras in 2007 and 2016 by the University of Tartu Press. Both, though very different in style and approach, are critically acclaimed.

There were some other reprints of exile translations, especially in the early 1990s, but generally publishers were more interested in Estonian émigré authors whose works were largely unknown to readers. The works still considered valuable and attractive to readers have since been retranslated, for example the novels by Mika Waltari, John Steinbeck and Daphne du Maurier. In case of Mika Waltari's *Sinuhe* the publisher of Waltari in Finland and his heirs did not allow the old translation by Johannes Aavik to be published in Estonia (as was planned to celebrate the centenary of Waltari's birth (2008)). Thus, a new translation was made by Piret Saluri and published by the publishing house Varrak in 2009 (PEEGEL 2010).

Same as the translations published in the Republic of Estonia and in the Soviet Union in 1918–1940, the translations published in exile and in Soviet Estonia in 1944–1991 are complementary, including translations of different authors and works. In the exceptional case of the parallel translations of *Faust*, the isolation of homeland and exile cultures led to the emergence of two masterful interpretations of the masterpiece of world literature.

**Conclusions**

The Soviet Union with the domination of political dimension and state-run institutions governing cultural production is an example of a communist country where the production and circulation of books and periodicals was highly politicized from the outset. Here, the cultural role of translations was intertwined with political functions, creating a specific value system of writers acceptable for translation. The agents involved in this process – the publishers, editors and translators of Estonian publishing houses in the Soviet Union were true communists who acted in harmony with the party line. This also applied to publishing of literature including translations. The selection of authors and works corresponded to the all-union translation policy and hierarchy of source literatures, giving priority, especially during the 1930s, to Russian literature.

That cannot be said about the readers – Estonian farmers and workers – who, according to historical data from the 1920s, were indifferent towards politics. Considering their cultural activity, literature, including translations, was the part of book production which could interest them the most. This is illustrated, for example, by the numerous publications of plays that could be staged by amateur theatre groups as well as read silently.

In the democratic West, there was no political pressure, although ideological aspects were present in the selection of texts, combined with commercial considerations. The leading publisher of translations Andres Laur strongly strived for the profitability of the company and primarily attempted to issue bestsellers. Operating in exile, on the small market of the Estonian community, non-market forces, notably state institutions, were not involved in the construction of supply and demand here (as described by Bourdieu).

However, not all the agents participating in the publishing of literary translations were oriented primarily towards commercial success, but selected texts based on their literary or intellectual value, as in the case of Ants Oras' translations of ancient literature or Faust by Goethe. The literary translations, along with the works by Estonian authors, played a notable role in maintaining the collective identity of the Estonian minority both in the Soviet Union and

in the West. Although the number of translations was small, their availability offered an opportunity to read world literature not only in Russian, English or in another foreign language, but also in their mother tongue. Language being the central characteristic of the Estonians' identity, its role cannot be overestimated. The literary translations issued by and for the Eastern and Western sub-diasporas thus performed both similar (e.g. cultural, preserving the mother tongue) and dissimilar functions (e.g. political, economic).

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