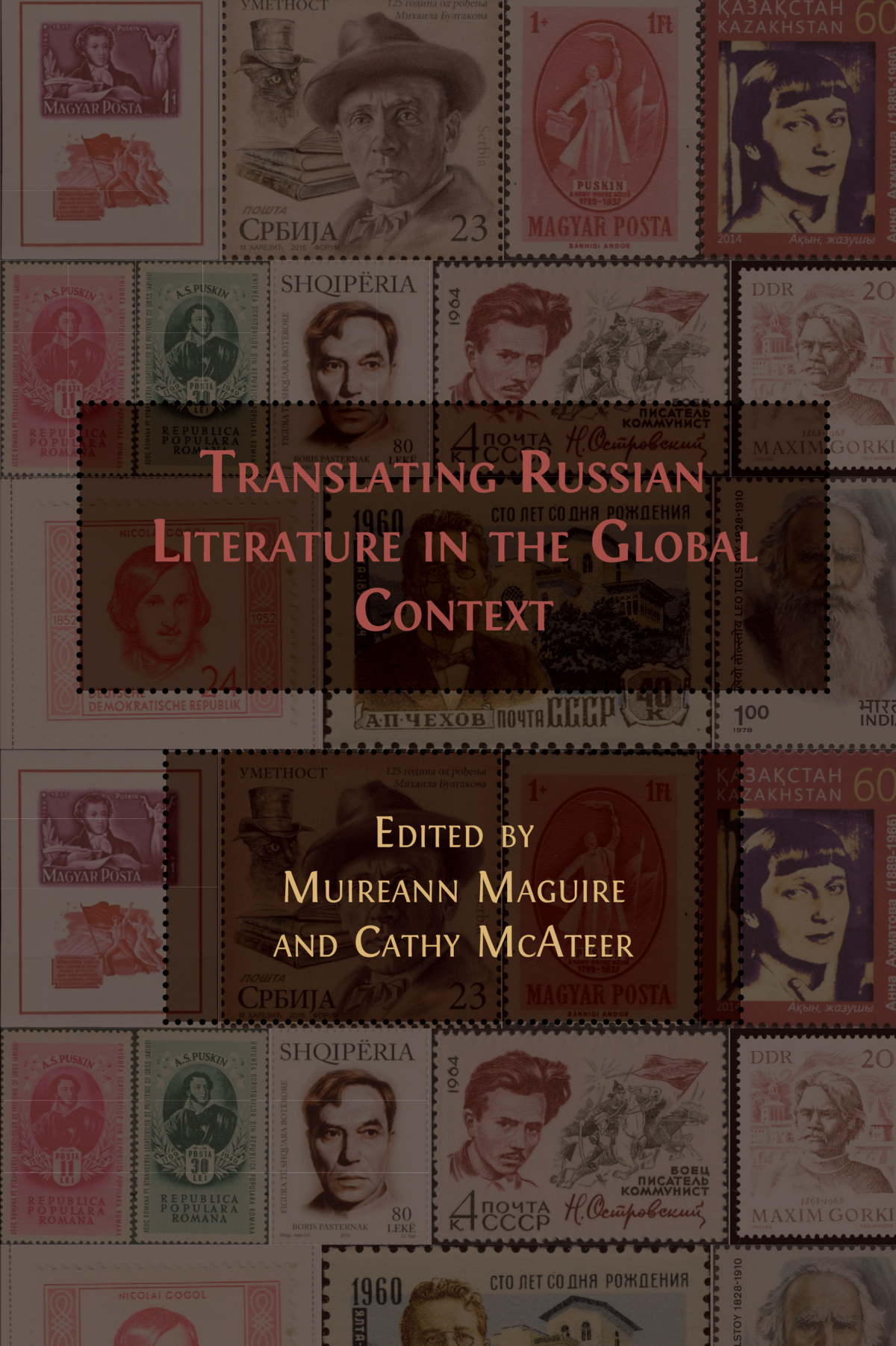

Translating Russian Literature in the Global Context

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Estonia

Russian Literature in Estonia between 1918 and 1940 with Special Reference to Dostoevsky[1]

Anne Lange and Aile Möldre

Translation is "a cultural practice interacting with other practices in a historical continuum".[2] This definition by Theo Hermans foregrounds the need to understand translation as a social phenomenon dependent on its cultural and political environment, in both synchronic and diachronic perspectives. Our study of translations of Russian literature in Estonia between the two world wars originates from this premise.

Since Estonia had been part of Imperial Russia and therefore subject to its policy of Russification, Estonian intellectuals of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries received schooling in Estonia only in the Russian language. This period of Russification in Estonia has been conditionally defined as lasting from the second half of the 1880s until 1905.[3] It was aimed at unifying the Russian Empire and standardising administration, while also ending the autonomy of the Baltic provinces, which derived from the privileges of the Baltic-German nobility. Historian Toivo U. Raun has distinguished between administrative (e.g. judicial or police reforms) and cultural (linguistic, educational, or religious) changes.

1 The research for this chapter was supported by an Estonian Research Council Grant held by Prof. Daniele Monticelli at Tallinn University ('Translation in History, Estonia 1850–2010: Texts, Agents, Institutions and Practices' (grant no. PRG 1206), https://translationinhistory.tlu.ee/en/people/.

2 Theo Hermans, *Translation in Systems. Descriptive and System-oriented Theories Explained* (Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing, 1999), p. 118.

3 Ea Jansen, 'Aleksander III venestusreformid ja Eesti avalikkus' ['Russifying Reforms of Alexander III and the Estonian Public Opinion'], *Acta Historica Tallinnensia*, 3 (1999), 39–65 (p. 39).

 https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0340.03

Russification led to the introduction of Russian as the language of administration at all but the lowest levels and as the language of education at all levels, from primary schools to the University of Tartu, by the end of the nineteenth century.[4] Estonian-language private schools and elementary education were allowed only after the 1905 Revolution in Russia. While, before Russification, few Estonian intellectuals were Russophone, afterwards the Russian language was widely used, enabling Estonians to study in Russian universities, primarily in St Petersburg. Studying abroad fostered interest in Russian culture and stimulated translation from Russian.

After Estonia became an independent state in 1918, Estonian became the official state language. It was now used at all levels of the educational system. According to the 1934 law on public secondary schools, English, German, French, and Russian were taught as foreign languages. Secondary school students were supposed to learn two foreign languages.[5] While in the 1920s, German was usually the first foreign language of choice, secondary school language policy changed over the years and on 27 November 1936, English was decreed the first foreign language in secondary schools.[6] The Russian language, as an elective subject, held a rather marginal position. The 1934 census demonstrated that 17.5% of the 1,126,413 residents of Estonia knew the Russian language. This figure included ethnic Russians living in Estonia (8.1% of the total population).[7] Thus translations from Russian were needed because "the language of its masterpieces is not understood or not understood in its details".[8] Russian literature remained available in the original, as the contents of the public libraries of Tartu, the university town of Estonia, show. Even in 1939, after twenty years of national independence with Estonian as the state language, 43.4% of its literature was in Russian. The situation was different elsewhere: in Tallinn, the share of Russophone literature was only 23.5%, and in Paide, a small town in central Estonia, it was 2.3%.[9] The average percentage of

4 Toivo U. Raun, 'Part Four: The Estonians', in *Russification in the Baltic Provinces and Finland, 1855–1914*, ed. by Edward C. Thaden (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981), pp. 287–356.

5 'Keskkoolide seadus' ['Law of Public Secondary Schools'], in *Eesti rahvahariduse ja kultuuriala korraldus* [*Organisation of Estonian Public Education and Culture*], ed. by Aleksander Kurvits (Tallinn: Riigi Trükikoja Trükk ja Kirjastus, 1938), pp. 105–11.

6 *Riigi Teataja* [*State Gazette*], 98 (1936), p. 2078.

