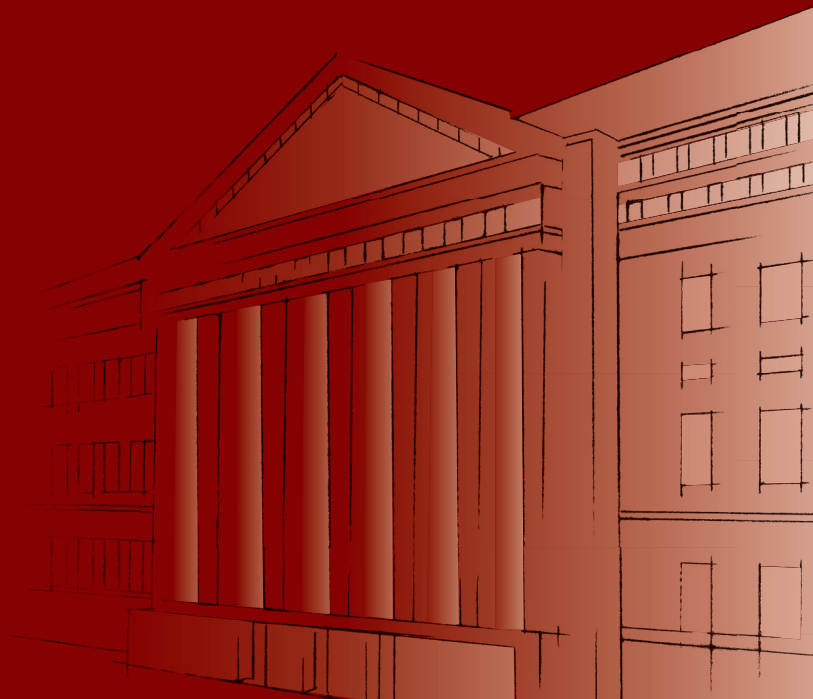


KÜLLIKI STEINBERG

Marta Sillaots: Translator and
Her Multipositional Agency
in the Interwar Literary Landscape of
the Republic of Estonia



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1. INTRODUCTION

Translators' position in and between cultures, or within the space of interculture (Pym [1998] 2014: 177), places them at the crossroads of numerous intersecting trajectories. A close examination of these positions offers new perspectives and interpretations. Both major routes and marginal pathways reveal unusual and often hidden connections to the lives and work of the individuals involved, as well as to their social environments, providing missing pieces of the larger puzzle. My premise in this study is that translators, as participants in social processes, are fundamentally human beings, and that examining their lives reveals the embodied and emotion-driven nature of their agency.

The dissertation examines the life and work of Marta Sillaots (1887–1969), a prolific Estonian translator, literary critic and author, and aims to trace her multiple roles in the Estonian literary scene, along the dynamics of her translator's agency, by asking how Marta Sillaots negotiated her agency as a translator, critic and writer within the interwar Estonian literary and translation landscape. Within this larger context, one of the questions this dissertation aims to address is whether the study of translator's multipositional agency can be extended beyond textual categories to include the translator's actual working conditions and embodied, lived experience? Moreover, can the translator's voice – understood as an aspect of agency – serve as a bridge between the everyday professional practices and the broader socio-cultural context? Also, can a translation's agency function as an extension of the translator's own agency, particularly in situations where the translator's embodied self is constrained or silenced?

To address these questions, the study adopts the framework of multipositionality – Sillaots was active in various literary and educational pursuits, including journalism, literary reviewing and essay writing, in addition to authoring and translating books. This will be done by examining her life and work through textual, paratextual and extratextual agency. This multipositional agency (a term I propose to introduce) becomes particularly visible in her relatively large archival collection, which has shaped the direction of this research. There is substantial archival material on two of her translations – *Huckleberry Finni seiklused* (*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*) and *David Copperfield* – which constitute the main data for the study, alongside preserved correspondence and manuscripts. Together, these sources offer a broad perspective on her work and agency. In addition to these materials, the dissertation draws on other unpublished archival documents, for example the court files that formed the basis for Sillaots' conviction by the Soviet authorities in 1951.

Marta Sillaots was born Reichenbach and became Gerland through marriage in 1923. The surname Gerland was Estonianised into Rannat in the 1930s. In the Estonian literary field, she is known by her pseudonym Sillaots, which she adopted in 1912. Over the course of her lifetime, Sillaots translated around 60 works of fiction, published in book form, from English, French, German and Russian.

The importance of studying translators is rooted in the fact that they are actors in a matrix of multi-layered social fields while, at the same time, occupying positions as both the subject and object, and operating at the borderlands of two (or more) cultures. This is a “critical” zone, where power relations may push translators into a corner (Pym 2009; Monticelli 2011) or place them in the spotlight, where their every move is meticulously scrutinised.

Among the first to discuss translators and their importance was Anthony Pym, in his chapter on translators in *Method in Translation History* (1998), followed by his call for the humanization of translation history (2009: 28). Pym bases the call for greater focus on translators on the ethical task of translator studies and translation history, which requires the study of not only of texts but also of “active people in the picture and some kind of human interaction at work, particularly the kind of interaction that can string the isolated data into meaningful progressions” (Pym 2009: 23–24). It is this human interaction and the social processes involved that have inspired and informed the present study.

Pym also draws attention to translators’ other activities that may have helped them acquire influence and social capital ([1998] 2014: 164); hence the focus on multipositionality in the present work. Furthermore, these other activities may shed light on the everyday lives and decisions that shape their work as translators. The dynamics and interaction of these different facets of professional engagement, revealing culturally and socially complex relations and contributing to a deeper understanding of translator’s agency and its scope of influence, stand at the centre of this dissertation.

Since the translator’s embodied existence in everyday life is an important concept for the present study, it should also be noted that Pym seems to be one of the very first translation historians to discuss the “flesh-and-blood bodies” ([1998] 2014: 161) of translators. He refers to their actual physical needs and activities while emphasising that translators’ private lives should not be a research interest *per se*, but should serve only to explain “what was done in the field of translation” (ibid. 167). Over the past decades, as the microhistorical approach has gained ground, the need to examine the translators’ working circumstances, daily practices and “even routine chores” (e.g. Paloposki 2010: 88) has increasingly entered translation history and translator studies. In this context, the present study pays particular attention to the translators’ ‘everyday’.

Since Pym’s early writings, translator studies (Chesterman 2009) has developed into a field of its own, with literary translator studies (Kaindl et al 2021) as an important research area.

Estonian culture has been characterised as a culture of translation (Tamm 2010). Research into translation history in Estonia has relatively long roots, ranging from early work in 1975 (Liivaku and Meriste 1975) and studies on Bible translation (e.g. Ross 2011, 2012, 2013, 2015; Paul 1999; Tafenau 2011, 2013) to translation criticism (Sütiste 2009; 2012; 2017) and research focusing on specific source languages or authors (e.g. Talvet 2005; Kaldjärv 2007). Bibliographical research and studies on publishing by Aile Möldre (2005) provide important background and statistics for historical translation studies. The

Soviet period has been studied by Anne Lange (2015), Daniele Monticelli (2011), Lange and Monticelli (2013) and Katiliina Gielen (2013), who has focused, for example, on expressions of creativity through translation during this period. New pages continue to be added to Estonian translation history, among the most recent being Mari Laan's PhD thesis on Spanish-Estonian translation history (Laan 2024).

Literary translator studies in Estonia have valuable antecedents in the work of Anne Lange (monograph on Ants Oras in 2004, her article on Enn Soosaar in 2011 and the case studies on three Estonian translators in 2015). Marta Sillaots has previously been studied by Alma (Aira) Kaal (1937), whose work, published on the occasion of Sillaots' 50th birthday, concentrated mainly on her original literary works and literary criticism. Reet Krusten (1967), in her article marking Sillaots' 80th birthday, addressed her biography and also mentioned her translations alongside her literary heritage. Anu Saluäär (1987; 2009; 2013) has devoted considerable attention to Sillaots' translation legacy and has also shed light on the more hidden pages of her life story, drawing on archival materials among other sources. Katiliina Gielen (2012a; 2013) has examined Sillaots' explicit and implicit poetics, based on her translation reviews as well as her own translations. More recently, Sillaots' prose works have also been explored (e.g. Tõnts 2019). The present dissertation seeks to contribute to this insightful scholarship by providing an in-depth examination of the translator's agency in the translation process and her everyday, drawing on archival sources that are still not very widely used in Estonian translation history. In addition, the research reconstructs Marta Sillaots' professional timeline, including her translations, and compiles the bibliographies of her literary and translation reviews in two major literary journals of interwar Estonia: *Eesti Kirjandus* and *Looming* (see Annexes 2 and 3).

Among the many possible directions translator studies can take, this dissertation has chosen to let archival materials lead the way. This path was taken with the aim of getting closer to the translator as a person, to their "human dimensions" (Kaindl 2021: 3) and to their embodied existence. The archival orientation of this dissertation started to take shape already during the writing of my MA thesis, encouraged by my supervisor Katiliina Gielen, and guided by the articles of Maria Constanza Guzmán (2020) and Outi Paloposki (2009; 2010; 2017; 2021). Jeremy Munday (2014) further strengthened my inclination toward a microhistorical perspective in translation history. In addition to offering a new angle from which to study published texts, the archival materials have helped to bring to light so far hidden and/or unpublished aspects of the life of the translator Marta Sillaots and her multipositionality within the Estonian literary field. They have also helped establish connections to other actors as well as the social and political situation surrounding them.

The dissertation proceeds as follows. Chapter 2 discusses the materials and theoretical considerations that inform this thesis: microhistory, archival studies and the concepts of translation event, translator's multipositionality, agency and voice.

Chapter 3 provides background information, covering the translator's biography and her multipositionality, as well as the socio-political and literary contexts surrounding her life at different periods, including the translation landscape of her most active professional years. This chapter draws largely on primary sources, such as Sillaots' memoir and relevant archival materials, as well as historical studies. It does not aim to connect these contextual elements directly to theoretical concepts and approaches.

The main body of the analysis is presented in Chapters 4 to 6. Chapters 4 and 5 centre on the concept of translation event, which enables the study of archival materials and paratexts in addition to the textual close reading of two of Sillaots' translations, *Huckleberry Finni seiklused* (*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*) (published in 1932) and *David Copperfield* (published in 1937). This mixed-method, mixed-data approach allows for a comprehensive and holistic understanding of Sillaots' work. Of the two translations examined, *Huckleberry Finn* was the first to appear in print, even though the translation process of *David Copperfield* had begun earlier. The order of publication determines the order in which they are discussed in this dissertation.

The structure of Chapters 4 and 5 follows a threefold analysis of the translator's agency: extratextual, paratextual and textual agency. Both translations are accompanied by rich archival material, including correspondence between the translator and the publishing house, as well as at least some genetic sources (manuscripts, proof sheets, or other unpublished materials related to the translation process). The chapter on the translation of *Huckleberry Finn* also incorporates unpublished material on Rudolf Sirge's retranslation of the work and the subsequent plagiarism scandal.

Chapter 6 is dedicated to the translator's everyday as viewed through the prism of food: it first examines the letters sent to Sillaots' sister Erna in 1923 and 1951 and subsequently explores the translation of culture-specific food items in the Estonian translation of J. K. Jerome's *Three Men in a Boat*, published in 1923.

Chapter 7 summarises the findings and addresses Sillaots' extratextual, paratextual, textual and everyday agency as well as her translation poetics.

The dissertation ends with Chapter 8, with concluding remarks focusing on Sillaots' multipositionality, the dynamics of her agency and her translation poetics.

2. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES AND ARCHIVAL PATHWAYS

The central questions of translation history, such as “what, where, when, how, why, for whom, and with what effect” (e.g. Hermans 2022: 31), also inform the research questions of the present study. Marta Sillaots’ work and role are examined to uncover the full extent of her translational life and in this quest, the materials and methods employed draw on microhistory and archival study.

Initially, the materials used in this dissertation were collected with the aim of describing and interpreting Marta Sillaots’ role as a translator. Archival materials played a central role in this process as the aim was to gain closer insight into the translator’s own choices and decisions. In the course of the archival research, it soon became evident that Sillaots’ role as a translator was intertwined with her other literary activities, positioning her an active agent in the Estonian literary and cultural field. The archival materials revealed the sometimes hidden links between the different aspects of her multipositionality and helped to establish connections between Sillaots and various other agents in the field. Consequently, guided by archival clues and with an aim of capturing the emergence of this rather unique female literary figure – an exception within a predominantly male professional circle – it also became necessary to describe the cultural and translational background of the period, as well as Sillaots’ formative years and her other literary activities. (These aspects are discussed in Chapter 3.)

Archival materials also drew my attention to and promoted consideration of Sillaots’ everyday and more private life. The availability of materials in the archives likewise influenced the choice of translations selected for closer study within the framework of translation events, namely *Huckleberry Finni seiklused* (*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*) and *David Copperfield*. At the same time, it must be acknowledged that archival materials are, by their nature, fragmentary and incomplete. Because of this fragmentariness, the primary guiding principle in compiling the materials for the present dissertation is the complementary use of different relevant sources. The materials employed will be discussed and commented on in greater detail in the next section, which will be followed by an outline of the methodological approaches and relevant concepts, including a separate subchapter on archives.

2.1 Materials: Mapping the Source Terrain

In this dissertation, the background provided in Chapter 3 serves as more than a means of contextualising the research: it also contributes to the primary research by offering insights into Sillaots’ networks and into the sources of her theoretical and professional thinking. The relatively wide scope of themes covered in Chapter 3 required an equally wide array of source materials. The subchapters describing the literary and translation scene of the first decades of the 20th century

and the interwar Estonian literary and translation scene draw on history volumes (e.g. Aasma et al 2002), encyclopaedias, literary histories (e.g. Annus et al 2001), book publishing studies (e.g. Möldre 2005, 2012b), as well as studies on the translation culture of the relevant period(s) (e.g. Mits 2012; Lange 2009).

The consulted sources also include translation reviews published in literary journals, which function both as paratexts and as metadiscourse (in Batchelor's sense; see Batchelor 2018: 149–152), offering contemporary reflections on the norms and principles governing literary translation (e.g. Saar 1927; Palm 1932). It is also important to take into account the reviews written by Sillaots herself in order to gain insight into her **explicit translator's poetics** (Torop 1999c: 50–51), i.e. the translation principles she articulated in both published or unpublished form. This, in turn, makes it possible to examine her **implicit poetics** (ibid.), namely the principles realised in her own translations.

For Marta Sillaots' formative years (see 3.2), one of the main sources is her autobiographical memoir *Sealtpoolit künnised* ([1939] 2009) (Beyond Thresholds), which is read in dialogue with archival material. The latter includes Sillaots' own archival collection (EKM EKLA f 243), as well as the archives of other cultural and literary figures (e.g. Eduard Virgo EKM EKLA f 155; Johannes Aavik f 275) and publishing houses (e.g. Noor-Eesti EKM EKLA f 92).

In describing her life and work in the interwar Estonian Republic (see 3.2.3), earlier scholarly writings on Sillaots constitute valuable resources alongside the above-mentioned types of sources (archival materials, articles in periodicals, translation reviews) (e.g. see Krusten 1967; Kruus 1971; Saluäär 1987; Gielen 2012a and 2012b) In addition, Sillaots' own literary and translation reviews form a substantial corpus of materials for these subchapters.

For the later period of Sillaots' life (see 3.2.4), the analysis draws primarily on court files (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019), including records of interrogations and witnesses' testimonies, held at the National Archives of Estonia. This material is further supplemented by research by foreign (e.g. Zubkova 2009) and Estonian historians (e.g. Tannberg 2021, 2024), as well as by Estonian literary scholars (e.g. Olesk 2022).

Given the breadth and heterogeneity of the source material examined in Chapter 3, I have deliberately adopted a restrained use of theoretical concepts and references in this part of the dissertation in order to maintain a clear focus on the subject matter and to enhance the readability of the chapter.

The material for Chapters 4 and 5 consists of Marta Sillaots' translations of *Huckleberry Finni seiklused* (*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*) and *David Copperfield*. These translations are analysed through the lens of the translator's extratextual, paratextual and textual agency (see 2.2). The selection of these works was based on the three criteria: 1) the existence of extratextual material concerning their emergence, 2) the availability of the manuscript or at least some material in their "genetic chain", 3) The use of English as the source language.

The **extratextual materials**, comprising sources external to the primary texts (i.e. translations), shed light on the emergence of the two translations and consist predominantly of archival sources. In the case of *Huckleberry Finni seiklused*

(*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*), the extratextual materials consist of the correspondence between Sillaots and the Noor-Eesti Publishing House, preserved in the Noor-Eesti archive (EKM EKLA f 92, m 276). Since the translation was later transferred from Noor-Eesti to Loodus, the correspondence between these two publishing houses (EKM EKLA f 92, m 299) has also been included.

The study of *David Copperfield* draws on correspondence between Sillaots and the EKS Publishing House (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6). The extratextual archival materials further include documents related to Rudolf Sirge's retranslation of *Huckleberry Finni seiklused* in 1953–1954 (EKM EKLA f 206, m 83: 3). Both translation events are additionally examined through their reception. These extratextual materials are interpreted in the light of research conducted in Estonia and elsewhere on the translation landscape of the period (e.g. Gielen 2012a and 2012b; Paloposki 2021; Pärigma 2024).

The immediate context of a translation is its edition, that is, the physical book with its **paratexts** (e.g. fore- and afterwords, footnotes, comments, etc.) (Genette 1997: 2), which may serve as manifestations of the translator's agency as well as of the political and ideological framework of the period. Paratexts, for example, could function as instructions for interpreting the translated text for readers (Lygo 2016: 56). Translators' prefaces can also function as mediators of the translator's experience, providing information on the process of translating, as well as on the selection principles of the translated text, as well as political and ideological issues (Dimitriu 2009: 204).

The **paratextual materials** examined in this dissertation include the forewords and footnotes of the translations. In order to study the influence of different socio-political periods on paratextual practices, the 1932 first edition of *Huckleberry Finni seiklused* is examined alongside the later Soviet editions of 1954, 1956 and 1970, as well as the 1989 edition. Paratexts are studied alongside available archival materials (the manuscript and proof sheets of *Huckleberry Finn*, EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0) in order to shed light on the translator's agency in inserting footnotes and composing forewords. The manuscript of *David Copperfield* is not preserved in the archives; however, the paratexts of the first edition (1937) and the second edition (1991) are addressed. Sillaots also revised her 1937 translation, and these revisions can be examined in the preserved copies of the book, in which she made annotations, most likely in the 1940s.

The textual sources of this study consist of the print versions of the first editions of the translations – *Huckleberry Finni seiklused* (1932) and *David Copperfield* (1937) – as well as the four subsequent editions (1954, 1956, 1970, 1989) of *Huckleberry Finn* and the 1991 edition of *David Copperfield*. They also include the manuscript and proof sheets of the first edition of *Huckleberry Finn* and the revised copies of the 1937 first edition of *David Copperfield* prepared by Sillaots presumably in the 1940s. The source texts of both of these translations are likewise consulted.

Furthermore, Sillaots' translation of Jerome K. Jerome's *Three Men in a Boat* (1923) will be studied in Chapter 6, 'Everyday Agency: Food, Translation, Voice', with a special focus on the translator's everyday, and in juxtaposition with Tiiu

Viires' later translation from 1978. Here, extratextual sources, such as historical overviews (e.g. Kannike and Uibo 2022) and Sillaots' personal letters (EKM EKLA f 243, m 9: 1), give valuable information. The methodological processes informing the dissertation will be addressed in the following subchapter, with a special focus on archival research.

2.2 Methodological Perspectives and Theoretical and Conceptual Anchors

The recent developments in historical research in general, and in translation history in particular, have taken a micro- rather than macrohistorical direction, drawing attention to the individual within broader historical narratives and questioning the explanatory power of the macrohistorical approach and the gaps in it. Jeremy Munday (2014: 64) has advocated a **microhistorical approach** or, as he terms it, the “history of translators”. Drawing primarily on the work of Giovanni Levi (1991) and Carlo Ginzburg (1993), Munday argues that such an approach allows us “to better understand how the detailed analysis of the everyday experience of individuals can shed light on the bigger picture of the history of translations in specific socio-historical and cultural contexts” (ibid. 65). The microhistorical approach seeks to address “‘ordinary’ [*single quotation marks in original*] people or specific groups, such as women, who have tended to be marginalised in traditional history” (ibid. 66). Furthermore, through detailed analysis, microhistory can reveal the extent and mechanisms of such marginalization, as well as the ways in which these groups have navigated and negotiated their positions. As Klaus Kaindl observes in the context of translator studies, this perspective enables scholars to detect “the cracks, conflicts and contradictions in the grand narratives of translation” (Kaindl 2021: 23).

Microhistory also allows us to look beyond translations as finished products and to approach them from the perspective of the translation process, drawing on the primary sources such as drafts, manuscripts, correspondence and other archival materials. In the present study, this process is examined through the notion of ‘translation event’ (Tourey 1995: 249), which will be addressed shortly. Tracing negotiations between the translator and the publisher offers not just the joy of seeing the translation process unfold but also reveals patterns of creativity and collaboration within a particular culture at a specific historical moment.

Microhistory, including archival research, need not be limited to case studies (be it person- or process-oriented). Comparative approaches are also possible, for example, between an individual translator’s archive and a publisher’s archive (Paloposki 2017: 30–47). The latter, in particular, often contains information on several translators, some of whom have never been documented in the printed sources.

Despite the advantages offered by a microhistorical approach, the diachronic nature of contemporary research cannot be avoided – the analyses, discussions and conclusions still bear the imprint of our present-day knowledge, perspectives

and experience. This is certainly true of the study; no matter how close one seeks to reconstruct past circumstances and realities, a gap between the researcher and the historical research objects of investigation inevitably remains. Microhistory, like any methodological approach, also has its own shortcomings and limitations. The issues related to archival research are discussed in section 2.2 of this chapter.

Translation event – a concept that Gideon Toury (1995: 249) developed to describe the social counterpart of what happens inside the translator’s head, i.e. the social embeddedness of translating – has been employed for studying translations in the making (Paloposki 2021: 74). It can be a useful tool for mapping the translation process in its entirety, i.e. not just for seeing how the translation unfolds (*ibid.*), but how it is negotiated and received in the target culture. I would also like to propose expanding the concept of translation event to cover the later new editions and reprints of the translation – the new editions can transpose the translation differently, new agents (editors, etc.) and circumstances (political situation, translator’s position in the field, etc.) can intrude, shape the scene and set the translated text into a new light. Drawing on the work done by Frank et al (1989), Pekka Kujamäki has employed the concept of “**comet’s tail**” (2001: 46) for retranslations to show the way the translations are interrelated and how social changes shape each new retranslation. I suggest that new editions of the same translation demonstrate similar effect – despite similar textual qualities of a translation, it can acquire, by different (e.g. paratextual) means, new angles and interpretations.

Furthermore, translation event can also become a tool for studying **translator’s agency**, an unclear term that is not sufficiently explained in translation studies (Koskinen and Kinnunen 2010: 6) and the recent years have not brought change as “a clear theorization of the concept is still largely lacking” (Kaindl 2021: 20). Its vagueness is reflected in its (various) definitions that entail the terms of, for example, ‘willingness’ and ‘ability’, or ‘power’ and ‘intentionality’. All these notions are manifold, consisting of several, both individual and social variables that are very difficult to grasp, let alone define. In an attempt to bring in some new aspects, concepts such as ‘multipositionality’ and ‘everyday’ are discussed. Besides that, even if we agree that the translator’s agency is the translator’s “willingness and ability to act” (Koskinen and Kinnunen 2010: 6) or “the ability to exert power in intentional way” (Buzelin 2011: 7) as a translator, there is also the agency of the translation (Kaindl 2021: 20). The agency of translation refers to its social function (*ibid.*) and the impact that a translation has independently of the translator’s personal intentions, emphasising thus the translation as a social actor and not merely a product. However, can separating it from the translator’s agency be possible? It is the translator, whose creation and work the translation is and cannot therefore be ignored even if only the social function of the translation is addressed. Nevertheless, as Koskinen and Kinnunen’s definition of agency seems to encapsulate the activeness of the agency to a greater degree, and Buzelin’s includes the much-problematised term of ‘intention’, it is the former I opt for here. In terms of this dissertation, besides translator’s agency, the term

agency of translation emerges when the translator's agency is very limited (see 3.2.4, 4.5 and 4.6).

The three types of translator's visibility – textual, paratextual and extratextual – that Kaisa Koskinen (2000: 99) has distinguished can be applied to agency (Paloposki 2009: 191). They lead us to search for textual agency, such as stylistic preferences, habits, adaptation or manipulation; paratextual agency, which consists of “[t]he translator's role in inserting and adding notes and prefaces” (ibid.), and extratextual agency, “the selection of books to be translated, the use of different editions and intermediary translations, and the role of translators in “speaking out”, publicizing their translations, explaining their methods and strategies, and the like” (ibid.). It should be mentioned here that the search for textual agency inherently requires text analysis and juxtaposing the translation with the source text as is done in Chapters 4 and 5. Studying these three types of agency in the framework of the two translation events (see Chapters 4 and 5), helps us to see the dynamics of Sillaots' agency as a translator and reveal the features that are specific to her case.

The study of the translation event as extratextual, paratextual and textual agency of the translator bears similarities with **genetic translation studies**, a relatively recent approach that focuses on the genesis or creation process of a translation (Cordingley and Montini 2015: 4). This study refers to genetic translation as an analytical lens for reconstructing the genesis of translations through archival and manuscript materials, enabling a process-oriented examination of translator agency across different stages of textual production. Besides providing a detailed account of how a translation was generated (in the current study, this is especially visible in the case of *Huckleberry Finn*, see 4.3), this approach can also help us understand the translator's agency not just as an immutable and static, but as a varied phenomenon: translators' creativity and their strategies are shifting (Cordingley and Montini 2015: 4). Therefore, an important feature of agency is its temporality (Koskinen and Kinnunen 2010: 7). Agency responds to socio-political changes, not always in a predictable manner. The temporality of translator's agency as well as the shifting nature of the strategies in the translation process become visible in the present study (see 6.2) and reveal a multitude of variables influencing the translators' work.

Through the notion of translator's agency, we can study not just the way the translation is done, but also collaboration between the translator's (and other agents'), the translator's position in the translation scene, the existing translation norms, the translator's conformity to them, and so on. The trinary division of extratextual, paratextual and textual agency is useful for viewing the translation event from not just the perspective of translator's agency in the text but opens the translator's involvement in the event to the full extent. It also reveals other agents present in the different stages of the translation process, as demonstrated by genetic translation studies (Cordingley and Montini 2015: 13). The other agents directly involved in the translating process include “institutions, editors, correctors, proofreaders, and clients” (ibid.). Jansen and Wegener (2013: 1) call this **multiple translatorship**: “the multiple ways in which the translator's agency

is intertwined with that of other parties in the process of bringing translation into the world” (ibid.). In addition to these different kinds of collaboration with other agents, genetic studies also help us see translation in the sense of creation, not just re-creation (Romanelli 2015: 102), and is a way to “effectively study and understand the translation process from within” (ibid.). In the present study, the involvement of various other agents at different stages of the process becomes visible: not just the publishing house and editors at the time of the publishing of the translations but also people involved during the later stages of editing and publishing, and across different time periods and political contexts.

Furthermore, the current study asks what other relevant aspects of agency beyond the textual, extratextual and paratextual categories. Should we “search for other approaches that may help us enlarge our view on the issue of agency” (Koskinen and Kinnunen 2010: 5), which direction should we explore and what is the scope of our inquiry? Can we extend the limits of our scope of inquiry beyond the professional sphere, into the domain which remarkably influences every individual’s professional performance – the **everyday**? Can we find any meaningful reasons behind and relations between the translator’s decisions to exercise or not to exercise professional agency in everyday context?

According to Rita Felski (2000: 84) “acts of innovation and creativity are not opposed to, but rather made possible by the mundane cycles of the quotidian” – the everyday. The recent developments of translation history and translator studies encourage the use of the archival sources that are “not directly related to translating and interpreting” (Lung cited in Rundle 2021: 233), i.e., “nosing around” (Park cited in Kaindl 2021: 22) in translators’ archives, personal papers included, in order to uncover their actual working circumstances. Such “nosing” in translators’ lives is particularly pertinent because translators’ main workplace usually is their home, and home, according to Felski (2000: 85), is the base of the everyday, always present and for the professional activities carried out there. When doing research, sensitivity and ethical handling of personal data is of utmost importance; the focus on how everyday can shed light onto the creative processes and not on personal issues *per se*. It needs to be acknowledged that “[t]he exploration of translators in all their human dimensions may be unfinalizable” (Kaindl 2021: 3), often for the already mentioned reason of insufficient or non-existent materials. However, everyday forms the basis of who we are (Felski 2000: 95) and, provided the relevant material exists, we can take the opportunity to look at translators’ living conditions.

It is obvious that the different (also personal) aspects related to the translator’s agency mentioned above manifest themselves in the interaction with cultural and socio-political systems. The collective nature of agency (Koskinen and Kinnunen 2010: 7), e.g. in the form of “those constraints and norms that regulate, to some extent their [translators’] freedom” (Paloposki 2009: 206) and that are negotiated and constantly changing, necessitates the study of the structure in parallel with that of agency. In terms of the current study, the structure can be viewed as the context that needs to be explored to be able to explain the mutually causal nature of the relations between the individual and the collective. As according to

Paloposki (2009) the interaction between society and the translator is different in each individual case, it is also for this reason that we need the individual case study to be accompanied by the wider background providing comparative information regarding the translators' community as well as translation and wider cultural, socio-political and historical landscape.

A related aspect is that a translator may be, and often is, engaged in other fields of activity (Pym [1998] 2014: 161). What is more, the way translators combine their different fields of activity may also reveal the power relations within a social system by explicating the different possibilities for gaining social capital (ibid.) and building their credibility and prestige as translators. Translation may also "feed into or stimulate other creative works of the author-translator" (Guzmán 2020: 50). While Pym ([1998] 2014: 161) finds that translators are hardly ever monoprofessionals, Meylaerts (2013) uses the term **multipositionality** "as it relates to their multiple lives (as a professional teacher, journalist, civil servant, etc. and as a writer, critic, translator, self-translator, editor, etc.) and to their plural and variable socialisation in a variety of social and cultural contexts" (ibid. 109). A look into multipositionality can also disclose the translators' active agency with their "own agendas conscious or unconscious as the case may be" (Pym 2009: 23; see also Kujamäki 2010: 61–84). It can be speculated that a translator's professional agency is not merely the translator's agency in isolation, but rather an interrelated set of roles, shaped by the different fields of activity the individual has undertaken. Therefore, examining the agency of Sillaots has led me to introduce the term 'multipositional agency', which encapsulates her multiple (literary) activities, showing how they inform one another and reveal the varying nature of her agency across these fields.

Another concept closely connected with agency is **voice** – translator's subjectivity, according to Theo Hermans (1996: 27), which is always present in a more or less hidden or explicit form. It may appear in paratexts (such as fore- and afterwords, footnotes, etc.) and in metalinguistic comments (ibid. 28), but also within the translated text, manifested through the particular strategies the translator is more likely to adopt (Pekkanen 2013: para 7). It is also possible to view translator's voice as "one which is not assimilated into the voice of the narrator of the source text" (O'Sullivan 2003: 202), i.e., "the voice of the narrator of the translation" (ibid. 205) as Emer O'Sullivan has formulated it. In search for the translator's voice, text analysis has also been employed in subchapters dealing with textual agency (see 4.3 and 5.3), juxtaposing the translated text with the source text.

Since the translator's textual agency can be seen "in the shifts the translator has opted for when faced with an opportunity to choose between two or more feasible alternatives" (Pekkanen 2013: para 6), the connection between agency and voice, becomes obvious. From the perspective of the present study, it would also be reasonable to examine whether the translator's voice can serve as a link between the translator's agency and the wider social context beyond the textual level, i.e., whether the translation strategy or strategies employed by the translator for a particular thematic field (e.g. foodstuffs and dishes) reflect the broader

trends in that area of social life at the time of the translation process and its publication. For this purpose, it is necessary to identify the translating strategy (according to Delabastita, 'operation' 1993: 39), examine its consistency of use, and ascertain its compatibility with the wider social context. This approach may be viewed as a response to Pym's criticism towards "attempts to privilege translators as a 'voice' within translations, and to leave it at that" (2009: 37). Searching for a translator's voice does not have to be merely "interesting reading performance" (ibid.); rather, it needs to be situated in the social context, including political and ideological environment. Adding the translator's multipositionality as a factor potentially shaping both the translator's agency and voice might provide an additional dimension for uncovering the translator's agenda or goals and their social causality.

At the same time, it must be acknowledged that there are areas in this dissertation where it is difficult to distinguish clearly between voice and agency, for example, in the subchapters on paratextual and textual agency (see 4.2, 4.3, 5.2 and 5.3) within the two translation events examined. Although the discussion in these sections concerns agency, the forms of textual and paratextual agency arise from the strategies the translator has chosen to employ, that is, from the (un)usual traces or footprints in the text that may render the translator's presence visible to the reader. Thus, the boundary between voice and agency is not always clear-cut; rather, voice appears as an inherent part of agency as it is conceived in this study.

Also, in this dissertation, multipositionality serves as a conceptual key to understanding Sillaots' persona in its entirety. Her professional identity cannot be reduced to the role of the translator alone; rather, it encompasses multiple, intersecting positions: writer, critic, editor, teacher and cultural mediator – each contributing to her social and literary presence. These overlapping roles illuminate the broader networks of power, prestige and cultural capital within which she operated, framing her translational activity as part of a dynamic, multidimensional career.

Within this overreaching perspective, agency functions as a lower-level analytical tool, enabling a close examination of how a translator exercises choice and influence in specific translational situations. While multipositionality captures the structural and relational complexity of Sillaots' professional life, agency reveals the micro-level decisions and strategies through which she negotiated constraints, asserted her voice and responded to socio-political contexts. Together, these concepts allow for a nuanced understanding of Sillaots – not only as a translator, but as an active participant in the literary and cultural processes of the time. Building on this conceptual framework, the exploration of Sillaots' multipositionality and agency relies fundamentally on archival research, which provides the material necessary to trace her multiple roles and the dynamics of her decision-making within specific translation events. In the above, one of the main premises of this dissertation, **archival research** and the respective sources (see 2.1 and 2.2) have already been mentioned. Archival sources are the common thread intertwined with all the aspects the dissertation aims to address (see

Chapter 1). Furthermore, archival materials have determined the course of this dissertation and called for the conceptualisation of an archive as not just “a site or mode of preservation of a national, institutional or individual past” but rather “a ‘generative system’” (Edwards in Guzmán 2020: 49), which helps us with one of the aims of translator studies: “detect the cracks, conflicts and contradictions in the grand narratives of translation” (Kaindl 2021: 23) and leads us to look for not just the lost voices, but also the lost reasons, coincidences and gaps that inevitably accompany translation. According to Stowe (2022: 180) “[a]rchival research, like any other, is about remediating some kind of lack of knowledge”, at the same time acknowledging that archives do not contain “fixed reflections of reality” (Harris in Stowe 2022: 181). Moreover, “there is no singular voice or set of singular voices to be found in the archive, no direct and unambiguous speech within documents preserved” (Stowe 2022: 181). Neither does the archive grant us a fixed truth that will fill all the gaps with necessary information and set all the pieces of the puzzle to their right places. In fact, the archive can pose more questions than it is able to answer, but the questions, even if they remain unanswered, can be an end in themselves: acknowledging the gaps may take us nearer to filling them.

Another issue related to archival imperfection has been pointed out by Munday (2014: 71): the institutional power involved in deciding on the principles of archival selection. These principles may be subject to ideological pressure (as in totalitarian regimes or other challenging environments), or power relations characteristic to any social structures (ibid.). This establishes a certain tension within microhistory, which aims at focusing “on those whose voices are generally unheard” (ibid. 67). At the same time, Paloposki (2021) has shown that sometimes it is still possible to obtain at least some information about such hitherto unheard voices from the archives.

Guzmán (2020: 49) also engages with archival discussion and stresses the need to abandon the idea of fixing truth or memory with the help of the archive and “recognise the researcher’s inscription” as she puts it. She draws attention to ways of reading archival material “with attention to its heterogeneity and its non-hierarchical set of relations” (Guzman 2020: 50), suggesting to do it “rhizomatically, in such a way that diverse points can be connected” (ibid.). Consequently, this study does not pretend to present a complete picture and a fixed truth; rather, it seeks to view archival fragments as links to other “outside” sources and as starting points that lead to new paths and sprouting new rhizomes.

A problem often encountered in archival research, and indicated above, is that the relevant material may be fragmentary, scattered across different collections, or missing altogether (e.g. letters of one correspondence partner may be absent). Archival detection (Munday 2014: 72), at least to some extent, is probably familiar to every researcher engaged in this field. This is where various search words (in case of the online databases) should be tested and archivists’ help accepted. At the same time, complicated as it may be, such detection may lead to interesting sources and rewarding findings (e.g. Bardet 2021: 41–53). Thereby, the present study has sought to consider all the critical notions referred to above

and to acknowledge that, in case of Sillaots, the fragmentary nature of her archival collection (such as incomplete correspondence, manuscripts that are referred to but missing (e.g. her poems, see 3.2) can, to some extent, certainly be attributed to institutional interference by Soviet authorities (see 3.2.4). However, some materials may also have been lost during the turbulent times or deliberately excluded from her archive collection, for example, by the family members. Thus, it is necessary to recognize both the “value and limitations of primary materials” (Munday 2014: 68) and to address these by acknowledging their subjectivity. Appreciating the mediated nature of archival materials becomes important when dealing with these sources (ibid.).

Similarly, the specificity of **translation and the translator’s archive** can become helpful in finding answers and missing pieces of a puzzle, but no matter how well-preserved and complete the archival collection is, it cannot show us what was actually going on in the translator’s mind (Cordingley and Hersant 2022: 13). Therefore, it is hardly possible to reconstruct, revive, recreate and/or recover the translation process, the translator’s everyday, or any other similar phenomena in its totality. Outi Paloposki (2017: 31), with reference to Munday, has estimated that archival materials are not always representative of “all translators’ condition”, but can still offer “a unique vantage point for studying individual translators’ experience” (ibid.). Therefore, alongside the problematic issues that have to be acknowledged, a translation archive is much more than a mere collection of documents, “but rather the reflection of the variegated phases leading from the selection of an original work to the reception of its translation” (Cordingley and Hersant 2021: 21), inevitably revealing the already strongly present “human touch” embedded in the choices, selections, relationships and social interaction around translation.

The specific qualities of translation and translator’s archives alongside the critical approaches towards “archival truth” in general have generated some new archival-related notions. For example, Israel (2022), advocates for the “refractionist” approach towards the archive (2022), suggesting to view the archive as a system of representation – a scheme of understanding what the past means for those in the present. Guzmán (2020: 50) proposes viewing the translator’s archive as an assemblage – “a signifying organism”, that enables recombinations across texts, bodies, and histories, revealing connections that cross dates, borders and territories (ibid. 50). As a methodological approach, the translator’s archive serves as “an entry point, a way of seeing, a mode of engaging with a translator’s experience without aiming to produce typologies or fixed terms for study” (ibid. 51).

Such a refractionist or assemblage-like way of looking at the translator’s archive leads to archival detection and enables to see meaningful units in the fragments that, in their turn, encourage searches in other sources. This can result in the individual fragments being linked to the “outside” sources and, thereby, eventually seeing what the past means to those in the present. In the current dissertation, these combinations and recombinations emerging between the different sources that complement each other, aim to approach the embodied

existence of the translator and take the particular translator's archive as an entry point and a mode of seeing, but at the same time also as tangible traces that give information about her existence, her being in the world as a person and a translator.

Moving closer to the "human factor", Guzmán (2020: 48) summarizes several aspects of the translator's archive, viewing "archive as a generative and relational space which is open to plural possibilities" and stating that: "[a]t the intersection between the social, the political and the intimate and subjective, the examination of translators' archives reflects their self-understanding and the "theories" of language and of the world that inform their practice and their "imaginings"" (ibid. 47). Thus, translators' archives are not just collections of documents but dynamic spaces where multiple dimensions intersect. Guzmán (2020) positions the translator's archive as a relational and interpretive space that illuminates both the translator's identity and the intellectual and imaginative foundations of their work.

In the context of the present dissertation, archival sources have been informative in all these aspects: the translator's personality, her principles of language use, her overall worldview, and a matter explicitly manifested in Sillaots' archive – her everyday life, including the specific aspect of food.

Sillaots' archive has also prompted me to introduce concepts such as the above-mentioned multipositionality into this dissertation. The grouping of archival materials relating to Marta Sillaots' and several of her collaborators reveals the extent of her multiple professional roles and activities beyond translation, hereby foregrounding her positioning within a broader network of cultural production. Moreover, engagement with the archive has raised questions concerning what may be termed the **tangibility of translation** and its applicability to the materials left behind by a long-deceased translator. While tangibility of translation is not a formally defined concept attributable to a single theorist, it can be understood as a broader theoretical orientation within translation studies that foregrounds translation as a materially situated and historically traceable practice rather than an abstract transfer of meaning (see Kaindl 2014, 2021). From this perspective, translations leave recoverable traces not only in translated texts but also in paratexts and archival documents.

In this dissertation, I consider the tangibility of archival materials to be twofold. On the one hand, archival documents function as tangible, material traces of the translator's existence, mediating her lived experience, emotional responses and professional negotiations in an indirect yet perceptible manner. On the other hand, following Batchelor's conceptualisation of paratexts as sites where translation materialises as discourse (see Batchelor 2018), these materials render visible the concrete ways in which translation practices are embedded in specific cultural, institutional and historical contexts.

This duality underscores a fundamental paradox of the archive: while its meaning is constructed through acts of interpretation, its material presence remains undeniable, reminding us that "the imaginary of the archive is always situated outside its own materiality, in the story it makes possible" (Mbembe in Cordingley

and Hersant 2021: 20). As Guzmán (2020: 54) observes, engagement with a translator's archive is therefore an embodied, multi-sensory experience rather than a purely intellectual exercise. Unpublished materials may reveal traces of life and even "secrets," whether preserved intentionally or accidentally. Such encounters cannot be reduced to rational argumentation alone; they are relational and potentially transformative, persisting beyond the archival space and continuing to shape understanding. Thus, the translator's archive emerges as an organic, generative space, constituted not only by its documents but also by the lived experience of engaging with them.

In relation to Sillaots, let me briefly also touch upon women's archives, which have not always been considered worthy to be preserved (Gerson 2001: 10–11), and it is only by looking for the collections of their male relatives and various other archival sources (requiring a great deal of archival detection) through which at least some information can be obtained (ibid. 14). On the other hand, when a female writer's or translator's archive does exist, we may find an abundance of extra information, or as Verduyn (2001: 94) puts it – "the other things". Verduyn explains: "women's sense of self exists within a context of deep awareness of others – the concept of women's self as relational" (ibid. 95). Thus, it appears that women's letters, autobiographies, diaries, etc. may include more background information, more context than men's. This has also been pointed out by Kurvet-Käosaar (2014: 145) on the example of Estonian women's prison and deportation diaries during and after World War II. Sillaots' archival collections, especially her letters to family members, give us this extra information, which may at first seem irrelevant and yet become an informative link to her professional activities.

A limitation of the microhistorical approach is its failure to bring to light the (not just female) translators whose archives have not been considered worth keeping (Munday 2014: 77). Researchers can only recognise the existence of such biases and

be aware that all phases through which research unfolds are *constructed* and not *given* [*italics in original*]: the identification of the object and its importance; the elaboration of the categories through which it is analysed; the criteria of proof; the stylistic and narrative forms by which the results are transmitted to the reader. (Ginzburg 1993: 32)

This recognition of constructedness reminds us that microhistorical research, while valuable, is inevitably shaped by archival gaps and interpretive frameworks, making transparency about these limitations essential.

Some of the previously mentioned concerns related to the shortcomings of microhistorical and archival approaches, such as "fixing the truth" and fragmentation, can (to a certain extent) be solved by a complementary use of other types of sources to supplement the archival material and provide proper contextualisation. On the one hand, it is the gaps of archival material that can be filled with the help of these sources; on the other hand, the latter have to be consulted also in order to link the individual with the cultural, social and political

background of the day. In order to understand the individual's position in the social hierarchy, the complementary usage of both micro- and macrohistorical sources can provide possible solutions. According to Marc Bloch's words summarised by Ginzburg, there has to be "a constant back and forth between micro- and macrohistory, between close-ups and extreme long shots, so as to continually thrust back into discussion the comprehensive vision of the historical process through apparent exceptions and cases of brief duration" (1993: 27). This interplay between micro- and macrohistorical perspectives ensures that archival research does not remain isolated but is continually contextualized within broader historical processes, enriching interpretation and mitigating the limitations of a purely microhistorical approach.

Similarly, but in the context of translation history, Paloposki (2009: 190) has indicated that the individual and the social aspect do not have to be separated or seen as differences or contradictions but rather be treated as supplementary to each other. In order to understand the social contexts in which translations are produced – the circumstances of a certain (socio-political) period alongside its constraints and possibilities – "translation can /.../ be studied *both [italics in original]* from the point of view of the individual translator's choice and decision process and the effect of these in the target culture, and from the point of view of the norms and constraints surrounding translators" (ibid.). Such supplementary approaches – between closeups and long shots is what the current study has aimed to reach.

Building on this interplay between micro- and macrohistorical perspectives, the translator's archive offers a complementary methodological lens – one that foregrounds manuscripts and paratexts as crucial sites of meaning and agency within the translation process. As a methodological tool, translator's archive also grants importance to manuscripts and paratexts (Guzman 2020: 46), since, besides paratexts, translators usually do not have any other form of discursive space in literature, which is why "translators' documents are fundamental for literary study" (ibid. 47). In this way translation is seen more as a process governed by human decisions and interactions rather than an end result. At the same time, translator's archive "does not restrict itself to them [paratexts] and, importantly, does not use them to resolve a finished text's unknowns" (ibid. 51). In terms of the current study, the relevance of paratexts also manifests itself in the study of paratextual agency in the framework of translation event described above. As a methodological tool, the translator's archive foregrounds manuscripts and paratexts as key spaces for understanding translation as a process shaped by human decisions, while avoiding reducing them to mere solutions for textual uncertainties.

The archival research for this dissertation extended over a period of more than five years and (as mentioned above) was conducted in two research institutions: The Cultural History Archives of the Estonian Literary Museum and The National Archives of Estonia, both located in Tartu, Estonia. The online databases of the two archives provided most of the sources; however, there were also some unexpected and fortuitous findings (e.g. Sirge's translation of *Huckleberry Finn*),

which added an additional perspective on certain aspects of the research, namely the translator's agency under Soviet repressive circumstances. The databases were searched using different search words (considering the translator's several surnames; see Chapter 1), with the invaluable assistance of the archivists. In addition, the works and cited sources of previous researchers' (e.g. Gielen and Saluäär) were consulted.

Last but not least, at every step and in every phase of the research it is necessary to keep in mind the notion of the researcher's own subjectivity, the self-reflexive and "self-portrait" (Levi cited in Ginzburg 1993: 34) nature of microhistorical study. When we humanize translation history, we should keep in mind "that subjectivity constitutes a central aspect of a humanized approach, not only with regard to the sources, but also in relation to the research subject, i.e., the translator, as well as the scientific approach" (Kaindl 2021: 11). The researcher's imminently subjective approach should therefore not be ignored but acknowledged, "accepted and incorporated into the theoretical deliberations" (ibid.). It is therefore obvious that this research inevitably bears the signs of my views and attitudes, my bond with the long-deceased translator, which, as stated above, was established with the tangible traces of her existence – her archive. My interpretations and evaluations, shaped by my knowledge, experience and analytical positioning accompanied every stage of this study, including the analytical procedures and the conclusions drawn.

3. FROM WORDS TO WORLDS: THE EMERGENCE OF MARTA SILLAOTS IN ESTONIA'S LITERARY AND TRANSLATION SCENE

The aim of this chapter is to shed light on the “hows” and “whys” of a young woman becoming a translator at the beginning of the 20th century Estonia. The Chapter is largely based on (auto)biographical material and archival sources. Following a brief overview of the socio-political context and the literary and translation scene, we will take a look at the childhood and young years of Marta Sillaots, the translator-to-be. Special attention will be given to those aspects that she herself deemed significant, as well as those which may be perceived as such, given the hindsight through the study of Sillaots’ literary career. Sillaots’ first translation, Wallace’s *Nelja kohus (The Four Just Men)* in 1915, will also be discussed as a typical example of a translation of the period.

We will then proceed to see the emergence of the different but intertwined (literary) activities that laid the foundation for Marta Sillaots’ multipositional literary career in the Estonian cultural context of the early 20th century. The aim here is to offer a focused picture through the lens directed at the translator-to-be, Marta Sillaots and the persons, social circles, events and developments that are captured through this lens.

A closer focus will be on Sillaots’ work in the interwar Estonian Republic as a literary critic, especially in translation matters. Her role as a reviewer and her reviewing style tell us about her translation poetics. Translation reviews form a part of general literary culture and shape and reflect the norms and principles that govern translation. Sillaots’ translation work will be addressed in more depth in the following chapters, so the current chapter will only give a general overview of her translation legacy.

The chapter ends with the tragic events of the 1950s: Sillaots’ arrest, court trial and imprisonment first in Valga, Estonia and afterwards in a Siberian prison camp. This section draws on the court materials of the National Archives of Estonia, unexplored and unpublished until 2024 (see Steinberg 2024). The section also briefly touches upon the last years of Sillaots’ life.

3.1 Cultural Background: Estonian Literary and Translation Scene in the First Decades of the 20th Century and in the Interwar Estonian Republic (1920–1940)

In the increasingly tense atmosphere of the first decade of 20th century Europe, Estonia belonged to the Russian Empire, while remaining – as it had been for centuries – in the sphere of strong German influence. For Estonia, this decade “predicts an upheaval”¹ (Pajur 2002: 11), initiated already in the 19th century by

¹ All the translations here and henceforth are by the author of the dissertation.

the National Awakening, which the subsequent second wave of Russification could not obliterate². Estonia's mostly rural population was beginning to define itself as a nation; Estonians were slowly but steadfastly starting to gain more say in how they were governed and their share in local administration as well as other platforms of governance was rising (ibid.).

The cultural scene of the time was characterised by the emergence of educated Estonian intelligentsia – composers, artists, actors, writers – who all contributed to the diversification and buzz of Estonian social and cultural life. Both amateur and professional orchestras and theatres gave colour to the landscape that had so far been mostly dominated by non-Estonian speaking minorities. The rapid social, economic and technological modernisation witnessed elsewhere in Europe in the 19th century reached Estonia with a delay as did cultural and literary movements, but when they arrived, they evoked diverse creative activities (Süvalep 2001: 163).

The first decades of the 20th century were also a period of lively linguistic debates. In the Estonian written language, there was no specialist terminology, nor any unified norms. For centuries, the language of social, cultural and educational activities had been German, which at the end of the 19th century had become accompanied by Russian. In the 1880s, active Russification programmes started transforming Estonian schools, making Russian the language of instruction already at the elementary level (Soosaar 1996: 6–7). However, because of the new cultural developments, there was an increasing demand for the written Estonian language to be standardised and at the beginning of the 20th century, tables started to turn, with the Estonian language increasingly used at different levels of society.

A new generation of writers emerged, who would later establish themselves alongside the already renowned authors, such as Eduard Vilde³. Young Estonia (Noor-Eesti), a literary movement which first operated as a semi-underground formation, was officially registered in 1912 and offered a platform for many of the younger generation authors (Süvalep 2001: 164). Young Estonia established their own publishing house, issued a journal and, more or less regularly, literary albums. The leader of the movement was the poet and later literary scholar Gustav Suits (1883–1956) and the movement included several other prominent literary figures of the day such as Friedebert Tuglas⁴, Bernhard Linde⁵, Villem Grünthal-Ridala⁶ and Johannes Aavik⁷. Their eyes were turned towards the West and the dominant literary flows of the first quarter of the 20th century were the same as elsewhere in Europe: modernism (in the form of neoromanticism in Estonia),

² The second wave of Russification reached its peak in 1908–1911 as a response to the First Russian Revolution of 1905 (Eesti Entsüklopeedia: Esimene Vene revolutsioon ja surveaeg Eestis (1900–1914)).

³ Eduard Vilde (1865–1933), Estonian writer and diplomat.

⁴ Friedebert Tuglas (1886–1971), Estonian writer, literary scholar, critic, translator and editor.

⁵ Bernhard Linde (1886–1954), Estonian translator and editor.

⁶ Villem Grünthal-Ridala (1885–1942), Estonian poet, translator, linguist and folklorist.

⁷ Johannes Aavik (1880–1973), Estonian linguist and translator, initiator of the language renewal.

symbolism, futurism and expressionism (Hasselblatt 2016: 347). The latter had not entirely replaced realism and critical realism of the end of the 19th century (Süvaley 2001: 161). All this diversity was accommodated into the Estonian literary scene. Another aim was to open Estonian culture and literature to other European cultures by a systematic and conscious effort. Literary translation was to be one of the vehicles employed for this cause (e.g. Hasselblatt 2016: 310).

Besides these aims, Johannes Aavik had an agenda of his own. He desired to promote the renewal of Estonian language, which he wanted to “become a great national construction” (Aavik 1916: 11) that embraces the different dialects of Estonia. This would make the Estonian language more accessible, excellent and precious (ibid.). The renewal would include new vocabulary (coined by Aavik and based on Estonian dialects and Finnish influences) as well as other linguistic novelties, for example, updated syntax and morphology.

The beginning of the 20th century was also characterised by a lively upsurge of journalistic publications and activities. In 1906, the literary journal *Eesti Kirjandus* (Estonian Literature) started appearing, and in the following year, Estonian Literary Society (Eesti Kirjanduse Selts – EKS) was established. Various newspapers and magazines emerged and although their lifespan did not always prove to be very long, they managed to cater for a very diverse range of readers’ tastes. They accommodated fiction, both original and translated and covered daily politics and current issues. *Eesti Kirjandus* is an exception in that it appeared under this title between 1906, and 1940 and its work has been continued in *Keel ja Kirjandus* (Language and Literature), still in publication.

3.1.1 The Rise of Translation Publishing and Cultural Modernisation in Estonia

Translations were published both as books and in periodicals. While book information is collected in bibliographies and book reviews can be studied for reception or additional information on the publication, translations in newspapers are usually not recorded in any bibliographic databases⁸. It is often impossible to detect their translators and there are no reviews of newspaper translations. In the first year of its appearance (1906), *Eesti Kirjandus* tried to publish a list of literary works and translations in the periodicals in addition to their list of the recent book releases, but the task must have been too laborious and was dropped already the next year.

Before the 20th century, the majority of translations were adaptations and retellings of the original, which is a common characteristic for both Finland and Estonia in the initial phases of their translation culture (Möldre 2012a: 90). Another common characteristic in Estonia was the use of indirect translation. Anglo-

⁸ Estonian Translation Database, one of the outcomes of the project Translation in History, led by Tallinn University, was made available at the beginning of 2026. The database includes translations published in periodicals. Available at: <https://kirjandus.tlulib.ee/en/translated-estonian-literature-database/>

American literature was often translated through a mediating language such as German or Russian.

In the period of 1900–1919, translations counted for 44% of the fiction published in book format (ibid. 90). The range of translated works was as versatile as their quality. A common feature of all translations in the very first years of the 20th century was a relative anonymity of translators: their names were often only marked by initials or missing altogether. The Estonian literary as well as translation landscape was at the time mostly, but not entirely, male dominated. For example, according to my observations during the decade between 1906 and 1915, only five women translators' names occur in translation reviews: Anna Haava, Anna Prants, Emilia Linde, Leeni Ploompuu and Linda Jürmann (later Vilde). Considering the lack of precise and systematic research on the period, this striking numerical imbalance in the translation reviews is nonetheless telling of the broader gendered structures of cultural production at the time, which constrained women's participation and visibility in both literary authorship and translation despite their active involvement.

The literary scene of the independent Republic of Estonia (1918 onward) witnessed a significant boost of both original literary works as well as translations from foreign languages (Möldre 2012a: 95). The flow of translations continued, even though Estonia joined the Berne Convention in 1927, which brought along certain difficulties in obtaining translation permits as well as paying royalties (ibid. 96). Some publishing houses then opted for older literature or cut their number of translations (ibid.).

Over the next decade (1920–1929), the share of translated literature rose to 48%. As there was a relative increase in the publication of original works in 1930–1939, the share of translated literature was only 45% during this decade (Möldre 2012a: 95).

The interwar Republic of Estonia adopted several means for promoting the publishing of quality literature. As early as 1919, the newly established and financially hard-pressed republic had devised a plan for publishing translations of important scientific and belletristic fiction at reasonable prices (Lott and Möldre 2007: 977). The establishment of the Cultural Endowment of Estonia (Eesti Kultuurkapital) and its subsidiary Literature Endowment Fund (Kirjanduse sihtkapital) in 1925 secured a more consistent and broader support to publishing (ibid. 978), but their primary objective was to support Estonian writers in their original works (ibid. 980). A policy paper⁹ in 1931 advocated support for translations of world classics, by e.g. allocating funds for royalties to authors (ibid. 982). Translation was encouraged both ways: in the late 1930s, a plan was drafted for translating Estonian literature into foreign languages, speeding up this process (ibid. 987).

⁹ “Fundamental standpoints on publishing and distribution of books by Cultural Endowment” (“Kultuurkapitali põhimõttelised seisukohad raamatute kirjastamise ja levitamise asjus”)

3.1.2 Measuring Meaning: Translation Reviews and Norms in the Early 20th Century

During the early 20th century, the space carved by translations and translation reviews was getting bigger in Estonian cultural life, bringing with them discussions and suggestions on translation principles and criteria for translating. These processes were certainly influenced by the Finnish developments in the field some decades earlier. Translation competitions were another way of discussing and influencing translation strategies and norms.

Translation reviews of the first monthly literary journal, *Eesti Kirjandus*, provide a window to the criteria for a good translation. Between the years 1906 and 1915, the journal published 51 translation reviews (World War I caused a decline in reviewing). Most of the (non-anonymous) translators reviewed were men.

Out of these 51 reviews, 21 were published during the first six years (1906–1911); an average of 3.5 reviews per year. Then, in a single year (1912), there were 9 reviews and in 1913, there were 16 of them. In 1914–1915, the figures went down to only 5 articles on translated literature; the same happened over the period of 1916–1917. During the Estonian War of Independence (*Eesti Vabadussõda*) in 1918–1920, reviewing ceased altogether. These figures naturally correspond with the numbers of published translations, which also started going down in 1914: 112 translations in 1913 and 68 translations in 1914. Translating only gained its pre-war volume during 1923–1924; in 1923 there were 103 translations (Möldre 2012a: 91, 96).

A common pattern in the 51 reviews between 1906 and 1915 consisted of a discussion of the general value of the literary work, followed by an evaluation of the quality of the translation, to a lesser or greater extent. Clearly observable in the reviews during the first decades of the century is also the effect of the often heated discussions on language standardization that were taking place in Estonian Literary Society and on the pages of most of the periodicals, including *Eesti Kirjandus*. The divergent opinions on vocabulary and grammar made their way into translation reviews as well.

Consequently, nearly all of the reviews deal with linguistic aspects of the translations. The remarks mostly concerned vocabulary, but also grammar (declination, syntax) and register. Some reviewers were in favour of the language renewal (Grünthal 1912: 373–383) advocated by Johannes Aavik, who also was a translator and active literary reviewer himself, while others found Aavik's novel ideas unnecessary and inconsistent (Hindrey 1915: 235; Jõgever 1913b: 463). One of the reviewers called the language renewal ““rabies linguae” of the modernists” (Eisen 1914: 17) and wanted to protect especially children's literature from this rage. Aavik, for his part, took a more systematic approach in comparison with other reviewers: he pointed out three aspects a translation review needs to address: precision of translation, fluency in style and compliance with orthographic rules (1912a: 295).

Reviews also covered a wide range of different issues. For example, if the translator was a renowned writer, their name was sometimes given as a guarantee

of the quality of the work (Jõgever 1913a: 130), but, as stated by an anonymous reviewer, even the best of writers could produce bad translations (Anon 1915b: 20). In the case of a classic of world literature (Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Aavik: 1912: 295), the graver is the sin of bad translation. Capturing the original's style was stressed by some reviewers, for example, Hindrey (1915: 235) and Okas (1913: 383).

Translations were still done indirectly, but during the period of 1906–1915, translators were often reproached if they had resorted to a mediating text instead of the original (e.g. Eisen 1914: 16–17; Haava 1914: 159). This was the claim stressed by Young Estonia and Estonian Literary Society. There was thus a shift in the attitude towards the widespread practice of indirect translations.

Surprisingly, the first Estonian translation competition was held as early as 1896 by the Estonian Charity Society (Eesti Heategev Selts) in St Petersburg (Sütiste 2017: 171). There was another one in Estonia in February 1911, with Leo Tolstoy's *Loll-Ivan* (*Иван-дурак*) selected as a source text. The decision of the committee was made public in *Eesti Kirjandus* in June 1912 (Leetberg et al 1912: 245–248), announcing that 24 translations had been submitted, but none of them were found prize-worthy. The problem, according to the jury, was not the translators' poor command of Russian, but rather the total absence of the "pleasure of Tolstoy's speech" in the translations (ibid. 246).

As indicated above, literary circles had started focusing on translation increasingly since the beginning of the century (Sütiste 2017: 172). While translation was first regarded as a means or an instrument of promoting Estonian culture, in the 1920s, translation started to be viewed as an independent domain where high standards were required. Language continued to be a concern: the heated linguistic debates of the first two decades of the 20th century had not subsided. The two main literary periodicals, *Eesti Kirjandus* and *Looming* (Creative Activity), the journal of the Estonian Writers' Union (Eesti Kirjanikkude Liit¹⁰) that started appearing in 1923, published an ever-increasing number of translation reviews and even full-length articles, addressing the essence and principles of translation.

The author of one of the articles conceptualising translation was the young and promising scholar Gustav Saar (1901–1930), whose article "On artistic literary translation"¹¹ (1927: 751–757) in *Looming* provides a historical overview of translations in the Western world and analyses the essence of translation and translators' tasks set against the background of contemporary values and needs. Saar (1927: 752) stresses the need for the internal and external form of the artistic work to function together and points out the ethnological, cultural, individual and other difficulties that may sometimes impede the equality (Est. 'võrdsus') between the translation and the original work (ibid. 753). The ideal of (for example poetry) translation should thus be "the critical and author-based sum of the internal and external, the world view of the author and his/her style – the critical-

¹⁰ Estonian Writers' Union (Eesti Kirjanikkude Liit) was established in 1922.

¹¹ "Kunstipärasest tõlkest"

lyrical translation” (ibid. 755). Saar mentions Friedebert Tuglas’ translation of Aino Kallas’ *Barbara von Tisenhusen* (1924) as closest to this ideal (ibid.).

A translator is an artist of words for Saar (1927: 755) and has to be the author’s soulmate with an impeccable linguistic and stylistic taste accompanied by creative vision. Similar ideas about the kinship of souls between the author and the translator have been expressed in translation thinking for centuries, for example “the Sympathetick Bond” of souls agreeing, expressed by the Earl of Roscommon in his *Essay on Translated Verse* ([1684] 1975: 77). Saar criticises the poor and limited vocabulary and inflexible syntax of the majority of Estonian translators (ibid. 756–757); he also addresses indirect translation and says it should be outruled (ibid. 757) – another indication of the changing translation norms. What is perhaps most important in this article is that for the first time in Estonia, translation is referred to as an art in its own right (ibid. 755). This idea will be applied to translation throughout the 1930s (Sütiste 2017: 173).

Another young literary figure and translator, Ants Oras (1900–1982), wrote an article in *Eesti Kirjandus* in 1931 called “Contemplations on translated literature”¹² (609–617), emphasising the need for good translated literature. Oras starts by stating that for a small nation, the question of translated literature is a crucial one (Oras 1931: 609). There is a utilitarian streak in Oras’ claim that when a small nation does not have enough great literary figures of its own, translation may be the means for creating “an acceptable intellectual environment” (ibid.), which is the prerequisite of becoming “a cultured nation” (ibid. 610). The topos of translation as a vehicle of culture reflects a rather general understanding in the history of many nations regarding the role of translation. According to Oras, translation may serve as a competitor to the nation’s original works and help to improve the latter (ibid. 611). He points out the need to translate works from different genres, such as philosophy, education and literature – the humanities (ibid. 613), but also memoirs, biographies and the like (ibid. 614). Fiction as the “most personal” (ibid. 615) field, needing the deepest attention, has an immense impact on the development of the readers’ personality. Oras lists several literary works that have this capacity and warns translators against letting Estonian nation become a ground for bad literary taste (ibid. 617), thus probably referring to the popularity of light literary genres such as detective stories and romantic fiction.

Yet another article on translating appeared in 1932, in the January and March issues (pp. 20–28 and 123–131 respectively) of *Eesti Kirjandus*. The article was by August Palm “How we translate and how we should translate”¹³ and aimed at answering the question of how Estonian translators translate and what an “exemplary translator” (Palm 1932a: 20) should be like. One of Palm’s first statements is that a good translation should be as close to the original as possible and the new form a literary work gets in translation should preserve the original’s uniqueness (ibid.). He continues by noting that “the quality of our translations is not high” (ibid. 22) and dedicates several pages to listing the main flaws, such

¹² “Mõtteid tõlkekirjanduse puhul”

¹³ “Kuidas tõlgitakse meil ja kuidas peab tõlkima”

as poor vocabulary, lack of linguistic competence, underdeveloped style and insufficient command of foreign languages, most of which he illustrates with examples (*ibid.* 22–26). He also mentions the foreignness of vocabulary and syntax and guides the translators to “cultivate” and utilise Estonian dialects more (*ibid.* 24). Thus, the main focus appears to be on the target language: the development of Estonian syntax, vocabulary and style, accompanied by the aim of refining the linguistic ear of the readers.

Palm ranks the three major publishing houses. For him, the best quality of translations was by the publishing house of the Estonian Literary Society (Eesti Kirjanduse Selts – EKS), followed by the Publishing House Loodus (Nature) and Noor-Eesti (young Estonia) as the worst (Palm 1932a: 27). He praises Gustav Suits, Friedebert Tuglas, Andrus Saareste¹⁴, Johannes Semper¹⁵ and Ants Oras as skilful masters, whose work brings the reader to “the luminous palace of poetry and the republic of beauty” (*ibid.*: 28).

In the second part of his paper (1932b: 123–131), Palm addresses the necessary “personal traits of the translator” (*ibid.* 124), using the same words as Gustav Saar. A good translator should write original works in order to become “an artist of words” and be the author’s “soulmate” (*ibid.*). Other valuable qualities include “a sense of style”, “idealism” (*ibid.*) and “diligence, accuracy and conscience” (*ibid.* 125). The skills a translator should possess include an excellent command of the mother tongue (with its different variants and registers), rich vocabulary, intelligence, good general education, knowledge of specific terminology and an awareness of current trends in literary and cultural life (*ibid.* 125). The merit of a translator’s command of foreign languages is his/her ability to think in it in addition to the good cultural competence of the source culture (*ibid.*).

Palm also gives a number of instructions, such as avoiding expanding or cutting the source text, reading the source text aloud in order to capture the rhythm, and avoiding the source language syntactic structures (1932b: 125). Sütiste (2009: 908) suggests that Palm may have been the first to make an appeal to follow Estonian “translational heritage” to find out what were the principles that had been followed, in order to “set up translation requirements for the present” (Palm 1932b: 126). This appeal is in line with similar initiatives in other European countries. For example, in 1929 the Czech Otokar Fischer called for a similar task: “The efforts of our 19th century translators deserve a systematic, detailed monograph, which would probably reflect, in a nutshell, the entire evolution of modern Czech poetic writing” (cited in Levý [1963] 2011: 167). Levý adds: “To this day we lack such a monograph, as indeed do all other literatures” (*ibid.*)

Palm claims that, among other things, a translator also has the power to develop or spoil the language (1932b: 126), and laments that good-quality tools available for translators are practically non-existent (*ibid.* 128). He expresses the need for an Estonian etymological dictionary, a dictionary of synonyms and collections of proverbs and idioms (*ibid.*). Translators’ meagre fees are not

¹⁴ Andrus Saareste (1892–1964), Estonian linguist and dialectologist.

¹⁵ Johannes Semper (1892–1970), Estonian writer, critic, translator, essayist and politician.

conducive to good quality and to an appreciation of translation as an art (*ibid.*). This leads Palm (1932b: 129) to discuss cultural policy, which he says should start by recognising translation as a specific field and, following Finland's example, create a financial support facility for translating world classics (*ibid.* 129–130). Another means for promoting translation could be competitions and establishing a professional association for translators (*ibid.* 130), similarly to the writers' union. He makes an appeal to pay greater attention to translations by increasing the number of translation reviews and calls for the major publishing houses to show greater “cultural spirit” to promote translation of good literature at the expense of the more profitable lighter genres (*ibid.* 131).

It can thus be concluded that since the (late) 1920s translation is increasingly viewed as an art and a separate field. Translator is an artist equal to the author and, in the course of that promotion, has to succumb to its various requirements. The guiding principle is that the artistic and creative translation has to be close to the original (Sütiste 2017: 174). Translators must have a sense of style, which serves as the prerequisite for being able to grasp the author's style. A metaphor that both Saar (1927) and Palm (1932b) employed is that of a soulmate, who a translator and the translated author have to be (Sütiste 2009: 914). Other important developments were the growing disapproval of indirect translating and the discussion around language renewal, which was still going strong. The fact that Estonian had become an officially acknowledged language of a nation state with its own literature and active discussions about its development, had an impact on translation. For their part, translations of foreign literature gave ground to linguistic debates. In fact, translation became an arena, where such debates were often initiated and where different approaches and opinions competed. All this bears witness to the buzzing translational activities of the period and that the principles and trends governing the field were still in the stage of formation.

As Estonian had become the language of instruction at all educational levels, education and children's literature came into greater focus (Palm 2008: 6–7). Children's literature emerged as a genre of its own in the 1920s and during the following decade its content diversified considerably while the volumes increased (Eesti Lastekirjanduse Keskus: para 1). Children's reading was promoted and its importance recognised (Palm 2008: 36) – the number of children's books of the interwar Estonian Republic increased almost “4-fold in comparison with the two first decades of the century” (*ibid.*). The primary function of children's literature was educational, including introducing children to cultural heritage and developing their ethical values (*ibid.* 15).

Understandably, translations of children's literature were to support similar nation-building and educational purposes. Translations were published in increasing numbers: half of the children's books published during 1918–1939 were translations (644 out of 1303) (Palm 2008: 7) and a number of world children's classics became available in Estonian. The Cultural Endowment (Eesti Kultuurkapital) supported several of these translations (*ibid.*). The main publishing house catering for children's needs was Loodus with their popular book series ‘The Golden Book of Loodus’ (‘Looduse Kuldraamat’), including mostly translations

(ibid.). Other popular series by Loodus were ‘Golden Home’ (‘Kuldne Kodu’) and ‘Joyful Book’ (‘Rõõmus Raamat’) (Eesti Lastekirjanduse Keskus: para 5). The primary genre for children’s books was prose; only very few poetry books were published for children (Palm 2008: 7). Children’s literature was also regularly reviewed in periodicals and literary overviews were published annually (ibid. 9).

3.1.3 Bridging Continents: Translating Anglo-American Literature in the Interwar Estonian Republic (1920–1940)

In the period of 1900–1919, translations from English made up 8% of the total number of translations (Möldre 2012a: 93), whereas in 1920–1939 the percentage had grown to 26% (ibid. 97). Thus, for the first time in 20th century Estonia, translations from English outnumbered translations from German (25%) and French (9%) (ibid.). Until then, German had been the main source language for Estonian translations (ibid. 93). The overall number of translated literature almost doubled from 1900 to 1940 (ibid. 99).

In the 1920s and 1930s, Estonian literary and translation landscape was undergoing a transformation, which Enn Soosaar (1996: 7) defines as looking for means to balance and neutralise German and Russian influences, and Lange (2015: 113) calls de-germanising (*degermaniseerimine*). Anglo-American literature played a big part in this process. English literature was considered prestigious, “an antidote against German ‘forced influence’” (Lange 2015: 83) and it is likely that this statement can be extended to cover American works as well, although the number of American books published in Estonia from 1917 to 1941 is significantly smaller than that of British books – 249 and 411 respectively (Lange 2009: 152). The long rule of German and Russian languages was officially overthrown in 1936 when English was declared the first foreign language of Estonian schools by a government regulation (ibid. 151). This regulation was preceded by a debate started in the late 1920s, when Ants Oras advocated English culture in his articles (Lange 2004: 143). Bestselling books were usually of lighter nature by writers such as Edgar Wallace and Arthur Conan Doyle, but also Herbert George Wells and John Galsworthy were translated and appeared among the most popular authors (Lange 2009: 152).

According to Lange (2004: 143), Oras stated in one of his articles that “in Estonia we are starved due to the lack of English literature and culture”. Oras speaks here primarily about British, not American culture and literature. American literature had been familiar to the Estonian audience since the 19th century, when topics dealing with slavery and Native Americans became popular, mostly as adaptations and retellings (Mits 2012: 76–78), and often as newspaper feuilletons.

One of the authors introduced to the Estonian readers early on was Mark Twain, whose *Huckleberry Finni seiklused* (*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*) in Sillaots’ translation forms part of the material of the present study. One of his first works translated into Estonian was *Aadma ja Eewa päewaraamatud* (*The*

Diaries of Adam and Eve) in 1909 (Toomiste 2023: 12) by a translator who has remained anonymous. Later, Ants Oras' student assignment at the University of Tartu, the translation of *Prints ja kerjus* (*The Prince and the Pauper*), appeared in the monthly journal *Vikerkaar* in 1922 (Lange 2004: 51). Huckleberry Finn had entered the Estonian literary scene in another book by Twain in 1923, under the Estonian title *Tom Sawyer salauurijana. Huck Finni jutustused* (Tom Sawyer – a Secret Detective. The Tales of Huck Finn), translated by H. Oras (Toomiste 2023: 12). The translator was very likely Ants Oras, whose first name Hans was Estonianised into Ants in 1922 (Lange 2004: 17) but may still have appeared as Hans in the 1923 translation.