7 Kadri Koreinik and Tõnu Tender, 'Eesti keeltest rahvaloendustel' ['Languages of Estonia in Censuses'], *Emakeele Seltsi aastaraamat*, 59 (2013), 77–102 (p. 86), http://doi:10.3176/esa59.04.

8 August Annist, 'Meie iseseisvusaegne tõlkeklassika ja Eesti Kirjanduse Selts' ['Translations of Canonical Texts in our Years of Independence'], *Eesti Kirjandus*, 5 (1939), 198–221 (p. 199). All translations from non-English sources, including Tammsaare's fiction, are by the present authors unless otherwise indicated.

9 Aliide Tuisk, 'Avalikud raamatukogud' ['Public Libraries'], in *Eesti Statistika. Recueil mensuel du Bureau Central de Statistique de l'Estonie*, 221:4 (1940), 161–66 (p. 162).

literature in Russian in Estonian public libraries was 23.5% in towns and 4.0% in the countryside, where 95.1% of literature was in Estonian.[10]

This chapter will begin with a survey of translations of Russian literature made between 1918 and 1940. Our focus is on translations published as separate books. We will then discuss the impact of Fedor Dostoevsky on the poetics of Anton Hansen Tammsaare, a major Estonian prose author of the first half of the twentieth century and a translator of Dostoevsky. We view Tammsaare as an author and translator working in the interculture of his own artistic endeavours,[11] besides those authors he read and translated, who in turn influenced his own novels.

Translations of Russian Literature in 1918–40

The establishment of the independent Republic of Estonia in 1918 was followed by the War of Independence (1918–20), in which Estonians resisted invasion by Soviet Russia. The book market was empty after the war, creating a great need for diverse types of publication. Thus, state legislation and a financial support system from public funds set the preconditions for publishing activities. Many private publishing firms were established, and title production increased considerably. Although economic crises, especially the Great Crash of 1929, had a temporary negative impact on the publishing industry, annual growth continued throughout the period. Output increased from 658 titles in 1920 to 1660 titles in 1939.[12] This increase ensured a constant influx of new texts and re-prints. Adaptation to market fluctuations led to a decrease in print runs (that is, the number of copies of a book printed at one time) and a shift in the selection of texts for publishing. Smaller print runs increased printing costs and the nominal prices of books, which, in turn, also reduced the number of purchases. This effect can also be seen in the dynamics of publishing translations of literary fiction for adults. During the short, local economic crisis in the early 1920s, the number of translations decreased from ninety-five titles in 1924 to fifty-six in 1925. The publishing of translations quickly recovered, reaching 148 titles in 1929. Yet another economic crisis at the beginning of the 1930s led to a decline (seventy titles in 1933), followed by an increase during the economically stable second half of the 1930s when the number of translations increased to 140 titles in 1936.[13] Translation publishing was also affected by Estonia's signature of the Berne Convention in 1927, which complicated the process for obtaining

10 Tuisk, 'Avalikud raamatukogud', p. 163.

11 Anthony Pym, *Method in Translation History* (Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing, 1998), pp. 177–92.

12 *Eestikeelne raamat 1918–1940: Eesti retrospektiivne rahvusbibliograafia* [*Estonian Book 1918–1940: Estonian Retrospective National Bibliography*], ed. by Anne Ainz and Leili Tenno, 4 vols (Tallinn: Eesti Rahvusraamatukogu, 2012–13), I (2012), p. 102.

13 Aile Möldre, 'Ilukirjanduse tõlked 20. sajandi esimese poole Eesti ja Soome raamatutoodangus (1900–1940)' ['Translations of Belles-Lettres in the Book

translation licences; new royalty requirements could be challenging for smaller publishers.

In 1918–40, translations of literary fiction (excluding books for children) from the Russian language ranked fourth by number of titles (136), coming after translations from English (570), German (465) and French (199).[14] The publication of translations from Russian had been increasing in Estonia since the 1880s. In view of the predominantly peasant readership, preference was initially given to translations of folktales and a limited selection of works by canonical writers.[15] In the early twentieth century, attention turned to contemporary authors, such as Anton Chekhov, Maksim Gorky, and especially Lev Tolstoy. Although the aesthetic programme of the influential Young Estonia literary movement, established in 1905 with the aim of modernising Estonian culture, focused first and foremost on the French, Scandinavian, and Italian literatures, its members took an interest in new trends within Russian literature—primarily Symbolism—as national borders do not determine literature.[16] In the first decades of the twentieth century, these translations were not published as separate books but in collections or periodicals. For example, short stories by Fedor Sologub and Valerii Briusov were included in the collection of translations *Selected Pages* (*Valitud leheküljed*, 1912) by Friedebert Tuglas (1886–1971), one of the leaders of the Young Estonia movement. Translation of Symbolist authors was part of the Europeanising characteristic of Estonian literary development in the early twentieth century.[17]

The Republic of Estonia's relationship with Russian culture was ambivalent. On the one hand, the Russification experienced in tsarist Russia and the fight against the Bolsheviks during the War of Independence had provoked animosity towards anything originating in Russia. On the other hand, the Estonian intelligentsia, educated through the Russian language and often in Russian universities, was curious about the development of Russian literature and culture. The writer and translator Johannes Semper (1892–1970) argued in a 1922 article that, following independence, Estonian observers could compare and assess different cultural phenomena more neutrally. Estonia's position

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Production of Estonia and Finland during the first half of the 20th Century (1900–1940)'], *Methis*, 9–10 (2012), 88–103 (p. 96).

14 The figures are calculated based on the Estonian national bibliography database ERB, available at: https://www.ester.ee/search~S95*est. In 1940, only books issued by the publishers from the independent Republic of Estonia during the first half of the year are included in the statistics.

15 Sergei Issakov, *Arhiivide peidikuist* [*From the Caches of Archives*] (Tallinn: Eesti Raamat, 1983), pp. 274–75.

16 Pascale Casanova, 'Literature as a World', *New Left Review*, 31 (2005), 71–90.

17 Lea Pild, 'Küsimus "vene mõjust" Friedebert Tuglase artiklis "Valeri Brjussov"' ['The Question of Russian Influence on Friedebert Tuglas' article "Valeri Brjussov"'], *Methis*, 1–2 (2008), 178–85 (p. 183), https://doi.org/10.7592/methis.v1i1–2.482.

between Europe and Russia obliges the nation to take an interest in successive Russian cultural trends.[18] The social context of translation has been discussed by Johan Heilbron and Gisèle Sapiro, who distinguish between political, economic, and cultural dynamics that affect the relations of exchange. Translation activity is dependent on the space of reception and social demand, as shaped by relevant intermediaries.[19] The Estonian case demonstrates the relative autonomy of cultural exchange from political factors, facilitated by various intermediary agents and readers' demand for Russian literature. Literary translations from Russian steadily began to appear. As a rule, the number of Russian titles issued per year corresponded to the total output of translated literary fiction, relative to the economic situation. For example, only one fiction book translated from Russian was published between 1933 and 1935, compared to thirteen such titles in 1939.

By examining the genres and authors published in translation, we can distinguish between literary trends in the 1920s and 1930s. Translations of plays accounted for more than half (57%) of all translations from Russian during the 1920s. The same applied to translations from German, but not so much to translations from English, French, and other languages. Thus, plays were primarily translated from historically dominant, familiar literatures. The repertoire of professional theatres, however, was quite varied and not focused solely on German or Russian plays. Theatrical activity thrived during this period: besides the seven professional theatres in Estonia at the time, there were also many amateur theatres. Numerous song and drama societies had already been established during the rise of Estonian nationalism in the second half of the nineteenth century and these activities increased during the years of independence, when the number of amateur theatrical associations exceeded 300.[20] Plays were performed during social events organised by societies in community centres and schools for the general public, often followed by dancing. Therefore, comedies and farces dominated the choice of plays that were also popular in professional theatres at that time. The most popular Russian author was Arkadii Averchenko, five of whose comedies were published in Estonian between 1918 and 1925. Plays were often translated by actors or directors, whose translations could be rather dilettante. It was customary to publish the scripts of plays performed in professional theatres, often as cheap mimeographed

18 J. Semper, 'Vene tulevasest kultuurist' ['About the Future Culture of Russia'], *Kirjandus-kunst-teadus: 'Päevalehe' erileht*, 23 March 1922, p. 97.