Also, Charles Dickens was already familiar to the Estonian audience before Sillaots' translation of *David Copperfield* in 1937. According to Kai Ellip's (1996: 50–52) data, the following translations existed in Estonian prior to *Copperfield*: *Jõulu õhtu* (1882) (*A Christmas Carol*); *Kosjakased* (1913) (a collection of short stories); *Kilk koldel* (1926) (*A Cricket on the Hearth*); *Oliver Twisti imelikud elujuhtumused* (1927) (*Oliver Twist (The Parish Boy's Progress)*); *Nell ja tema vanaisa* (1932) (Nell and Her Grandfather – extracts from *The Old Curiosity Shop*); *Dombey ja poeg* 1933 (*Dombey and Son*); *Meie issanda elu* (1937) (*The Life of Our Lord*) and some adapted stories, mostly from the turn of the 20th century.

3.2 Female Translator in the Making: Marta Sillaots' Journey through Literature and Translation

At the end of the 19th century, only 19.2% of the Estonian population lived in towns (Eesti Entsüklopeedia: "Eesti rahvaarv"). Marta Adolfine Reichenbach's (1887–1969) family belonged to this minority. Her father and mother were "townsfolks", according to her own words communicated to Helmut Joonuks (1987: 3). The father was a post office clerk who was assigned to work in different parts of Estonia and, as Estonia was a part of the Russian Empire at the time, the north-western parts of imperial Russia were part of his district, too. Young Marta recalls the constant moving around, the boredom and tiredness of the endless packing and unpacking, but despite this, the general mood of her childhood was warm and bright (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 14). This, and much more information, can be gleaned from her autobiography and letters.

The family returned to Tallinn in 1894 and settled in the medieval Old Town. A significant fact is that Marta's home language was Estonian. She has written that all her classmates were from German- or Russian-speaking families, making her the only Estonian in her class. The language of instruction at the *Töchterschule* (School for Girls) she went to was officially Russian, but it was a German school by spirit. Sillaots recalled that she struggled with both of these languages and depended on her mother's help when doing her homework. (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 31). Another non-typical characteristic of the Reichenbach family was that the parents had decided to educate all their children – Marta Sillaots had

10 younger siblings. During the turn of the century, schooling usually lasted for three to five years (Põld 1933: 156) in the rural areas where most of the population lived. Sillaots attended school for 10 years.

Sillaots described her father Heinrich (Heinrich Alexander Reichenbach, later Estonianised into Hindrek Riikoja) as a reserved and withdrawn person, who did not quite know how to be around children, although he loved them dearly. Sillaots recalls their long walks into different ends of Tallinn (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 31–33), where the girl learned to notice the beauty of nature and got acquainted with the pleasures of hiking – the influence of which we can trace in her later literary works and life, when she enjoyed and eloquently described the natural environment.

The mother Julie Jeanette Reichenbach (Riikoja) (*née* Miller) was gentle, lively, articulate and funny, but with a darker suspicious layer underneath, making her harsh and unjust at times (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 50). The frankness with which Sillaots opens her father's and mother's personalities is noteworthy as her memoir was published when both parents were still alive, in 1939. She describes them as culturally oriented; her father reading aloud to her mother was a daily routine, their children falling asleep with it. Listening to newspaper feuilletons, which were often written by well-known Estonian writers (such as Eduard Vilde), evoked an acute interest in literature and reading in the 10-year-old girl, who had not shown particular interest in this activity before. Sillaots has also mentioned she was influenced by the easy pastime literature published mostly by Publishing House Valgus (Light). The games she played with her brother featured vivid and romantic characters as well as dramatic turns and overwhelming emotions that, according to her, emerged from that literature (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 34–35). She did not specify, though, where she got such books from – whether from her school-mates, or home.

Undoubtedly, all this laid a solid foundation to her eloquent verbal expression and rich vocabulary, which can be observed in her literary works, but perhaps even more so in her translations. The parents seemed to have lived in harmony, thus creating a stable environment for the children. They were both longevous and kept taking interest in their children's activities throughout their lives (Saluäär 2009: 158). For example, in 1961 Sillaots writes to Friedebert Tuglas on the occasion of his 75th birthday and sends him her best regards together with her husband, her younger sister and her 95-year-old mother (EKM EKLA f 245: m 59: 12, p 19/25).

Neither in her memoir nor in the archival material has Marta Sillaots explicitly referred to a religious background of her parents – an assumption that may rise in relation to the size of their family. Although large families were common at the time and did not necessarily indicate deep religiousness, Sillaots, while in the Soviet prison camp, often ended her messages to her mother by adding “God bless you” and “may God hold you” (e.g. EKM EKLA f 243: m 9: 1, p 51/191).

The number of siblings and Sillaots' often tiresome duties related to them is a fact that we have to keep in mind when discussing her early career as a teacher and writer on educational topics. Looking back at the duties of the older sister

with 10 siblings did not fill Sillaots with bitter feelings. Quite the contrary – she found it an important factor in her development, which had made her hard-working and responsible, and also evoked her interest in educational topics. The habit of telling stories emerged from the need to entertain the children. Her especially warm and friendly relationship with her sister Erna Reichenbach (later Voitulaitis), who she looked after as if she were her own child (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 43), lasted throughout her life. The sister played an important role in different periods of Sillaots' life; their long-lasting correspondence of which only Sillaots' letters exist¹⁶, opens their mutual love and affection, at the same time providing plenty of valuable information from a translation history perspective.

The strong Estonian national spirit was one of the cornerstones of Sillaots' identity throughout her life. It was manifested already at the age of 8, when she was asked about her nationality at school. The question got an answer in broken German: "Ihh pin eestlind"¹⁷ (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 29). Becoming "consciously Estonian", as Sillaots puts it in her memoir (ibid. 61), was largely due to the works of the Estonian literary classic Eduard Vilde whose novels evoked anger, pain and compassion towards the destiny of her nation that had had to suffer so much. It was from 1903 that the girl began to think about the national issue in depth, filling the pages of her diary with discussions on the matter and trying to make it compatible with her education acquired in foreign languages (ibid.). A noteworthy fact is that so far, despite having claimed to be "*eestlind*", her diary entries had been mostly in German and in some cases in Russian until 1903, which is when she started writing them exclusively in Estonian (ibid. 62).

Another factor animating her imagination and encouraging creativity was her close relationship with theatre, which, however, took some time to develop. For a reason she has not specified, young Marta had been a bit shy and fearful towards theatre at first, but once she had overcome her fear, the fascination was ever greater. The only professional theatre in Tallinn at the time was the German theatre and her mother had an acquaintance there who let the mother and daughter see the performances free of charge. This is where the 12-year-old Marta's lifelong relationship with dramatic arts began (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 62). The performances were mostly in German, but the parents also took her to see some Estonian productions. An Estonian family frequenting the theatre was not a commonplace phenomenon at the time. The opening of the new theatre Estonia in 1913 contributed both to Marta Reichenbach's national feelings as well as to her love for theatre. According to her memoir, it was much more than a venue for social gatherings – "It was a temple!" (ibid. 93).

Being the oldest child of a large family Marta had to start working after the gymnasium. In the year 1904, an 18-year-old girl could not just start work as a governess or teacher but had to pass the exams at a special educational institution with the right to issue a certificate for this profession. Marta Reichenbach's true calling was to become a schoolteacher – a career which neither she nor her parents

¹⁶ The letters are kept in the translator's personal archive (EKM EKLA f 243: m 9:1).

¹⁷ I am Estonian.

knew how to get started with (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 63). After her exams and following a brief and unsuccessful attempt as a governess in 1906, she decided not to try her luck in that field anymore and started to look for a job at private schools. After a few positions at different educational institutions, Marta ended up at Elfriide Lender's Primary School (Elfriide Lenderi algkool) (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 73), a free institution for children from poorer backgrounds, where she first became an inspector. After a little while she became employed as a teacher at another one of Lender's schools in Tallinn – the Gymnasium for Girls (Elfriide Lenderi Eragümnaasium) – a true Estonian school both in terms of language as well as spirit (ibid. 74).

Elfriide Lender was a progressive headmaster. She made sure that her teachers attended courses and kept up with modern trends in education. It was on her recommendation that young Marta Reichenbach entered a German private *pedagogium* (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 74) – an experience which became a true revelation. Marta began reading pedagogical texts, psychology, methodology and didactics. She ordered books, including Ellen Key's works, and became a changed person. "My eyes had opened and I could see," is how she recalled it (ibid. 75). The whole process resulted in a new position in Leontine Trummer's Private School (Leontine Trummeri Erakool), where Marta started as a teacher of Russian and other subjects, with Russian as the language of instruction. Her evenings were spent reading and studying. All this became the foundation of numerous educational articles written since 1910 and published in the national daily *Postimees*, where she showed a remarkable understanding of child psychology, delicacy and progressive views on education (Krusten 1967: 295), still applicable in the 21st century.

Marta Reichenbach wanted to compile a handbook of experimental pedagogics and didactics. She worked on the manuscript but failed to find an interested publisher (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 103), which may have reflected the society's attitude towards pedagogics and women authors. The first signs of Sillaots' emerging multipositionality are evident here: her interest in pedagogics cracked open the door to journalism, which she would push wide open quite soon.

Sillaots has said that the life in her childhood home was a closed one, they hardly ever had visitors, and she rarely visited her schoolmates or relatives. When she learned about Esperanto courses that were going to start in the premises of Temperance Trust (Karskuskuratoorium) in 1907 (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 77), she and her brother were eager to attend and asked their mother's permission (at the age of 19, Sillaots was not yet officially an adult, as women came of age at 20). Esperanto opened an interesting path for the young woman. Both she and her brother enjoyed the courses and took delight in the circle of people they met there, which resulted in the decision to establish the Group of Tallinn Esperanto-learners (Tallinna Esperantistide Rühmitus) that was officially registered as a society in 1907 (ibid. 78). The activities of the group were not only limited to language learning. The society started publishing its own periodical *Estlanda Esperantisto* (Estonian Esperantists), where Marta Reichenbach started her literary career as an associate, making Esperanto her first language in publication!

It is also remarkable that Leontine Trummer, Marta's, who had progressive views, encouraged her to engage socially and considered this a useful part of a young woman's life (ibid. 80).

Some other education-related societies (Eestimaa Rahvahariduse Selts) (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 80–81) and the Temperance Society (Karskusselts) followed very soon in Sillaots' life. Yet, it soon became clear for Marta that holding several responsible positions was quite time-consuming and this led to her abandoning The Group of Tallinn Esperanto-learners and the Temperance Society – “quite ungratefully” (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 81) in her own words. The literary subdivision of the Estonian Society of Public Education (Eestimaa Rahvahariduse Selts) became her new focus. The subdivision's meetings brought together writers and people interested in literature, just like Marta Reichenbach herself. She recalls having met several prominent literary and political figures of the time there, such as Mait Metsanurk¹⁸, Ernst Särgava¹⁹, Jaan Kärner²⁰, Hugo Raudsepp²¹ and Jüri Vilms²². Thus, the intense social life brought along many interesting acquaintances that would become useful in the future. It can be said that this period solidified a foundation that had been laid already in Marta's childhood – a deep interest in culture – with the particular focus on literature, theatre and languages.

“The year 1912 was pivotal for me in several respects” ([1939] 2009: 87) as Sillaots recalls in her memoir. She left the teacher's job, moved away from her childhood home and rejected an initially appealing invitation to become a school inspector at the Girls' Gymnasium of the Estonian Youth Education Society (Eesti Noorsoo Kasvatuse Seltsi Tütarlaste Gümnaasium) in Tartu. This was an institution run by Peeter Põld (1878–1930), a well-known and respected pedagogue, who had personally asked Marta to become a member of his staff (ibid. 87). There was an urge in her that was stronger than the teacher's calling. She fostered a hope to come out as a writer, adding yet another field to her range of activities (see also Steinberg 2023). She explained her gradually growing interest in writing fiction as something stemming from her pedagogical and educational interest as well as a general draw towards different personalities and their development (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 90). Her decision to step into a literary career might also have been promoted by her active social and cultural involvement – she had already made acquaintances in cultural and educational circles, and she apparently expected that women would be if not encouraged then at least not pushed aside.

However high Sillaots' hopes were, the fact is that her literary debut, the two books *Algajad (Beginners)* (1912) and *Anna Holm* (1913) were not very

¹⁸ Mait Metsanurk (real name Eduard Hubel) (1879–1957), Estonian writer and critic.

¹⁹ Ernst Peterson-Särgava (1868–1958), Estonian writer, politician and teacher.

²⁰ Jaan Kärner (1891–1958), Estonian writer.

²¹ Hugo Raudsepp (1883–1952), Estonian writer and critic.

²² Jüri Vilms (1889–1918), Estonian politician.

successful. These two, but also her other early literary attempts will be discussed in more detail below (see 3.2.1).

Life needed living, though, and Sillaots was led back to the door she had only cracked open some years ago. Her introduction to journalism had begun, as noted earlier, in 1910 with the pedagogical essays in *Postimees* and continued in various periodicals, including *Eesti Kirjandus*, where her first literary review was published in 1912 (see 3.2.3.2).

Sillaots' journalistic career proceeded (in parallel) in several periodicals, some of which are related to the name of Eduard Virgo (1878–1938), a journalist, publisher and diplomat. Sillaots has said that she was interested in observing, comparing, characterising, making conclusions, but not in “inventing plots” (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 91). On Virgo's request she started working on an article about female characters in contemporary Estonian literature. The article was published in 1913, in the third edition of the *Postimees* supplement *Oma Maa* (Own Land). Although she had already published a translation review in *Eesti Kirjandus* in 1912, according to her own words, 1913 was the start of her career as a reviewer (ibid. 91) that stretched well into the 1940s (see 3.2.3.2).

Journalistic activities continued at the Tallinn daily newspaper *Päevaleht* (The Daily Newspaper) where Sillaots had her own column of diary-like entries every Saturday for several years. In 1912, Sillaots had agreed to contribute to the journal of the Tartu Women's Society (Tartu Naisselts) (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 102) titled *Naiste Töö ja Elu* (Women's Work and Life) – an assignment that had made her visit Tartu occasionally during the two pre-war years (1912–1913). The circle of women she met there must have made an impression on the young journalist as she speaks with the warmest of feelings about Marie Reisik²³, the editor of the above-mentioned magazine, and Aino Kallas, the Finnish author settled in Estonia. The women used to show Sillaots around, introducing the miscellaneous manifestations of cultural expression in Tartu to her. Their discussions formed the base of articles published in *Päevaleht*, the author at first unaware of her role in introducing the genre of interview into Estonian journalism (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 103), where Sillaots, apparently for the first time in Estonian journalism interviewed people. Tartu was also where her friendship with another prominent Estonian writer, August Kitzberg (1855–1927), started, lasting until his death. At his home she met other relevant cultural figures of the day, including writer Karl August Hindrey²⁴, Juhan Simm²⁵, Konrad Mägi²⁶ and Marie Heiberg²⁷.

In Tallinn, Eduard Virgo started to publish a new illustrated weekly newspaper *Tallinna Kaja* (The Echo of Tallinn) in 1914 and asked for Sillaots' contribution, which resulted in her own column titled ‘Lenduri kirjad’ (Letters of a Pilot). The

²³ Marie Reisik (1887–1941), Estonian politician, journalist, feminist and leader of women's movement.

²⁴ Karl August Hindrey (1875–1947), Estonian writer, journalist, critic and caricaturist.

²⁵ Juhan Simm (1885–1959), Estonian composer and conductor.

²⁶ Konrad Mägi (1878–1925), Estonian artist.

²⁷ Marie Heiberg (1890–1942), Estonian poetess.

founding of the newspaper coincided with the outbreak of World War I and Sillaots' column covered mostly the life of war-time Tartu, where she had temporarily moved in October 1914. The articles (the manuscripts of which have been preserved in Virgo's collection in the Cultural History Archives) of the column dealt with a wide range of subjects well captured by one of the titles: "On a Variety of Worldly Topics"²⁸ (EKM EKLA f 155: m 28: 1, p 77), and included, for example, a comparison of the towns of Tartu and Tallinn, war events and everyday problems related to the lack of certain goods like soap and sugar. Food certainly became an issue at those difficult times and remained a repetitive motif in Marta Sillaots' letters and writings throughout her life (see Chapter 6).

A common phenomenon in the current literary and journalistic landscape was the widespread use of pen names, which in some cases developed into a game and art in itself. Marta Sillaots has been reported to have had many pseudonyms, which she chose to use according to the need and the nature of the particular writing task. Her first journalistic pseudonym found in the newspapers at the beginning of the century was Ach (the last syllable of her then surname Reichenbach). Other pen names, adapted to the circumstances, included Missy Cherry (when dealing with English literature) and Caran d'Ache²⁹ (for French literature) (Runnel 2012: 8). In a kind of a literary game which took place on the pages of *Tallinna Teataja* (Tallinn Reporter – another newspaper Marta Sillaots worked for in the 1920s) between her and August Kitzberg, she was publishing under the name of Molli Pill and he under Tiibuse Mari³⁰ (Sillaots 2012c: 149–152). It was also customary at that time to be published anonymously in periodicals, or to be marked merely by initials (M. R or M. S in Sillaots' case at the time), making it often hard or impossible to detect the author of some of the articles.

Just before the First World War, Sillaots had been occupied with pedagogical essays (published in *Postimees* 1910–1911) and a collection of stories *Lapsed* (Children) (1914); she had also returned to the didactic-pedagogical book she had been planning to write earlier. All these tasks were put on hold when the message of war spread over Europe, like "a lightning out of the blue" (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 95) as Sillaots put it.

Marta Sillaots' journalistic work until 1915 has been covered above. She continued writing for the newspapers *Päevaleht* and *Tallinna Kaja* at the

²⁸ "Kõiksugu ilmaasjust"

²⁹ Although transliterated to seem French, the name sounds as a Russian word 'карандаш' (pencil). Caran d'Ache (Emmanuel Poiré 1858–1909), was a Russian-French satirist and political cartoonist.

³⁰ The name Molli has a diminutive quality and may suggest naïveté or childishness rather than authority. Pill means a musical instrument, but it also carries metaphorical connotations: it implies a voice that produces sound while simultaneously suggesting an instrument that is played by others, evoking passivity or mediated expression. The pseudonym is rhythmical and alliterative, yet its semantic associations position the author as deliberately non-prestigious or humorous. This self-diminishing effect may be read as a defensive strategy rather than a claim to cultural authority.

beginning of the war. In Tartu she saw the true misery and poverty of war, which had not been so striking in Tallinn (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 100). The exact duration of her stay in Tartu remains somewhat unclear. Letters to Johannes Aavik, dated of June and July 1915, indicate that Sillaots must have been moving between Tallinn and Tartu at the time, living in Tallinn again in spring 1915 and intending to move to Tartu in June (EKM EKLA f 275, m 15:15, p 6/9). Such commuting may have been partly due to her ongoing contributions to *Tallinna Kaja*, Virgo's newspaper that was unfortunately closed down in December, due to lack of subscriptions. Letters to Aavik from October and November indicate that Sillaots was back in Tartu (ibid.).

The already mentioned long-time friendship with August Kitzberg, “the old windhover” as Sillaots recalled his self-description (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 102), proved useful at the turbulent war times. It was at his home that she had been introduced to Hindrek Rikand – not only a poet and a person of literary inclinations, but also a high official in the Regional Governing Office of the Postal and Telegraph Service (ibid. 106). In March 1916, with Rikand's help, Marta Sillaots could start work as an apprentice at the Tartu Post and Telegraph Office (ibid.). At the end of the summer, she took her exams and became a postal clerk in Tallinn, appointed to start her duties on 1 October. In her memoir she expressed regret over having to leave Tartu, as she had grown quite fond of the town (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 113).

The political atmosphere became especially tense in 1917. The red flags of the early spring (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 118) were substituted by the escape panic among Russians in August (ibid. 122), triggered by the German army's capture of Riga. The feverish times of 1917–1918 were revived by Sillaots in her memoir with such intense lifelikeness that they were used as the main textual source for a short 2017 documentary *Hetk ajaloos* (A Moment in History) (Eesti Rahvusringhääling 2017), which marked the centenary of the Republic of Estonia. The main subject of the film is the strike of post and telegraph workers in 1917 when Bolsheviks tried to seize power. Unfortunately, in the film titles there is no reference to Marta Sillaots' memoir.

In the summer of 1917, after a certain halt, Sillaots continued her journalistic activities at the newspaper *Tallinna Teataja*, by accepting the invitation of the editor-in-chief, Eduard Hubel (*alias* writer Mait Metsanurk). They had become acquainted probably around 1906 (EKM EKLA f 182, m 89: 7, pp. 1/1–2/2) and he then became Sillaots' brother-in-law, marrying her sister Vanda Hildegard. Sillaots' tasks at *Tallinna Teataja* included translating, reviewing and summarising the speeches held at Provisional Assembly (Maapäev)³¹ and providing relevant information obtained at telegraph – a place where information came together. This lasted until December 1917, when the Bolsheviks took over the editorial

³¹ Maapäev was the first parliamentary representative body for people of Estonia, being in operation since 14 July 1917 until 23 April 1919 and playing decisive role in making important decisions leading to its proclamation of the Republic of Estonia on 24 Feb 1918 (Riigikogu/Eestimaa Ajutine Maanõukogu ehk Maapäev).

office (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 131–132). Sillaots' relationship with *Päevaleht* continued in parallel with her work at the telegraph as she states in her report (ibid. 136) of the significant 24 February 1918, the day Estonia declared independence, and which is still celebrated as a national holiday. She had been too anxious to stay at home and visited Toompea³² (where the Estonian Provisional Assembly resided) stopping by at the editorial office of *Päevaleht* on the way (ibid.).

Due to the ensuing German occupation, the future of the newly established republic did not seem bright, and Marta Sillaots was dismissed from her duties at the Telegraph Office as a direct consequence. The outbreak of revolution in Germany had created a lot of confusion and the general atmosphere of discouragement and distraction led to total marauding at the post and telegraph office – “every last piece of metal and cord was ripped off/.../ only empty rooms with torn-off wallpapers, smashed-in stoves and broken chairs remained” (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 141). After being defeated in World War I, Germans lost Estonian territory and fled at the end of 1918. The Estonian Postal Service started again on the 12 November 1918, led by Hindrek Rikand, who had been responsible for employing Marta Sillaots in 1916 and who single-handedly drew the blueprints for the first postage stamps for the new republic that were launched on 22 November 1918, and that Marta Sillaots took great pride in (ibid. 142).

At the time when postal work was not available, journalistic activity kept Sillaots busy and provided the satisfaction of being at the heart of events at such pivotal moments. One of the first tasks of the already independent Estonia was to interview the leaders of the Council of German Soldiers (who had their representation in Estonian Provisional Assembly at the time) on an assignment by *Tallinna Teataja* (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 143). The interviewer reported that it was not an overly successful endeavour as the interviewees were not very keen to provide answers. She added that the corridors of the Toompea castle, where the interview was supposed to take place, were smudged and dirty, filled with cigarette butts and spills all over the floors. “It was another occasion to confirm the conviction that the “cultured” Germans were no better than Russian Bolsheviks when it came to cleanliness and order,” Sillaots concluded (ibid.). These critical lines about Russian communists would be among the accusations that brought along repressions for Sillaots later, in the Stalinist period (see 3.2.4).

Archival documents of the period, including letters to Noor-Eesti Publishing House in September, bear witness to a facet of Marta Sillaots' literary expression not widely known. On 6 September 1918 she writes to the publishing house asking if they would be interested in her poems, of which there were about 70–80 (EKM EKLA f 92, m 276: 26, p 1). It remains unclear whether she was discouraged by the publishers or whether it was her own individual decision to quit writing poetry, but years later, in her letter of 22 March 1935 to Daniel Palgi³³ (EKM EKLA f 257, m 3: 6, p 3/3), she writes that she is not competent at

³² The hill where the Parliament resided and still resides today.

³³ Daniel Palgi (1899–1988), Estonian publisher and literary scholar.

reviewing poetry and therefore cannot write about a collection of sonnets she had been asked to review. The fate of her own poems remains unclear. So far, there is no trace of them in the archives and Sillaots has never before or after referred to her poems in any other written sources except this one letter. The fact that Sillaots' poems were not published may be a sign, among other things, of the hardships aspiring female writers encountered.

The letter, where she asks if the Noor-Eesti Publishing House is interested in her poems, also states that she is preparing a collection of essays, to be finished in two or three weeks. The collection would include two longer papers: one on Eduard Vilde's female characters and the other on the protagonists in Estonian literature. In her following letter, of 14 September, she sends the manuscript to Noor-Eesti Publishing House; in October she expresses her dissatisfaction as the publisher had not let her know their decision regarding the manuscript (*ibid.*). The Publishing House Loodus published the paper on Vilde's female characters as a small booklet some years later, in 1925. These exchanges illustrate both Sillaots' persistent efforts to secure publications and her wish to be able to support herself and her family by writing. At the same time, it also reveals the financial or other concerns in the field of culture – the negotiations between authors, translators and publishers in the early 20th century were often protracted.

Sillaots had been touching upon different areas of culture already in her journalistic work – in fact, culture-related topics had quite often been the subject of her newspaper columns and other journalism, frequently expressing discontent about the lack of cultural interests and the shallowness of culture (2012a: 88) among the general public of Estonia. The emergence of a sharp-eyed culture critic is already visible in the early days of her journalistic writings – a skill to be polished further throughout her life.

Sillaots was re-employed at the telegraph in November 1918, at the same time taking up her duties at *Tallinna Teataja*. When another session of the Provisional Assembly was opened on 20 November 1918, Sillaots started attending the sessions – so strong was her urge to be at the heart of events – and described the atmosphere of the sessions as rather idyllic “if only the threat from the East had not approached” ([1939] 2009: 145). Within days, however, the recently proclaimed and economically fragile republic was drawn into the Estonian War of Independence against Soviet Russia and the German *Baltische Landeswehr*, which began in late November 1918 and would last until the signing of the Tartu Peace Treaty on February 2, 1920. Almost “barehanded” (*ibid.*), the new state was forced to defend what had only just been achieved. Sillaots observed the course of the war with compassion, registering not only its political significance but also its human cost. However, *Tallinna Teataja*, where Sillaots became full-time editor of foreign affairs in 1920, soon encountered financial difficulties in 1921 and was ultimately forced to close down on 16 May 1922 (*ibid.* 149). Throughout these years of political upheaval and economic instability, Sillaots' strong Estonian national spirit remains a constant presence, informing both her recollections of work at the telegraph office and her later activities in the press.

As regrettable as the closing of the newspaper may have been, for Marta Sillaots it entailed a turn of a new page in life. In journalism she had had plenty of opportunities to test her writing skills; therefore, she took courage and became what she has called a “vabakirjanik” (free writer, i.e. freelance writer) (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 149) – a career which she pursued during most of the period of interwar Estonia and which saw her establish herself as a prolific translator and literary critic. In a letter written to the editors of *Eesti Biograafiline Leksikon* (Estonian Biographical Dictionary) in 1927, she specifies that since the closure of *Tallinna Teataja* in 1922 she “has had no job with a fixed salary” (EKM EKLA f 194, m 21: 51, p 1/3). This plain statement gives no clue whether it was something that Sillaots took pride in, but based on the fact that she never returned to a position with a “fixed salary” in her life (I have no information what her terms of contract with Estonian Public Broadcasting were), the life of a freelancer must have been her conscious choice – something she took as a normal way of earning a living.

Sillaots highlighted several aspects of her life and career in her memoir and letters. Based on these events and aspects it is possible to follow her path and observe the building blocks of her career retrospectively. Combining the abovementioned sources with archival material of other people (literary and cultural figures, publishers, family members, etc.) as well as historical research on the social and cultural context of the day, allows us to outline the following aspects:

- General love for and interest in culture, particularly in literature and theatre. Sillaots found that the fact that she had been read to as a child and that books and newspapers were present in her childhood home helped her to become an avid reader, triggered her imagination and contributed to her eloquent verbal expression.
- Desire for learning and knowledge. Sillaots had a strong urge for self-development, and she educated herself in those fields (e.g. pedagogics, languages, etc.) that she found in need of improvement.
- Strong national identity and interest in the Estonian language that manifested itself already in childhood. Several written sources mention her interest in the development of the Estonian language, including the correspondence with the initiator of the language renewal, Johannes Aavik.
- Foreign languages. She mastered German, Russian and French at school, added by Esperanto and later English, which she learned by herself.
- Her large family, i.e. a number of siblings that contributed to her interest in and understanding of human psychology, accompanied by the skill of storytelling she had mastered and practiced in her childhood, looking after her sisters and brothers.
- Her domestic duties of looking after her siblings and other household chores made her hard-working and resilient, which best reflects in her translating prolificity, but also in her multipositional activities in the Estonian literary field.

- Love for walking and hiking in nature, which drew her to the beauty of nature and urged her to spell out her impressions.
- Active involvement in social life at a young age, which acquainted her with prominent literary and cultural figures and influenced her career decisions, leading gradually from teaching towards writing and translating; thus, contributing to Sillaots' quite unique multipositionality in the Estonian cultural and literary scene.
- Relatively unsuccessful literary debut, which is likely to have contributed to her opting for "safer" activities in the cultural field – journalism and, afterwards, translating. This is an assumption not confirmed explicitly by Sillaots but gleaned in examining her career and the reception of her first published original literary works. She stopped writing original literature for nearly two decades and does not mention her first literary works in her memoir, which leaves to surmise that it left a lasting mark on her confidence as a writer.

3.2.1 Literary Debut: *Algajad* (1912) and *Anna Holm* (1913)

Already in her childhood, the young writer and translator had started making notes about the books she read; later these notes became accompanied by pages filled with imaginary fates and invented characters (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 90). These pages might have been forgotten, if Marta Reichenbach had not met a person whose impact on her literary development should not be underestimated – the active, lively and persistent Eduard Virgo, who was a newspaper editor and fostered a hope of establishing his own publishing company (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 90). It was on his request that the writer-to-be arranged her notes into a collection of stories titled *Algajad* (Beginners) and saw the light in the early 1912. In the same year, it was accompanied by a second book titled *Elga* and the following year the third novel, named *Anna Holm*, came out, published by Virgo's Publishing House Maa. In the name printed on the cover she only used her initial for the first name (M. Sillaots), disguising thus the gender of the author, a fact that will be returned to later. Copies of the original editions of *Algajad* and *Anna Holm* are kept in the Cultural History Archives of the Estonian Literary Museum (EKM EKLA f 155: m 36: 1; f 155: m 36: 2). The author has said that it was in the significant year, when she adopted the pseudonym Sillaots, after her mother's temporary childhood home (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 91). Therefore, this is the name that will be used henceforth.

Regarding the first literary works, little is left in the archives, but in Eduard Virgo's collection some Marta Sillaots' letters of 1911 have survived, where she asks Virgo to let her know about the decision regarding her manuscript (EKM EKLA f 155: m 3: 7, p 1/1), probably that of *Algajad*. The constant financial negotiations that Sillaots needed to hold throughout her life make their first appearance here; in several letters, the author has to beg Virgo for her money to be paid out, if not in total, then by instalments (ibid.).

The time Marta Sillaots emerged as a writer was certainly just as lively in literary terms as it was in social terms (Süvalep 2001: 160). Archival sources confirm that Marta Sillaots maintained close contacts with the members of Young Estonia movement as well as several other well-known cultural figures. Nevertheless, being a female prose writer at the beginning of the 20th century can hardly have been an easy path to follow. Sillaots herself was clearly aware of this, as evidenced by a letter she wrote to Eduard Virgo prior to the publication of her first book, *Algajad*, in 1912: “I would wish that the fact it has been written by a woman was not publicly known and that the reviewers would not be aware of that” (EKM EKLA f 155: m 3: 7, p 3/3). As mentioned earlier, the name printed on the cover – M. Sillaots – was also intended to disguise the gender of the author. This may explain why Sillaots told Virgo she would prefer not to take the manuscript to Tartu herself, instead asking him to send it there as soon as possible (ibid.). Already as a child, Sillaots had understood that different standards and social expectations applied for girls and boys: boys were allowed far more than girls (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 48), a distinction that reflected broader social norms of the period and extended into adulthood.

Another reason for adopting a pen-name was noted by Alma (Aira) Kaal in her 1937 article marking Sillaots’ 50th birthday: the young writer with strong Estonian national spirit had not wanted to come out with her first major literary work under a German surname (Kaal 1937: 228).

The literary debut *Algajad* was reviewed by Karl Laos in the May issue of *Eesti Kirjandus*, 1912 (198–201). The review’s general attitude is not overly positive. Sillaots’ characters were found to be too schematic, naïve and weak. The author’s style was considered to be compatible with the kind of abstract style of writing, but despite of this, it was reported to be a bit dry, tedious to read and, at times, even coarse. The next book by Sillaots, *Anna Holm*, was reviewed on the pages of *Eesti Kirjandus* in September of 1913 by Anton Jürgenstein, a politician, journalist and literary critic. He starts by stating at the very beginning: “This is a women’s story written by a woman” (Jürgenstein 1913: 345–347), which indicates that by that time the author’s gender was already known, and perhaps not meant to be hidden any more, but the classification as women’s literature also reveals that it was considered a separate, inferior genre. The review dives into the content of the story, which describes the hollow and trivial social circle of women surrounding the protagonist Anna Holm, a young, divorced woman. The general tone of the writing is benevolent, although the reviewer finds the book a little tedious and boring despite its fluency and pleasant scenes (ibid. 347). Attention to details is said to be slightly superfluous, which, according to the reviewer, is characteristic to female writing. Nevertheless, the book is reported to have content – a quality that, in the author’s opinion, most contemporaneous works seem to be lacking (ibid.). Jürgenstein also refers to other, more critical reviews, not quite justified, according to him.

Jürgenstein might have been referring to a review by Anton Hansen Tammsaare³⁴ (1914: 39–42), who criticised the work, putting it against the background of Estonian contemporary literature in general and saying: “One can only recall very few books of our literature, where the sense of beauty cannot be perceived as showing off and farce, but is an organic part of the author” (ibid. 40). He notes not having found live spirit in the work and says it can be characterised by dryness, futile theorising and fragmentation (ibid. 41). The subject and language deserve some praise, though (ibid.). Tammsaare brings out a common trait in all Sillaots’ writing: “a certain didactic feature characteristic to the elderly” (ibid.) that, according to him, is inherent to many female writers and may stem from their role as mothers. Thus, Tammsaare situates Sillaots and her work within the broader contemporary literary field, acknowledging her stylistic merits, but framing her work through gendered expectations that bear witness to the critical discourse of the time.

Friedebert Tuglas’ letter of 1914 to another writer and literary reviewer Aleksander Tassa³⁵ summarises these attitudes towards female writers. Tuglas says, “You must be aware of the actual literary fashion of the day: it is women’s literature, of Sillaots, Wuolijoki³⁶ and others! So it is not recommendable to foster any hopes regarding the audience” (1986: 8–9). This opinion speaks of two aspects characteristic to the literary culture of the day – female writers were becoming visible on the literary scene, but their works were not considered to be of remarkable value.

In her memoir Sillaots says only very few words about these first literary works. For example, *Elga* (1912) is not mentioned at all, *Algajad* (1912) and *Anna Holm* (1913) are barely mentioned as if trying to avoid the topic altogether but not being able to. The only thing she says is that for some reason *Anna Holm* was considered a pamphlet – a genre it was never intended to represent” ([1939] 2009: 91). In her later life, Sillaots recalled that social circles had been buzzing in an attempt to identify the prototypes of the characters critically and ironically presented by the author (Kruus 1971: 176). The not very warm reception of Sillaots’ first original works must have still been bothering her at the end of her life as she confided in Oskar Kruus in 1967, two years before her death, she had never intended to insult anyone with *Anna Holm* (Kruus 1971: 176).

Sillaots later published a collection of short stories titled *Kodukäijad* (Revenants), based on materials written mostly before World War I. Its fate was similar to that of its predecessors – the collection was not met with great enthusiasm. According to Kruus (1971: 1977), Friedebert Tuglas wrote a review (actually a paragraph of a longer overview of Estonian literature) in 1921 (Tuglas 1935: 162–223), which is quite moderate in its tone and not overly critical – it

³⁴ Anton Hansen Tammsaare (1878–1940), Estonian novelist, essayist and translator; the figurehead of Estonian literary canon, who at the time observed here had not yet become the leading prose writer he soon became.

³⁵ Aleksander Tassa (1882–1955), Estonian artist and writer.

³⁶ Hella Wuolijoki (1886–1954), Finnish writer of Estonian descent.

could be described as calmly arrogant, featuring phrases like “petty bourgeois sketches” (ibid. 192) and “nice stories”, which “will hardly attract much attention” (ibid. 193). This was the part and parcel of a female writer in interwar Estonia – likely not to attract much attention and forced to move to “safer” grounds. The fact is that the works were criticised and the author herself did not have much to say about them retrospectively. All this prevented her from writing for almost 20 years.

3.2.2 Translation Debut: Edgar Wallace’s *Nelja kohus* in 1915

Marta Sillaots’ first translations are difficult to date. Teder (1967: 794) has found a text from 1907 and Sisask (2024: 67) assumes a Maupassant’s short story in the newspaper *Eesti Kodu* (Estonian Home) in 1910 to have been Sillaots’ work as the translation was signed by M. R. (possibly Marta Reichenbach). Sillaots does not mention them in her memoir; instead, she starts with Edgar Wallace’s *Nelja kohus* (*The Four Just Men*) ([1939] 2009: 100), which was published in the periodical *Tallinna Kaja* in 1915. Both the place of publication of the translation and its genre are telling facts that echo the social and cultural scene of Estonia at the time, which will be addressed below.

Eduard Virgo, the editor of *Tallinna Kaja* and a sailor by his former profession, mastered the English language (Adson 2017: 124) – not a commonplace skill in Estonia at the time as English was not included in the school curriculum (see 2.1.3). It is not known how familiar Virgo was with English and American literature, but it was he who asked Marta Sillaots to translate Wallace’s *The Four Just Men* (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 100). It appeared in serialised sequels in 16 consecutive issues of *Tallinna Kaja* and was in several ways characteristic to the translation landscape of the day.

Translations published in periodicals were usually not accompanied by bibliographical details and they often represented a very popular genre, detective stories. With the start of the Anglophone cultural orientation during 1918–1940, Edgar Wallace would soon gain fame in Estonia with 24 translated works (Lange 2009: 151–152).

Yet, it is not entirely clear whether Edgar Wallace’s *Nelja kohus* was actually translated from English, a language Marta Sillaots had not learned at school but later claimed to have mastered as an autodidact (Kruus 1971: 172). Detecting an indirect translation is not an easy task: indirectness is usually not indicated in bibliographic databases for books, and newspaper and magazine translations are even more elusive. What further complicates the matter is that newspaper translations do not have paratexts, book covers and reviews, which would have been valuable sources for such detection (Marin-Lacarta 2017: 135). If a possible mediating text is not available, it is only the textual elements of the target text that have to be drawn on.

In this translation, there are certain textual features, which point towards potential indirectness. One such indicator is the title itself, which in Estonian is *Nelja kohus* (The Court of Four pro the title of the original *The Four Just Men*).

Search in the Russian National Library database³⁷ confirmed that a 1906 translation of *The Four Just Men* into Russian with the title *Суд четырёх* (The Court of Four) existed and the title is an exact equivalent of the Estonian *Nelja kohus*.

Other clues pointing towards indirectness include distortion of proper names (Marin-Lacarta 2017: 142). In Sillaots' case, about two thirds of all the names have changed in translation: 'Poiccart' (one of the main characters) has become 'Paycart' or 'Paycars', 'They' has been transformed into 'Terry'. 'Patrick Welch' has become 'Petrik Ouselch', a place name 'Jerez' appears as 'Xerez' and 'Erez', indicating possible transliteration from the Russian mediating text. Some proper names have not undergone changes, but they are mostly the well-known toponyms that might have been easily identifiable by the translator. Another telling fact is the list of languages that appears in the source text: a police notice is said to have been published in "French, Italian, German – and Spanish" (Wallace 2021: 40). In the Estonian translation, Russian has been added to the list: "Prantsuse, Italia, Hispania, Saksa ja Wene keeles" (Wallace 1915: 603) ('French, Italian, Spanish, German and Russian').

Some lengthy omissions have also been detected in the target text. These may not necessarily be related to indirect translation but to the limited space of the newspaper format. As the text of the Russian translation of 1906 is not available, further comparative textual analysis is unfortunately not possible.

The translator's name is missing from the translation, and neither Sillaots' nor Virgo's archive include the manuscript. If Sillaots had not mentioned having translated it for *Tallinna Kaja* in her memoir, it might have been impossible to detect its author. Assumedly Sillaots' first translation of a full literary work was an indirect translation, made via Russian as the mediating language.

Tallinna Kaja offered Marta Sillaots a valuable opportunity to test her skills in an occupation she would soon be engaged with full-time. As it became apparent, it was still early days to speak about her translator's agency at that time, but she had had a chance to find another and pleasurable aspect to complement her multipositionality – translating.

3.2.3 Thresholds of Change: Marta Sillaots from Interwar Estonia to the 1940s

Sillaots' life and work in the interwar Estonian Republic (1918–1940) has been covered in several articles mentioned earlier (e.g. Kaal 1937, Krusten 1967, Saluäär 1987, Gielen 2012a and 2012b). In 1923 Sillaots had married Julius Woldemar Gerland, which name was Estonianised on 20 July 1936 into Rannat (Saluäär 1987: 676). Julius brought along his two daughters Elisabeth and Wilhelmine from his previous marriage and, based on the archival material, Sillaots took care

³⁷ Courtesy of Natalia Kamovnikova.

of the girls with great love and affection. The couple built their house in Nõmme³⁸ and although the building work continued until 1937 (Anon. 1937b: 7), Sillaots had informed EKS about her address change to Valguse 19, Nõmme in 1931 (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 104). To Aavik she describes how she loves gardening in Nõmme, growing strawberries, vegetables and flowers, and considers it “the best and most beautiful activity” (EKM EKLA f 275, m 131: 21, p 1/1).

The guestbooks from Sillaots’ house testify to numerous visits by writers, composers, artists, etc. Sillaots and her husband also hosted a literary salon, where according to Kaalep, everyone felt welcome (Kaalep 1997: 541). In September 1939, when dark clouds were already above Europe, one of the Rannats’ family friends, newspaper editor Agnes Vesilo, wrote into the guestbook:

At the time, when the heavy shadow of the war has again fallen over Europe, even in the most idyllic place nothing but war can be the topic, but a haven such as Marta Sillaots’ fairy-tale home can still offer a momentary oblivion – moreover, it makes you want to live here forever! (EKM EKLA f 243, m 5: 3, p 25)

In the 1940s, the house was also frequented by the members of the literary society of Nõmme Gymnasium for literary discussions and some extramural activities. These salon-like social gatherings would later become grounds for accusations raised against Sillaots in 1950–1951 (see 3.2.4) by Soviet authorities.

The two decades of interwar Estonian Republic were professionally most prolific for Sillaots. She firmly secured her position in the Estonian literary scene as a translator and literary critic. Towards the end of the period, she also made a comeback as a writer with her children’s stories about triplet boys called Trips, Traps and Trull (four books between 1935–1938). This series was followed by another children’s book *Matkamehed (Hiker-men)* also in 1938. This part of her literary heritage bears witness to her interests in children’s psychology and expertise in children’s literature, but perhaps also the male reviews of her earlier literary works that emphasised her educator’s background may have pushed her towards this genre.

After a long break, Sillaots came out with two new original works for adults. *Viiskümmend (Fifty)* (1937) was written upon a commission by Tallinna Naisklubi (Tallinn Women’s Club) to portray a professional working woman, who is also a mother and would incorporate all the traits of a modern intelligent woman (Saluäär 1987: 678). The writing of the work had been kept secret from the family members (Anon. 1937b: 7). The book has strong autobiographical allusions – the main character (an almost ideal woman coming from a large family, translating, building a house in Nõmme, etc.) looks back on her life on the threshold of her 50th birthday. Marta Sillaots denied the autobiographical nature of the book, saying it was a product of “free poetic flight that does not include anything autobiographical” (ibid.). However, she also said that unlike male authors, she

³⁸ Nõmme was granted town rights in 1926 but was incorporated into the capital Tallinn in 1940.

did not like to write about the things that she does not know about, bringing it out as a reason why certain things in the story and her life overlap. In the same article she also describes the way she writes: “I devise everything in great detail and only then take to writing. Then it goes as if someone is dictating; I just add some little details only” (ibid.). These remarks not only dismiss autobiographical readings of her work but also reveal her meticulous, almost dictated approach to writing, which helps explain why elements of her fiction occasionally resonate with aspects of her life and why her manuscripts do not display numerous corrections.

As there were still themes about women’s lives that Sillaots found necessary to address (free love, illegitimate children, etc. – Saluäär 1987: 679), *Viiskümmend* was followed by *Neli saatust. Psühholoogiline varipilt* (Four Destinies. A Psychological Shadow Image) in 1938, depicting four women, whose lives are linked through one man. 1938 was also the year Sillaots was admitted as a member of Estonian Writers’ Union.

The memoir *Sealtpoolt künniseid*, which has been one of the the main sources of the subchapter 3.2, saw light in 1939. Besides praising other good qualities of the book, one of the reviewers described it as “absolutely free from any feminist aspirations, which would prevent men from enjoying the objectively expressed content of this memoir” (Jürma cited in Saluäär 1987: 679). This remark is telling not so much of the qualities of Sillaots’ memoir as of the gendered discursive framework of its reception: the reviewer’s praise is directed less at the work itself than at the perceived absence of a feminist orientation, which would have been seen as potentially alienating to male readers.

The peaceful period came to an end soon. In June 1940 the independent Republic of Estonia was occupied by the Soviet Union. The turbulent and confusing times are reflected in Sillaots’ letters (EKM EKLA f 245, m 59: 12, pp. 9/12–18/21) to Friedebert Tuglas over a relatively short period of time, from August to October 1940. In the letter of 3 August 1940, where she says that due to a huge workload she is unable to write any longer articles on topical issues, she addresses Tuglas “V. a. Hr. Tuglas” (Respected Mr Tuglas). At the end of the month, on 29 August, the letter starts with “Kodanik Tuglas” (Citizen Tuglas), which transforms into “Armas kolleeg” (Dear colleague) in September to settle with “Lgp. sms. Tuglas” (Dear Comrade Tuglas) in October 1940. Over these few months there was so much confusion and insecurity that it complicated even correspondence between colleagues. Then, on 26 May 1942, at the time of German occupation, Tuglas was again addressed as “Armas härra Tuglas” (Dear Mr Tuglas).

Besides her customary literary activities, at the end of the interwar period Sillaots had also been engaged in a new field: Estonian Radio Broadcasting. She was responsible for some literary programmes, but also, during the war, she wrote radio plays often in cooperation with Evald Paikre³⁹ under their common pseudonym Wind Needle (Tuulenõel) (see also 3.2.4).

³⁹ Evald Paikre (1906–1944), teacher, conductor and writer.

The turbulent times of Soviet and German occupations are also recorded in the guest books of the Rannats' Nõmme home. After the Germans had driven the Soviets out in 1941, spirits seem to have lifted, as indicated by Sillaots' stepdaughter Liisi (Elisabeth) on 31 August 1941: "Our small country is free again. I have come to Nõmme from the war, alive and well. My father's house and its people are well, too" (EKM EKLA f 243, m 5: 3, p 48). Similar sentiment is expressed by Eduard Ole⁴⁰ and his wife Helmi on 2 September 1941 of their hopes having been fulfilled and that they greet a free Estonian home (ibid.). However, the optimistic spirit was supplemented by more mundane issues, such as the lack of food (ibid. p 59), and replaced altogether with grim feelings in the spring of 1944 when the Soviet army was regaining Estonian territory once again. Such feelings were expressed, for example, by Gustav Suits on 19 March 1944, describing the world surrounding them without peace and joy, in contrast to Sillaots' home, which for him seemed like an oasis of peace and joy, in the middle of the desolate world (ibid. p 76).

In 1944, Sillaots' had, according to the contemporaries, stated firmly that despite the turbulent times, "whatever may happen, I will stay with my people, at my home in Nõmme" (Kuningas 1987: 309). Although she continued her work as a translator over the next few years in the late 1940s (e.g. the translation *Pickwick-klubi järelejäänud paberid* of Dickens' *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club* was published in 1948), unfortunately, the Stalinist repressions caught her very soon.

3.2.3.1 The Power of Translation: Marta Sillaots' Legacy as Cultural Capital

Sillaots' translation legacy has been addressed in greater detail by Anu Saluäär (1987; 2009) and Katiliina Gielen (2012a and 2012b, 2013) but has been touched upon also by other authors. Saluäär has said that

Marta Sillaots' era has been the era of the birth and progress of our contemporary translation (1987: 672). Many previous understandings have changed by today, but nothing diminishes the reading experience gained by the books mediated by Marta Sillaots. Would we have the thousands of pages of quality literature if Marta Sillaots would not have done the strenuous work day by day, for decades, filling the pages with her fine pencil lines of the Estonian *Colas Breugnon*, *Jean Christophe*, *David Copperfield*, *The Pickwick Club*, *Huckleberry Finn*, *The Forsyte Saga*, *Magic Mountain*, *Les Thibault*, etc. (1987: 672)

This statement can only be agreed with.

As noted above, Sillaots started her translator's activity already in the first decade of the 20th century and her first translation of a longer literary work was, according to her own words, made in 1915 (see 3.2.2). However, her full potential as a translator was realised in the interwar Estonian Republic, when translation

⁴⁰ Eduard Ole (1898–1995), Estonian artist.

became her primary field of activity, alongside literary criticism. The languages she translated from were French, German, Russian and English. There have been references also to her earlier translations of some plays by Spanish authors, such as for example, Lope de Vega's *Naiste mäss* (*Fuente Ovejuna*) in 1923 (Laan 2024: 61–62), but it is likely that they were not made from the original source language.

Although English had, at least at the earlier part of her career, not been her first preference to translate from, 11 of the works translated by Sillaots were done from English. Besides the two works (*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and *David Copperfield*) examined more closely in this dissertation (see Chapters 4 and 5), her translations from English include Galsworthy's *The Forsyte Saga*, Kipling's *Kim*, London's *White Fang*, and many others.

In the 1920s, Sillaots became increasingly more engaged in translating. Her decision to become a freelancer and at the same time quit writing original works must have stemmed from the decision to support herself and her family as translator and critic. Albert Org's⁴¹ mission to start publishing world literature and invest his fortune, gained in Russia, into translating (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 150), involved also Marta Sillaots. One of the first works Org commissioned her to translate was Jerome K. Jerome's *Kolm meest paadis* (*Three Men in a Boat*), published in 1923 (see Chapter 6). The famous pace at which Sillaots worked manifests itself already at these early times of her translator's career: right after *Three Men* was finished, on 10 March 1923 (EKM EKLA f 243, m 9: 1, p 4/9), a new translation was waiting on her table – E. de Concourt's *Vennad Zamganno* (*Les frères Zemganno*), which was completed by 15 June (ibid, p 26/71). Sillaots reported to her sister with great joy: "I am awfully glad. Will I do a somersault? Oh, dear! I did it! What have you got to say about it?" (ibid.).

Org apparently continued to keep Sillaots' hands full, as she writes on 24 June 1923 that she has six books from Org at the moment, "as if I had a translation factory" (EKM EKLA f 243, m 9: 1, p 27/75). Probably not all these works reached translation and publication, at least not by Sillaots. Be it as it may, in another letter to her sister, of 6 October 1923, Sillaots states that Org owes her 15 000 marks (ibid. p 35/102), bearing witness that the earlier good times, when Org had paid for his translators well and quickly (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 151), were over. Org got into financial difficulties and had to sell some translation manuscripts to other publishers, including some by Sillaots, for example, Antoine Prévost d'Exiles' *Manon Lescaut* and Dickens' *David Copperfield* (see 5.1).

Sillaots recalls:

I liked translating, this constant wrestling with the styles of different authors and the unique structure of the Estonian language; when Publishing House Loodus invited me to work for them in 1929, when they started their large-scale publishing of translated literature, I agreed and have since then enjoyed every work that I have been given to translate. ([1939] 2009: 151–152)

⁴¹ Albert Johannes Org (1886–1947), Estonian publisher, economist and teacher.

Sillaots worked for all the notable publishing houses of Estonia: the above-mentioned Loodus, Noor-Eesti, EKS and others. Her communication with the three mentioned publishing houses is addressed in more detail in Chapters 4 and 5.

At the age of 50, in December 1937, Sillaots told the newspaper *Uus Eesti* that in summer her workdays start already at 5–6 am and last until 10 pm, with a lunch break (Anon. 1937b: 7). It is therefore not surprising then that her average translation pace was 10 pages per day, depending on the text. For example, Thomas Mann's *Võlumägi (Zauberberg)* had been impossible to translate 10 pages a day, at the same time giving more job satisfaction than any lighter work (Kruus 1971: 179). "Thomas Mann has his unique style and this is why I prefer him to Romain Rolland. Rolland does not have his individual style, but he is a great man and has great ideas" (ibid.). Sillaots' comments underscore the challenges and satisfaction she found in translating Thomas Mann, whom she admired for his distinctive style.

The publishing practices of the 1930s are addressed alongside the examined translation events (see Chapters 4 and 5); however, may it be mentioned here that the economic recession of this decade reflected also on the translation scene – publishing houses had to curtail their costs and plans. Sillaots' husband was made redundant and for some time she was the sole breadwinner of the family. Advance payment was not given, the translator was allowed to order books and other publications on the publisher's account, as part-payment. Sillaots asks to be sent books by EKS: e.g. Kipling's *Džungliraamat (Jungle Book)*, ÕS [*Õigekeelsuse Sõnaraamat – Dictionary of Standard Estonian*] (vol 2) and Lydia Koidula's letters (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 60). It must have been an extra task for the publishing house to keep records and make such arrangements, but it seems to have been customary, at least with Sillaots – the different publishers she dealt with never refused such settlements and carefully kept records. On several occasions she asks the publisher to inform her how much she has been paid and how much she still has to get – this shows that she trusted the publishing houses and did not keep record of the accounts herself.

By the age of fifty, Sillaots is said to have translated about 30 works, mostly from English and French (Kaal 1937: 228) and is valued as a "quiet, tireless working woman", who was constantly commissioned to translate for "big Tartu publishing houses and Tallinn theatres as she is one of our best translators from French and English" (Anon. 1937b: 7). Anu Saluäär (1987: 678) lists the most important translations of the period: France's *Thaïs* (1929), Maupassant's *Tugev kui surm (Fort comme la mort)* (1930), Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* (1932), Verne's *Kapten Granti lapsed (Les Enfants du Capitaine Grant)* (1932), Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* (1934), Rolland's *Colas Breugnon* (1935) and *Jean Christophe*, vol IV, V, IX and X (1936–1937); Turgenev's *Isad ja pojad (Отцы и дети)* (1936); and Galsworthy's *Forsyte'ide saaga (The Forsyte Saga)* (1936) and *Patriits (The Patrician)* (1938). Saluäär (ibid.) also mentions Th. Mann's *Võlumägi (Zauberberg)* (1937–1939) and du Gard's *Perekond Thibault (Les Thibault)* (vol 1, 1938). The list can be complemented by Dostoyevsky's *Idioot*

(*Идуом*) (1939). In many ways, Sillaots' translations mirror her own reading passions – a connection that becomes even more evident in her reflections from the 1930s.

In the 1930s, when the journal *Looming* asked writers which books they would take along to a desert island, Sillaots' choice was Dickens' *David Copperfield*, Tolstoy's *Sõda ja rahu* (*Война и мир*), Th. Mann's *Buddenbrookid* and the Estonian writer Tammsaare's *Tõde ja õigus* (*Truth and Justice*) (Krusten 1967: 297). The first two in the list are translated by herself (*Sõda ja rahu* partly, though), supplemented by a comment "As a translator I have been lucky to have translated mostly the authors that I am fond of" (Kuningas 1987: 310). Her choices reveal a clear overlap between the authors she admired and those she translated, underscoring the close connection between her reading and her work as a translator.

During 1945–1949, Sillaots was reported to have translated 11 new books (around 3700 pages) (Kuningas 1987: 311), including *Pickwick-klubi järeljäänud paberid* (*The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick-Club*) (1948). After her release from the Siberian prison camp, she reviewed and edited her earlier translations (e.g. *Forsyte'ide saaga*, *Jean Christophe*, *Perekond Thibault*, etc). Among the last new translations were London's *Valgekihv* (*White Fang*) (1956), Barbusse's *Selgus* (*Clarté*) (1961) and Pons' *Kingsepp Aristoteles* (*Le Cordonnier Aristote*) (1961, in cooperation with H. Vanaveski).

There is no exact record and bibliography of her theatre translations, although archival materials (see e.g. 3.2.3.1) as well as articles written about her (e.g. Kuningas 1987: 310) indicate that the number of the plays she translated may be quite significant.

Sillaots' work as a translator has been highly appreciated. Krusten (1967: 297) describes it priceless and according to Saluäär (2013: 63), her translations helped the country-folk to become a cultured European nation. Katiliina Gielen says:

[A]s a translator, she looked for the ideal way of conveying the content and form with the means of target language in the framework set by the original. For Sillaots, translation will always be translation, not a shadow or imitation of the original, but a text format different from the original – something that the translator has recreated and where the translator's authorship is noted by the self-positioning in the foreword. (Gielen 2012a: 114)

All in all, these assessments emphasise Sillaots' exceptional skill and dedication, portraying her translations as both faithful to the source texts and creatively reimagined, with her own authorship clearly evident. Her translations helped integrate Estonia into the European literary sphere while affirming translation as a creative, authorial act.

3.2.3.2 Between Criticism and Creation: Marta Sillaots' Journey to Independence

Since 1912, literary reviews and overviews emerged as an independent genre in Sillaots' writing. All her previous activities, not just the literary ones, proved to be stepping-stones in becoming a freelancer in the literary field. Her teacher's and telegraph clerk's job confirmed her interest in human psychology and provided encounters with different people – observations, which then fed into her literary work and helped to analyse the characters of other authors.

Sillaots' various activities became increasingly entangled, making her more and more multipositional. The importance of her path as a writer and a journalist, preceding the decision of becoming a freelance writer, is obvious. Besides being able to polish her writing skills, the fact that she had been active in literary circles also provided her the necessary contacts and made her name known. Moreover, being both subject and object of criticism, i.e. being reviewed and a reviewer at the same time, made her aware of both sides of the coin – what it takes to be a (new) author whose works are scrutinised and “dissected”.

Sillaots described the context in which her critic's work began:

Although I had started to send stories about children's lives to *Postimees* as early as 1910, and Virgo had encouraged me to write longer stories, I did not find narrative prose my cup of tea. I was interested in observing, juxtaposing, characterising, taking a stand, drawing conclusions, not inventing events. As I was not familiar with the essay genre, it would have been hard for me to determine what exactly were the kinds of things I would have wanted to write; it was a sheer chance that I happened to be on the right track. /.../ Virgo was gathering material for the *Postimees* supplement *Oma Maa* III, the editor of which he was and which had to come out at the end of 1913, so he turned to me, too. For some reason he did not want an article on educational matters but proposed that I write about female characters in Estonian literature. I said that I could not write on such a topic; Virgo, naturally, did not listen to my objections ... (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 91)

Thus, it can be said that Sillaots' career was influenced both by her own methodological inclinations and by external encouragement, suggesting that her emergence as a critic and essayist was the product of both personal disposition and fortuitous opportunity.

Getting down to work, Sillaots read all the even purportedly outstanding belletristic fiction published over the last 10 years and found the task of making notes, comparing and analysing “most manageable” (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 91). She concludes by stating that “nevertheless, it took years since I could start publishing essay-like longer writings on literary issues on a regular basis” (ibid. 92).

Some of Sillaots' longer literary essays, such as *Eduard Vilde naistüübid. Kirjanduslikud vaatlused* (Eduard Vilde's Female characters: Literary Observations) (1925), *A. Kitzbergi toodang* (A. Kitzberg's Works) (1925), *A. H. Tammsaare looming* (A. H. Tammsaare's Works) (1927a) and her monograph *Romain Rolland* (1940) were published in book format, but most of

her reviews, overviews and analyses were published in periodicals. Although the bibliography of her books (original works, translations and the three above-mentioned essays in book format alongside the monograph) exists, there is no bibliography of her literary (and translation) criticism – a gap this dissertation aims to fill as much as possible (see Appendix 2 and Appendix 3).

In the 1912 January issue of *Eesti Kirjandus*, one can find the first literary and translation review by Marta Reichenbach, addressing the translation from Finnish by Eduard Virgo of L. Onerva's⁴² collection of short stories, *Murdjooned* (*Murtoviivoja*). Sillaots' begins with the statement that men often assess women's works by the same standards they use for men's and see it as the greatest compliment if it seems, at first glance, no different from a man's work (Sillaots 1912: 36). She blames women for writing without character and special colour, and claims that their work could be recognised by the abnormal effort of strenuous copying of men's writing (ibid.). The review concentrates on the literary value of the original but does not address the translation. As the review appeared in the January issue of the journal, it must have been written and published before Sillaots' own *Algajad* came out later in 1912. Sillaots was to receive critical reviews for her own works quite soon (see also 3.2.1)

Letters from the early 1920s exchanged between Sillaots and EKS demonstrate the multipositional nature of their relationship. It was the latter that published the literary and linguistic journal *Eesti Kirjandus* and Sillaots became a frequent contributor to the journal with her literary and translation reviews with remarkable prolificity, especially in the 1930s. The early correspondence includes some review- and translation-related issues – Sillaots asking for translations, unfortunately in vain.

One of the running threads throughout the correspondence was Sillaots constantly reaching out to the publisher in order to get her money. It was not paid unless she explicitly asked for it. In 1928 the fee for a review was 10 cents per line making the fee for a short review of 180 lines 18 kroons (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 9). The total number of Sillaots' literary and translation reviews in *Eesti Kirjandus* (from 1906 to its closure in 1940) is 117. Despite the rather slow beginning – the first in 1912 and the next one in 1916 – from 1927 onwards, her critic's job gained pace, and Marta Sillaots' name appeared on the pages of the journal regularly until its closure. Furthermore, Sillaots' reviews were also published in the other literary journal *Looming* (34 articles between 1923 and 1940) as well as other periodicals.

When we search for literary themes in Sillaots' earlier journalism, we find a somewhat unusual example from the year 1915 – manuscript of an article titled “Poetic Potpourri. A *Rosolje*⁴³ of Unpublished Poems”⁴⁴. This discovery widens

⁴² L. Onerva (Hilja Onerva Lehtinen) (1882–1972), Finnish poetess.

⁴³ *Rosolje* is a salad of Slavic origin, made with beetroot, herring, potatoes, sour cream, etc. The word is also used in a metaphorical sense to denote something made with very different and often incompatible components.

⁴⁴ “Luulelik potpourrii. Rosolje ilmumata luuletustest”

our understanding on the kinds of themes Sillaots worked with and perhaps also her not wanting to do it under her own name. The article had appeared in *Tallinna Kaja* signed by “Tiit Piibelegt”⁴⁵ (1915: 506–509), who, as it appeared, was Marta Sillaots. Without the manuscript (f 155, m 28: 1, p 24/1), the authorship of the article would have been left undetected. With the bitter and ironic humour generally not characteristic to her (Kaal 1937: 234), Sillaots ridicules the “poetry-fever” (Piibelegt 1915: 506) that emerges every spring, bringing headache to stationers, who run out of paper, and to publishers, who have to deal with the influx of such output.

Sillaots’ essays of a single writer’s works, such as Kitzberg’s or Tammsaare’s are very thorough and detailed, paying equally close attention to the writer’s style and to what was the reviewer’s special interest, characters (Kaal 1937: 231). In one of her reviews, she describes characters as generally lacking vitality in Estonian literature (1927: 543). Alma (later Aira) Kaal (1937: 232) retorted that Sillaots own literary works were no exception there. Sillaots’ reviewing style, on the other hand, is described by Kaal as an intellectual one, distinguished by detailed analyses and an exploratory urge aiming at precision (ibid. 234).

Oskar Kruus, referring to his 1967 conversation with Marta Sillaots, notes that *Eesti Kirjandus* commissioned reviews on weaker authors from her as she had a skill to find something good even in books that were not so good (1971: 177). Her 1935 letter to Daniel Palgi supports this understanding of her role: “Let it be mentioned that I am ready to write about less important, second- or third-rate works” (EKM EKLA f 257, m 3: 6, p 5/5). Whether her own unpleasant memories as a literary debutant contributed to the utterance “to run down a novice is a sin, at least in my opinion” (Sillaots to Kruus 1971: 177), can only be guessed.

In 1967 Sillaots explained that in order to remain unbiased she had not wanted to keep close relationships with writers “because when you are acquainted with a writer and do not like his/her book, it is difficult to write about it” (Kruus 1971: 179). In her letter of 1936 to Karl August Hindrey she states: “Generally I try to keep away from writers – I do not like these folks” (EKM EKLA f 185, m 4: 7, p 1). This is a confusing sentence in a letter addressed to a writer and coming from someone whose whole life has been lived in literary circles.

Despite the above-quoted statement, Marta Sillaots’ literary criticism facilitated and established her contacts with writers and has provided interesting information about some well-known Estonian authors and their response to criticism. Tammsaare, for example, had not been overly keen on female reviewers, including Sillaots (Kruus 1971: 179). Richard Roht⁴⁶ was rather sensitive in this respect and had sent quite abusive and even obscene letters to his critics. Aadu Hint,⁴⁷ on the other hand, took criticism seriously, and after Sillaots’ critical reference towards his *Kuldne värav* (Golden Gate), expressed concern about his

⁴⁵ Tiit Piibelegt is a widely known character of *Pisuhänd*, a play by Eduard Vilde.

⁴⁶ Richard Roht, Estonian writer (1891–1950).

⁴⁷ Aadu Hint, Estonian writer (1909–1989).

prospects of being published again (ibid.). Hindrey had sent a thank-you note for the review of his short stories to which Sillaots responded that she had had a Christmassy feeling receiving it and that such acknowledgment motivates her, “especially when it comes from the master who one has deep respect to” (EKM EKLA f 185, m 4: 7, p 1). August Kitzberg, after having read Sillaots’ analysis of *Eduard Vilde naistüübid* (Eduard Vilde’s Female Characters), had sighed: “If only someone could write something like this on my female characters!” (Kruus 1971: 177) – a wish that came true in 1925 in the format of the book *A. Kitzberg'i toodang* (A. Kitzberg’s Works).

Sillaots sometimes had strong opinions of writers, as the case of Eduard Hubel *alias* Mait Metsanurk proves, revealing also certain personal antipathy (Saluäär 1987: 680). Her overview and analysis of Metsanurk’s whole literary production appeared in *Eesti Kirjandus* in 1929 and starts with a remarkable statement worth keeping in mind in the light of the discussions of a writer’s or translator’s personal life in general: “The author’s person may and can be a subject of interest only to the extent that it can offer for the understanding of his/her work” (Sillaots 2012e: 385). The article, which marks Metsanurk’s 50th birthday, obviously could not be too critical. It briefly covers his biography and includes an analysis of his characters. Sillaots is trying to highlight as many of the writer’s strengths as possible, but his weaknesses are not left unnoticed either. Metsanurk continues to feature in several of her broader overviews of certain common problems in Estonian literature and is often the source of negative examples either with his too naïve, sentimental and narrow depiction of love (Sillaots 2012b: 108), either with his work which is “lacking Tammsaare’s conceptual forcefulness and Jakobson’s massive dynamics” (Sillaots 2012d: 201) or other similar vices. In her letter to Johannes Semper of 2 January 1936, Sillaots writes: “I would not like to say anything about Metsanurk as I am irritated by the style and attitude towards life of this writer” (EKM EKLA f 188, m 8: 27, p 4/4). Metsanurk, as noted above, was Sillaots’ brother-in-law.

Female characters in literature were Sillaots’ particular focus. Her letters to publishers confirm this special interest. She writes to Palgi in 1935: “I would most willingly write about our recent female characters, characterise and maybe compare them with pre-independence typical figures” (EKM EKLA f 257, m 3: 6, p 1/1). Later she expresses her wish to write about the topic of love and marriage (ibid.). Papers such as “Naised meie uuemas kirjanduses” (“Women in our modern literature”) in 1913 (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 91); *Eduard Vilde naistüübid* (1925); “Iginaiselikust A. H. Tammsaare käsitluses” (1938/2012) (“On eternally feminine in A. H. Tammsaare’s works”); “Naiskujude ülesandest August Gailiti romaanis “Ekke Moor””(1942/2012) (“On the task of female characters in August Gailit’s “Ekke Moor””), to name but a few, are pioneering and original contributions to Estonian literary criticism. Thus, on the one hand, Sillaots remained within the sphere considered appropriate for a female literary figure of her time; on the other hand, through her sustained focus on female characters and their roles in literature, she not only broadened the scope of Estonian literary

criticism but also laid the groundwork for later gender-conscious approaches to reading and interpreting texts.

Sillaots' archival material, especially her correspondence with publishing houses, gives clues to her agency as a critic, i.e. her ability to shape her career, assert her views, negotiate with publishers and make choices that affected both her own professional position and the wider literary field. She proposed and discussed the selection of books to be reviewed with EKS. For example, on 4 May 1934 she writes to EKS: "Would you mind if I reviewed without any special notice the novels of the LKR ['Looduse Kuldraamat' – 'The Golden Book of Loodus'] and LTR ['Looduse Tänapäeva Romaan' – 'The Contemporary Novel of Loodus'] series in the future – naturally only the ones that deserve to be spoken about" (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 143).

In 1934, there are some other letters, where Sillaots asks for particular works to write about (ibid. 149–150), but she reviewed significantly more books than the few referenced in this correspondence. She was in direct contact with Daniel Palgi in EKS and the 18 Sillaots' letters to Daniel Palgi from the period 1935–1943 (EKM EKLA f 257, m 3: 6) mostly include questions regarding the books to be reviewed. In her letter of 1 October 1935, she asks Palgi to keep her in mind when choosing reviewers for new works of literature; this was also where she mentions that she could write about less important, second- and third-rate works (ibid. p 5/5). Their correspondence, where review-related issues are intertwined with translation-related ones, continued for 14 years, until the publication of Sillaots' translation of *David Copperfield* in 1937. These letters reveal Sillaots' proactive engagement in literary reviewing, her willingness to take on a wide range of texts, and her determination to maintain an active presence in the Estonian literary scene and secure her livelihood.

The reviewing-related issues were also addressed in Sillaots' letters to the editors of the literary journal *Looming*: Johannes Semper (f 188, m 8: 27) and Friedebert Tuglas (f 245, m 59: 12). Sillaots often enquired which books they would like to be reviewed and offered her articles for the journal.

There was one field where her authority was unquestionable – children's and youth literature. The sometimes quite harsh and demanding tone of the EKS publishing house adopted in relation to Sillaots' translations (see also 5.1) becomes practical and matter-of-fact in terms of literary and translation reviews and changes completely when addressing Sillaots' field of expertise – children's and youth literature. For example, in the letter of 27 October 1939, when they inform Sillaots that they have dispatched 10 books belonging to their new children's series:

[...] we are sending all 10 books for your kind inspection. Should you express a favourable attitude towards them, we would kindly ask you to address the series either in *Looming*, in the Public Broadcasting or any other place suitable for you. Should you find any shortcomings in them, we would be grateful if you could inform us about them. We hope that the series would be more to your liking than the first book (*Vanapagan*) we sent for your examination and where we have

changed one of the illustrations based on your review. With respect, Eesti Kirjanduse Selts. (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 222)⁴⁸

The wording is extremely polite and cannot be compared with the one apparent in the letters regarding her translations (see e.g. 5.1).

As noticed, her critic's agency – her capacity to act with authority, make independent judgments and influence literary discourse – had different facets depending on the field to be reviewed. She was a well-known and established reviewer, whose scope of authority was greater in her field of expertise, particularly in children's literature, but also when it came to female characters and "women's literature". The pressing financial concerns did not allow her much choice in selecting books to review; she often had to take whatever was available – even second- or third-rate works, in her own words.

3.2.3.3 Between Dedication and Love: Sillaots' Translation Reviews⁴⁹

The aim of this section is to analyse Marta Sillaots' work as a translation critic during 1930–1940, focusing on her reviews published in the journal *Eesti Kirjandus*. By examining her evaluations of translation quality, linguistic accuracy, stylistic faithfulness and translator dedication, the section seeks to identify the main principles underlying Sillaots' critical approach and to illustrate how these reflect broader contemporary attitudes toward translation and language culture in interwar Estonia.

In *Eesti Kirjandus*, there were 24 of her translation reviews in the given period and it is on them that the following overview is based. In *Looming*, there were no Sillaots' translation reviews until 1940. The languages from which the reviewed books were translated include French, English, Dutch and Danish. Generally, the reviews deal with the analysis of the original's literary value, but space is also devoted to translation – especially when the quality of the latter is not considered good enough.

There are several faults of which translators are accused of, one of the most frequent being insufficient respect for the original. This can take the form of "vulgarizing the atmosphere" and may result in "mistakes against the spirit of the original's style" (1930a: 84). The translator may not have remained "at the level of the original" (1930c: 198) or has been omitting sentences of the source text, which is inexcusable even if it has been done for moral reasons (1930e: 245).

⁴⁸ ...saadame Teile kõik 10 raamatut lahkeks tutvumiseks. Juhul, kui võite pooldavalt suhtuda nende kasutamisse, palume Teid lahkesti võtta sõna kas "Loomingus", Riigi Ringhäälingus või mõnes teises Teile sobivas kohas. Leiate neis aga rohkem puudusi, oleksime tänulikud, kui informeeriksite nest meid. Lootes, et sari tervikuna Teile siiski rohkem meeldib kui esimene tutvumiseks saadetud raamat (Vanapagan), milles üks pilt sai muudetud Teie arvestust arvestades, austavalt EESTI KIRJANDUSE SELTS. (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 222)

⁴⁹ The section is based on a subchapter of my master's thesis (see Steinberg 2017: 23–28).