19 Johan Heilbron and Gisèle Sapiro, 'Outline for a Sociology of Translation: Current Issues and Future Prospects', in *Constructing a Sociology of Translation,* ed. by Michaela Wolf and Alexandra Fukari (Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: Walter Benjamins, 2007), pp. 93–107.

20 Jaak Rähesoo, *Eesti teater: ülevaateteos. 1, Üldareng: "Vanemuine", "Estonia"* [*Estonian Theatre: Overview. 1, General Development: The Theatres "Vanemuine", "Estonia"*] (Tallinn: Eesti Teatriliit, 2011), p. 219.

reproductions, enabling performances to be staged all over the country and to be read by wider audiences. The leading publisher specialising in plays was T. Mutsu Theatrical Publishing House, which also issued translations from Russian.

However, the list of drama translations was not confined to comedies. For example, the dramatisation of Fedor Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* (*Prestuplenie i nakazanie*, 1866) by J. A. Delier, translated by the poet and theatre critic Artur Adson (1889–1977), was published by the Drama Theatre (Tallinn) in 1921. Adson was a literary adviser to the Drama Theatre in the early 1920s. He also translated Leonid Andreev's symbolist drama *The Life of Man* (*Zhizn' cheloveka*, 1906), published in Estonian in 1921 (re-printed in 1927). Comedies by Nikolai Gogol were translated by writer Richard Kullerkupp. During the 1930s, audiences' theatrical tastes changed, pivoting towards more serious drama. Meanwhile, new works by Estonian authors superseded the abundance of translated plays.

Prose translations were dominated by stories and novellas, although several Russian novels were also issued during the 1920s. Among the authors translated were Aleksandr Kuprin, Evgenii Chirikov, Mikhaíl Artsybashev, Ivan Bunin, and other émigrés from Russia. The few publications from Soviet writers included a collection of short stories by Panteleimon Romanov and Lev Gumilevskii's novel *Dog Alley* (*Sobachii pereulok,* 1926), both of which critiqued the supposed extinction of moral values during the social upheaval in the Soviet Union in the 1920s. Both writers were well known in Soviet Russia in the 1920s and 1930s but later condemned by official criticism and soon forgotten. They were not canonical Soviet authors who created highly politicised texts in accordance with the Communist Party line. The topic of moral conflict, different attitudes towards love and family were also treated in Nikolai Nikitin's novel *The Crime of Kirik Rudenko* (*Prestuplenie Kirika Rudenko*, 1927), which was published in Estonian by Loodus in 1933. Nikitin's later fate was different; he adopted the official Soviet line, receiving the Stalin Prize in 1951. Loodus also included works by Aleksei Tolstoy, Aleksandr Neverov, and Lev Nikulin in their fiction series after the early 1930s.

Reviewing the collection of feuilletons published under the cover title *Agitator* (*Agitaator*) by Mikhail Zoshchenko, issued in Estonian in 1928, the writer and translator Oskar Truu stated that in addition to his interesting characters, Zoshchenko's depictions of everyday life under Communist rule were politically relevant to Estonian readers.[21] Similarly, Russian emigrants read Soviet authors not only for aesthetic pleasure, but out of curiosity, or for informative-cognitive interest as the literary scholar Sergei Isakov put it.[22] Russian émigré-run

21 O. Truu, 'M. Zoštšenko: Agitaator' ['M. Zoshchenko: Agitator'], *Eesti Kirjandus*, 4 (1930), 200–01.

22 Sergei Isakov, *Kul'tura russkoi emigratsii v Ėstonii 1918–1940: Stat'i. Ocherki. Arkhivnye publikatsii* [*The Culture of Russian Emigrants in Estonia in 1918–1940:*

publishing houses in Latvia (such as Literatura, Knizhnaia Lavka Pisatelei, Zhizn' i Kul'tura, and M. Didkovskii), in addition to those Latvian publishers who issued books in Russian (e.g. Grāmatu Draugs), provided some of the channels through which Russian-language books reached Estonia. Zoshchenko, Romanov, and Il'ia Ehrenburg were the most popular Soviet writers for Russian-language publishers in Latvia, with the largest number of titles.[23] Their works also attracted the attention of established Estonian publishers of literary fiction like Loodus, Noor-Eesti, or Valik, who then commissioned translations into Estonian.

Some works by Soviet Russian writers were translated and produced by individuals who were interested in a particular author or subject. For example, the poet Jaan Kurn was among the first translators of Vladimir Maiakovskii in Estonia. The latter's Futurist poems inspired Kurn's own literary output, published under the pseudonym Ralf Rond. Kurn's translations of Maiakovskii's poems were published as *A Cloud in Trousers* (*Pilv püksten*, 1930), which included mainly pre-revolutionary lyrics by the poet. Reviewing this collection for an Estonian literary journal, the philologist Johannes Silvet criticised the quality of the translation, but welcomed the publication of Maiakovskii in Estonian.[24]

After the 1920s, the distribution of Soviet literature and Soviet-approved canonical Russian writings was organised by the All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, whose representative joined the Soviet Embassy in Estonia in 1927. Books and periodicals published in the Soviet Union were delivered to various Estonian cultural organisations as well as to several prominent intellectuals.[25] As an authority from a Communist country, its activities were politicised and ideological considerations left their mark on cultural exchange. The society also organised trips for Estonian writers to the Soviet Union; they brought back Soviet books, and published overviews of trends in Soviet literature and their travel impressions in Estonian literary journals. These imported books, however, did not stimulate translations of Soviet literature. The poet Johannes Vares-Barbarus (1890–1946), known for his leftist views, visited Moscow in 1928. In a letter to Johannes Semper, Vares-Barbarus admits that even the most popular works were quite boring and unattractive to readers, especially poetry "where I found very few eye-catching and heart-healing lines".[26]

Articles. Overviews. Archival Publications] (Tallinn: Aleksandra, 2011), p. 107.

23 Isakov, *Kul'tura russkoi emigratsii v Ėstonii*, p.110.

24 J. Silvet, 'Vl. Majakovski. Pilv püksten' ['Vl. Maiakovskii. A Cloud in Trousers'], *Eesti Kirjandus*, 10 (1930), 490–92.

25 Karl Martinson, 'Eesti kirjanike suhteid Nõukogude Liiduga kahel sõjaeelsel aastakümnel' ['The Contacts of Estonian Writers with the Soviet Union during the Two Pre-War Decades'], *Keel ja Kirjandus*, 12 (1972), 731–42 (p. 734).

26 Jaak Valge, *Punased. I.* [*The Reds*] (Tallinn: Tallinna Ülikooli Eesti Demograafia Instituut; Rahvusarhiiv, 2014), p. 278.

Several Estonian organisations (libraries, museums, scientific organisations) maintained direct contact with their Soviet counterparts and acquired Soviet publications through exchange or purchase. Some publishers had business contacts with the Estonian-language publishing houses that operated in the Soviet Union, issuing books for the more than 154,000 Estonians resident there. Although the trade focused on Estonian-language books, the Estonian publishers were also interested in Russian-language publications.[27] Following the shift to Socialist Realism during the 1930s, the monotonous new Soviet literature created under conditions of strict censorship remained distant and alien to Estonian readers. Thus, no such books can be found among the publications of established publishers. However, some notable works of Socialist Realism were issued by small, leftist publishing houses. For example, the publishing house Sõprus (Friendship), which issued publications by the Estonian Socialist Workers' Party and its youth organisation, brought out Gorky's novel *Mother* (*Mat'*, 1906) in 1936. It was translated by the writer and youth organisation leader Nigol Andresen; Gorky was one of his favourite authors. The text was acquired through the All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, and the Estonian print run of the book was significant (2000 copies), distributed mainly among the working class via cultural and other societies without the mediation of bookstores.[28] Another example is the novel *And Quiet Flows the Don* (*Tikhii Don*, 1928–32) by Mikhail Sholokhov, published in Estonian in 1936–37. Both volumes were translated by August Koit and issued by the publishing house Kalev; the latter had been founded in Tartu in 1936 by left-wing students aiming to translate and publish Soviet literature.

However, from the end of the 1920s and especially during the second half of the 1930s, the focus of translations of Russian literary fiction remained on nineteenth-century classic authors. By that time, living standards in Estonia and the level of education had risen, and readers' preferences shifted to novels. In order to study the wishes and expectations of its readership, Loodus conducted a survey in 1928 among readers of its fiction series *Looduse universaal-biblioteek* (LUB, 1927–31; Universal Library of Loodus). Just over two and a half thousand respondents named more than 700 writers whose works they wished to see included in the series. The five most popular authors were Knut Hamsun, Henrik Ibsen, Jack London, Lev Tolstoy, and Fedor Dostoevsky. Other Russian authors among the top forty were Maksim Gorky, Nikolai Gogol, and Ivan Turgenev.[29] Thus, the results demonstrate Estonian readers' demand for Russian literature.

27 Aile Möldre and Tiiu Reimo, 'Publishing Activities of Estonians in St. Petersburg before the Second World War (1918–1937)', *Knygotyra,* 50 (2008), 114–31 (pp. 124–26).

28 Nigol Andresen, 'Maksim Gorki ja Eesti' ['Maksim Gorky and Estonia'], *Looming*, 8 (1961), 12, 1227–245 (p. 1241).

29 J.K., '"LUBi" ankeedi tulemustest' ['Results of the LUB Survey'], *Kirjanduslikke Uudiseid,* 19 (1928), 3, 6–8 (p. 6).

These sought-after writers' works were afterwards published in various series by Loodus, as well as other literary publishers. The circle of published canonical writers was not limited to the favourite authors of the survey respondents, but also included Ivan Goncharov, Vladimir Korolenko, Anton Chekhov, Mikhail Lermontov, and Aleksandr Pushkin. A selection of Pushkin's poetry (published as *Valik luulet*, or *Selected Poems*, by the Estonian Literary Society in 1936) was compiled by the outstanding literary scholar Ants Oras (1900–82), who also translated most of the poems included. This collection was the only book of 'classic' Russian poetry published in the period 1918–40. The hundredth anniversary of Pushkin's death in 1937 was widely celebrated in Estonia both by Russian emigrants and Estonian cultural organisations, which arranged lectures, exhibitions, festive meetings, concerts, and other events.

Publications of Russian literature, however, culminated with the *Complete Works* (*Kogutud teosed*) of Dostoevsky in fifteen volumes, issued in 1939–40. Dostoevsky appealed to Estonian readers while enjoying popularity in the West. As literary scholar Lea Pild has stated, certain Russian classics were considered part of the Western European literary canon in the translation culture of the period. According to Iurii Lotman, introducing external cultural structures into the world of a given culture assumes the existence of a common language. For communication to occur, the receptive culture must 'interiorise' the image of the exterior culture within its own world. This process is inevitably dialectical and contradictory, with levels of meaning lost on both sides.[30] Pild argues that the modes of interiorisation of Russian classics gradually became established in Estonia and associated with the latter's 'native' heritage.[31]

This is in line with Maria Tymoczko's proposal to enlarge the concept of translation beyond its usage in ordinary speech (where it primarily means interlingual translation, the reproduction of a text in another language), to include the concept of transculturation.[32] The latter is broadly defined as the transmission of cultural characteristics from one cultural group to another, encompassing the spread of literary systems that are integrated with previous practices. The poetics of writing have always changed, everywhere, under the influence of texts written in another language. The world republic of letters (to use Pascale Casanova's formulation) enters into relation with national practices, since literature does not recognise the "political and linguistic boundaries

30 Iurii Lotman, *Culture, Memory and History: Essays in Cultural Semiotics*, ed. by Marek Tamm, trans. by Brian James Baer (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), pp. 76–77.

31 Lea Pild, 'Tõlkimine kui interioriseerimine: Friedebert Tuglas Aleksei Tolstoi romaani "Peeter Esimene" tõlkijana' ['Translation as Interiorization: Friedebert Tuglas as Translator of the Novel *Peter the First* by Aleksei Tolstoy'], *Tõlkija Hääl*, 6 (2018), 136–48 (p. 136).

32 Maria Tymoczko, *Enlarging Translation, Empowering Translators* (Manchester and Kinderhook, NY: St. Jerome Publishing, 2007; repr. 2010, 2014), pp. 107–39.

of nations".[33] One author's technique ramifies and becomes a performative part of another's repertoire, 'transculturated' to the extent that it ceases to be perceived as alien. Verse metres, for example, whether learned from the original or a translation, become integrated within various literary cultures without having originated within them. Translation, understood as transculturation, is instrumental in shaping the receiving culture.

Tammsaare and Dostoevsky: Direct References

Transculturation is particularly relevant to the poetics of Fedor Dostoevsky in the work of Anton Hansen Tammsaare (1878–1940), who has always acknowledged the influence of Dostoevsky on his imaginary landscape. Born into a peasant family in central Estonia, Tammsaare attended local parish schools, then a private secondary school in Tartu, and later Tartu University, where he studied law. In 1911, he began to suffer serious health problems; he also started writing cultural criticism for Estonian periodicals while publishing his own fiction. From 1919, he was a professional writer. In 1928, interviewed on his fiftieth birthday, Tammsaare admitted that Dostoevsky, with his "excruciating" psychology, had convinced him that literature is capable of representing human realities beneath their overt manifestation.[34] In 1934, after completing his iconic pentalogy *Truth and Justice* (*Tõde ja õigus*, 1926–33), he expanded this statement in an interview with Elsa Heporauta, a Finnish writer and journalist. Here he attributed his decision to write a panoramic account based on the ideas that had both motivated and hampered the Estonian people during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to his reading of *Crime and Punishment* (in Russian). He had been a student at the time (1898–1903) at the private Hugo Treffner School in Tartu (then known as Iurev). Reading the novel "depressed and shocked me," he told Heporauta. "I had never read a book like this before, and our own literature, in comparison with it, seemed suddenly trivial—it seemed so cold and careless about men and all living creatures."[35]

The seeds for Tammsaare's ambitious idea to encompass the mental landscapes of his people took another quarter of a century to mature before he began writing *Truth and Justice*. This fictional work had to be a pentalogy, Tammsaare had decided long before, "because we have to fight with four forces: land, God, society, and ourselves, and then comes surrender, resignation."[36]

33 Pascale Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters*, trans. by Malcolm DeBevoise (London and Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), p. xi.

34 Harald Tammer, 'A.H. Tammsaare juubeli eel' ['Before the Jubilee of A.H. Tammsaare'], *Päevaleht*, 26 January 1928, p. 6.