In one of the reviews Sillaots expresses her regret for the loss of style of the French original in Estonian translation and compares the translation and the original figuratively to the herbarium plant and the flower (1934a: 334). In another review, the French style of translation has been touched upon as a negative feature (1932a: 568). There are also cases where Sillaots finds the rendering of the style of the original ‘satisfactory’ (1930h: 535), transmitting all the virtues of the author, and others which she finds as praiseworthy attempts to “maintain the features of the original’s style” (1930b: 143). When an effort has been made to shape the original into a new mould, “to melt it into a new work of art” and “breathe life into the translation” (1933: 42), it deserves the reviewer’s special approval.

The linguistic aspects of translations are also scrutinised in Sillaots’ reviews. Sometimes Sillaots finds the lexical solutions not appropriate (1930a: 85); and that some translators’ “Estonian is abominable, mistakes abound, making it an example rarely to be encountered in translated literature” (1930c: 198), or that some translations are simply full of mistakes (1930h: 535). Turning too lightly to verbatim translation “while there are good Estonian options available” is criticised whereas the ideal should be “the creation of supple, unique and noble Estonian language” (1932a: 568). Sillaots’ background as a teacher and author of educational articles surfaces in the statement explicating that lexical inaccuracies and excessive use of foreign loanwords should be especially avoided in popular science aimed at young readers (1934b: 383).

Sillaots’ acquaintance with Johannes Aavik and close interest in his language renewal has resulted in a mostly positive attitude towards Aavik’s translations (1930e: 245), which often bristle with neologisms. Nevertheless, Sillaots finds words that were novel at the time, such as ‘malbe’ and ‘nõrdima’ (both fully adopted into Estonian today), to be unsuitable, yet elsewhere reproaches Aavik for the lack of neologisms in his translation (1932a: 568). Praiseworthy phenomena that deserve the critic’s approval include the following: added glossaries (1931b: 292); the “unparalleled richness and diversity” of the lexical aspect of the translation, which surpasses the vocabulary of the source text (1931c: 379–380); the translator’s reluctance to correct the author’s sloppy use of words that has given “to Estonian readership a genuine Stendhal in impeccable and pure Estonian” (1939: 374); and the translator’s skill in selecting suitably juicy popular expressions (1930b: 134).

As for sentence structure, Sillaots mostly criticises the foreign influence, which she claims to be a sign of insufficient dedication on the part of the translator (1930a: 84, 1932a: 568). In one of the reviews, she criticises the sentence structure as “clumsy to the extent of the grotesque” (1930c: 198).

The dedication and love for translating are important for Sillaots and she often refers to it or its absence in her reviews (1930a: 84; 1931a: 118; 1931c: 379; 1933: 41). It is necessary to be especially attentive, she says, when translating for young readers, and shortcomings in any aspects of such translations are unforgivable (1932b: 639, 1934b: 383).

It can thus be summarised that Sillaots was a critic with a sensitive linguistic ear, who found too easy solutions either in vocabulary or in sentence structure equally deplorable, a phenomenon indicative of insufficient dedication and care. Her concern for the Estonian language and the strong Estonian national spirit, the result of having spent her formative years under imposed Russian and German conditions, shows here clearly. The style of the author of the original work – an elusive phenomenon – had to be captured as much as possible by the means of the Estonian language. The latter skill required good and cultivated stylistic sense on behalf of the translator. Shortcomings in this respect were drawn attention to. At the same time, Sillaots did not lack the innovative spirit which is seen in her positive attitude towards Aavik's language renewal and its manifestations in translated literature. Outright mistakes and inaccuracies deserved the critic's disapproval, whereas good translations were praised for what they were worth. What was worth recognition and proved the translator's dedication – be it masterly conveyance of the author's style or lexical variety – was highlighted and praised.

Stern reviews sometimes had their consequences. Sharp criticism could bring along a reaction as the target of the review could become offended and start looking for the critic's own lapses. This was precisely the case with some of Marta Sillaots' own translations, the reviews of which provide an opportunity to get a glimpse of the translation and reviewing culture of the day and have an idea whether Sillaots was subjected to the rules she herself had laid down.

An example of rather harsh criticism usually not characteristic to Sillaots was the review of the translation of Balzac's *Isa Goriot* (*Le Père Goriot*) by Bernhard Linde⁵⁰ and Arma Kristen⁵¹ (1930a: 84). Sillaots had drawn attention to multiple inaccuracies that, according to her, arose from "lack of respect towards the original" and "insufficient care and dedication" (*ibid.*) towards the job of translating. She accused the translators of "vulgarising the atmosphere of the original" and of "mistakes against the spirit of the original's style" (*ibid.*). The sentence structure and word choices also left much to be desired (*ibid.*). The review triggered the translators' resentment and their subsequent reaction. In the next but one issue of *Eesti Kirjandus*, Bernhard Linde was given a chance to voice his objection (1930a: 208). He accuses Sillaots of having derailed due to her unsatisfactory command of French and points out that minor errors need to be attributed to the proofreader.

It did not take long for another blow to follow. In the 5th issue of the same year, Linde attacks Sillaots' recent translation of Henri Barbusse's *Põrgu* (*L'enfer*). He finds that the already imperfect qualities of the original are further worsened by the translation that "is at times hardly understandable" (Linde 1930b: 246). Linde also points out that Sillaots is the reviewer of about a half of all the translations from French, and is highly critical in her reviews, "demanding

⁵⁰ Bernhard (or Bernard) Linde (1886–1954), Estonian columnist, critic, prose writer, translator and publisher.

⁵¹ Arma Kristen (later Linde), Estonian translator.

accuracy and finding mistakes where they actually do not exist” (ibid.). Linde goes on dismantling the translation, concludes that addressing all the mistakes would take up too much space (his review extends over three pages) and questions the decision to publish such a translation.

The translator is given space to answer for herself in the same issue. She states that her goal in the translation had been precision on the one hand and flawless Estonian on the other (1930f: 250). She also expresses modest hope that she has succeeded in the latter endeavour at least with some of her translations (ibid.) and suspects that Linde’s critical outburst may have been motivated by revenge regarding the review of *Isa Goriot*. It is remarkable that in this response Marta Sillaots also outlines her principles of reviewing, which include considering “the interests of Estonian literature” and avoiding personal attacks on the translator. It is the latter that she finds being Linde’s purpose with this writing. She also refers to one of Linde’s previous reviews of her works, namely the translation of Émile Zola’s *Thérèse Raquin* that bears the signs of “similar nitpicker’s attitude” (ibid.).

This issue of the journal also publishes a second response by Sillaots, concerning Linde’s translation of *Isa Goriot* (*Le Père Goriot*) (1930g: 255). In a short comment, Sillaots brings out some further details regarding the insufficient command of French that Linde had not admitted to before.

Usually, Estonian translation criticism of the interwar period did not take such fierce and personal turns. Although the heated debates on the pages of *Eesti Kirjandus* were not overly frequent, they bear witness to the buzzing translational activities of the period and the formation of principles and trends governing the field.

Over the observed decade, *Eesti Kirjandus* published three more reviews of Sillaots’ translations: Jules Verne’s *Kapten Granti lapsed* (*Les enfants du Capitaine Grant*), Rudyard Kipling’s *Kim* and Romain Rolland’s *Colas Breugnon*. Ants Oras adopts a rather critical attitude towards the translation of *Kim*, stating that the translation is “quite fluently readable, but Kipling cannot be recognised in the translation” (Oras: 1934: 522). The translator is also reproached for having not bothered to find “succinct and expressive equivalents” for the source vocabulary (ibid.). Oras (ibid. 524) also points out that as “quite a harsh critic of other translators’ works”, Sillaots should be especially careful and diligent with her own translations. Aleksander Vaigla, who reviewed the translation *Kapten Granti lapsed* finds it most “agreeable for our circumstances” and the glossary that the volume entails is praiseworthy (1933: 457). Sillaots’ translation of *Colas Breugnon* is highly acclaimed by Aleksander Aspel⁵² (1936: 430) as one of the best recent translations, possessing “great lexical richness” (ibid.) and letting the original’s style shine through to its full.

Towards the end of her life, Sillaots writes to one of her correspondents in her birthplace Rakke, Helmut Joonuks, with certain remorse: “As far as my works are concerned, it is the part that I have considered my life’s work: the reviews, articles and monographs in *Eesti Kirjandus*, *Looming* and elsewhere, that seem

⁵² Aleksander Aspel (1908–1975), Estonian writer, translator, literary scholar and critic.

to have lost their value” (Joonuks 1987: 3). This aspect of her literary heritage has been addressed by several writers such as Kaal, Krusten, Saluäär and Gielen; and including the current dissertation, these works show that Sillaots was wrong in underestimating her work. Her literary criticism remains a valuable part of our literary history.

Sillaots’ sense of disillusionment expressed in her later correspondence gains deeper resonance when viewed against the political upheavals that marked the final years of her life. The Soviet occupation and subsequent repressions brought about not only the suppression of free intellectual thought, but also the personal tragedy that befell many members of the interwar literary generation, including Sillaots herself.

3.2.4 Court File No 12910: Marta Sillaots Between Literature and Repression⁵³

In the following, I address Marta Sillaots’ life under Soviet repression. This subchapter is based on court documents (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019) from the National Archives of Estonia that have not been studied before. The section also covers the activities Sillaots’ had been engaged in during the interwar period as well as during the war – in particular the activities that were deemed anti-Soviet and harmful in the eyes of authorities.

A wish to silence and/or eliminate intellectuals served several purposes for the Stalinist Soviet regime (1940–1953). Building the new society meant getting rid of the old (Holquist 2003: 141). The cultural memory, bearers of which were mostly the interwar intellectuals, the so-called “old staff” (“*vana kaader*” – Kalda 2001: 572) among whom Marta Sillaots belonged, had to be erased.

Sillaots’ fate is one example of the many similar human tragedies brought about by the Stalinist national and cultural policy. In June 1941, about 10,000 Estonians were deported to Siberia and in 1944 about 80,000 people fled to the West. Over 20,000 people (mostly women and children) were taken to Siberia in the 1949 deportation. During the Soviet terror and World War II, Estonia lost about a fifth of its population, according to some estimates up to 200,000 people. Besides general means of repression, such as imprisonments, deportations, and deprivation of rights, some aspects of the policy implementation, such as repressions of women and the complicity of their family members, combined with the alleged collaboration with German authorities during the German occupation 1942–1944, emerge vividly in Sillaots’ case.

By the start of the Soviet occupation in 1940, Sillaots had gained a reputable position in the Estonian literary landscape (Gielen 2012a: 105) as noted also in the previous subchapters. During the first year of the Soviet occupation and during the II World War, Sillaots continued her literary activities in all the fields

⁵³ The subchapter is largely based on the article published in the journal *Tõlkija Hää* (see Steinberg 2024: 98–114).

she had been engaged in: as critic, translator and writer (she wrote some radio plays and children's plays). Estonian Public Broadcasting had emerged as a new area for her, and she hosted a number of literary programmes there. Besides the apparent need for self-expression, the multiple nature of her activities also served an economic purpose: her income constituted a substantial part of the family's livelihood, a fact that the numerous letters in the Cultural History Archives confirm.

Sillaots' social background must have been more or less suitable for the Soviet authorities: a post office clerk and a housewife, as parents, should not have been too alarming. Even, this, however, could not save her; neither could the considerable number of Russian classics (e.g. Dostoyevsky, Turgenev, Tolstoy) and the Western authors acceptable to the Soviet regime that she had already translated. There were huge ideological mistakes and shortcomings that her favourable deeds could not compensate for. First of all, Sillaots did not go along with the new regime: she did not publish anything laudatory about the new power neither in the first Soviet year nor after the war. The other popular topics of the day, such as hammering American imperialism (Olesk 2003: 470) or singing praises to the great Russian nation (ibid. 473) had left her equally indifferent. Sillaots had also been a member of Estonian Writers' Union only since 1938, although it was surprisingly late, considering the fact that the union was established in 1922 and she had made literary debut as early as 1912. Membership in the union was widely regarded as prestigious and functioned as a marker of full recognition within the literary establishment. Besides the fact that she was regarded primarily as a woman writer focusing on women's issues – a position that was not taken very seriously in the male-dominated literary establishment – it seems that she herself showed little interest in joining the organisation. Her relationship with the union seems to have been rather distant and reserved.

As for the Soviet Writers' Union, which started to form after the dissolution of the Estonian Writers' Union in 1940, Sillaots was not selected as a candidate member (Tannberg 2021: 582). A selective evaluative process was later applied to writers who remained in Estonia during the German occupation (1941–1944) to determine which individuals would be considered ideologically and professionally suitable for candidacy in 1945. For example, the poet Betti Alver (1906–1989), whose husband, also a poet Heiti Talvik (1904–1947) was imprisoned later in 1945 and died in Siberia in 1947, became a candidate member (ibid. 577), but Sillaots' name is not on this list. She, as the investigation materials show, did not make any efforts whatsoever to become included into it.

It is known that many Estonian writers were drawn towards social democracy and a number of them favoured communism, at least before the year 1940 and the first Soviet occupation. According to Mertlesmann, public distrust towards Russians and their Soviet power emerged rather quickly after this: over the period from June 1940 to the beginning of German occupation in September 1941 (Mertelsmann 2005: 49). Before that, the general public was simply unaware of who they were dealing with and the threat from the East seemed unlikely. Sillaots, on the other hand, had written about Bolsheviks critically in her memoir in 1939, when she described the turbulent aftermath of the Russian Revolution of 1917 in

Estonia ([1939] 2009: 115, 118–119), even though, her attitude towards Germans was similarly mistrusting.

The first Soviet year with its repressions and the first wave of mass deportations in June 1941 made Marta Sillaots, similarly to most Estonians, look forward to German invasion with hope. During the German occupation, however, the rhetoric of her writings was motivated by Estonian national spirit, sparked by the wish to restore independence – such sentiments dominated in the home policy of the Baltic states during the war (Zubkova 2009: 31) – and reveals no particular support to Germans. Soviet power and Russian power became the same in the eyes of Estonians (Mertelsmann 2005: 49) and this state largely prevails today. The overall increase in crime (Zubkova 2009: 149) added to fear and distrust.

Sillaots was not deported during the two largest mass deportations in Estonia, neither in June 1941 nor in March 1949. It is not known whether she considered fleeing to the West, but if she did, it certainly did not come true. In the post-war years, she, just as many others, may have hoped for a miracle – that Western countries would come and save the Baltic States (Zubkova 2009: 150–151). However, the “high Stalinism”⁵⁴ of 1945–1953 (McCauley 2003: 73) or “the bottom of the wave”⁵⁵ 1950–1953 (Olesk 2003: 466), as it has been termed in Estonia, caught up with Sillaots and many other writers, who had managed to escape the repressions before. Sillaots’ fate was shared by Valmar Adams (1899–1993), Heiti Talvik, Hugo Raudsepp, Leida Kibuvits⁵⁶ among others – they were all deported to Siberia (Olesk 2022: 66). The details of the Stalinist literary scene of Estonia have been addressed from various angles by several authors, including the literary scholar Sirje Olesk (2003; 2022) and the historian Tõnu Tannberg (2021; 2023).

Sillaots was able to enjoy her freedom until 21 December 1950, when she was arrested and her home was searched. The court file of the Estonian National Archives (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019) contains search acts (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019, pp. 13–16), which include with remarkable precision the items found and impounded. The rest of the documentation is also rather detailed, showing how the orders were forwarded and the way everything was recorded. At the same time, the general understanding until today has been that the Soviet administration was rather disorganised, with things often done in a random and sloppy manner. However, the sizable bureaucratic apparatus required documentation and approval for virtually everything. This duality is precisely what Marta Sillaots and her husband’s detailed court files demonstrate.

In order to make sure that the Soviet way of life, including the accompanying repressive measures, were conducted properly, it was necessary to have ideologically sound and trustworthy staff (Lewin 1997: 53). This requirement applied to all the relevant organisations. In the Baltics, it was often carried out by

⁵⁴ The time after the Great Patriotic War, when Stalin’s stature and his cult of personality “rose to new heights” (McCauley 2003: 73).

⁵⁵ The time when Estonian literature had alienated from itself the most (Olesk 2003: 466).

⁵⁶ Leida Kibuvits (1907–1976), Estonian writer, is touched upon further in this subchapter.

“importing” such staff from other Soviet regions (Zubkova 2009: 110–111). The Rannats⁵⁷ investigation materials include mostly Russian names among the people conducting the investigation and the Estonian ones are quite scarce. There is no clear statistics on the exact ratio between Estonian and Russian (or other nationalities) employees in the repressive institutions of Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic (ESSR)⁵⁸ in the early 1950s.

The investigation file refers to the order dated 15 December (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019, pp. 5–6), by which Marta Rannat was accused of writing a memoir during the bourgeois regime, titled *Sealtpoolt künniseid* (Beyond the Thresholds) and deemed deeply anti-Soviet. Besides that, she was accused of engaging in anti-Soviet propaganda during the German occupation, including publishing an anti-Soviet work *Seitsekümmend viis ööd ja päeva* (Seventy-five nights and days); writing an anti-Soviet radio play *Doktor Tamm* (Doctor Tamm) (which had received a third prize from the German authorities); contributing anti-Soviet articles to the newspapers *Eesti Sõna* (Estonian Word) and *Eesti Noored* (Estonian Youth); and delivering anti-Soviet speeches on the radio. Furthermore, Sillaots had not changed her views after the Great Patriotic War⁵⁹ continuing her anti-Soviet propaganda as well as spreading slander about Soviet power. Her “criminal” activities were confirmed by the theatre scholar Karin Kask (1919–1998), the writer Rudolf Sirge (1904–1970), a person named Frido Toomus (1908–1974), the writer Leida Kibuvits (1907–1976). There were allegedly also a number of official documents (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019, p 5), the contents of which is unclear, but which were used against her. The documents were accompanied with the requirement that Marta Rannat was to be taken into custody due to the risk of her evading investigation (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019, p 7). The interrogation transcripts of the above-mentioned persons were included in the file, with the exception of Rudolf Sirge’s.

This accusation is a compound of several features characteristic to Stalinism and its repressive measures. One of these aspects was that terror was in order to make the Baltic population, who did not find the Soviet life attractive, obey. Culture, especially literature and writers, had been under Stalin’s close scrutiny already since the 1930s (McCauley 2003: 45) with the only acceptable genre being socialist realism (ibid. 76). “Kowtowing to the West” or praising anything foreign, was condemned (ibid.). The Stalinist slogan “national in form, socialist in content” (ibid. 46) encapsulates a nationalities policy that subordinated expressions of nationality to class position and social background (Weiner 2003: 254), rather than to ethnic or political nationalism. Within this framework, forms

⁵⁷ Rannat, as mentioned before, was the Estonianised surname of Gerland. Soviet authorities used civil names during the investigations and court trials.

⁵⁸ Already at the end of the Second World War, Soviet authorities in the Baltic States started organising “help” from the central Moscow headquarters and manned the local branches of their repressive bodies in the Baltic states by mainly Russian staff (see Tannberg 2024).

⁵⁹ Great Patriotic War, a period of World War II (1941–1945), referring to the war between Germany and the Soviet Union. The term is until nowadays widely used in Russia.

of nationalism that asserted national identity as an autonomous political or cultural principle outside the socialist ideology, were regarded as hostile to Soviet state interests and therefore treated as enemies of the regime (ibid. 261).

Sillaots, who had expressed nationalist ideas, was thus, automatically “bourgeois nationalist” and this was a part of her guilt. With her collaboration with the German occupation authorities – she had published articles in periodicals and worked at radio, a powerful propaganda tool in the eyes of the Soviet regime, in the period of German occupation – we get an embodiment of “eternal enemy” (Weiner 2003: 252), whose guilt was equal to original sin in biblical terms: impossible to wash off. We can see how paranoid and fearful the regime must have been if it had to fear a 63-year-old woman of letters. Ironically, Stalin favoured gender equality also in repression. Sillaots was a bearer of cultural memory: she remembered too much, including the things that were not acceptable to remember.

On 19 December 1950 an order both in Estonian (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019, p 9) and Russian (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019, p 8) was issued to Lieutenant Sellits for the arrest of Sillaots and the search of her home in Nõmme, Valguse Street 19–1. It is noteworthy that the arrest and search were to take place simultaneously, i.e. the arrest must have been based purely on the indictment, without evidence that might emerge during the search. It also appears that the Soviet authorities had already divided the Rannats’ house into flats and housed a co-tenant into one of them – the above-mentioned Frido Toomus, who would later become one of the key witnesses in Rannats’ investigation.

The search act (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019, p 12) states that Marta Rannat was taken into custody on 21 December 1950 and the premises were searched. Among other things taken, there was a packet of letters, a box of manuscripts, different albums, photos, etc. A separate act (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019, p 15) was drawn up about the dubious literature, including Sillaots’ own works listed in the initial accusation (listed above), but also the works of Gustav Suits, August Gailit (1891–1960), August Mälk (1900–1987), Hugo Raudsepp and other writers who either fled to the West or fell into disfavour with the Soviet authorities. The room was sealed and the keys given to the husband Julius Rannat (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019, p 17), whose freedom would soon be curtailed, too.

On 22 December, Marta Sillaots was interrogated. The transcript of the interrogation is in Russian (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019, pp. 18–20). Answering the question why she has kept such a substantial amount of anti-Soviet literature at her home, Sillaots said that there was no hidden agenda. She had just not had time to rearrange her library⁶⁰ and remove the unnecessary volumes. As for her occupation, she stated that it was that of a translator and children’s writer, mostly working from home. The investigator found it surprising that a person who works from home does not have enough time to remove anti-Soviet literature from her bookshelves and opined that it looked like a deliberate display of anti-Soviet

⁶⁰ Reference to her library is not just figurative here: Sillaots was a registered member of a private libraries’ network at the time of the interwar Estonian Republic (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 210).

mentality. Sillaots argued by saying that she does not deny that about until the year 1947 she had supported writers' apoliticality, but then, influenced by the Soviet literature and the classics of Marxism-Leninism, a kind of intellectual transformation occurred, and she has considered herself a Soviet person from that point onward.

Further, the literary circle of the Tallinn Upper Secondary School No. 10 (former Nõmme Gymnasium) came up during the interrogation. Sillaots told that she had mostly acted as a consultant from 1944 to 1946, introducing young participants in the literary circle of the school to writing poetry, short stories and prose in general. The circle had been attended by 30–40 pupils, mostly of the upper secondary years. When questioned about the venue of the meetings, Sillaots admitted that on some occasions small groups of two or three pupils had visited her house in Valguse Street. She also confirmed the existence of a jointly written play *Odüsseia* (The Odyssey), which had sometimes been continued at her house. Sillaots also admitted that the play was mostly formalist, but also included aspects related to Soviet literature. Explaining why the children wrote individual formalist works, Sillaots noted that their learning journey at school had been rather inconsistent and volatile: they had started out at bourgeois school, continued under German occupation and finally attended Soviet school – experiences that had left their mark on the development of the pupils' literary taste. She signed the transcript affirming that everything it contains is true and that she was proficient in Russian. The interrogation was conducted by Major Naumov, head of the Estonian Ministry of National Security (Estonian MGB – *Министерство государственной безопасности*).

The interrogation continued on 13 February 1951 (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019, pp. 26–30), when a senior investigator, Felix Kott (one of the few Estonian names in the materials), took over. He asked whether the defendant understood the indictment and whether she pled guilty. Sillaots gave an affirmative answer to both questions. It must have taken some “persuasion” in the meantime, as the testimony included several aspects that were not present in the initial accusation and that the first interrogation did not touch upon. Sillaots explained that her background was not Soviet and that her bourgeois-national views emerged already during the interwar Estonian Republic; she had failed to dispose of them during the Soviet period. She described how people used to gather at her home during the war to listen to the Finnish radio broadcasts and talk about topics that may have been anti-Soviet. As for the guests' names, she mentioned Evald Paikre (her radio associate she wrote radio plays with), artist Eduard Ole (who had fled to the West) and Ole's wife whose name she reported not to remember. It is clear that Sillaots deliberately mentioned only the people Soviet authorities could not apprehend any more. She admitted that she had viewed German occupation as a positive development in terms of restoring Estonian independence, which had been welcomed by many. Her husband Julius had also sometimes listened to the Finnish radio broadcasts, but he had preferred to do it alone. Sillaots also confessed to producing anti-Soviet writings, including the above-mentioned memoir *Sealtpoolt künniseid* and *Seitsekümmend viis ööd ja päeva* published in the

compendium *Ammukaar* (Crossbow Arc), which contained slander against the Soviet power. She also acknowledged the anti-Soviet nature of her radio play *Doktor Tamm* as well as the articles in the periodicals *Eesti Noored* and *Eesti Sõna*.

Sillaots conceded that she had maintained her bourgeois-nationalist views also during the Soviet period but had made efforts to adapt to the new order. She had been busy translating Russian literary classics and had not produced original works. As for the anti-Soviet propaganda, Sillaots said that she had such inclinations until 1946 and had expressed such views in the close family circle, but since then, adopted a loyal attitude towards the Soviet power. Her husband had shared her views earlier, but similarly to her, had revised them, although he had generally not engaged in political discussions.

During the investigation Frido Toomus's name came up – a person who had lived in the Rannats' house and had apparently testified about their anti-Soviet mentality and sentiments. When commenting upon Toomus's testimonies, Sillaots did not deny that there had been such sentiments but claimed not to remember the exact utterances and suspected that Toomus had exaggerated. She testified that Toomus himself had made anti-Soviet statements. Toomus had probably been placed to Sillaots' household by the Soviet authorities with a mission to spy, provoke and provide testimony against the Rannats, possibly in exchange of some favours. As for the anti-Soviet publication found in the attic of the house, namely the magazine *Signaal* (Signal) and a leaflet *Hitler ja lapsed* (Hitler and Children), Sillaots commented upon the former being a random purchase bought probably by her daughters. *Hitler ja lapsed* is said to have been brought by Amanda Arendi, who lived in Tapa and had given it to Sillaots during a fundraising activity for the children of poor families. The investigator became interested in Arendi's person, but Sillaots claimed she had not been familiar with her political views. This is unlikely: the Arendi family were frequent visitors to Sillaots home, which is confirmed by the family guestbook⁶¹ (e.g. EKM EKLA f 243, m 5: 3, p 64).

Finally, investigator Kott asked about an illegal publication *Nõmmekate Ajakiri* (The Magazine of Nõmme Residents), published by the students of Nõmme school. Sillaots denied her knowledge about the magazine but remembered that the pupils had wanted to do something like this as a present to their school. Due to their entrance exams to the universities, the initiative was dropped. The interrogation lasted for 6 hours, 10:30–16:30.

As was characteristic to the working style of Soviet investigative bodies, interrogations were often long, conducted in late hours or at night. Therefore, it is not surprising that the questioning continued on the same day (13 February 1951), at 22:00, with primary focus on Sillaots' husband Julius. The questions

⁶¹ The investigation files do not contain any reference to the Rannats' guestbooks, currently kept in the Cultural History Archives, which could have provided ample proof about anti-Soviet sentiment, hopes during the German occupation and the well-known cultural figures disseminating these sentiments and hopes. It is unclear whether the family managed to hide the guestbooks or give them to some reliable friends for safekeeping.

concerned the period they had known each other, what his occupation had been earlier as well as who owned the house on Valguse Street. Sillaots stated that the house was registered in her husband's name but had been built and financed jointly. When describing Julius' views, Sillaots said that at the beginning of their acquaintance (1919–1920) he had favoured the communists but changed his views on her influence and started supporting the bourgeois “independent” [*quotation marks in original*] state. After the war, Julius had, similarly to his wife, held anti-Soviet views until about 1945–1946, when he became pro-Soviet. In general, Julius had not been politically active or aware. Apparently, Sillaots tried to do what she could to protect him, unfortunately without any success. Julius Rannat was taken into custody the next day, 14 February 1951, and the home was searched again (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019, p 42). The accusation against the Rannats' was possession of anti-Soviet literature at home and engagement with propaganda.

Sillaots' interrogation continued on 22 February (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019, pp. 33–35), when she admitted to expressing anti-Soviet ideas only in a close family circle and described her work as the consultant of the literary circle at school. She was asked to name its members, and she mentioned Juhan Kahk, Kulno Süvalep, Evi Puskar, Vidrik Kivilo, Boris Mirov, Ants Kand and Eino Tamberg. As noted above, the membership was much larger, but the ones listed belonged to a closer circle that visited Sillaots' home. Among her tasks, she mentioned delivering lectures on literary theory, where she had also spoken about formalism, while trying to remain apolitical. Soviet literature had not been discussed as Sillaots had not been familiar with it, whereas, for example, Maxim Gorky and Nikolay Ostrovsky were touched upon. Sillaots also tried to highlight the Russian authors she has dealt with, either in her literary reviews or by translating. Here and elsewhere during this investigation the rise of Russian nationalism surfaces (McCauley 2003: 76): while the Soviet leadership was accusing other nations of (bourgeois) nationalism, Russian nationalism was given free rein, to the point of ridiculous manifestations at times⁶².

According to Sillaots, the work of the literary circle was largely focused on the literary theory of bourgeois West and Estonia. When explaining how exactly she supervised the pupils' literary experiments, she told that for her the content of the work was important, but this was based on the anti-Soviet premise as she had not been familiar with Soviet literature. Sillaots highlights the way the members of the circle educated her about Soviet attitudes and literature they had acquired at school, making her change her mind. As for the possible collaboration of the members of the literary circle with the German occupation authorities, she denies having any knowledge of such conduct. Again, we can see Sillaots trying

⁶² An instance often referred to in Estonian cultural history is that of Johannes Semper, who was accused of having translated Pablo Neruda directly from Spanish and not from the Russian mediator language; thereby having not used “all the riches of the Russian language” (Olesk 2003: 475).

to protect the young members of the literary circle, the majority of whom, according to my data, were fortunately left unmolested.

Interrogation continued the following day, when some details were specified regarding the confiscated manuscripts and their importance for the defendant (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019, p 36). Sillaots said that they did not have any importance for her and she did not object to their destruction, except for three children's plays written during the war that she would have liked to be left to her relatives. On 26 February, questions regarding Sillaots' paid jobs during German occupation arose (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019, p 36), which she answered by denying any such jobs, except the received royalties for the children's stories, and stating that she had neither been a correspondent of any publications nor a member of any organisations. The signature (in Cyrillic) Sillaots had to write to all the pages of the interrogation transcript becomes more illegible with each page.

The interrogation of the writer Leida Kibuvits in connection with Sillaots' case had already taken place on 7 April 1950 (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019, pp. 62–65) and demonstrates that incriminating materials on Sillaots had been gathered for quite some time by then. Kibuvits was arrested on 13 February 1950, on accusations very similar to those against Sillaots: publishing articles during German occupation and collaborating with German authorities. Kibuvits said she had known Sillaots only very remotely but was aware that the latter had been engaged in translating from various languages, including Russian, during the German occupation. The compendium *Ammukaar* was also mentioned, in which Sillaots had written about Soviet soldiers killing the Estonian artist Eduard Järv⁶³. Kibuvits was the only witness to refer to one of Marta Sillaots' radio broadcasts, in which she had spoken of the return of Soviet troops to Estonia as “dark days”. The fact that Sillaots had not wanted to join the Writers' Union of Soviet Estonia is also mentioned by Kibuvits. As customary, Kibuvits may have been promised some leniency in her own punishment, but the fact is that she too was deported to Siberia, but returned somewhat earlier than Sillaots, in 1954.

One of the key documents in this trial, Frido Toomus's testimony (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019 pp. 57–61) was given on 13 December 1950. In it he described his meeting with the Rannats in 1945 which took place on the recommendation of Paul Rummo's⁶⁴ wife. Toomus stated that he had lived in their house until April 1947 and had realised over the time that Sillaots was anti-Soviet in her attitude. For example, in March 1947 she had spoken in the presence of her husband:

Communists are destroying the Estonian nation because the latter want to live independently. They destroy all Estonians, i.e. the ones that are against the Soviet power and the ones that favour it. Russians want to clean Estonian territory of Estonians. In 1941 there were many repressions against Estonians and there will be many more. (ibid. 59)

⁶³ Eduard Järv (1898–1941) had been the illustrator of Sillaots' children's books, including the stories of Trips, Traps and Trull (Saluäär 1987: 678).

⁶⁴ Paul Rummo (1909–1981), Estonian writer.

Sillaots had also spoken to Toomus about the Soviet economic system, which she did not favour, and had remarked that during the German occupation, at least, one did not have to be afraid of arrests at night. Julius Rannat had confirmed his wish to remain Estonian until the end and not to collaborate with Soviet authorities. The anti-Soviet nature of the Rannats' home library was unknown to Toomus since he did not read books. However, he had noticed German magazines and had been aware of the hostility towards the Soviet rule that Sillaots had expressed in her articles.

Theatre scholar Karin Kask, who had also been condemned by the Soviet power as “a bourgeois-aesthetic, anti-patriotic theatre critic” (Olesk 2022: 74), was interrogated on 12 December 1950 (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019, pp. 66–69). Kask said that she was not familiar with Sillaots' works but knew her radio play *Doktor Tamm* and her articles published during the German occupation, which she considered anti-Soviet. Otherwise, Kask had not been aware of Sillaots' anti-Soviet sentiment but knew about her activities as the head of the literary circle at Tallinn Secondary School No 10. Sillaots had led the young people towards the Western formalism and apoliticality but also indicated that Soviet writers could not write about the subjects they wanted. Karin Kask's testimony added Lembe Õngo and Ilmar Tamberg to the membership list of the literary circle.

On 21 February 1951, the confrontation (apparently customary for the investigation procedures of the time) between Marta Sillaots and Frido Toomus took place (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019, pp. 71–72), where Toomus said that despite the fact that he did not remember the exact wording, he had heard anti-Soviet views more than once while living at the Rannats' home. These views concerned the limited freedoms and repressions under the Soviet rule, while the German occupation was praised. Sillaots agreed to what Toomus said, but notes that all these views were shared by Toomus himself, too. The latter retorts that he had not supported these statements but decided not to argue. A similar confrontation during an interrogation was set up between Julius Rannat and Toomus (ibid. 73–75).

The indictment materials include all the articles and extracts of Sillaots' works mentioned earlier in this subchapter (*Sealtpoolt künniseid, Seitsekümmend viis ööd ja päeva, Doktor Tamm*, etc.) and were presented not only in Estonian but also in Russian translation (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019, pp. 78–124). Passages deemed especially significant and anti-Soviet had been underlined in red pencil. An example of supposedly anti-Soviet views is Sillaots' article in the newspaper *Eesti Sõna* in April 1944, titled “Under the White Columns”⁶⁵, where she reflects on Theatre Estonia and the importance of this building for Estonians. Its white columns, which had been “the symbol of Estonian rights” (ibid. 81), had now been bombed to bits and lie in ruins. Her contention was that is the optimism and resilience of the Estonian nation that gives ground to the hope that *Estonia* theatre will be rebuilt. The cultural figures whose names have been underlined in red in the Russian translation of the article include the writers Anton Hansen Tammsaare and Eduard Vilde, composers Evald Aav (1900–1939) and Raimund

⁶⁵ “Valgete sammaste all”

Kull (1882–1942) (ibid. 78). The Soviet authorities also found reprehensible Sillaots' sadness over the destroyed building and the ruins, where Estonians stand "with a sword in one hand and a firebrand in another" (ibid. 82).

The file also contains a review of Sillaots and Paikre's radio play *Doktor Tamm*, published in *Eesti Sõna*. The passages underlined in red highlight the realistic elements of the play's plot as well as its depiction of the surveillance during the Soviet period (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019, p. 98).

The indictment file also includes an extract from the compendium *Ammukaar I*, the compiler of which was a well-known writer Henrik Visnapuu (1890–1951), who had fled to the West in 1944. The compendium included an extract of Sillaots' memoir *Seitsekümmend viis ööd ja päeva*, the Russian translation of which is extensively underlined in red (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019, pp. 103–110) due to its predominantly anti-Soviet content. The memoir recounts the initial weeks of World War II in Estonia, her friendship with the artist Eduard Järv and his murder by the communists.

Sillaots' memoir *Sealtpoolt künniseid*, which primarily describes her childhood and youth and rarely extends beyond the 1920s, was also scrutinised by the Soviets. Special attention was paid to her portrayal of the 1917 events in Estonia and her description of communists, whom Sillaots characterises as being illiterate and lacking both authority and public support (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019, p. 116, 119). References to the threat from the East during the War of Independence were likewise marked in red (ibid. 123). The indictment materials demonstrate how Soviet authorities targeted Sillaots' writings for their national and anti-Soviet attitudes. Passages expressing grief over cultural destruction, hope for Estonia's resilience and criticism of communist rule were systematically marked as subversive. This scrutiny reflects the regime's broader effort to suppress narratives that affirmed Estonian identity and independence.

In early 1951, the investigation was completed. The charges were largely based on the same grounds that the initial accusations that led to Sillaots' arrest and the search in December 1950 (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019, pp. 131–133). Only one episode had been added after the interrogations: the case concerning the literary circle at Tallinn Secondary School No 10, where Sillaots' had allegedly promoted formalism and advocated writers' apolitical stance (ibid. 132). Apoliticality was unacceptable to the Soviets, who operated under the principle that anyone not supporting them was against them. So far, the published materials have regarded the literary circle as the primary cause of Sillaots' trial and imprisonment (e.g. Saluäär 2009: 160; Kaalep 1997: 537). However, the investigation materials indicate that this is not the main accusation but just one of many.