35 Elsa Heporauta, 'Huomattavinta elämässani?' ['Of Importance in my Life?'], *Suomen Kuvalehti*, 34 (1934), 1206–207.

36 Ibid., p. 1207.

The New York Estonian émigré magazine *Our Way* (*Meie Tee*) summed up Tammsaare's synopsis of the pentalogy thus:

> We begin like moles digging the earth and trusting in God. Gradually we unbind ourselves from land and God, construct a sophisticated society and, looking for personal happiness, build our houses even on sand or between winds and water so that they collapse next moment. People perish, cultures perish, and we begin again from land, trusting in God.[37]

The stimulus to translate Dostoevsky came to Tammsaare in November 1922 when the Estonian Writers' Union, acting with publisher Albert Org, announced a competition for the translation of world literature. Tammsaare signed a contract to translate *Crime and Punishment* by 1 July 1923. The translation was completed on time and Tammsaare won the competition, but the publisher went bankrupt. Only in 1929 was the manuscript issued by the Loodus publishing house, which had bought the rights. The only contemporary review of Tammsaare's translation in an Estonian daily, by novelist Albert Kivikas (1898–1978), stated that Russian literature had become remote from Estonian readers' experience. Kivikas listed three possible factors for this: boredom (since Russian had long been the main compulsory language in schools); political developments in Soviet Russia; and/or the then-fashionable cultural orientation towards Western literatures. The reviewer added, however, that Dostoevsky's novel, as "one of the most typical and deepest examples of Russian literature" is of greater importance for younger generations no longer exposed to Russification.[38]

Contemporary reviews are revealing sources for the context of translations. Kivikas' words demonstrate that Tammsaare was translating in a milieu not unanimously receptive of his work. But he had always been writing and translating against the tide, working not for the multitude but rather to advance artistic consciousness independently of capricious commercial fashions. Tammsaare's 1931 translation of Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim* (1900) had also received guarded reviews, correctly predicting a limited readership. Yet Tammsaare, convinced that "a book can save many a moment from transience", used his introduction to *Lord Jim* to urge readers towards authors who re-create the moral and emotional atmosphere of a specific place and a time.[39] Tammsaare, a polymath who read English, French, German, and Russian, effectively inhabited Casanova's titular "world republic of letters". He wished "to patiently retie the threads that link these two universes [the world and literature], which otherwise are condemned

37 Andres Pranspill, 'Tammsaare "Tõde ja õigus"' ['Tammsaare's *Truth and Justice*'], *Meie Tee*, 12 (1934), 5–6 (p. 5).

38 Albert Kivikas, 'F.M. Dostojevski Kuritöö ja karistus' ['F.M. Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*'], *Päevaleht*, 27 June 1929, p. 4.

39 A. H. Tammsaare, 'Midagi ilust ja "Anna Holmist"' ['On Beauty and "Anna Holm"'], *Vaba Sõna*, 1 (1914), 39–42 (p. 39).

to exist in parallel without ever meeting each other".[40] As the above-mentioned readers' survey by Loodus indicates, he was not alone in his quest; Estonian audiences wanted more translations of Ibsen, Tolstoy, and Turgenev.

Many authors have been compared to Tammsaare (Shakespeare, Goethe, Nietzsche, Oscar Wilde, Joseph Conrad, and Knut Hamsun, among others) but Dostoevsky remains his preeminent influence. In 2014, Mihkel Mutt, a contemporary Estonian cultural critic and novelist, published an article entitled 'Tammevsky and Dostosaare' examining the similarities between these two writers.[41] Both, he argues, wrote about a cross-section of their respective societies with emphasis on the middle classes; their narratives share common motifs, which Tammsaare had gained from reading Dostoevsky. For example, in Tammsaare's 1917 story 'Shades' ('Varjundid'), a character (significantly called Sonia, like *Crime and Punishment*'s Sonia Marmeladova) reads Dostoevsky's *The Insulted and the Injured*. As Sonia is dying of tuberculosis, she admits that she should not read a depressing text like this, "but—I want to [...] A few pages here or there—I have read it before—and I am already intoxicated".[42] There are also thematic parallels with Dostoevsky in Tammsaare's *Truth and Justice*: Tiina, a character who arrives in the second volume of the pentalogy, is crippled like Liza Khokhlakova in *The Brothers Karamazov* (*Brat'ia Karamazovy*, 1881). Thanks to an apparent miracle, she stands on her feet. There are further parallels between Tiina and *Crime and Punishment*'s Sonia, who share a deep and innocent faith in God, Christ, and angels. Yet another analogy: a major character in Tammsaare's pentalogy has a troubled daydream about the eyes of a beaten dog, just as the eyes of a beaten horse trouble Raskolnikov in his dream. Although these references to Dostoevsky are overt, all Tammsaare's sentences are undeniably his own. The recycling of Dostoevskian motifs does not impinge on Tammsaare's stylistic autonomy. Tammsaare must have perceived his own homage to Dostoevsky as excessive, since he removed from his initial manuscript of *Truth and Justice* a scene where Indrek Paas, the main hero of the second volume, reads *Crime and Punishment* with a reaction similar to Sonia's response to a different novel of Dostoevsky in 'Shades'. This deleted passage can be found in Tammsaare's draft manuscript, which is preserved at the Estonian Literary Museum in Tartu.

The *Weltanschauungs* of Dostoevsky and Tammsaare are still not easily compatible. "Even a great mind of worldwide significance like Dostoevsky becomes boring when he starts advocating his only remedy that can redeem us, and forgets to depict, to create", Tammsaare wrote in 1914.[43] His admiration for Dostoevsky was limited to the latter's poetic devices; he distanced himself from

40 Casanova, *World Republic*, p. 348.

41 Mihkel Mutt, 'Tamjevski ja Dostosaare'. https://www.looming.ee/artiklid/tamjevski-ja-dostosaare.

42 A. H. Tammsaare, *Kogutud teosed* [*Complete Works*], ed. by Eerik Teder, 15 vols (Tallinn: Eesti Raamat, 1978–93), III (1979), p. 72.

43 Tammsaare, *Kogutud* XV (1986), p. 300.

the Russian author's religious and nationalist views.[44] "History has shown that the human race is somehow or other progressing in every sphere", Tammsaare stated in 1906.[45] His own optimistic convictions did not prevent his characters from struggling with highly Dostoevskian questions about the presence of God, or their nation's destiny. However, being born into similar circumstances and equivalent milieus, Dostoevsky and Tammsaare both went on to experience analogous psychological phenomena and social turmoil, which each writer reflected through his characters. We will discuss this textual reflection of reality in the next section.

Dostoevsky and Tammsaare: Poetic Similarities

Since he translated *Crime and Punishment* in 1923 before beginning *Truth and Justice* in 1925, Tammsaare was well versed in Dostoevsky's literary devices, including that "completely new type of artistic thinking" which Bakhtin called polyphony.[46] This multi-voiced metaphor of composition is also apt for describing Tammsaare's poetics, although the latter could not possibly have encountered Bakhtin's ideas, nor did he later read the initial 1929 version of Bakhtin's essay on Dostoevsky.[47] Tammsaare distilled his own literary technique from reading and translating Dostoevsky.

When reading Dostoevsky and Tammsaare side by side, one is struck by the carnivalisation of dialogue in their novels. Complete strangers with vastly different social backgrounds engage in lengthy conversations to clarify their understandings of prevalent discourses, often conflicting with conventional hierarchies. These conversations relativise established mental and behavioural patterns by bringing together ideas from various spheres of life, relevant for each character at that moment in the plot. Dostoevsky's characters inhabit an eccentric and elevated atmosphere of scandal: "Dostoevsky takes much dramatic licence, employing chance encounters and messengers, eavesdropping, and accelerated action".[48] The wild party in the cellar flat of a caretaker in the second volume of Tammsaare's *Truth and Justice*, where people come together "by pure chance" is no different: there are seamstresses, shop-assistants, students from a nearby

44 Ilmar Vene, 'Tammsaare ja Dostojevski. Maailmapiltide kõrvutus' ['Tammsaare and Dostoevsky. Comparison of their Weltanscahuungs'], *Keel ja Kirjandus*, 5 (2007), 345–56.

45 Tammsaare, *Kogutud*, XV (1986), p. 91.

46 Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, ed. and trans. by Caryl Emerson (Minneapolis, MN and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1984; repr. 1999), p. 3.