The indictment materials were then submitted to the court and the hearing against the Rannats took place on 15 March 1951 in Estonian. The minutes of the hearing (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019, pp. 146–150) list Afanasjev as the presiding judge, with Tuutar and Vilgu serving as lay judges. The prosecutor was a man called Paas and the defence lawyer's name was Koltšin. None of the witnesses were summoned to attend the hearing. The next time the Rannats' would see each other was five years later.

The charges were read aloud and both spouses pled guilty. In court, Sillaots largely repeated what she had said during the interrogations: she mentioned that during the bourgeois period she had not known anything about the Soviet Union and considered herself a bourgeois nationalist at the time. Since 1940, she had tried to become acquainted with the history of the Communist Party but had largely maintained her previous views. At the start of the war, she had looked forward to the Russian troops' leaving, believing that neither Russians nor Germans were any good. However, Sillaots had started to read Soviet literature when Germans left and changed her opinions. She had also tried to write Soviet works herself. The prosecutor also asked about Sillaots' father and his property, the existence of which she denied. Her husband Julius added that since 1940 the spouses had *de facto* not lived together: one had been living on the ground floor, the other on the first floor. As for the literature found in the house, it belonged to the wife. Distancing from one another may have been in the hope that at least Julius would get off with a lighter sentence.

The prosecutor's initial proposal was the minimum one: 10 years, with confiscation of all property. A separate act was drawn up regarding the confiscation of the pocket watch that was taken from Julius upon his arrest (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019, p 164). The sentence itself was in Russian and commuted death sentence for Marta Sillaots to 25 years of imprisonment. Julius got 10 years of imprisonment. All their property would be confiscated and 150 roubles, the defence lawyers' fee, was to be paid by the defendants. The sentence, as customary at the time, was "final and not subject to further appeal" (ibid. 155). Their anti-Soviet literature would be destroyed (ibid. 167). Why the initial proposal of 10 years was changed into 25 has not been explained. The fact that the 63-year-old woman, not in the best of health, might not survive the sentence made no difference – such a verdict could be given to people of any age group.

Sillaots was first taken to Valga prison in South Estonia. Letters to her sister Erna (EKM EKLA f 243, m 9:1) bear witness to relatively tolerable living and dietary conditions (see 6.1.2). An unlimited quantity of parcels from home could be sent, but only two letters per month were allowed. In 1952, however, Sillaots was taken to Russia, first to Leningrad (now St Petersburg), where she was hospitalised, and then, in June 1952 (Saluäär 2009: 161), further on to Nizhny Tagil in Sverdlovsk Oblast (ibid. 173), 2600 km from Estonia.

There was a difference here between the deported and the imprisoned – it is probable that even after Stalin's death (1953) the credibility of the Soviet courts had to be maintained. The impression that the courts make random decisions that could easily be annulled was best avoided and this delayed the release process. To enable the release of imprisoned people without undermining the perceived authority, a new procedure was necessary.

In 1954, the Rannats' materials were reopened and their cases reviewed, which can be gleaned from documents gathered at the back of the file (RA ERAF. 130SM.1.6019, pp. 174–175). An order, issued on 24 November 1954, confirms that despite the Rannats' indictment, which was fully verified in 1951 (ibid. 177–

179) by several witnesses, it was now proposed that the sentence be reduced to 10 years for her and 5 for him. Julius was also released from prison in the course of general amnesty of 27 March 1953. The reason given was the overly harsh nature of the original sentence (ibid. 182). As of 24 July 1954, the whereabouts of Marta Sillaots were reported as unknown. On 27 December 1954, the notice of appeal for a reduction of the spouses' sentence was received (ibid. 181–182) and the verdict was delivered on 10 January 1955 (ibid. 186). Julius Rannat was thereby released (ibid. 190). A brief note of 25 February 1955 states that Marta Rannat has also received information about the verdict (ibid. 191). This is the last document from the 1950s that the file contains, but Sillaots' prison letters from Siberia, preserved in the Estonian Literary Museum, may shed light on how exactly her homecoming took place. According to Saluäär (1987: 681), it started in December 1954 and with several stopovers Sillaots returned to Estonia at the end of 1955.

As their house in Valguse Street was already in the possession of other people, the Rannats' settled instead in a flat at Leina Street 7–2 (Kuningas 1987: 311) in the Hiiu district of Tallinn. During this period Sillaots is said to have wanted to review and edit her earlier works, including *Anna Holm* and the Trips-Traps-Trull quadrilogy (ibid.), which was possibly the only option for her to earn some money.

The very last documents of the court file date from 1965, showing how long it took to fully rehabilitate Sillaots. Only then did she start to receive a state pension (Saluäär 2009: 171). As her professional activities were rather limited and her health had deteriorated, her economic survival must have been complicated. Another factor characteristic to the Soviet society at the time was that the returnees from prisons and from Siberian deportation were not always warmly welcomed (McCauley 2003: 79). This was probably somewhat different in the Baltic context, but nevertheless still hard. She was admitted to the Writers' Union in 1964. On 14 June 1965, Sillaots submits a complaint to the Public Prosecutor's Office of ESSR (Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic), which she finishes with the following lines summarising her and her fellow sufferers' fate:

My whole prosecution and conviction is a classic example of the personality cult practice. I am now a 79-year-old elderly person, whose life has been under everyone's eyes and can easily be assessed. I cannot come to terms with the fact that I am still not rehabilitated, bearing the seal of the anti-Soviet citizen. No-one can return to me my lost years, my health and the experienced insults in the places of detention that mortify any human dignity.

I ask to be rehabilitated so that I can die in peace, knowing that truth wins and that my contribution to the progress of our society is one of an honest citizen, who has, higher than anything, valued honest work and done it with great love and dedication. (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019, p. 196)

The complaint is supplemented by the (not entire) bibliography of Sillaots' works (ibid. 197–203) and Paul Kuusberg's (Head of the Writers' Union) character reference (ibid. 194).

It took 15 years to annul the sentence of Marta and Julius Rannat: on 15 December 1965, their sentence was overturned because it did not contain elements of a criminal offence (RA ERAF.130SM.1.6019, p. 212). Their property and other confiscated belongings had to be returned (*ibid.*), but their house on Valguse Street was already occupied by other people. In archival letters Sillaots confirms that compensation, 388 roubles, had been given to the family for the furniture of the house, and she expresses hope that at least a part of her library would also be returned (Saluäär 2009: 172), but it is not known whether these hopes materialised.

Sillaots' active engagement in several literary fields – her multipositionality – that had opened doors for her at the beginning of her literary career ultimately proved disadvantageous under the Soviet rule; it marked her as an enemy who had to be silenced.

Marta Sillaots passed away at Hiiu Oncology Hospital on 15 July 1969, at the age of 82 and is buried in the writers' section of Metsakalmistu Cemetery in Tallinn.

4. TRANSLATOR'S AGENCY IN TRANSLATION EVENT: *HUCKLEBERRY FINNI SEIKLUSED* (1931–1932) IN THE INTERWAR ESTONIAN TRANSLATION LANDSCAPE AND ITS "COMET'S TAIL"

4.1 Translation in the Making: The Birth of *Huckleberry Finni seiklused* in 1931 and Translator's Extratextual Agency

By the 1930s, Marta Sillaots had become an expert in children's and youth literature and was often asked to give advice regarding possible translations as well as original Estonian works. Her reviews on translated works reflect her attitude towards the subject: translating for young people needs special attention and faults in any of the aspects are unacceptable (Sillaots 1932b: 639; 1934b: 383).

The subchapter is primarily based on the correspondence between Sillaots and Noor-Eesti Publishing House (EKM EKLA f 92, 276: 26), as well as between the latter and Loodus Publishing House (EKM EKLA f 92: m 299: 5), preserved in the Cultural History Archives of the Estonian Literary Museum. The fact that the translation *Huckleberry Finni seiklused* (*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*) was offered to Marta Sillaots by Noor-Eesti Publishing House on 27 May 1931 (EKM EKLA f 92, m 276: 26, p 16) is likely to have been due to her recognized expertise in the field. The publishing house explained that they had had an intention to commission a translation of a different Mark Twain's work but ultimately opted for *Huckleberry Finn* (ibid.). Estonia's accession to the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic works in 1927 explains the restrictions mentioned by the publisher, namely that only up to 11,000 lines of Mark Twain's works could be published (ibid.; see also Gielen 2012b: 263).

Noor-Eesti Publishing House then asked Sillaots whether she would be willing to take on the task and complete the translation by August 1931 (EKM EKLA f 92, m 276: 26, p 16). She replies on 29 May (ibid. p 17), congratulating the publishing house on their good choice and mentioning that *Huckleberry Finn* is likely to stay "forever young", unlike *Tom Sawyer*, and that it will definitely find readers. It is thus obvious that Sillaots is familiar with Twain's works and their reception in the USA. She expresses hope that the translation will be ready by the beginning of August or, should there be any obstacles, the publishing house will hopefully not object if she sends in the final part of the manuscript a little later (ibid.). The publisher's next letter is of 30 May (ibid. 18), where they state that the fee will be their usual: 4 cents per 5 ¼ corpus line. They are also asking to be sent the first half of the manuscript as soon as it is ready so that it could be delivered to the printer by the beginning of August or even in July 1931 (ibid.).

In her letter of 2 June 1931 (EKM EKLA f 92, m 276: 26, p 19), Sillaots confirms that she has already started translating the work and can hopefully send the first half of the manuscript by early July. She also asks whether the publisher would like a foreword and offers to write a short one (ibid.). August Pill, the

publishing house's spokesperson, replies on 4 June 1931 (ibid. 20) and confirms that the publisher is interested in a short foreword (about two pages) and that it should be placed at the beginning of the book. Sillaots wrote the foreword, which will be covered in more detail in the next subchapter (see 4.2).

Sillaots' postcard of 7 July (EKM EKLA f 92, m 276: 26, p 21) reports that the first part of the translation is ready and will be sent to the publishing house. She asks to be notified upon its arrival and also requests the proof sheets when typeset, if possible (ibid.). A note from the publisher of 9 July (ibid. 22) confirms that the first part of the manuscript has been received and that the second proof will be sent for her inspection. The second part of the translation is ready on 5 August 1931 and sent to the publisher with a polite request for some advance payment (ibid. 23). Sillaots' request is fulfilled and a payment order for 50 kroons is sent to Keisermann's bookshop, according to a note dated 11 August (ibid. 24). Sillaots replies on 1 September to acknowledge the receipt of those 50 kroons (ibid. 25). Although, as Sillaots reported, there had been an incident about Keisermann's hostile behaviour (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 55), when he was not willing to pay out the money, his shop was often the place where she would receive her payments.

The publisher's letter of 2 September (EKM EKLA f 92, m 276: 26, p 26) bears witness to a problem that had unexpectedly arisen. August Pill informs Sillaots that another publishing house, Loodus, has announced *Huckleberry Finni seiklused* (*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*) to be published in their 'Looduse Kuldraamat' series the same year. They had apparently already started receiving subscriptions for it. Noor-Eesti Publishing House explained to Sillaots that they had started negotiations with Loodus to avoid two parallel editions and intend to pass Sillaots' translation to Loodus (ibid.). In doing so, Noor-Eesti has also requested that Sillaots could have the same terms of payment with Loodus. Pill expresses the hope that the translator will agree with the transfer, at the same time stating that it is not a favourable course of events from their point of view, but the only option under the circumstances. The agreement could potentially be finalized the same week (ibid.), at the beginning of September 1931.

According to Möldre (2012b: 30), there were 49 publishing houses in Estonia in 1934, and the number increased to 75 by 1939. The leading position was held by three rather diverse publishing houses: Loodus, Noor-Eesti and Eesti Kirjanduse Selts (EKS) (ibid.). The fact that information about potential parallel publications circulated among these leading publishers indicates the relatively tight-knit nature of the Estonian interwar publishing scene. It was apparently possible to negotiate common solutions between counterparts and competitors. At the same time, according to Paloposki (2021: 84), such "collisions" – as coinciding publications of one and the same book by two different publishers were called – were a frequent phenomenon in Finnish context, "even after Finland joined the Bern convention in 1928" (ibid.). In Estonia, as a smaller country, the situation must have been similar, with news travelling even faster. Translators wanting to change publishing houses may have had different reasons. For example, in one of Bernhard Linde's rather emotional letters of 20 December 1930 to Noor-Eesti

Publishing House (EKM EKLA f 92, m 264: 9, p 131) regarding the translation of the second part of Reymont's *Chłopi (Talupojad)*, Linde expresses doubts about the publisher's genuine interest in publishing his translation and proposes finding another publisher who will reimburse Noor-Eesti for the advance they have already paid to Linde. So far I have not encountered anything similar in the case of Sillaots. She has complained about the difficult terms and working conditions of some publishing houses (e.g. see 5.1) but never expressed an explicit wish to change the terms.

As for the change of plan regarding *Huckleberry Finn*, Sillaots responds on 4 Sept 1931 (EKM EKLA f 92, m 276: 26, p 27) stating that the steps taken are appropriate under the circumstances and she agrees with everything Noor-Eesti has done so far. She thanks the publisher cordially for protecting her financial rights should the transition be agreed upon (ibid.). The next letter from Noor-Eesti, which would have confirmed the transition of the translation to Loodus, is either lost or never sent as Sillaots indicates in her letter of 9 November (ibid. 29). The content of this missing letter is that Loodus is taking over the contract and reimbursing Noor-Eesti the 50 kroons already paid to Sillaots (ibid. 28). In another letter of the same day, Sillaots complains that "Loodus" has not contacted her yet (EKM EKLA f 92, m 277: 1, p 41).

The correspondence between the two publishing houses, Noor-Eesti and Loodus, in August and September 1931, reveals that negotiations were taking place without Sillaots knowing. There are three letters that address the issue of the transfer of *Huckleberry Finni seiklused* and they include details of discussions between the two publishers. Loodus confirms that

according to the conversation between your manager, Mr A. Pill and our manager, Mr H. Männik, Loodus has agreed to pay the translator, Mrs Sillaots, the fee of 4 cents per translation line, covering also the costs of the translation made for us. The cost of the already initiated typeset would, as said in the conversation, be carried by you [Noor-Eesti]. It is not possible for us to use the typeset text of Mällo's printing works because, due to the initial revision, Mrs Sillaots' translations often need multiple corrections. (EKM EKLA f 92: m 299: 5, p 20)

According to Loodus accountancy records, this fee (4 cents per corpus line) was higher than their average, which was usually 2–3 cents per line (Pärgma 2024: 206). The fact that Sillaots has not been contacted by Loodus until November 1931 suggests either that the corrections were not numerous enough to let the translator know about them or that the publishers decided not to involve the translator in the proofreading process, despite her explicitly stated wishes.

On 8 September, Noor-Eesti sends the manuscript to Loodus and specifies the terms of the translator's payment (EKM EKLA f 92: m 299: 5, p 22). The book came out at the beginning of 1932, which serves as further evidence that the editing and proofreading process was completed with remarkable speed, raising questions about the extent of the potential corrections the publisher had suggested. These corrections, made to the manuscript as well as the proof sheets will be addressed in one of the following subsections of this chapter (see 4.3).

In the present case, it was the publishing house that initiated the translation process and exercised its agency/power in terms of several aspects: they reached out to Sillaots and represented her, when her translation was given to another publishing house. Here Sillaots' multipositionality functioned primarily as social and cultural capital, rather than as an active exercise of extratextual agency. While this capital did not itself translate into direct intervention beyond the text, it positioned her as a legitimate and trusted interlocutor, enabling her participation in negotiations concerning the transfer of the translation. In this sense, her extratextual agency was limited but operative, residing chiefly in her ability to enter and sustain such negotiations. Neither the publishing houses nor the translator can be regarded as a sole decision-maker – Sillaots was the one the publishing house turned to and as a result of their quite smooth and unproblematic negotiations, the translation process was approved. At the same time, it can be said that the publishing house's agency is still dominant – Sillaots did not propose the translation herself and agreed to the terms the publisher set. Furthermore, the publishing house indicated her manuscripts needed many corrections, implying her work was considered inadequate.

The shared interest of different publishing houses in certain types of books becomes evident in the fact that another publishing house had already started to commission the translation of *Huckleberry Finn*. This gives ground to speculations that the translation would have come into being anyway, either with or without Marta Sillaots' involvement. Such a course of events – “the collision” (Paloposki 2021: 84), when two publishing houses intend to publish the same translation at the same time – demonstrates that there was a clear demand for this translation in the Estonian literary scene. The value of Twain's work had been recognized and combined with the need for good youth literature; thus, the scene is set to welcome the translation.

Although Loodus Publishing House had undermined Sillaots' translator's agency and her skills, there is a small and seemingly insignificant detail: Loodus advertised the 'Kuldraamat' series actively at the end of 1931 in several newspapers, for example, newspaper *Nool* (Arrow) of 24 December 1931 ('Looduse Kuldraamat' 1931: 9), and some translators' names were included in the advertisement. The first name on this list was Marta Sillaots, who must have been well known to the wider public and was therefore chosen as one of the names that would potentially promote the sales. In this sense, the publishing house “gives with one hand and takes with the other” (as is often the nature of negotiations): while claiming that Sillaots' translations needed to be edited and revised thoroughly, it simultaneously considered her name good enough to advertise the series. Moreover, Loodus agreed to pay her a higher fee than their usual: the 4 cents per line Noor-Eesti had initially promised. Thus, although speaking about the quality of Sillaots' translations behind her back, the publishers may have done so so as not to offend her.

As a follow-up, another typical example illustrating Sillaots' translatorial persona and her relationship with Noor-Eesti Publishing House can be briefly summarised. At the end of the same year, 1931, the publishing house reaches out

to Sillaots' again, to ask her advice about potential new translations for young readers as they intend to start publishing a series of children's books (EKM EKLA f 92, m 276: 26, p 31; see also Gielen 2012b: 263–264). Sillaots suggests that although Jules Verne's *Kapten Granti lapsed* (*Les enfants du Capitaine Grant*) is a little outdated, it is still worth translating with some abridgements (ibid. 29). She also proposes *Vingt mille lieues sous les mers* for the publisher's consideration as well as Selma Lagerlöf's works, adding that several French authors have good books suitable for the readers under twelve (ibid.). The publisher agrees to *Kapten Granti lapsed* but explains that the fee would be slightly lower compared to the translation of *Huckleberry Finn* (ibid. 35). According to the publisher, they have been forced to take such steps to make ends meet with the children's series that *Kapten Granti lapsed* would belong to (ibid.). The educational aim of children's literature is evident here: such books had to be affordable in order to reach more readers. Active advertising, referred to above, served also the purpose of attracting more readers besides the obvious objective of increasing the publishing house's profit.

Sillaots agrees with the terms and undertakes the translation. This response is characteristic to Sillaots; she usually accepts what is offered and does not engage in extensive negotiations. Here, however, her extratextual agency is fairly strong in proposing books and giving her opinions about abridging.

4.2 Shaping Huck: Translator's Paratextual Agency and the Evolution of *Huckleberry Finni seiklused* in Editions from 1932 to 1989

The first edition of *Huckleberry Finni seiklused* (*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*) appeared, as mentioned above, in the 'Looduse Kuldraamat' series at the beginning of 1932. The translator's name is printed at the top of the verso of the title page and the paratexts of the book include a short foreword by the translator and 29 footnotes. Paratexts can be seen as manifestations of translator's paratextual agency – “translator's footprints” or his/her “voice within the text” (Paloposki 2010: 87). When combined with the archival manuscript, these elements make the translator's choices and decisions more visible (ibid. 89).

Aiming at covering the translator's work in its different aspects as well as the different socio-political periods of Sillaots' life, but also in order to provide some background to the translation of *Huckleberry Finn* in 1931–1932, I will also take the opportunity to examine the “comet's tail” here – the later reprints of the book in the Soviet period. This serves to illustrate how the “translator's footprints” can be altered without the translator's involvement, as a result of societal changes. Paratexts offer valuable insight into these changes, revealing both the ideological shifts and changes in publishing practices.

There were 4 reprints in the Soviet time: in 1954 – a joint edition with *Tom Sawyer*, published at the time when Marta Sillaots was in prison, without the name of the translator; in 1956 a similar joint edition identical to the 1954 version

but republished as a part of the new series ‘Seiklusjutte maalt ja merelt’ (‘Adventures from Land and Sea’), this time including the translators’ names; in 1970 a single volume of *Huckleberry Finn*; in 1989, a joint volume with *Tom Sawyer* again. The first two editions (1954, 1956) are almost identical in terms of page layout, apart from the missing translators’ names of the 1954 edition. The single volume of 1970 is text-wise also very similar to the Soviet predecessors with only extremely minor editorial interference (see 4.5), but as it is a single volume of the work, it has a different cover illustration and, understandably, different pagination. All three include the same footnotes. The 1989 edition is not just a reprint and needs separate consideration. For reasons that will be explained below, the first three will be referred to as Soviet editions, while the 1989 edition will be addressed separately.

The names of the translators (as it was a joint volume, with *Tom Sawyer* translated by Anna Bergmann) were not included in the 1954 edition but are there in the 1956 reprint. In the 1970 new edition of *Huckleberry Finn* as a stand-alone volume, the translator is said to be A. Bergmann. At the very end of the book, there is an explanatory note titled “Misprint”, which states: “The verso of the title page includes a misprint of the translator’s name A. Bergmann. The work has been translated by M. Sillaots” (Twain 1970: 294). This may have been a simple error, or more controversially, an attempt by Soviet censorship to erase the translator, who had been pronounced ‘enemy of the nation’ by Soviet authorities in 1950 (see 3.2.4), even after her death. The fact that the translators’ names were included in the 1956 edition and that Sillaots was rehabilitated in 1965, seems to indicate that the 1970 misprint might have been an innocent inaccuracy.

The verso of the title pages of all the Soviet editions contains another curious detail: the title of the edition from which the translation is made from (*The Adventures of Tom Sawyer and The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*), is a 1948 English language edition published by the Foreign Languages Publishing House in Moscow (Twain 1970). Textual comparison shows that the text is that of the 1932 translation and could, therefore, not have been translated from the 1948 Moscow publication. Such misinformation was common to Soviet publishing practices. None of the Soviet editions have a foreword and regarding the 30 footnotes, they largely overlap with those in the 1932 edition, although some differences exist, which will be addressed below.

The 1989 edition – a joint version with *Tom Sawyer* again – was revised, unlike the three Soviet editions published since 1954, of which only the first was revised. The 1989 edition also reflects changes in footnotes. The year 1989 marked the period of big changes in Estonian society – the time of *perestroika* and the Singing Revolution, when emphasis started shifting from Soviet values towards intensely national rhetoric and public movements, culminating in independence in 1991. These shifts are evident in the footnotes of the 1989 *Huckleberry Finn*. Similarly to the Soviet editions, 1989 edition does not include a translator’s foreword and like all the preceding Soviet editions, the information regarding the source text used for the translation as well as the translator’s name is included on the verso of the title page. The page starts with a remark specifying

that the revision was based on a 1960 Moscow publication of *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn* (by Foreign Languages Publishing House). Thus, the misinformation present in the Soviet editions regarding the 1948 Moscow source text has been corrected.

The next subchapter examines the foreword of the first edition (1932) followed by a section that takes a closer look at the footnotes in all the editions. These paratextual elements not only shed light on the translator's role and visibility but also reveal how ideological and editorial practices evolved across different historical periods. By analysing these features, the study aims to demonstrate how translation is never a static act but one that continues to interact with shifting cultural, political, and institutional contexts.

4.2.1 Framing Twain: Marta Sillaots' Foreword to the 1932 Edition

Katiliina Gielen's (2012a) study of Marta Sillaots' explicit translation poetics, based on Sillaots' translation reviews, highlights, among other things, Sillaots' emphasis on viewing the translated book as a cohesive whole (ibid. 108). This includes the foreword as an integral introduction to the translation that can, if written well and elaborately, serve as an extra asset to the translated work (ibid.).

The foreword of *Huckleberry Finni seiklused* is also available in the archived manuscript version (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, pp. I–V). While the manuscript foreword does not include a heading, the published version is titled “Mark Twain” (1932: 5), and covers mostly the author's biography accompanied by an overview of some of his literary works. The manuscript and the published foreword are identical and, as agreed with the publisher earlier, the foreword appears at the beginning of the book, preceding the main text.

The published foreword starts with a curious error, though, likely caused by Sillaots' occasionally illegible handwriting: Mark Twain's real name has become Samuel Clewers (Sillaots 1932: 5) instead of Clemens. The handwriting in the manuscript indeed allows the name to be misread as Clewers, which is the probable reason for the mistake. It is noteworthy, though, that it was somehow not possible for the editor to check the name at that time, or did they fully trust the translator in this matter? If so, this highlights a discrepancy in Sillaots' multipositionality as well as her different types of agencies – in one field, she enjoyed considerable authority as an expert in children and youth literature, which granted her freedom to write paratexts without extensive editorial checks (paratextual agency); yet her translations (textual agency) are objects to scrutiny, at least according to the publisher's rhetoric.

The foreword itself is short, a little more than a page long (5 small manuscript pages). The translator's presence becomes visible when she starts speaking about Twain's literary heritage. She uses the epithet “*võrratu*” (‘superb’) to describe *Tom Sawyer*, *Prints ja kerjus* (*The Prince and the Pauper*) and *Huckleberry Finn* and mentions that the first two are already available in Estonian translation (Sillaots 1932: 5). Sillaots finds Twain's humorous stories and several novels outdated, as is often the case with works tied to specific historical periods and

circumstances (ibid.). Fortunately, as she says, this does not apply to *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*, which, in her view, will remain fresh and enjoyable for the most part (ibid. 6). Thus, the translator informs and guides the reader along with her evaluations. The foreword also links the translator's paratextual and extratextual agency by making her role in the process, i.e. in the birth of the translation, visible to the readers. Coming to *Huckleberry Finn*, Sillaots finds it necessary to add that this work surpasses *Tom Sawyer* with "the vivid plot, multitude of interesting characters, the variety of moods and descriptions of nature skilfully intertwined into suitable places" (ibid.). The reader can assume that the book is chosen for translation because of its literary uniqueness and quality, and the translator's awareness of this might have played a role in it being published. The awareness may also have been due to the motion pictures, the earliest of which was a silent movie of 1907, followed by *Huck and Tom* in 1918 and then a more widely spread *Tom Sawyer* in 1930. However, there is no evidence that these films reached Estonia.

Finally, at the very end of the foreword, Sillaots mentions a distinctive feature of the work – its language –, which she describes as "a humorous mixture of written language, the dialectal features of the broken speech of the uncultivated small-townners and the gibberish of the negro-slaves (Sillaots 1932: 6)". This reflects a common (mis)understanding of the time – African American speech was considered an incorrect language usage rather than a legitimate linguistic variety. Sillaots also explains her translation strategy in relation to this: "This interesting feature [i.e. the linguistic varieties] was of course impossible to maintain in translation" but says that she tried to "modestly copy that with abundant popular colloquialisms and some linguistic incorrectness" (ibid.). The foreword is signed simply as 'Translator' (*Tõlkija*). In her above-cited comments, Sillaots informs the reader about her decisions regarding the translation strategies and perhaps tries to prevent possible criticism from reviewers. Such tactics, i.e. anticipating criticism, resembles her approach in her first widely known original work – the collection of stories *Algajad* (Beginners) (1912). The subheading of the collection, *Elulookirjelduslised katsed* (Biographical Attempts), may perform a similar function: framing the work as just a modest attempt may help secure a more benevolent reception by critics (and readers). In the case of the current foreword this also likely signals the translator's agency by emphasising that the chosen translation strategy has been her conscious choice and deliberate decision.

As noted above, the Soviet editions, alongside the 1989 edition, omit the translator's foreword entirely. This omission prevents the readers and researchers from examining the progression, described by Kujamäki (2001: 46) as "the comet's tail" – a metaphor that likely alludes to the lingering influence or interpretative trajectory of the translation over time. Without this paratextual element, it becomes challenging to assess how the translator's perspective or commentary evolved across different editions, thereby limiting our understanding of the broader dynamics of translation reception and adaptation.

4.2.2 Tracing the Margins: Footnotes across the Five Editions of *Huckleberry Finni seiklused* (1932–1989)

Footnotes often interrupt the smooth flow of reading, drawing attention to the translator's intervention and signalling that the text is not an unmediated original but a constructed representation. The 27 footnotes added to the translation of *Huckleberry Finn* are Sillaots', as the manuscript (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0) confirms, address mostly the cultural realia of the US southern states, but also of other countries such as France, the UK and India. We can see here what the translator had expected the (young) readers not to know and "considered important for them to know" (Paloposki 2010: 90).

What does this "extra voice" (Paloposki 2010: 104) in the form of footnotes reveal? Appendix 4 shows that the 27 footnotes include, besides cultural realia, also some phenomena characteristic to the period when the work was written that the translator had considered necessary to explain to the readers, for example, "phrenology" and "mesmerism" (Twain 1932: 138). The disease "mumps" (ibid. 207) must have been relatively rare in 1931–1932 Estonia, as Sillaots had added a comment to it. She had also found it necessary to explain general phenomena of Classical culture such as "muse" (ibid. 146) and "orgy" (ibid. 189) to explain. Even 'mosquito' made its way into the footnotes, although the Estonian term 'säask' refers more broadly to insects worldwide, not just in warm countries as Sillaots had suggested (ibid. 132).

As for the specific cultural realia of the US southern states, some inconsistencies in footnoting can be traced regarding the toponyms. For example, "Arkansas" is footnoted (Twain 1932: 116), but "Ohio" not (Toomiste 2023: 24). Similarly, "St. Petersburg" of the U.S. receives a footnote (Twain 1932: 76), but some other place names (e.g. "Pike County, Missouri" (ibid. 143) or "New Orleans" (ibid. 291) do not. Most personal names of historical figures are not footnoted, though some are Estonianised and some commented upon in a footnote. Occasionally, both strategies are applied, for example, "Mari Antoneti" ("Marry Antonette" in the original – Twain 2001: 262), which is accompanied by a footnote "Marie Antoinette" (Twain 1932: 141). A similar tactic can be observed in the translation of "blue jay" (Twain 2001: 242) – "siniähk" (commented upon as "siniähk" (Twain 1932: 115). The former, slightly misspelt version, serves the purpose of marking the idiolect of the characters; the latter was orthographically correct according to the *Eesti õigekeelsuse-sõnaraamat* (1937: 1704) (Dictionary of Standard Estonian). 'Mari Antoneti', for example, occurs in the uneducated colloquial speech of one of the crooks Huck and Jim meet on their way. At the same time there are plenty of names of the historical figures similar to Marie Antoinette, which have not been footnoted or added any explanation in any other form, for example, "lady Jane Grey" or "Gilford Dudley" (ibid. 281). Furthermore, "mesmerism" is footnoted twice in the exact same wording (ibid. 138 and 231); sometimes the commented word or phrase is repeated in the comment, sometimes not.

A BA thesis at the University of Tartu (Toomiste 2023) on the translation strategies of culture-specific items in *Huckleberry Finn* lists footnotes (or extratextual gloss according to Aixelá 1996: 61, whose framework Toomiste has used) as one of the strategies employed. Sillaots did not add a comment to every culture-specific item but instead used a range of strategies (ibid. 27). Diachronic research has to consider the temporal gap – what may have needed a comment at the time of translation may no longer need today. Recent genetic translation studies have confirmed that the employment of different translation strategies by a translator is a common practice (Cordingley and Montini 2015: 4), and evident in Sillaots' translations as well.

The translator's voice in the paratexts reveals an awareness of the educational aims of the translation while simultaneously reflecting the translation practices of the period. As noted above, Estonian readers were familiar with the exotic plots of the Wild West and the Native-American characters. Nevertheless, the young target readers of the book may have needed additional explanations for certain phenomena, according to the translator's judgment. However, the translator's judgment as for the use of footnotes seems to have been less methodical and more random, perhaps influenced by her general knowledge. It is hard to imagine that names such as Old Northumberland (The Duke of Northumberland), Lady Jane Grey or Guilford Dudley were familiar to the young readers in the Estonia of the 1930s, yet no footnotes were provided. While some of the potentially new and exotic elements were explained, a considerable number were not.

The translation manuscript bears witness that there were only a very few instances where the translator's paratextual agency was curtailed by editorial intervention, as when the editor crossed out certain footnotes: for example, "praam" ('ferry') footnoted as "Transpordialus=lame töövene" ('transport vessel = flat work boat') (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, p 300).

There are six footnotes in the 1932 edition that are slightly modified in the Soviet editions (see Appendix 4). The changes are mostly marginal: some omitted words, apparently found unnecessary by the editor. The 1954 version was edited by Hardi Tiidus⁶⁶ and the following two Soviet editions (1956 and 1970) list H. Jürgenson as editor. It seems that it was Tiidus who did most of the editing for the first 1954 version, whereas the later versions (1956 and 1970) were largely simply reprints, despite bearing a different editor's name. The matter of the different editors and their involvement will be discussed further in the subchapter 4.4 covering Soviet editions.

In the following examples taken from the Soviet reprints, the pagination is that of the 1970 reprint. Some examples of the omitted words in the footnotes include, for example, "kunsti kaitsejumalanna" ('protective goddess of art') reduced to just "kaitsejumalanna" (Twain 1970: 134) ('protective goddess') ("muse", Twain 2001: 266) and "inglise vanim põhiseadustekogu" ('the oldest English body of constitutional laws') ("Domesday Book", Twain 2001: 285) to "inglise vanim seadustekogu" ('oldest English code of laws') (Twain 1970: 158). Here we can

⁶⁶ Hardi Tiidus (1918–1999), a TV presenter, historian and translator.

see that both the translator as well as the editors (of the 1932 and the Soviet versions) have apparently confused the *Domesday Book* with the *Magna Carta* and given Estonian readers slightly misleading information.

There are a couple of instances where the simplified colloquial use of names – retained in the 1932 translation to mirror the original – was later replaced with the correct name forms and supplemented with a footnote providing pronunciation guidelines. For example, “Marry Antonette” (Twain 2001: 262) in the original has transformed into “Mari Antoneti” in Sillaots’ hands (Twain 1932: 141) to keep the uncultivated colloquial use in 1932, but turned into “Marie Antoinette” in the Soviet editions and footnoted as “loe: Marii Antuanet” (Twain 1970: 129) (‘pronounce: Marii Antuanet’). Such pronunciation instructions were common in books for young readers during the Soviet period. This is probably due to the strong editing practices of the era (Lange 2015: 182) – all the Soviet editions as well as the 1989 edition include a list of proper names with the corresponding pronunciation suggestions.

There are also instances where traces of a possible ideological interference can be detected. Sillaots had footnoted the surname of the last French king, *Capet*, as “Viimse Prantsuse kuninga perekonnanimi (nagu viimse Vene keisri perekonnanimeks oli Romanov)” (Twain 1932: 153) (‘the surname of the last French king (just like Romanov of the last Russian emperor)’). The name of the last Russian emperor murdered by the communists was clearly unacceptable in the Soviet editions, therefore, the footnote was reduced to “prantsuse vana dünastia nimi” (Twain 1970: 141) (‘the name of an old French dynasty’). This change reflects the ideological censorship typical of Soviet editorial practices, ensuring that politically sensitive references were systematically removed from translated texts.

Some traces of ideology can also be noticed in the 13 extra footnotes added to the Soviet reprints. The “sah” (Twain 2001: 100) of African American slang, used by Jim to address Huck, was “noorhärä” (Twain 1932: 57) (‘young mister’/‘master’/‘sir’) in 1932, but changed to “massa” in the Soviet editions, supplemented by a footnote “Massa – isand. Nii kõnetasid orjad oma peremehi” (Twain 1970: 48) (‘Massa – master. The way slaves addressed their masters.’). This aligned with the Soviet ideology, which sought to emphasise the antagonism between the exploiters and the exploited in the capitalist world. Apparently, for the same reason, in the Soviet versions “abolitsionist” (‘abolitionist’) was highlighted with a footnote “orjade vabastamise pooldaja” (ibid. 49) (‘a proponent of freeing slaves’). In contrast, the 1932 edition translated it as “orjavarjaja” (Twain 1932: 58) (‘slave-concealer’) and did not include a footnote.

The other footnotes added to Soviet editions mostly explain the historical and literary figures that Sillaots had not found necessary to explain in 1932. Some such examples include ‘William the Conqueror’, ‘The Iron Mask’, etc., including also the above-mentioned ‘Old Northumberland’, ‘Jane Grey’ and ‘Guilford Dudley’. Evidently, Soviet editors found that youth literature needed to be more informative and tried to fill the gaps – time had moved on, information had become more available despite the Iron Curtain and editors could expand their agency by inserting what they had found missing but necessary. This could, on

the one hand, be seen as diminishing the translator's agency, but on the other, as indicating a broader shift of publishing norms that granted editors greater responsibility. This change in publishing and editing could have been triggered by the fact that many translations made in the interwar "bourgeois" period needed to be adapted to the new social order – the Soviet ideology – with editors acting as the agents of this transformation.