47 For this information we are indebted to Maarja Vaino, a leading Tammsaare scholar, who is also the director of the A. H. Tammsaare Museum in Tallinn.

48 Victor Terras, *A History of Russian Literature* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1991), p. 349.

private school, and its headmaster, too. The narrator of the novel comments: "[A] human being is sometimes like a thunderstorm: it is coming and coming to flood us, and we all wonder from where it is coming, and then it turns aside for some reason and there is no rain anymore even if we need it, no rain at all. Why? No one knows".[49]

The characters in the private school (in *Truth and Justice*) where most of the action takes place include people who have moved to Estonia from elsewhere in tsarist Russia. They spend their time in an inebriated atmosphere outside the confines of ordinary life. The discussions between two teachers at the school (Voitinskii, a Pole, and Slopashev, a Russian) verge on bathos as they debate profound questions over vodka: "But when we all are eternal, me, you, Goethe, Schiller, Gogol, Pushkin, well, if the two of us, these two creatures of God, the dogs of God, are eternal like God himself, why should we then believe in God and his angels, and why couldn't God and his angels believe in us?"[50] The most carnivalesque character in the novel is Maurus, the private school's Estonian headmaster. He, like Porfirii Petrovich from *Crime and Punishment*, cannot stand still; he runs up and down the classroom, talking and gesticulating constantly. His thoughts jump hectically from one subject to another; he goes off on tangents when speaking to his students and staff: "A young man must be always polite, always deferential," he tells Indrek, the protagonist of the novel, at their first meeting:

> Therefore always—Herr Headmaster, Herr Maurus, Herr Lehrer. In Herr Maurus's house everyone is polite, Herr Maurus has a polite house. But wait, wait! Where can we put you to bed? Where can we find you a room? Yes, polite, deferential. Latin and politeness, these two govern the house of Herr Maurus. Latin! Romans loved space; they loved a lot of space. Herr Maurus is teaching Latin, but he has not so much space as a Roman had.[51]

This is as erratic as Porfirii Petrovich's discourse in *Crime and Punishment*. For example, having asked Raskolnikov to pardon him his pedestrian habits (Part 4, Chapter 5), Porfirii Petrovich adds: "I suffer from my sedentary life... I always intend to join a gymnasium; they say that officials of all ranks, even

49 A. H. Tammsaare, *Tõde ja õigus. II jagu* [*Truth and Justice. Part 2*] (Tartu: Noor-Eesti Kirjastus, 1929), p. 415. We will use this volume for our examples in order not to introduce too many unfamiliar storylines, and because its action takes place in a city and at a time when Estonia was still part of tsarist Russia, and thus closest to Dostoevsky's settings.

50 Tammsaare, *Tõde ja õigus*, p. 144.

51 Ibid., p. 28.

Privy Councillors, may be seen skipping gaily there; there you have it, modern science... yes, yes ..."[52]

Maurus, who established his private school to offer Estonian boys secondary education (in Russian, the only possible language of instruction under Russification), is well aware that he is "living in a foreign country, living in Germany that is situated in Russia [...] speaking a foreign language because [he does not] have a language that [he] can use".[53] The German teacher's description in the novel of life under Russification for Estonians living in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries aptly expresses the atmosphere that Tammsaare is trying to capture. As mentioned above, Maurus is depicted mostly through his conversation, always addressed to others, reacting randomly to momentary ideas. "Herr Maurus does not want to become famous for having killed God", he says in the novel after Indrek publishes a blasphemous pamphlet, renouncing God. Maurus expels Indrek from his school:

> [... B]ecause he knows that he cannot resist God. Herr Maurus is old, he knows. But [Indrek] Paas is tall and dumb like a rock, he does not know. He trusts his height like the Philistine giant who was slaughtered by little David. Herr Maurus knows: God will tell the inspector, the inspector the director, the director the curator, the curator the minister, and the minister the tsar that He will be killed. And then the tsar tells the minister, the minister the police and the gendarmes that gods are being slaughtered at Herr Maurus's. Tell me now, can old Maurus fight the tsar and his police and gendarmes! Can he fight the lightning and angels of God once they come? Therefore, the tall Paas with his fame must go. Go and live where there is neither tsar nor faith. Go to France with its president and revolution. Go there. But Herr Maurus will stay in Russia, under the generous wings of the Russian eagle, because an Estonian loves his tsar and his eagle.[54]

Tammsaare's characters are not spokespersons for their author; in keeping with Bakhtinian polyphony, they possess their own words and voices, often dissonant from their author's. The consciousness of his characters is presented as remote from Tammsaare's; they encounter each other at events where they interact but remain emotionally and intellectually separate.

Maurus's student Indrek Paas undergoes several important influences: discussing Darwin, Nietzsche, and Marxism with his fellow students, a life-changing lesson on cosmography, and, most decisively, the death of the girl he loves. He subsequently shares his belief in the death of God in the school

52 Fedor Dostoevsky, *Crime and Punishment*, trans. by Constance Garnett. https://www.gutenberg.org/files/2554/2554-h/2554-h.htm#link2HCH0025.

53 Tammsaare, *Tõde ja õigus*, p. 206.

54 Ibid., p. 566–67.

newspaper *Truth*. He is then expelled from school by Maurus. Indrek sits on his suitcase in the street until Mrs Vaarmann, the caretaker, invites him into her cellar flat. Indrek explains to her the reasons for his expulsion, which her daughter, the crippled Tiina, overhears. Tiina, waiting for God's angels to heal her, breaks down in despair, and Indrek, realising the effect of his words on the girl, retracts them. He tells Tiina that she will get well, because God is living and will send his angels to cure her. At this point Tiina stands up and takes her first steps. The apparent miracle juxtaposes Indrek's newly adopted credo with the need to show compassion to the little girl. Thus, abstract dialectics fade from Indrek's consciousness because of his interaction with another mind, albeit one he barely understands:

> Indrek had renounced everything but now he was kneeling on the floor as if he were bowing down before the one whom he had recently renounced. But there was one thing he felt good about: he had conquered himself because of the crying little child. He forgot his own sorrow and pain; he gave up the truth born out of the blood of his heart to console the miserable and unhappy girl. What else could he have done? Even God could not do much more if he were there.[55]

Maurus's school accepts students and instructors regardless of age or nationality because not many Estonians can pay the fees. The school includes Russians, Germans, Poles, and Jews alongside Estonians; therefore, the multiple voices crowding Tammsaare's dialogues may appear chaotic. Only in the light of his artistic endeavour can one "begin to understand the profound organic cohesion, consistency, and wholeness" of his poetics—as might be said of Dostoevsky.[56] Tammsaare was not aiming to create generic character archetypes, but rather reactive personalities sensitive to both mental and social events. The extradiegetic narrator of *Truth and Justice* does not describe the characters from his own monologic point of view; instead, his imagination fosters dialogic interaction between numerous consciousnesses. This quotation from Bakhtin about Dostoevsky's poetics is equally applicable to Tammsaare: "The consciousnesses of other people cannot be perceived, analysed, defined as objects or things—one can only *relate to them dialogically*. To think about them means to *talk with them; otherwise they immediately turn to us their objectivized side*: they fall silent, close up, and congeal into finished, objectivized images" [original italics].[57] Tammsaare neither affirms nor denies the contradictory opinions of his characters; he simply integrates them into his narrative.[58]

The third aspect of poetics shared by Tammsaare and Dostoevsky (besides carnivalisation and polyphony) is their use of lexical repetition. 'Suddenly'

55 Ibid., p. 579.
56 Bakhtin, *Dostoevsky's Poetics*, p. 8.
57 Ibid., p. 68.
58 Arne Merilai, 'Tammsaare aga-ometi' ['Tammsaare's 'but-yet''], *Keel ja Kirjandus*, 5 (2015), 297–315 (p. 304).