The 40 footnotes of the 1989 edition outnumber the ones of the previous editions. In addition to the 16 footnotes by Sillaots' (some slightly modified) of the 1932 first edition and the 12 footnotes from Soviet editions, there were 12 new footnotes (see Appendix 4). These added comments deal mostly (8 instances) with biblical and religious topics and/or characters – something that clearly had not been necessary to explain in 1932. Religious education was a part of the school curriculum at the time of the first publication and this knowledge was an inherent part of the culture. Soviet regime had if not erased this from public memory then at least blurred it to the extent that the editor T. Heidmets of the 1989 book saw it necessary to explain them to younger readers. Also, in 1989 it was again possible to speak about religious issues. In fact, there was a significant religious awakening in the late 80s and early 90s in Estonia, when many people were baptised and married in churches, often as a sign of protest against Soviet rule. This wave reflects on the footnotes. The editor's decision to explain the religious phenomena to the readers was in line with the prevailing sentiment in society. The footnotes include the information about the following biblical personae, for example: 'Goliath' – "Koljat" (Twain 1989: 419), 'Noah' – "Noa" (ibid. 377), 'Adam' – "Aadam" (ibid. 246), 'Cain' – "Kain" (ibid. 372), etc. The four remaining new footnotes are references to John Bunyan's *Palveränduri teekond* (ibid. 319) (*Pilgrim's Progress*), the region of "Navarra" (ibid. 454) in Spain, the castle of "Tuileries" (ibid. 482) and "*delirium tremens*" (ibid. 248).

The translator's paratextual agency, especially in cases where there are different editions of a translation from various (socio-political) periods, is telling in terms of not just the translator's expectations regarding the readership's knowledge about certain cultural phenomena, but also about the changes in translation and book-publishing practices alongside their accompanying ideological features. Even if a translation is reprinted with minor changes in the text, the paratexts can be twisted to steer the reader towards a preferred interpretation of the text.

The translator's paratextual agency is manifested at its most in the first, the 1932 edition. This is the only edition among those examined here that includes the translator's foreword, where she guides the readers in their approach to the text, offering them information and explaining her translation strategies. In the later reprints, this aspect of the translator's voice was omitted, either for ideological reasons – the translator was *persona non grata* at the time of at least the first two reprints of 1954 and 1956, although the latter includes her name – or for other editorial considerations.

As a specialist in children's literature, Sillaots was trusted to decide which phenomena to footnote, depending on her discretion regarding Estonian children's awareness and education, but also her own knowledge about the cultural realia

included in the book. An observable feature of footnotes is that the later reprints follow societal changes, thus, gradually diminishing the translator's paratextual visibility and impact, with each later reprint and new edition.

4.3 Negotiating Voices: Editorial Power and Translator's Textual Agency in *Huckleberry Finni seiklused*

Since examining the translator's extratextual and paratextual agency has revealed the involvement of multiple agents in the current translation event, it is reasonable to address the voices of other agents in addition to the translator. The study of these other voices will complement the picture of the translator's voice while allowing a glimpse into the "archeological structure" (Jansen and Wegener 2013: 4) of the translation and its genetic emergence, insofar as it is possible through manuscripts, proof sheets and the test copy of the book, all of which bear the traces of the other agents involved in the process. Within this shared responsibility, which multiple translatorship and diverse voices entail, these agents may pursue different aims and adopt different attitudes (ibid.) and analysing them can help to filter out the translator's voice and agency.

For this aim, I will first provide a general overview of the manuscript and the corrections that can be found there, followed by the examination of the proof sheets and the test copy of the book. I will then analyse in greater detail the second chapter of the translation across all stages: first, the manuscript, for the genetic emergence of the translation (translator's working practices as they manifest in this manuscript) and the editor(s) corrections; then the proof sheets, the test copy and the published copy of the 1932 book, with relevant reference to the source text when necessary. The chapter chosen for closer examination depended on the existence of all the segments of the genetic chain: manuscript – proof sheets – test copy and published text. The proof sheets were the decisive factor, as there were few complete chapters available in this form.

Thereafter, I will proceed to compare the 1932 edition with the later Soviet editions/reprints and see the fate of the text and the shifts this meant for the initial translator's agency over time – more than 20 years past its first publication, in the Soviet period, when the translator was thrown into the turbulence of the changed ideology and political turmoil.

Correspondence between the translator and Noor-Eesti Publishing House does not reveal any disagreements regarding the quality of translation – possibly because the translation was passed to Loodus before the final corrections were made. As the letters exchanged between Sillaots and Loodus have not survived or even existed (see 4.1), this cannot be stated with certainty. However, the fact that the translation appeared at the beginning of 1932 indicates that there were no extensive debates and disagreements. The letters that were exchanged between Noor Eesti Publishing House and Loodus when the translation changed hands and which reveal Loodus' preconceptions about the quality of Sillaots' translation have been addressed above (see 4.1).

As for the next Noor-Eesti-commissioned translation by Sillaots, *Kapten Granti lapsed* (*Captain Grant's Children*), at the beginning of 1932, there were several issues the translator and Noor-Eesti had to discuss, for example, the correct possessive case of the name Grant in Estonian (either *Grant – Granti*, or *Grant – Grandi*) (EKM EKLA f 92, m 277: 1. p 38), or the translation of ‘major’ which Sillaots had interpreted as doctor, but the publisher insisted to remain major (EKM EKLA f 92, m 276: 26, p 40).

Unfortunately, due to the gaps in archival sources and without specialist knowledge in graphology it is almost impossible to detect exactly who made the different types of corrections on the 1087 handwritten pages of the *Huckleberry Finn* manuscript (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0) – there seem to be at least three different types of corrections by different people. This detection is complicated further because the different colours and both pen and pencil markings are not used consistently by editors and proofreaders. There are the translator’s own amendments in the translation process in the same ink as the handwritten translation manuscript in general; there are probably two different types of corrections made in pencil, one of these may be Sillaots’ own, the other probably of Noor-Eesti editor’s. Purple colour comes in on page 61 of the manuscript to be complemented by red very soon, on page 69 – this seems to be Sillaots according to page 92 where she has written a longer phrase in red pencil, which shows that it is her handwriting.

The corrections made on the manuscript by the editor(s) are generally quite marginal, concerning mostly word order (this is what Sillaots herself has also adjusted the most), for example, ”ja heitsin kaldale puu taha väikesel harvikul” pro “ja heitsin väikesel harvikul kaldale puu taha” (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, p 155) (‘I lay down behind a tree on a little open woodland’).

Pencil seems to be standing for stylistic/lexical corrections such as “välja uurima” pro “teada saama” (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, p 167) (‘find out’); “noorhärä” pro “isand” (ibid. 173) (‘young master’ vs ‘master’), “valge džentelmen” pro “valge isand” (ibid. 361) (‘white gentleman’ vs ‘white master’); or “hea meelega” pro “meelsasti” (ibid. 210) (‘gladly’ vs ‘with pleasure’), which are very similar in meaning but carry perhaps slightly different stylistic value.

Purple-coloured pencil has corrected mostly orthographic and linguistic issues, for example, “allavett” pro “alla-vett” (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, p 124) (‘downstream’); “pöab” pro “pügab” (ibid. 522) (‘shears’); but also stylistic features, for example, “öelda” pro “ütelda” (ibid. 67) (‘say’); “ja mees oli olnud minuga nii paha” pro “ja ta olevat kohelnud mind nii halvasti” (ibid. 244) (‘the man had been so bad to me’ vs ‘the man had treated me so badly’); “ei läinud tal korda” pro “ei läinud tal õnneks” (ibid. 85) (‘he did not succeed’ vs ‘he did not have any luck’).

A commonplace amendment is also a specifying addition (made both in pencil and purple coloured pen), which demonstrates that at least one of the editors must have used the source text. Such examples (words added are in bold) include: “kas saame siis teiste **vaimude** vastu” (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, p 56) (‘will we be

able to stand against other ghosts'), or "Jah, kuus suutäit ehk" pro "Jah, paar korda" (ibid. 561) ('Yes, six mouthfuls perhaps.' pro 'Yes, a couple of times.').

The proof sheets are fragmentary; only the first three chapters exist along with a fragment of Chapter 4 (eight pages in total); whether the rest of them have been lost or simply did not contain any corrections is unknown. There are also three different types of edits on these sheets: pencil, black ink and purple pencil. Pencil seems to stand for typeset errors, for example, a different font of the character 'e' has been marked with it. Purple-coloured pencil and black ink have made both similar and different corrections, for example, both have corrected closed and open compounds, orthographic features, etc. At least the ink and purple colour ones seem to belong to the same person who is most likely to be H. Pürkop⁶⁷, editor of Loodus Publishing House. His name is included in the 1932 edition of the book and we have also the sample of his handwriting on one of the proof sheets: "Please send the next sheets with wider margins to allow space for corrections", accompanied by his signature (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, proof sheets p 1). He seems to have stepped in only at the stage of proof sheets, which adds to the likelihood that the translator's manuscript was edited by Noor-Eesti editor(s). It is possible to get a good cross-section of the amendments made on the proof-sheets in the following analysis of the second chapter; therefore they will not be covered here.

The test copy of the book has very few corrections, which consist primarily of typesetting errors, corrected in pencil. Purple pencil has been used here, too, likely by Pürkop. The pencil corrections on the proof sheets and the test copy must have belonged to Pürkop who was the proof-reader as well.

- Manuscript

The manuscript of Chapter 2 mostly includes the translator's own corrections as well as some made in pencil, but there are not many of the latter. The majority of Sillaots' own corrections are crisscrossed and therefore impossible to read. Some of the legible examples include crossing out excess personal pronouns, which in Estonian, as a pro-drop language, can be omitted if they can be pragmatically inferred, for example, "Läksime" pro "Me läksime" (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, p 18) ("We went" (Twain 2001: 171)). Both of the phrases have the same meaning 'we went', but carry a slightly different stylistic value: the use of personal pronouns in cases such as this is more characteristic to colloquial, informal speech whereas omitting them ('läksime') belongs to a more formal register and is often characteristic of the narrator's more neutral style in a literary text.

There are some initially untranslated words that the translator added during the translation process, for example, "olime **kolmekesi** nii ligistikku" (EKM

⁶⁷ Helmut Pürkop (1905–1974) is one of the forgotten figures in Estonian publishing – even his first name was difficult to ascertain. He was an editor at Loodus Publishing House and his name features in numerous books as well as book series from the interwar period. He fled to the West during the World War II and died in Lund, Sweden.

EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, p 19) (in Estonian the addition “kolmekesi” means ‘the three of us’ instead of ‘all’ in the source text: “we were **all** there so close together”, Twain 2001: 171) or “võib-olla olid seal **mõned** inimesed haiged” (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, p 27), (“where there was sick **folks** maybe” Twain 2001: 173). Estonian allows the use of the word ‘mõned’ as a collective noun meaning ‘some people’, hence the specifying addition is not grammatically strictly necessary.

Sometimes (not often), the translator has considered words with different stylistic value, which can be considered to be the manifestation of her implicit translation poetics (see Torop 1999c: 50–51): “**sihukest** asja” pro “**niisugust** asja” (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, p 20) (the first one is a more colloquial version of ‘that kind of’, which the translator opted for to convey the uncultivated speech of Huck, “that thing” in the original, Twain 2001: 172). This can be seen as a means to compensate for the lack of dialectal, slang and other specific socio- or idiolect features in the translation, which the translator refers to in her foreword to the 1932 edition (see 4.2.1).

Word order has been a constant issue in Sillaots’ translations, as well as in the work of other translators. Among the novel features of Aavik’s language renewal was the proposal that the verb should not appear directly after the subject as in German, but, for example, at the end of a sentence or a phrase. Sillaots was an avid proponent of most of Aavik’s innovative ideas and tried to introduce several of them into her translations, incorporating them into her translation poetics. In many cases, however, this proved to be a lost battle, as editors crossed out the majority of such initiatives. Tracing the manifestation of Aavik’s ideas in Sillaots’ paratexts as well as in her translations leads to the conclusion that, at least from this perspective, both her implicit and explicit translation poetics coincide. In response to editorial interference, Sillaots began self-correcting her strategies. For example, she experimented with word order by opting for “tahtis, et me **seoksime** Jimi nalja viluks puu külge” pro “tahtis, et me Jimi nalja viluks puu külge **seoksime**” (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, p 22) (“wanted to tie Jim to the tree for fun”, Twain 2001: 172) or “sest et kurat **oli mängus**” pro “sest et kurat **mängus oli**” (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, p 27) (“because the devil had had his hands on it”, Twain 2001: 173). A similar phenomenon has been described by Anne Lange regarding Tammsaare’s translation of Conrad’s *Lord Jim* (1931), but the difference here is that Tammsaare corrected his manuscript in the opposite way: by purposefully placing the verb at the end (Lange 2015: 113). It seems as if the well-known and established male writer was more confident in his translation decisions; at least he tried to bend the normative usage imposed by his editors (Ants Oras and Daniel Palgi) and publishing practices, but it was a lost cause for him as well. The editors had the final say (ibid.).

The changing language usage and linguistic norms are also reflected in the translator’s self-corrections, for example, “läbi kogu **Ühendriikide**” pro “läbi kogu **Ühisriikide**” (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, p 24) (“all over the State”, Twain 2001: 172). ‘Ühendriigid’ is the present-day translation of the States, ‘ühisriigid’ was a previous one, which Sillaots has corrected. It is also possible to see the changing orthographic norms in the example “Joe Harperi ja Ben Rodgersi” pro

“Joe Harper’i ja Ben Rodgers’i” (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, p 28) (new norms for the declination of foreign names).

The change in tense form “mille kurat oli talle andnud oma käega” pro “mille kurat talle andis oma käega” (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, p 26) (‘the devil had given him with his own hands’ vs ‘the devil gave him with his own hands’; ‘the devil give to him with his own hands’, Twain 2001: 173) is also an issue in some instances – probably due to the fact that there are more tenses in English than Estonian and this is a common translation problem between these languages.

All the self-corrections have made it to the published text and the fairly clean manuscript bears witness to the translator’s approach to work – first think, then write. This, of course, might have been a general practice of the time, when handwritten manuscripts were largely a part of the translation process. Too many corrections on top of each other may simply have made the text illegible.

- Editor(s)’ corrections: manuscript – proof sheets – test copy – published text

The manuscript features very few editor(s)’ (mostly orthographic) corrections, which, in some cases, were a matter of discussion. One such case at the time was the use of closed and open compounds. Sillaots had written “igalpool” as a closed compound, but the editor has corrected it into an open, e.g. “igal pool” (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, manuscript p 20) (“all over” Twain 2001: 172). “Ei julenud” was corrected to “ei julgenud” (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, manuscript p 19) (“dasn’t scratch”, Twain 2001: 172). It is not clear whether the latter correction in pencil was made by the editor or Sillaots herself, but there is a possibility that the translator had opted for a more colloquial version ‘julenud’, which was then corrected to the standardised written language ‘julgenud’. In today’s terms, both of the versions are correct, although the former (‘julenud’) is marked as colloquial.

Another interesting emendation concerns the declension of the phrase “mind polnud kodus” (“I warn’t in” Twain 2001: 172). The initial version was ‘kodus’ (‘at home’), which is standardised, grammatically correct usage. Either the editor or Sillaots herself struck out the ‘s’ in the word (‘kodu’), which used to be the incorrect/dialectal colloquial version of ‘at home’. This, perhaps also a feature of Sillaots’ translator’s (implicit) poetics, is probably another means of compensating for Huck’s idiolect – the uncultivated American English he uses, but Pürkop puts the ‘s’ back on the proof sheets (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, proof sheets p 4) and thus eliminates the compensation. The instance of “juure” (ibid. manuscript p 40) edited into “juurde” (ibid. proof sheets p 4) (‘to’ or ‘towards someone or something’) belongs to the same category – the editor has opted for standardised “proper” usage.

The manuscript also includes a case where the editor was the one that might have intended to make the text in Estonian sound more colloquial. Sillaots had written “siis ta ehmatas” and the editor has corrected it into a more informal “siis ta ehmus” (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, manuscript p 40) (“he was scared” Twain 2001: 175).

Foreign names, including toponyms, also appear in the editor’s manuscript corrections: the initial “Nev-Orleans” (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, manuscript

p 24) has first become “New-Orleans” and then, on the proof sheets “New Orleans” (ibid. proof sheets p 4) in its original form.

Most of the changes (except ‘kodu’) made by the manuscript editor of the chapter made it into the final product – the published book. However, most of the changes in the chapter were made on the proof sheets by Helmut Pürkop, who was the editor and, as the verso of the title page confirms, “linguistic proof-reader of the Loodus Publishing House” (“K./Ü. “Looduse” keeleline korrektor”. Twain 1932: verso of p 1). This must have stood for the joint role of the editor and proof-reader. What also needs to be emphasized here is that contrary to her wishes, Sillaots did not have a chance to review the proof sheets: there are no signs of her interference on them and the fact that Loodus had not contacted her until November 1931 seems to prove this course of action. Thus, the translator was denied her agency and voice in the stage of final editing and could not object to or approve of the way the final product emerged. It is also very likely that the proof sheets Loodus used were the ones commissioned by Noor-Eesti Publishing House, as the typeset only includes the corrections made on the manuscript and there has been no extra editing between the manuscript and the proof sheets, except for the corrections made to the manuscript addressed above. Therefore, Loodus’s initial claim that Sillaots’ translations needed excessive editing and probably a new typeset was not justified. As hypothesised above, this might have been just negotiation rhetoric used by Loodus to pressurise Noor-Eesti.

Pürkop definitely used the source text when editing the proof sheets. This is clear from the examples taken from the second chapter, where he has made additions based on the source text, for example, “made a noise” (Twain 2001: 172) – “tegin kära” (manuscript, EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, manuscript p 18) – “tegin **veidi** kära” (ibid. proof sheets p 4) (“made **some** noise”). “[L]äbi kogu **Ühendriikide**” (‘all over the United States’) (ibid. manuscript p 24) has in the editor’s amendment become “läbi kogu **osariigi**” (ibid. proof sheets p 4), which is closer to the original “all over the State” (Twain 2001: 172). Such specifying additions can also change the stylistic quality as in “kole vaikne ja **tore**”, which is the editor’s version of “kole vaikne ja **suur**” (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, proof sheets p 5) (“awful still and grand”, Twain 2001, 173) as rendered by the translator in the manuscript (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, p 28). While the translator had offered a word ‘suur’ (‘big’), the editor made it more ambivalent, by substituting ‘suur’ with ‘tore’, which can be translated back into English as ‘nice’, but at the time of translating more often meant ‘magnificent’ or ‘great’. The source text also shines through in the editor’s correction of “he must be sued” (Twain 2001: 174), which has become “siis pidi teda vastutusele võetama” (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, proof sheets p 5) instead of the translator’s “siis pidi teda hoiatatama” (ibid. manuscript p 30) (‘then he must be warned’).

One of the most frequent type of corrections made to the proof sheets in Chapter 2 belongs to the orthographic conventions and language usage. This seems to be the area where editors had the final say; even if different schools favoured different approaches, i.e. many of these conventions were a matter of debate, editors decided how it should ultimately be. Some such examples include:

“hiljem” (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, manuscript p 20) corrected into “hiljemini” (ibid. proof sheets p 4) (“since” Twain 2001: 172), both meaning ‘later’. The added syllable ‘-ni’ has been dropped in today’s usage and it is likely that the process had already started at the time of translating, but the editor did not find it correct. A similar example concerns the orthography of the word “cents” (ibid. 175), which the translator had written in today’s form, “senti” (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, manuscript p 23), but the editor had corrected “tsenti” (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, test copy p 18) – a version that was used in interwar Estonia. The phrase “selle järele” (ibid. manuscript p 19) was not corrected on the proof sheets but has been shortened only in the test copy as “selle järel” (ibid. test copy p 16) (“next”, Twain 2001: 172). In another instance, this correction has not been made and “järele” appears in the published text (Twain 1932: 17). Also, the translator’s “ütelnud” has been corrected into “öelnud” in multiple occasions (e.g. EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, manuscript p 26 and proof sheets p 5 (“told”, Twain 2001: 173)).

Tense forms are the next category of changes appearing mostly on the proof sheets. This was again a debatable issue, showing that the translator has often remained more faithful to the original and translated the tenses close to the source text – an approach that editor(s) have not always found justified. The phrase “every gang that was high-tomed had it” (Twain 2001: 174) had been translated “igal õigel salgal **oli** sihuke vanne” (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, manuscript p 32) and edited as “igal õigel salgal **on** sihuke vanne” (ibid. proof sheets p 5). ‘Oli’ means ‘had’, as the translator has suggested, but in direct speech (like in the latter example) it is more colloquial to use the present tense. A similar correction has been made by the editor in the phrase “it was a good idea” (Twain 2001: 174), where the translator’s “see oli hea mõte” (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, manuscript p 32) has become “see on hea mõte” (ibid. proof sheets p 5) (‘this is a good idea’).

Personal pronouns and their possible usage in Estonian have been addressed above in the section on the translator’s own corrections. The tendency to omit personal pronouns which in Estonian can be expressed in the verb form, was taken further by the editor on the proof sheets, for example, “Ta toetas selja vastu puud” (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, manuscript p 20) has become “Toetas selja vastu puud” (ibid. proof sheets p 4), (“He leaned his back up against a tree”, Twain 2001: 172). However, most of the omissions of the personal pronouns were made by the translator herself in the manuscript.

Another category worth highlighting is the editor’s corrections related to grammatical conventions, which in some cases overrule the translator’s probable aim to mark the language variants, socio- and idiolects of the characters, thereby compensating the dialectal and slang features impossible to convey in translation. One such instance has been mentioned above (‘kodu’ – ‘kodus’), but other examples can be brought out. “But Tom wanted to **resk** it” (Twain 2001: 172) had initially been translated “Aga Tom tahtis **riskeerida**” (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, manuscript p 23) and shortened by the editor to “Aga Tom tahtis **riskida**” (ibid. proof sheets p 4) on the proof sheets. The shortened form is also widespread nowadays, but the longer ‘riskeerima’ may have been a more

adequate alternative for the ungrammatical 'resk'. A similar phenomenon can be traced in the phrase "mamma juure" (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, manuscript p 40), ("to his ma" Twain 2001: 175), which has been changed into a standardised "juurde" (ibid. proof sheets p 6) by the editor. The dialectal 'juure' could again have been the translator's conscious choice to mark the young boy's speech.

The editor has also opted for some stylistic changes that, in his view, might have seemed to correspond to the source language better and/or sound more natural in the target language. Some of such instances include "We went to a clump of bushes" (Twain 2001: 173) – "Läksime põdsastihnikusse" (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, manuscript p 28) – "Läksime põdsastikku" (ibid. proof sheets p 5), where 'tihnik' ('thicket') has been substituted with a shorter 'põdsastik' which is an exact match for 'the clump of bushes'. The sentence "That ain't no sort of style" (Twain 2001: 174) has been translated close to the original: "Ses pole mingit stiili" (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, manuscript p 34) and corrected by the editor: "See pole kellegi õige asi" (ibid. proof sheets p 5). The editor has offered a colloquial and idiomatic phrase, which is not as close to the source phrase, but sounds organic in spoken Estonian. The phrase "but I do not take no stock in it" (Twain 2001: 175), which the translator has rendered "aga mina ei taha sellega tegemist teha" (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, manuscript p 39), has become "aga mina sellest küll suuremat midagi ei arva" (ibid. proof sheets p 6), which is closer to the source text, achieved by substituting one spoken Estonian phrase with a more exact alternative.

The test copy adds little to the overall quantity of changes in the translation – some cases have been covered above (e.g. 'järele' – 'järel' and 'senti' – 'tsenti'). There are a couple of punctuation issues, such as a colon replaced by full stop (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, test copy p 19/ibid. proof sheets p 5) a missing full stop (ibid. test copy, p 19/ibid. proof sheets p 5). Some typesetting errors also did not escape Pürkop's proofreader's pen (ibid. test copy p 20/proof sheets p 6).

The examination of the changes in different stages of the translation and publishing process has given an overview of how the translation has emerged and the different stakeholders that have been involved in it in 1931–1932. The lack of detailed account about the editing process does not allow us to identify all the names, but provide a general idea that on behalf of Noor-Eesti Publishing House there were probably two editors involved, whose corrections were mostly marginal, concerning orthographic issues, word order and other minor things that did not change the translator's text in any remarkable way. The Loodus' editor H. Pürkop's involvement was of somewhat greater extent and some of his amendments added to the translation's fluency and eloquence, thus contributing primarily to the expression plane of the target text. At the same time, and somewhat paradoxically, with this he has also in some cases levelled the translator's voice in her possible attempts to mark the characters' slang, socio- and idiolect and/or dialectal features. The editor has not done so extensively, though, and therefore the translator's text largely remained what it was in the manuscript version. In numerous instances, orthographic and language usage conventions were a subject to discussions and could have been debatable if the translator had had a chance

to see the proof sheets as she wished. As this was not the case, the editor(s) had the final say.

Ultimately, the editorial interventions reveal a dynamic interplay between prescriptive norms and the translator's stylistic intentions, with the final text reflecting both collaboration and constraint. As noted above, Loodus did not make the extensive changes they initially claimed Sillaots' translation would require. The editing and publishing process was fairly quick – the book was already advertised in December 1931 and appeared at the beginning of the following year. These findings underscore that, while editorial authority prevailed in certain areas, the translator's voice remained largely intact, offering valuable insight into translation practices and linguistic debates of the interwar period. Sillaots' translator's poetics also become evident in the textual analysis above, even if (or precisely because) they are shaped through negotiation and constraints.

4.4 Negotiating Norms: The 1932 Reception Revisited

Whether a translator has successfully rendered a work into the target culture (Torop 1999a: 14), can be answered by examining the reception of the translation. The only review to the 1932 first edition that I have been able to find is Karl August Hindrey's article in *Päevaleht* of 18 February 1932, which addresses three books for children and is titled "Three good books for youth"⁶⁸ (1932: 4). Hindrey mentions the long-discussed need for good youth literature and the equally long time that it has taken to become reality (ibid.). He describes the three books: Kyösti Vilkkuna's *Tapani Lõfvingi seiklused* (*Tapani Lõfvingin Seikkailut*), H. A. Vachell's *Koolivennad* (*Brothers*) and Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finni seiklused* as a breath of fresh air (ibid.).

According to Hindrey, good youth literature is actually not just youth literature, but readable for both the young and the old (1932: 4) – a feature common for all the books. The educational aims could be shared by both the young and the adult readers.

Coming to *Huckleberry Finn*, Hindrey expresses his personal opinion regarding Twain's humour, which is not exactly his kind of humour (Hindrey 1932: 4). Despite that, the book is "fantastic, full of marvellous adventures" and interesting characters, qualities likely to make it popular (ibid.). The quality of translations is addressed briefly by mentioning that they are mostly "quite well done", except for some problems with Vachell's *Koolivennad*, which the "translating lady" has not completed without problems (ibid.). The translators' names have not been mentioned, the "translating lady" in question turns out to be Helmi Kivisepp.

Hindrey's article shows that children's and youth literature was addressed in the interwar Estonian Republic and that the quality of translations was also valued. Book series aimed especially for young readers, such as 'Looduse Kuldraamat I', containing 13 books and published during 1931–1932, were advertised in the

⁶⁸ "Kolm head noorsooraamatut"

newspapers at the end of 1931 (e.g. newspaper *Nool* of 24 December 1931 – ‘Looduse Kuldraamat’ 1931: 9) with the help of some names of the translators, starting with Sillaots. I have not been able to find the circulation numbers of the 1932 book, but the fact that it is almost impossible to get it from the libraries or book antiquarians seems to indicate that it was not too large, but clearly well valued by the readers. An additional indicator of the reception of the work is the number of new editions and reprints of Sillaots’ translation. In Soviet times, book circulation numbers were remarkably higher than they have been later – for example, the 1970 circulation of the translation was 40,000 (1970: 295). This adds to the availability and outreach of the translation among the general public until nowadays.

4.5 The “Comet’s Tail” of 1954, 1956 and 1970: Editing, Fidelity and Fluency in Marta Sillaots’ Translation

In textual terms, the 1954 and 1956 editions are identical despite the different editor’s names (H. Tiidus and H. Jürgenson, respectively). The results are thus mostly similar to those of the paratextual analysis. Comparison with the 1970 edition reveals only very few minute changes, mostly related to changing linguistic conventions. Based on a close examination of Chapter 2, it is possible to conclude that most of the edits of the 1954 version have been made from the target text perspective, with the aim of making it more readable and fluent for the contemporary reader. It is obvious that language usage had changed and that the Soviet editors had their own ideas about the lexical choices and textual fluency. It should also be noted from the outset that, as far as the translated and edited text is concerned, there are almost no signs of ideology; to be precise, only one potentially ideologically motivated correction was made in the chapter.

The 1954 editor had certainly been comparing the translation with the source text. Although most of the corrections seem to have been made to improve the idiomaticity and general readability of the target text – sometimes also motivated by changes in linguistic conventions – there are several instances where the source text had clearly been consulted and specifying amendments or additions were made. I will present just a few such examples: for example, “ja ootan, kuni kuulen jälle” (Twain 1954: 217) (“and listen till I hear it again”, Twain 2001: 173) – “ja ootan, kas kuulen jälle” (Twain 1932: 16) (‘and wait if I hear it again’). Sillaots’ “sest et kurat oli mängus” (Twain 1932: 18) (‘because the devil had had something to do with it’) has been changed into “sest et kurat oli seda oma käega katsunud” (Twain 1954: 218) (“because the devil had had his hands on it” Twain 2001: 173), which is certainly more close to the source text. The degree of idiomaticity of both of the translations is debatable, though. “Vankrid teel” (Twain 1932: 20) is another example, showing the source text link as the editor has corrected it “vankrid maanteel” (Twain 1954: 220) (“carriages on the road”, Twain 2001: 174). ‘Tee’ in Estonian means mostly ‘way’ and ‘maantee’ is a more precise translation of ‘road’. In the following example, Sillaots had either

purposefully or deliberately missed the word ‘sadul’ (‘saddle’) in her translation “ta selg oli puha puru” (Twain 1932: 17) (‘his back was totally blistered’), which has been modified by the editor to correspond more to the source text: “ta selg oli sadulast juba puha puru” (Twain 1954: 218) (‘his back was all over saddle-boils’, Twain 2001: 172).

Nevertheless, most of the corrections made to the 1954 edition move the translation slightly further away from the source text (despite the editor having consulted it), but contributed to its idiomaticity and fluency in Estonian. This can be illustrated by numerous instances of which I will select some. Jim’s utterance “Hm! What do you know ‘bout witches?” (Twain 2001: 173), which in Sillaots’ version was “Mh! Mis sina tead nõidadest?” (Twain 1932: 18), has undergone a slight modification: “Mh! mis sina **ka** tead nõidadest?” (Twain 1954: 218). The seemingly insignificant modal adverb ‘ka’, which in the context of the sentence may be interpreted as ‘at all’, certainly adds to the naturalness of the colloquial Estonian speech. When Jim refers to a five-center with allegedly magic powers “just by saying something to it” (Twain 2001: 173), Sillaots’ word for ‘saying’, “lugema” (Twain 1932: 18) (read) is changed to “lausuma” (Twain 1954: 218) (‘conjure’), a word often used in the context magic tricks in Estonian. These examples illustrate how small details and lexical adjustments can make the text sound more organic in the target language while offering stylistic alternatives to the source text.

There are numerous instances, though, where such meagre tools did not suffice and the editor had to be inventive to make the text sound more organic in his opinion. This may also have led the translated text further from the source one, but once again contributed to its fluency in Estonian. For example, the translator’s initial “Tom kobas käikude vahel” (Twain 1932: 18), which was closer to the source “Tom poked about amongst the passages” (Twain 2001: 173) has been edited to “Tom nuuskis käikudes” (Twain 1954: 219). ‘Kobas’ is Estonian for ‘poke’, ‘fumble’ or ‘grope’; ‘nuuskima’ means ‘sniff (around)’ but has also a connotation of trying to find something. “Tom whispered to me” (Twain 2001: 172) had been rendered verbatim by Sillaots: “Tom sosistas mulle” (1932: 17), but the 1954 editor had corrected it: “sosistas Tom mulle kõrva” (Twain 1954: 217), adding the word ‘kõrv’ (‘ear’) to the phrase and making it more idiomatic. “The families of boys” (Twain 2001: 174), again translated literally by the translator: “poiste perekonnad” (Twain 1932: 19), appears in the 1954 edition as “poiste omaksed” (Twain 1954: 219), with ‘omaksed’ meaning ‘next of kin’.

On a few occasions, the editor’s obvious aim of making the text more fluent and readable was not achieved. This is the case with “a real beautiful oath” (Twain 2001: 174), rendered as “tõesti ilus vanne” by Sillaots, (Twain 1932: 19) and changed to “tõeline ja ilus vanne” by the editor in 1954 (Twain 1954: 219). Sillaots’ version, in addition to being more natural, is also closer to the original. It is likely that the editor was not aware of the American colloquial usage of adverbs without the adverb suffix ‘-ly’ in ‘real beautiful’, so he added the conjunction ‘ja’ (‘and’) that he thought had been missing in the source text.

Also, word order had started shifting towards what Aavik had suggested. Soviet editors did not consider it a taboo to place the verb at the end of a phrase or a sentence; rather, they considered it more natural in Estonian, for example, “roomama sinna” (1932: 17) – “sinna roomama” (Twain 1954: 217) (“crawl to”, Twain 2001: 172) or “siis avardus koobas” (1932: 18) – “siis koobas avardus” (1954: 219) (“then the cave opened up”, Twain 2001: 173).

The only instance where potential traces of ideology can be found is the interpretation of “No, sir” (2001: 175), which had previously been translated as “Ei, mu härra” (1932: 21) and was modified to “Ei, sir” (1954: 221). The word ‘härra’ was a common form of address to ‘mister’ at the time of the interwar Estonian Republic. It is possible that the editor found it too closely associated with the previous “bourgeois” political order and therefore preferred the more distant and exoticizing ‘sir’ at the still Stalinist period.

The only difference between the observed Chapter 2 of the 1954 (and 1956) edition and the 1970 edition lies in the translation of the word “tiptoeing” (Twain 2001: 171). The changes in language usage are as follows: “varbaotstel” (1932: 16), “kikivarbail” (1954: 216) and “kikivarvul” (1970: 10). They all mean the same with a slight modification – ‘varbaotstel’ was probably too old-fashioned for 1954 already, but as for the stylistic difference between the ‘kikivarbail’ and ‘kikivarvul’, it is a little hard to assess. To me, they both sound equally suitable, with the latter having perhaps a slightly more poetic colouring, at least from today’s perspective.

Thus, as said above, the editorial changes made to the text did not silence the translator’s voice. The translated text became slightly more focused at the level of expression in the target language, contributing to its fluency, but in general it retained the features of the 1932 publication. The changes traced between the 1932 and 1954 edition have mostly been minor in both scope and quantity. The text was not shortened, nor were any of its parts abbreviated or omitted as was the case with some other Soviet retranslations (e.g. *Robinson Crusoe*, see Soovik and Vaher 2012). Despite the fact that, at the time of the 1954 edition, the translator was still suffering from the Soviet repression in a Siberian prison camp, her translation appeared without being extensively edited. It was, with full certainty, still Sillaots’ 1932 translation.

The comparison of the 1932 and 1954 editions shows that the Soviet-era editing, though present, was minor and did not fundamentally alter Sillaots’ translation. The translator’s stylistic choices, linguistic preferences and overall voice largely survived, with adjustments mostly limited to fluency, word order and occasional lexical nuance. Despite the political climate and the translator’s own difficult circumstances, the 1954 text remained recognisably and substantially the 1932 version.

However, the Cultural History Archives reveal that the emergence of the 1954 edition was not as seamless as it may seem. Let us take a detour from the main road of textual agency to see what was going on behind the scenes before the translation reappeared in the early post-Stalinist period.

4.6 A New *Huck* for a New Era: Rudolf Sirge's Retranslation of *Huckleberry Finni seiklused* in 1953–1954

As it turns out, there was (an unpublished) retranslation *Huckleberry Finni seiklused* (*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*) in 1953 by a Soviet Estonian author and translator Rudolf Sirge (1904–1970). Estonian Cultural History Archives have been storing a part of Sirge's so-far unopened collection, which includes his unpublished manuscript of the work as well as the accompanying documents and correspondence, shedding light on the context of this retranslation. Although it remained in manuscript form, it sparked a discussion on plagiarism in the Soviet Estonian press. This case is not just another surprising turn that *Huckleberry Finni seiklused* has taken in Estonia, but a revealing example that adds an extra dimension to the translator's agency and offers a glimpse into the more hidden corners of Soviet publishing practices of the period.

Sirge's new translation was apparently supposed to erase the name of Marta Sillaots from this literary classic – an intention clearly motivated by her status as *persona non grata* in Soviet society, having served time in a Siberian prison camp (see 3.2.4). She was not the only one to undergo such a procedure – such method of “erasure” and “overscription” (Monticelli 2011: 191) seems to have been, if not a standard practice for dealing with the “bourgeoise” translators of the interwar period, at least something that was taken as a possible course of action during the period that Monticelli terms “totalitarian translation” – the height of the Stalinist regime, which represented “a serious challenge to domestic cultural identity” (ibid. 190).