(*vdrug*) is the most commonly reiterated word in *Crime and Punishment*; it is meticulously reproduced in Tammsaare's translation. The Estonian equivalent 'äkki' is also frequent in *Truth and Justice*, and its function is analogous: 'äkki' marks the seemingly unreasonable impulses of characters who suddenly realise they should do something or suddenly feel something without saying a word; 'äkki' is the adverb of intuitive understanding that establishes the psychological rhythm of the ideas that possess the characters.

A companion word to 'äkki' in Tammsaare's novels is 'aga' ('but'). It recurs to such an extent that the critic Arne Merilai has called Tammsaare's idiolect "an epic *but*-mantra" that hypotactically structures not only Tammsaare's syntax but also his philosophy. His characters repeatedly undergo abrupt or paradoxical insights or experiences that alter their previous decisions. Indrek, attending the funeral of an Estonian national hero with his headmaster Maurus, listening to the strange intonation of the pastor, and observing his always voluble headmaster silently kneeling, suddenly feels a tenderness he cannot explain.[59] Another example: on the journey home to his father's farm for the summer vacation, Indrek meets a neighbour his father has never tolerated, and to whom he has never talked. Surprising himself, he suddenly greets the man and has a conversation with him.[60] Intuitive reactions to events are of equal importance in plot development for both Dostoevsky and Tammsaare, and are often introduced by the adverb 'suddenly'.

Tammsaare's Translation of *Crime and Punishment*

Tammsaare's translation of *Crime and Punishment*, first published in 1929, was reissued in 1939, 1958, 1987, 2007, and 2020. The translation has stood the test of time; no retranslation has yet been commissioned. Sensitive to the internal rhythm of Dostoevsky's text, Tammsaare's translation preserves the original arrangement of sentences and their rhythmic punctuation. In Tammsaare's version, form is as important as content because structural equivalence (linguistic differences excluded) was the established norm of translation in Estonia during the 1920s and 1930s. "In its essence, a piece of art is an organism that cannot be divided," Gustav Saar, an Estonian cultural critic, wrote.[61] He continued:

> Form in art is not the surface [...] but the sensual cover of animated ideas, the visible part of mental activities, and its rules depend on its dynamic relationship with the subject matter [...]. Destroying the outward form cannot keep intact the inward one, the feel of life of the work, because the content floods in only with the lava of the form.[62]

59 Tammsaare, *Tõde ja õigus*, p. 244.
60 Ibid., p. 277.
61 Gustav Saar, 'Kunstipärasest tõlkest' ['On Artistic Translation'], *Looming*, 8 (1927), 751–57 (p. 754).
62 Ibid., pp. 754–55.

Estonian translation practice during this period thus recoded the formal plane of the source text as closely as possible, and since Estonian word order is flexible, the syntax of other languages can be reproduced, resulting in texts with a barely perceptible foreign intonation. Translators and editors at this time did not strive for idiomatic and fluent Estonian, unlike now.

Comparing two Estonian translations of Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* (Aita Kurfeldt's 1939–40 version and Virve Krimm's 2015–16 text), we reach a similar conclusion: Kurfeldt "follows [word-for-word] a Dostoevsky phrase or his long syntactic construction, even preserving his word order."[63] This literalism, the same critic continues, is not a symptom of the translator's 'dilettantism' but can be viewed as her attempt to reproduce the "broken accent of the narrator of *The Brothers Karamazov*."[64] The same can be said of Tammsaare's translation of *Crime and Punishment*—its clumsy phrases do not violate the rules of Estonian grammar *per se*. Instead, they draw attention to the incompleteness and uncertainty of Dostoevsky's fictional world. As the translation preserves the conceptual poetics of Dostoevsky, there has been no need for retranslation.

Although Tammsaare's text has never been replaced, it has been edited. The 1939 edition was not sent to him for revisions, even though Tammsaare was still alive. Instead, it was edited by a proof-reader from Loodus who changed the spellings of Russian names, in line with modified transliteration norms. The 1958 edition, which included redactions and notes based on the 1957 Soviet version of the original with critical apparatus, replaced certain lexical items then perceived as archaisms. Vello Tarnaste (1929–99), the editor of this edition, had himself translated numerous books from Russian. The 1958 edition of Tammsaare's translation included a translation of a new afterword by the contemporary Soviet critic Boris Riurikov. The lengthy paratext acknowledges the realistic depiction of the life of humiliated classes in ruthless capitalist society but sees Dostoevsky's inability to believe in the revolutionary socialist ideas of his time as "the greatest tragedy of his life".[65] The readers of *Crime and Punishment* are encouraged to distance themselves from the reactionary religious teaching of the novel that is "alien to us, […] the fighters, workers, builders […] who incessantly battle with the forces of the old world and build a bright future".[66]

The 1987 edition updated Tammsaare's lexis once again and expanded the critical apparatus, now based on translations of notes from the 1970 Soviet

63 Lea Pild, 'Jutustajateksti muutlikkus Fjodor Dostojevski romaani "Vennad Karamazovid" eestikeelsetes tõlgetes' ['Variations in the narration in the Estonian translations of Fedor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*'], *Methis. Studia humaniora Estonica*, 25 (2020), 68–94 (p. 70).

64 Ibid.

65 B. Rjurikov, 'F. M. Dostojevskist ja tema romaanist "Kuritöö ja karistus"' ['On F.M. Dostoevsky and his novel *Crime and Punishment*'], in Fjodor Dostojevski, *Kuritöö ja karistus* (Tallinn: Eesti Riiklik Kirjastus, 1958), pp. 560–82 (p. 563).

66 Ibid., p. 582.

edition of Dostoevsky's novel. This time the afterword, entitled 'Love and Mercy', was penned by Peeter Torop, an Estonian Slavist scholar and Dostoevsky specialist, then lecturing on Dostoevsky at Tartu University. The 2007 reprint appeared in a series for classical novels from world literature; it reproduced the 1958 redaction while omitting the redactions made in 1987, the notes, and Riurikov's afterword. The latest edition, in 2020, updated the vocabulary and spelling again but refrained from tampering with the general style of the text out of respect for Tammsaare's poetics of translation, as the editor says in his preface.[67] As we can see, every new edition of Tammsaare's version of *Crime and Punishment* has conformed to evolving contemporary usage of Estonian as well as to Russian transliteration practices; editing was motivated by the wish to add available paratexts so that *Crime and Punishment* could be used in schools (where it is a compulsory part of the literature curriculum).

Mihkel Samarüütel, a contemporary Estonian author, has carefully compared Tammsaare's original translation with the edited 1987 version in his blog *Lottery* (*Loterii*). Acknowledging that languages do change within decades, he concludes that "a publishing house could think of reissuing the old *Crime and Punishment*, the examples given here leave an impression that the initial version [of the translation] is more alive [...]. The [1987] redaction has impoverished the language or perhaps centralized it? [...] The first translation is more poetic, more sensitive; the later version more pedagogical and straightforward, seeking clearer formulations".[68]

Aare Pilv, a researcher, author, and translator who redacted the latest edition of Tammsaare's translation and collected information on previous editions for his *Acta nubis* blog entry on *Crime and Punishment*, highlighted some lexical changes in the 2020 text in personal correspondence with us, relevant to Raskolnikov's inner dialogue. In the penultimate paragraph of Chapter 7 (Part 6), Dostoevsky—and Tammsaare, following him—presented this as free indirect speech (in both the first and third person).[69] Fearful of confusing readers, in later editions these passages are in the first person. The mingled narrative technique must have also perplexed Constance Garnett, whose translation is purely in third-person free indirect speech (deictics in bold):

> He fell to musing by what process it could come to pass, that **he** could be humbled before all of them, indiscriminately—humbled by conviction. And yet why not? It must be so. Would not twenty years of continual

67 Aare Pilv, 'Redigeerija kommentaar' ['Editor's Comment'], in Fjodor Dostojevski, *Kuritöö ja karistus* (Tallinn: Helios, 2020), pp. 5–6 (p. 6).

68 See Mihkel Samarüütel's blog post, 'Feodor/Fjodor Dostojevski—Kuritöö ja karistus I (1929/1987)', 29 August, 2009. https://loterii.blogspot.com/2009/08/feodor-fjodor-dostojevski-kuritoo-ja.html.

69 For the original, see F. M. Dostoevsky, *Prestuplenie i nakazanie*, in *Sobranie sochinenii v piednadtsati tomakh* (Leningrad: Nauka, 1988–96), V (1989), p. 493.

> bondage crush **him** utterly? Water wears out a stone. And why, why should **he** live after that? Why should **he** go now when **he** knew that it would be so?[70]

Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky use both persons:

> He fell to pondering deeply by what process it might come about that **he** would finally humble himself before them all without reasoning, humble himself from conviction? But, after all, why not? Of course, that is how it should be. Won't twenty years of unremitting oppression finish **him** off completely? Water wears away stone. But why, why live in that case? Why am **I** going now, if **I** know myself that it will all be precisely so, as if by book, and not otherwise![71]

In Tammsaare's initial translation, the passage relies on both first- and third-person pronouns:

> Deeply thought **he** about the question:—How could the process look like that **he** would be tamed in front of them all without any discussion, tamed in **his** convictions! But so what, why not? Of course, it must be like that. Wouldn't twenty years of incessant suppression smash **you** finally? Water wears out even a stone. But why, why to live then, why am **I** going now when **I** know that it all will be exactly like this, as by the book and not otherwise!
>
> [Sügavasti mõtles **ta** [he] küsimuse üle järele:—Missuguse arenemise kaudu võiks nõnda sündida, et **ta [he]** lõpuks kõigi nende ees ilma igasuguse arutamiseta taltsub, oma veendumustes taltsub! Aga mis siis, miks mitte? Muidugi, nõnda see peabki olema. Kas kahekümneaastane vahetpidamatu rõhumine ei rusu **sind** [you] lõplikult? Vesi sööb kivissegi augu. Aga milleks, milleks siis elada, milleks **ma** [I] siis praegu lähen, kui ise tean, et see kõik tuleb nimelt nõnda, nagu kirja järele, mitte teisiti!][72]

Of interest here is the fact that Tammsaare also used a second-person deictic pronoun ("Wouldn't twenty years of incessant suppression smash **you** finally?") that is absent in the original Russian text, and Pilv has kept this pronoun:

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70 Fedor Dostoevsky, *Crime and Punishment*, trans. by Constance Garnett (London: Heinemann, 1914). https://www.gutenberg.org/files/2554/2554-h/2554-h.htm#link2HCH0038.

71 Fedor Dostoevsky, *Crime and Punishment*, trans. by Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (London: David Campbell Publishers, 2002), p. 520.

72 F.M. Dostojevski, *Kuritöö ja karistus*, trans. by A.H. Tammsaare (Tartu: Loodus, 1929), p. 647.

> **He** [ta] deeply thought about it: 'What could be the process with the help of which **I** [ma] will be finally tamed in front of all of them without any discussion, convincingly! But why not? Of course, it must be like that. Wouldn't twenty years of incessant suppression smash **you** [sind] finally? Water wears out even a stone. But why, why to live then after that, why am **I** [ma] going now when **I** know myself that it all will be exactly like this, as by a book and not otherwise'.
>
> [**Ta** [he] jäi sügavalt mõtlema selle üle: „Milline on see protsess, mille kaudu **ma** [I] lõpuks kõigi nende ees juba ilma igasuguse arutamiseta taltsaks saan, veendunult! Aga miks siis mitte? Muidugi, nõnda see peabki olema. Kas kahekümneaastane vahetpidamatu rõhumine ei rusu **sind** [you] lõplikult? Vesi uuristab kivissegi augu. Ent milleks, milleks siis elada pärast seda, milleks **ma** [I] siis praegu lähen, kui ise tean, et see kõik tuleb nimelt nõnda, nagu kirja järgi, mitte teisiti!"]

The comparison shows that translators and editors tend to modify the narrative technique of the original if they find it uncustomary themselves or believe their readers may be unfamiliar with it. This is one of the "trials of the foreign" that all translations have to face.[73]

Pilv mentions one other significant amendment to the latest edition of the translation. He points to Dostoevsky's subtle hint regarding the association of Raskolnikov's name with the *raskolniki*, schismatics dissenting from the Russian Orthodox Church. In Chapter 2 of Part 6 of *Crime and Punishment*, Porfirii Petrovich says of Mikolka, the man who confesses to the murder he did not commit, "A izvestno li vam, chto on iz Raskolnikov […]" ; in Garnett's translation "And do you know he is an Old Believer […]?"; in Pevear and Volokhonsky's, "And do you know he's a schismatic?".[74] In Tammsaare's original translation, 'raskolnik' ('*раскольник*') became 'vanausuline' ('Old Believer'); while in the 2020 redacted version, Pilv simply transliterates the word 'raskolnik', thus using the Russian loan word already present in the Estonian lexicon. Pilv explains: the word has its role in the texture of the novel. Porfirii Petrovich, already knowing the real culprit, still plays his cat-and-mouse game and continues "but not because he is a raskolnik"[75] (in Tammsaare's translation "but not the true one"). Since etymologically, 'raskolnik' means 'one with a split head' or even 'a splitter of heads', the use of this word in the context of the fictional Raskolnikov's axe-murder is undeniably meaningful—as Dostoevsky's character names often are.[76]

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73 Antoine Berman, *L´épreuve de l'étranger: Culture et traduction dans l'Allemange romantique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1984).

74 F.M. Dostoevsky, *Prestuplenie i nakazanie*, p. 429. See also Dostoevsky, *Crime and Punishment* [online], trans. by Constance Garnett; and Dostoevsky, *Crime and Punishment*, trans. by Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky, p. 454.

75 F.M. Dostoevsky, *Prestuplenie i nakazanie*, p. 429

76 See Aare Pilv's blog 'Acta nubis', especially the post 'Fjodor Dostojevski "Kuritöö ja karistus"', 12th Dec. 2012. http://aarepilv.blogspot.com/2020/12/

This is the essence of Hermans' idea of literary interactions within a "historical continuum", as we cited at the start of this essay.

Conclusion

Although the quantity of individual books translated from Russian was relatively modest, translations of Russian literature were represented consistently in Estonian book production between 1918 and 1940. Besides numerous plays (predominantly comedies) printed in the 1920s, the selection of translations also included prose by contemporary Russian writers, both émigré and Soviet. Works by Soviet authors introduced new topics and literary styles to Estonian readers. The official attitude towards Soviet Russia might have been cautious, but Soviet cultural developments intrigued those adult Estonians who had been educated in tsarist Russian times. During the later 1930s, readers turned to nineteenth-century Russian literary classics. It was considered important to introduce the best examples of world literature to the young generation of Estonians who, having studied no Russian at school, relied on translations. At the same time, major works of Socialist Realism were published by leftist organisations primarily for distribution among the working class. Thus, the output of translations from Russian was quite diverse, combining entertaining and educational books. Publications of intellectual interest and political propaganda were targeted at different strata of readership, whether issued by established commercial publishers or other organisations.

According to studies of the reading public, the most renowned and widely known Russian classics—Tolstoy and Dostoevsky—also appealed to wider audiences. While the impact of Russian classics on the general public in pre-Second World War Estonia cannot be accurately established, the impact of Dostoevsky on the poetics of Anton Hansen Tammsaare, the classic Estonian novelist, is discernible in the latter's public statements and literary work. Tammsaare's use of carnivalesque and polyphonic dialogue, his adoption of 'suddenly' as an adverb of intuitive recognition, and the many motifs in his fiction which pay homage to scenes in Dostoevsky's novels are all clear tokens that Tammsaare and Dostoevsky belong together in the "world republic of letters".

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