In 1953, when Sillaots had been in prison for about two years already, either Eesti Riiklik Kirjastus (Estonian State Publishing House) or Rudolf Sirge had concluded it would be necessary to retranslate *Huckleberry Finni seiklused*. The popularity of the novel in the Soviet Union was due to its strong critique of slavery and social injustice, and the portrayal of rebellion against oppressive norms that aligned with Soviet ideological values while offering an adventurous and accessible view of American life. The exact circumstances and the procedure related to the initiation of this retranslation have not been recorded, but a translation contract with Sirge is concluded on 16 January of 1953 with a clause that the manuscript has to be handed over to Eesti Riiklik Kirjastus by 15 October of the same year, with the fee of 800 roubles for one (author's) quire⁶⁹ (EKM EKLA f 206, m 83: 3, p 5).

Sirge completed his work slightly behind the schedule – his letter of 25 December 1953 to the publishing house confirms that the manuscript had just been submitted (EKM EKLA f 206, m 83: 3, p 7). He also points out that *Tom Sawyer* would also “need to be made available for the reader anew” (ibid.). Whether he means a new translation or just a new publication is not entirely clear from the letter, but Sirge adds that the latest, 1947 publication of *Tom Sawyer* has been “well-thumbed and worn out in the libraries” (ibid.). Sirge also finds that

⁶⁹ In present terms, ‘printer's sheet’.

Huckleberry Finn definitely needs a fore- or afterword, which he offers to write (ibid.). The fact that Sillaots' had written a foreword to the first, 1932 edition bears obviously no relevance here, as the changed political conditions would not have allowed a foreword by a condemned translator to appear anyway.

Sirge mentions in the same letter that he has “delved into the specificities of American English when translating [*Huckleberry*] *Finn* and would therefore like to have more that kind of translation jobs if the publishing house has something to offer” (EKM EKLA f 206, m 83: 3, p 7) in the future. He goes on to comment upon his usage of ‘Mister’ and ‘gentleman’ against ‘härra’ (‘Mister’) and ‘proua’ (‘Missis’) in his translation. Sirge explains that in the current translation he has used them all (both the English and Estonian variants) but is willing to discuss the matter with the editor (ibid.).

Rudolf Sirge was to become one of the key figures in the Estonian contemporary literary scene. He had joined the Estonian Soviet Writers' Union (the organisation changed names several times) in 1945, although he had been a member of the Estonian Writers' Union already in 1940 (Olesk 2022: 13), before its dissolution by the Soviet authorities and the establishment of a new organisation. Sirge was among the core of the new union (ibid. 18) and started working as a technical secretary responsible for enrolling the “acceptable” writers from the previous organisation for the new Soviet organisation (ibid. 38). He belonged to the group shortlisting those writers that had been members of the previous “bourgeois” union but were considered worthy to be nominated as member-candidates (ibid. 43) of the new one. Marta Sillaots was not among those nominated.

Sirge himself was a committed Soviet writer (Olesk 2022: 66) even though his family had been deported to Siberia (ibid. 118). In the early 1950s, he was an active member of the union, although he did not hold any of the very top positions. His position was secure but not secure enough to escape the unexpected course of action soon to come.

Before examining this turn, it is necessary to briefly recall the socio-political context of the time. Stalin died in March 1953 bringing along changes which took time to adjust to. There was a certain transitional period during which the new Soviet writers and translators – among whom Sirge undoubtedly belonged – still followed the old Stalinist habits, allowing them to retranslate works from the “bourgeois” period, especially when the original translators had not adapted or embraced the new and “fertile” conditions of the Soviet order. These practices were about to change.

On 6 February 1954, the translation contract with Sirge was annulled for the reason of “the manuscript being a revised version of Marta Sillaots' translation published in 1932” (EKM EKLA f 206, m 83: 3, p 8). The director of the publishing house, Bernhard Haab, added that this “revision has evidently been done superficially and often only for the sole purpose of “getting a new translation”” (ibid.). The editor of the publishing house could “edit the old translation himself and a translation contract is not necessary for that” (ibid.). Thus, without Sillaots being involved at all in this process, her version, along

with Sirge's retranslation, was drawn into a debate caused by the changing Soviet publishing practices.

Sirge had been rightly accused – his translation manuscript proves that he had taken Sillaots' translation and corrected it with varying success. Understandably, he was not pleased with this unfavourable course of events and sought to defend himself against the charges of plagiarism. Correspondence between Eesti Riiklik Kirjastus and Sirge provides ample material to illustrate Stalinist publishing practices. On 25 December 1953, the publishing house had drawn up a document titled "Akt" (EKM EKLA f 206, m 83: 3, pp. 9–11), an official statement or report, listing the flaws Sirge was found guilty of, many of which, according to Sirge, had previously been standardised practice.

The list includes a statement that Sillaots' 1932 translation had been revised and edited by Sirge "to a greater (especially at the beginning) or smaller extent. There are pages where the translations overlap word for word" (EKM EKLA f 206, m 83: 3, p 9), and a number of pages and page ranges of such instances are included. "There are occasions when the mistakes of M. Sillaots' translation have remained also in R. Sirge's manuscript" (*ibid.*). This observation brings us back to the concept of "comet's tail": typos and mistakes from earlier editions or (mediating) texts are sometimes reproduced in new texts (Kujamäki 2001: 65). Thus, "comet's tail" effect, whereby errors, typos, or other features of a source or previous translation persist in subsequent texts can be seen also in this case. In other words, Sirge's work, though revised, still carried ample remnants of Sillaots' original translation, showing how traces of an earlier text can linger in a retranslation.

The overview continues by noting that "the old translation has been compared with the original by R. Sirge only on the already [cleaner] typed copy" illustrated by an example (EKM EKLA f 206, m 83: 3, *ibid.* 10). A number of poor corrections made by Sirge are also listed, leading to a conclusion that based on the cited examples, most of Sirge's manuscript can be considered plagiarism (*ibid.* 11). Out of the thirteen signatures in the "Akt", only a few were legible, including those of Hardi Tiidus (editor at the Estonian State Publishing House, responsible for the 1954 Sillaots' translation), T. Kalinina (head of the Children's and Youth Literature Department), Paul Kuusberg (a later head of the Writers' Union of the Estonian SSR) and Henno Rajandi (a well-known translator) (*ibid.*).

Sirge's objections to these accusations must be taken with a grain of salt, given his emotional involvement in the incident. However, the event provides an insight into the period of totalitarian translation in Soviet Estonia, which only archival sources can offer. Hidden principles and details often emerge in the situation of conflict, or semiotically 'on the border', and particularly during the periods of change.

The most interesting and controversial argument that Sirge gave certainly lies in his statement about what constitutes a good translation:

the better the two different translations are, the closer they are to each other and, consequently, closer to the original. /.../ the better the previous translation is, the harder it is for the next translator to achieve his very “own”, very “new” translation. In one way or another, the next translator has to repeat the previous translator’s vocabulary, sentence structure, yes – in some cases even the placement of punctuation marks. (EKM EKLA f 206, m 83: 3, p 25)

This idea is repeated from various angles: “Every language possesses only one and the best means for conveying a certain idea or message. And surely a translator has to search for this best, to return to it, even if it may have been used in a previous translation” (ibid.). The controversy arises from the fact that Sirge repeatedly praises the old translation as good, yet deems it necessary to produce a new one. Only once, in one of the draft letters to the publishing house, does he mention shortcomings in Sillaots’ translation; and even then, he does so obscurely, without really specifying its flaws:

In the current case, it is the commonly well-known work that we are talking about, the original of which is foreign and which every translator can translate according to their own will, the way they consider it best – provided that the ideas, imagery and stylistic values are conveyed properly. I dare confirm that my translation has these necessary qualities. This is not the case with M. Sillaots’ translation, though. Sillaots’ translation is distorting Twain and does not fully convey his ideological content. The work’s stylistic values have been greatly lost as Sillaots as a translator is often prone to the “so-called good” “*Töughterschule*” tone, which does not at all fit with *Finn* and is simply fake. The publishing house can by no means release M. Sillaots’ translation without a thorough revision. My translation, at the same time, is perfectly publishable when some of the shortcomings will be removed as proved by the opinion of the committee of ERKL. (ibid. 15)

Sirge has drawn attention to Sillaots’ “*Töughterschule*” background and indicates, in line with Soviet ideology, that a person’s background can be considered either right or wrong. There is also a clear gender-implication – a woman with such unsuitable background is not capable of translating literature for boys properly.

A cleaner draft of what seems to be the same letter adopts a somewhat more moderate tone. Besides objecting to the examples of bad translation indicated by the publishing house, Sirge says – adding to the previously mentioned importance of conveying the original’s ideas, imagery and the stylistic values – that the latter is “a Marxist principle and that making good use of the past translation heritage is carried out by him strictly according to these principles” (EKM EKLA f 206, m 83: 3, p 20). He continues,

I, as the author of the second translation of *Finn*, am little to blame for the fact that before me, there is only one, M. Sillaots’ translation. This M. Sillaots’ translation has merits that cannot be ignored by any of the following translations. At the same time, Sillaots’ translation has such inescapable flaws that no revision is enough for it to be reprinted. I am not going to delve into these merits and flaws thoroughly here, but my claim is supported by the fact that my translation is ready for the

publishing house's use, whereas the old translation is not and cannot be, even if revised, not only because of the reasons related to the translator's person. The reasons are profoundly fundamental, discernible. Therefore, allow me to ask how can a publishable translation be plagiarism of an unpublishable translation? And how can plagiarism be decided based on the mere overlap of certain sentence structures? Translation plagiarism is both theoretically and juridically problematic, it is mostly a matter of feeling. In the current case it is a purposefully searched claim for achieving an aim unknown to me. (EKM EKLA f 206, m 83: 20)

Here another controversy emerges: Sirge writes that the reasons why Sillaots' translation cannot be republished are discernible, but does not elaborate on them, at the same time stating that pronouncing a translation plagiarism is a matter of feeling. This clearly speaks about earlier publishing practices that were now, probably related to Stalin's recent death, about to change. Sirge was caught in between – he believed he was following practices that had been acceptable for some time, but not any longer. Nowhere in this correspondence does Sirge provide examples of the merits or flaws of Sillaots' translation. A mere unsuitable background of the translator was sufficient for retranslating.

As is well known, translators with “dubious” past were erased by the Soviet authorities and their legacy was subject to elimination one way or another during Stalinist times. There were also individuals willing to undertake the job of eliminating, as Sirge demonstrates by citing a number of primarily ideologically-driven translations. In several of his letters of protest, he justifies his approach to the new translation by drawing up a list of translations that were initially done by translators of the bourgeoisie period and had – over the period of 1940s and 1950s – been retranslated by ideologically sound and steady comrades of the Soviet literary landscape. Such examples include Balzac's *Eugenie Grandet* translated by Bernhard Linde in 1928 and retranslated by Nelly Toiger 1947; Gorki's *Emma* (*Мать*) by Nigol Andresen (1938) and later Anja Tulik (1949); Gontcharov's *Oblomov* by Anton Hansen Tammsaare (1934) and retranslated by Felix Kauba (1953); Lermontov's *Meie aja kangelane* (*Герой нашего времени*) by Karl August Hindrey (1941) and a new translation by Väino Linask (1948), etc. (EKM EKL f 206, m 83: 3, p 26). All the examples explain clearly why these retranslations appeared – because of the initial translators' changed position in Soviet Estonia. The only borderline case is that of Tammsaare, who was not openly condemned at the time (perhaps due to his death in the spring of 1940, prior to the Soviet occupation of Estonia), but all the other interwar translators in this list suffered from Soviet repressions or fled to the West. The translations of *Oblomov* and *Meie aja kangelane* had been highlighted by Sirge as especially good examples of new translations that “have been worked through according to the principles” (EKM EKLA f 206, m 83: 3, p 16). “According to the principles” here, as in Soviet rhetoric generally, means in accordance with Soviet ideology.

Sirje Olesk (2022: 109) indicates that the changes Stalin's death brought along took place gradually rather than all at once. In terms of publishing practices, this is also proved by Sirge's proposal to Eesti Riiklik Kirjastus:

I find it highly necessary to address both of the mentioned translations [*Oblomov* and *Meie aja kangelane*] at the work meeting of the Translators' Section [of the Estonian Soviet Writers' Union] for all translators to see how and to what extent the past heritage of translation should be utilised, reassessed and reprocessed. This would serve as a big step in developing our literary translation as far as publishing literary classics is concerned. (EKM EKLA f 206, m 83: 3, p 16)

These two examples of “good” retranslations date from 1953 and 1948 (respectively) and, according to Sirge, the translators should be explained “the principles and basics based on which the publishing house approves translations and pays increased fees, or pronounces them plagiarism, although methodologically the translations do not differ from each other” (ibid. 17). Sirge’s irony here indicates that he still thinks he was treated unjustly but aims at improving the situation by proposing a collective discussion – in the manner characteristic to Soviet society. He also admits that he has “chosen the easy path and opted for the raw, unprocessed use of the old translation”, thus acknowledging his faults to a certain extent and admitting that he has not acted in compliance with the Marxist principle “to take only the good from the old but that, too, in the reprocessed way” (ibid. 16). Typically, he does not elaborate on the criteria of good and bad.

The epilogue of this case unfolds on the pages of the national daily of Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic *Rahva Hää* (Voice of the People), on 27 May 1954, where an article titled “On Ethics of Creative Work”⁷⁰ (EKM EKLA f 206, m 83: 3, p 27) discusses Sirge’s plagiarism alongside some other similar cases. It says,

Cases where creative ethics is violated are especially numerous in translation. A number of translators have made their job very easy: they have used previous translations, replacing the real act of creative translating with mere revision of the previous translation. This is the impression that one gets when reading the translation of *Meie aja kangelane*, translated anew in 1948 by V. Linask. For some reason the Estonian State Publishing House had also commissioned a new translation of Gontsharov’s *Oblomov*, originally translated by A. H. Tammsaare in 1934. Relying on the work of our literary classic, the master of words, it is of course very convenient to rearrange sentences with greater or lesser enthusiasm but practising such an “easy method” on the account of our classic cannot be approved. (EKM EKLA f 206, m 83: 3, p 27)

Thus, Sirge’s proposal to discuss the other retranslations he had carefully listed had been heard, if not at the work meeting of the translators’ section, as he had suggested, then publicly, on the pages of the newspaper. That the translations he had brought out as good examples of “principled” retranslations, could be signs of either Sirge’s irony in highlighting them and his understanding of their actual worthlessness, or of the revaluation of such outright erasive and overscriptive translation practices. Another notable aspect is that whereas Tammsaare’s name is mentioned as an author of the previous translation of *Oblomov*, Karl August

⁷⁰ “Loomingulise töö eetikast”. The copy of the newspaper article is also added into the archival collection of Sirge’s manuscripts (EKM EKLA f 206, m 83: 3, p 27).

Hindrey's name (as a translator of *Meie aja kangelane*) remains a taboo – how else could the Soviet press treat a person who actively resisted the Soviet power already in 1940 and later died in a care home where he had lived under a false name to escape Soviet repression. Marta Sillaots was accorded similar treatment: her name was also not mentioned in the article.

Sirge's initiative is called something "that may have been welcomed as a good will of the well-known writer of our republic to enrich the bookshelves of our youth with a work that belongs to the all-time favourites of the young readers. Unfortunately, this was not the case as the translation is mostly plagiarism" (EKM EKLA f 206, m 83: 3, p 27). The anonymous author of the article in *Rahva Hääl* also draws attention to a certain disagreement between the writers' union and the publishing house as the union had not taken the necessary steps "to draw attention to Sirge's unacceptable misconduct" and had failed "to explain to the writer his wrongdoing in full principle" (ibid.). It was apparently also a time when the lines of the literary field were debated and authority negotiated. The article refers to a wider dispute in the matter; voices had been heard in favour of "appropriating full pages of previous translations if necessary" (ibid.), but this position is not supported in the article. The article draws attention to the wider issue of favouritism and backscratching attitudes that "harm the principled solving of acute problems" (ibid.).

It is evident that these acute problems connected to overthrowing the Stalinist totalitarian principles started to be debated. It took some time for the so-called lost translators of the interwar period to re-enter the title pages of books, yet slowly but gradually the quality of translations began to outweigh the translators' background. As mentioned above, the two main mechanisms for "deploying Stalinist cultural policy in postwar Estonia" are erasure, meaning "censorship and destruction of books" and "repression of living authors", and overscription, which "fills the blanks generated by erasure with translations from Russian" and reconfigures the past (Monticelli 2011: 191). Sirge's seems to be the case of retranslation not with the primary aim of producing new and better translations, but with the aim of erasing and overscribing previous translators and their translations. Similar instances have been described in the literary scenes of other Eastern European countries, for example, by Nike Pokorn (2012: 42–49).

Let it be noted that this incident was by no means a fatal blow to Sirge's reputation – in 1958 that he was elected to the board of the Writers' Union of the ESSR (yet another new name adopted by the organisation in 1958) (Olesk 2022: 125). Under these circumstances, the fact that it was Sillaots' translation and not Sirge's retranslation that was published in 1954 can be considered an unexpected course of events. That the new edition came out without any reference to the translator is equally telling, yet customary for the time, when nobody knew what the coming years would bring. Something was about to change, but what exactly and to which extent was not clear yet. In a paradoxical way, this new edition stripped of the translator's name, enabled a continued impact of Sillaots' translations and denied a committed communist writer and translator his place in the book. *Huckleberry Finni seiklused* was found a necessary book on the desks

of Soviet children in 1954 who knew nothing of the fate and whereabouts of its translator. However, this seems to be common for translators in general, regardless of time, space, or political system – their readers hardly ever know anything about them.

4.7 From Soviet Silence to Linguistic Nuance: The 1989 Edition

Returning to the “comet’s tail” of the current translation event, it needs to be said that just as the 1989 edition of *Huckleberry Finni seiklused* stood out paratextually, it is also different textually. One remarkable feature appears in this edition: Jim’s African American vernacular is explicitly marked. Apparently, the editor Tiit Heidmets had found it impossible to ignore such a distinctive feature of the character and rendered Jim’s speech in Estonian with dialectal features, using markers of the “lower” style and lexical choices associated with uneducated speech. Without any expertise in historical linguistics, it is hard to tell whether or how much the attitudes towards spoken language had changed in Estonia by 1989, but it may have been so, being another likely reason for the editor’s decision.

For example, in Chapter 2, Jim hears strange noises and addresses their potential maker by asking: “Ütle, kis sa oled? Kus sa oled? Pagan võtku, kui ma ei kuuld siin miskit kära!” (Twain 1989: 223) (“Say – who is you? Whar is you? Dog my cats ef I didn’ hear sumf’n”, Twain 2001: 172). The dialectal ‘kis’ substitutes its standardised analogue ‘kes’ (who), ‘kuuld’ is the shorter and dialectal version of ‘kuulnud’ (‘heard’), ‘miskit’ is a colloquial analogue of ‘midagi’ (‘something’). Since Chapter 2 includes only a few lines of Jim’s direct speech, I will bring some extra examples from other chapters of the book. Jim’s line “But bless you, honey, I doan’ want none” (2001: 366) is edited as “Oidku küll, kullake, mul põle neid vaja” (1989: 475), where ‘oidku’ is a low-style colloquial version of ‘hoidku’ (in the current case a part of a phrase the English equivalent would be ‘dear me’ and ‘põle’ the ungrammatical alternative to ‘pole’ (is not)). Dropping the initial ‘h’ from is a common way of marking lower and colloquial style in Estonian speech and the 1989 edition applies this feature systematically to Jim’s speech, for example, “Alasta ja oia küll, mister Tom” (1989: 475) (“De goodness gracious alive, Mars Tom!” 2001: 368), where ‘alasta ja oia’ means ‘halasta’ (‘have mercy’) and ‘hoia’ stands for ‘hold’/‘keep’ in the standardised language.

It needs to be mentioned that the African American slang is the only one of the socio- and idiolects that is marked in this edition; the rest of the distinctive sublanguages of the source text, for example, that of the boys of Tom Sawyer’s “gang”, or small towners, etc., have not been explicated.

As for the other corrections in this edition, they remain marginal, at least according to the analysed chapter. Rearranged word order has been the main type of correction, for example, “siis ütles ta” (Twain uu: 222) which in previous editions had been “siis ta ütles” (e.g. 1954: 216) (“Then he says”, 2001: 171), or “Niipea kui Tom tagasi tuli” (1989: 224), which had previously been “Niipea kui Tom tuli tagasi” (1954: 217) (“As soon as Tom was back” 2001: 172).

Some lexical changes also appear in the chapter. The word ‘vaikselt’ (‘still’) of the previous editions has been replaced with “vagusi” in 1989 (223). This replacement seems a little strange as ‘vaikselt’ is a more common word in our today’s usage (and probably in the 1989 one); ‘vagusi’ at the same time seems to have a certain historical quality or, perhaps, it contributes to the greater colloquiality of the target text. The rest of the edits do not suggest broader intention to historicise the language.

“No, sir” (Twain 2001: 175) which, as discussed above, has undergone several transformations since the manuscript version, has found yet another new alternative in this edition: “Ei, söör” (1989: 227), an Estonianised pronunciation-based address. One more noteworthy lexical change concerns the word ‘mamma’, which in the 1989 edition has become “emme” (1989: 228) (“ma”, 2001: 175). ‘Emme’ was, both in 1989 and is nowadays, a much more common diminutive used by children to address their mother than ‘mamma’ – a commonplace alternative to it in the interwar Estonia.

In general, besides the African-American slang, which has been marked more and less consistently throughout the text, the corrections of the 1989 edition seem to be somewhat random: for example, ‘mamma’ has been modified into ‘emme’, but from the 1989-perspective archaic-sounding “kokku langenuid” (Twain 1989: 283) (“broke down”, 2001: 365) has been retained alongside with some other similar examples.

Thus, the 1989 publication differs from the Soviet ones – it has been added a new qualitative feature. At least one character has been attributed his distinctive sociolect – Jim’s African American slang. Consistent or not, it certainly enriches the target text of the translation. Almost 60 years after the first publication of the translation, there are still facets that can be improved through “multiple translatorship” (Jansen and Wegener 2013: 1), involving different stakeholders at different genetic stages of the text.

The examination of textual agency in the translation event has included the role of editors (of the first publication as well as the later ones), who contributed primarily to the readability of the target text, but did not alter the text extensively and let the translator maintain her voice.

5. TRANSLATOR'S AGENCY IN TRANSLATION EVENT: THE PROTRACTED TRANSLATION OF *DAVID COPPERFIELD* IN THE INTERWAR ESTONIA AND ITS AFTERMATH IN 1991

5.1 Translation in the Making: *David Copperfield* and Translator's Extratextual Agency

The correspondence between Marta Sillaots and Eesti Kirjanduse Selts (EKS) – the publishing house that August Palm had ranked as publishing the best quality translated literature (see 3.1.2) – had started already before *David Copperfield* came about. The letters preserved in the Cultural History Archives date back to 9 January 1924, when Sillaots asks for translations, ranks her preferred languages as French, German and Russian (apparently in the order of preference, as can be seen below) and adds a list of her previous translations (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 1). The publisher answers on 11 January 1924, stating that unfortunately they do not have works available in those languages but could offer texts in English, Danish, Norwegian, Spanish and Greek instead (ibid. 3). They are going to compile new lists of works for translation soon and promise to “take this kind offer into account then” (ibid.). As the present study of the two translation events is mostly focusing on the translation from English, it should be noted that English was not among Sillaots' favourite source languages, at least not in 1924.

Although the following account is arranged chronologically, the underlying facts surface only gradually through scattered references in the correspondence. Reconstructing the sequence of events has required a certain amount of detective work – and it will also demand attentive reading from the audience, as the connections between letters and archival notes are often subtle and only become clear when viewed together.

The *David Copperfield* translation emerged several years later. On 18 February 1929, when EKS had heard that Sillaots had done the translation, they wrote, planning to publish the work and asking whether she would be willing to give her translation for this purpose and submit it for their review (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 11). In her reply on the following day (19 Feb 1929), Sillaots explains that the translation had initially been commissioned by Albert Org already in 1923, but due to the economic difficulties (see 3.2.3.1), Org temporarily halted the process. In 1926 he had asked Sillaots to continue the work, but when $\frac{3}{4}$ of the work had been completed it became apparent that publishing it was still an unfeasible task for Org. Sillaots confirms, that she is willing to transfer her manuscript to EKS and offers to revise it in order to ensure full compliance with the latest ÕS [*Õigekeelsuse Sõnaraamat* (Dictionary of Standard Estonian)] (ibid. 13–12)⁷¹. It is interesting that Sillaots had kept the manuscript for 6 years without offering it to other publishing houses she had been in contact with. Or perhaps she did, we just do not have any written records of it? In any case this may again

⁷¹ The page numbers of the archive source have mistakenly been reversed.

indicate the non-forceful nature of her extratextual translator's agency, at least in the 1920s, in the early stages of her translator's career.

On 18 March 1929, the publisher kindly asks to be sent the manuscript. "Mr Org, in whose possession, according to you, it is, should not object giving it temporarily to you for this purpose, or, should it suit him better, he could himself send it directly to us" (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 15). The request is met and on 22 March Sillaots reports having sent the first part of the manuscript "with Mr Org's permission" (ibid. 17) to the publishing house, asking to be notified upon its arrival.

The subject continues in the publisher's letter of 10 June 1929, in which they inform Sillaots that they have returned the first part of the manuscript on that day and consider it to be "generally acceptable, with some shortcomings we hereby list" (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 24). The list of shortcomings includes:

1) Orthographic mistakes in the foreword's English titles of Dickens' works and periodicals he worked for (e.g. "monthley pro monthly, posthume pro posthumous, Cristmas pro Christmas" (ibid.)); 2) The foreword could benefit from some small additions which could raise interest, "for example, the reason behind the popularity of Dickens' lectures" (ibid.); 3) Attention should be paid to the comments at the end of the 1st, 4th, 12th and 14th chapters; 4) Omissions: "some parts of sentences are left untranslated. This phenomenon should be avoided" (ibid.). The publisher also draws Sillaots' attention to a certain loss of Dickens' humour and sentimentality, the flatter dialogue in translation (e.g. on pages 206–216) and the Estonian language, which needs to be reviewed (ibid.). The publishing house asks to be notified about the possible time by which Sillaots could finalise the translation and what her wishes regarding the translation contract would be (ibid.). She replies three days later (13 June), explaining that due to a work in progress that has to be completed by 1 September, she cannot resume work on the manuscript before autumn and expects to finish it by Christmas (ibid. 28). It is rather typical for her to wait for the publishing house to make their proposal and, at least when it comes to translations from English at this stage of her professional career, to accept all the listed shortcomings with gratitude (ibid.).

The letter of 24 September 1929 from Sillaots indicates that the publishing house has sent her a list of the translations they intend to commission in the near future, which includes a case similar to the one of *David Copperfield*. Namely, the publishing house has included *Manon Lescaut* into the list of possible translations, which Sillaots states that she has already translated for Org earlier, but it remained unpublished (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 37). In general, she expresses her delight at the works included in the list and adds: "the works in your list pose such interesting tasks for the translator that I would gladly offer you my abilities and hand if you agree" (ibid.). She further writes: "I will start reviewing and correcting *David Copperfield* in the coming days" but explains also that the process will probably take longer than estimated in one of her previous letters (of 13 June) (ibid.). Sillaots also reminds the publishing house of the translation contract, which she apparently has not yet received.

The next piece of information regarding *David Copperfield* is a note with the publisher's comment: "Org and Sillaots wish the matter to be decisively settled", accompanied by the numbers apparently indicating an amount of money: 80,000–100,000 (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 32). The currency has not been specified, but is likely to have been Estonian marks, paid to Sillaots by Org earlier. In their letter of 5 December 1929, the publishing house sends the draft contract, asking Sillaots to sign and return it if acceptable. The terms are described as their usual (ibid. 33). Sillaots replies only on 2 January 1930, returning the signed agreement and explaining the delay with Org's reluctance to give her the rest of the manuscript. It was only after "several time-consuming negotiations" (ibid. 34) that he agreed, Sillaots reports. Whether Org still hoped to publish the work himself, or whether there were any other reasons for his unwillingness, can only be guessed.

On 22 January 1930, EKS sends Sillaots a copy of the agreement signed by them. The first third of the manuscript is dispatched to the publisher on 2 August 1930 – translating must have taken significantly longer than initially planned (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 45). The letter deserves some extra attention as the translator explains her approaches and principles adopted for this translation. First, she asks whether the publishing house could find time in the near future for reading the part of the manuscript and informing her of any "unwelcome phenomena" (ibid.). Such feedback would allow her to take the recommendations into consideration while working on the rest of the translation. "I have tried to follow ÕS [*Õigekeelsuse Sõnaraamat* (Dictionary of Standard Estonian)] both in terms of vocabulary as well as orthography", she explains (ibid.).

Sillaots' support for Aavik's language renewal and his neologisms have been touched upon earlier and the issue emerges again with this translation. Sillaots finds it necessary to justify her use of three of Aavik's neologisms, which were not included in ÕS: 'evima' ('to have', 'to possess'); 'malbe' (which she comments having used for English 'modest' – "a word I have no means to interpret"); and 'sulnis' ('sweet', 'serene') (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 45). Although all the words are part of contemporary Estonian, editors in the interwar Estonia were often not very welcoming regarding Aavik's innovations, their implementation needed persuasion and, like many others, Sillaots was not too successful in this endeavour. However, without a corpus analysis of the translated text, it is impossible to tell how many of Aavik's innovations reached it, but at least one of the three, 'sulnis' (e.g. Dickens 1937: 95) can be identified in the 1937 published version. Manuscripts thus prove valuable in providing evidence of the range of translator's suggestions, in this case, the lexical innovations Sillaots wanted to promote. Such innovations and the translator's suggestions remain hidden if they are not accepted by the publisher and are only revealed through manuscript study.

EKS confirms the arrival of the manuscript on 4 August 1930 (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 46) and shortly thereafter, on 18 August, Sillaots dispatches the second part of the translation, at the same time asking for translations from French once *David Copperfield* will be completed (ibid. 47). The letter also includes a complaint about the Publishing House Loodus, which, according to Sillaots, she

“would like to terminate all relations with” (ibid.). The reasons she brought were “the conditions one has to work in make it impossible to answer for the quality of the work”; very short deadlines (at best two months per average novel); the poor quality of works not worth translating, for example, O. Mirbeau *Toaneitsi päevik* (*Le Journal d'une Femme de Chambre*) (ibid.). Whether it was a tactical move to vent her frustration about the competing publishing house and thereby please EKS, or a simple expression of resentment, remains unclear. Be it as it may, EKS confirms having received the part of the manuscript on the next day, 19 August 1930 and promises to return to the other issues mentioned in the letter later (ibid. 48).

Sillaots dispatched the final part of the translation to the publishing house on 28 September 1930, adding a note requesting that the proof sheets be sent to her once the translation is printed (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 57). On 3 November, the publisher sends the translator the proof sheets and expresses a hope that *David Copperfield* will be printed in January of the following year (ibid. 59).

An interesting and somewhat unexpected turn interrupts the course of events in January 1931, just as *David Copperfield* was supposed to go to the printer. On 21 January, EKS writes to the translator informing of the delay in printing due to the need to review the syntax of the translation:

When you were given the translation of Dickens' *David Copperfield*, one condition was that Estonian text has to be adjusted and updated. The translation does not meet this requirement, as the verb is regularly placed at the end of the sentence. Before printing, the translation needs to be carefully checked and this will take considerable time. EKS' translations are also compared with the original; therefore, the manuscript may be printed after double revision and not before the summer. The results of the revision are currently unknown. (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 68)

It has been mentioned above that Sillaots had asked for advice already in August 1930 and been sent proof sheets at the beginning of November 1930; it is therefore striking that these quality issues had not emerged earlier. Sillaots responds the following day, asking for the manuscript to be returned so that she can correct it again. Proof sheets are not mentioned in this exchange, leaving it unclear whether they were discarded altogether and the book will be typeset anew. Sillaots explains:

When I corrected and reworked the first version of the translation last year, I was too strongly under the influence of this old translation; I am certain that I would find plenty to correct in the linguistic aspects of the already corrected translation, all the more as I have recently started to take great interest in word order, which I have not paid sufficient attention to in my previous translations. Considering the great time and effort spent on the translation and the high value of the literary work itself, I would like to do everything I can to make sure that the translation does not become inadequate and therefore I hope that you will not refuse my request [to send the manuscript]. (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p. 69)

She does not complain about the work has already invested in the translation; on the contrary, she expresses willingness to go an extra mile to secure the timely publication and the quality of the translation.

At the end of February 1930, after having examined the manuscript, the publishing house sends their opinion: “100 pages have been reviewed from the linguistic point of view and 48 compared with the text of the original. It is thus possible to see the extent to which it is necessary to change the word order and notice deviance from the source text” (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 72).

So, the revision process starts anew and on 18 March 1931 Sillaots reports having sent the first part of the manuscript back to the publisher asking whether it is worth for her to continue the work (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 77). This indicates her understandable wish not to toil in vain should EKS still find it insufficient. It is perhaps necessary to remember that in this period Sillaots simultaneously writes her regular literary and translation reviews for *Eesti Kirjandus* – she asks EKS for her review fees on regular basis – and besides that, also translates *Termitide elu (La Vie des Termites)* by Maurice Maeterlinck, a work EKS had commissioned from her in the meantime. Thus, her hands are more than full. In the same letter, Sillaots also expresses her wish to the publishing house: not to replace the words that are included into ÕS, such as ‘orb’ (‘orphan’) and ‘naituma’ (‘marry’) (ibid.), which she has used in her translation of *David Copperfield*.

Her question regarding the necessity of reviewing the rest of the translation of *David Copperfield* must have been overlooked by the publishing house, as Sillaots repeats it on 23 April 1931. EKS replies the following day and informs the translator that the translation will not be published “this season and is therefore not the most pressing matter” (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 82). Daniel Palgi, who has signed the letter on behalf of the publishing house, adds that he will inform the translator as soon as possible about the course of events.

On 27 April 1931, Sillaots once again asks to be sent the rest of the manuscript “for further polishing” (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 83), explaining that she currently has much free time and would therefore not keep it for long (ibid.). The request is met and the rest of the manuscript sent out to her the following day (ibid. 85). A note of 12 May 1931 reveals the purely economic reason behind the postponement of the publication “at least until 1932”, with the hope that purchasing power will increase (ibid.). Publishing houses as private companies naturally have to be able to profit and make their ends meet. At the same time, the effort the translator had already invested, allocating time in her busy schedule, can easily be discarded or postponed without any financial compensation for the work completed.

As noted above (see 3.2.3.2), Sillaots’ contact person at EKS for literary reviews was Daniel Palgi and she addressed Palgi directly, as in case of the monthly journal *Eesti Kirjandus*, where the reviews were published, communication needed to be faster. Translations, on the other hand, were much more time-consuming and required a more collective approach by the publishing house: the board decided what to publish, editors and proofreaders stepped in when necessary and therefore

Sillaots' translation-related letters are addressed to EKS as an institution rather than to Palgi personally. There is only one exception, when Sillaots turns to Palgi directly regarding the translation of *David Copperfield*. On 1 October 1935, she asks Palgi besides other things about the fate of *David Copperfield* and, provided it would be published soon, would like to order some EKS books at the expense of her translation fees (EKM EKLA f 257, m 3: 6, p 5/5).

As mentioned above, according to Sillaots' letter of 21 September 1930, EKS had commissioned another translation (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 54), this time from French, just as she had wanted – Maurice Maeterlinck's *Termitide elu* (*La Vie des Termites*). The simultaneous translation of *Termitide elu* had a better fate as its publication was not postponed; it appeared in 1931. Before that, however, it was also sent for the publisher's inspection, as reported on 24 April 1931 (*ibid.* 82). The review had been completed by 9 June and the verdict is that it

has to be reviewed quite meticulously: namely, there are signs of Frenchness in the sentence structure, which should be removed and the use of uncommon words has made the Estonian language unnecessarily complicated. *Termitide elu* [*La Vie des Termites*] is meant for a wider audience and should therefore be clear without excess artificiality. By the way, using particular words in a certain relation is not justified by the mere existence of their entry in ÕS. The translation is currently in the process of correction, and its final results will become known in a month. (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 88)

Sillaots' intentions or, more precisely, her translation principles regarding *Termitide elu* were explicated in her letter to the publishing house on 12 March 1931: “besides the greatest accuracy, my ultimate goal was to maintain the peculiarity of the original's style insofar as the great difference between the languages allows” (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 73). Sillaots tries to exercise her translator's agency by saying that she has allowed herself certain liberties by deviating from standard Estonian usage in declension (e.g. ‘sellane’ pro ‘selline’) and sentence structure. Regarding the latter, Sillaots justifies herself by bringing out an example of an EKS publication of Johannes Aavik's translation of Maupassant's *Vee pääl* (*Sur l'eau*). The innovation Aavik had introduced and Sillaots had advocated for is the ‘-maks’ construction: a specific converb construction in Estonian, an alternative and shorter way of expressing a purpose or result besides the longer ‘et’-construction, which is similar to ‘in order to’ in English. Sillaots says that this helped to make Maeterlinck's long sentences stylistically nicer and comprehensible in Estonian (*ibid.*). “Should the publishing house find it necessary to change these constructions, the translation will become stylistically dragging and awkward,” (*ibid.*) she warns, but expresses hope that the verb ‘evima’ (‘have’, ‘possess’), which she has used with direct object, will not be edited out – a practice which had not taken root in Estonian, but which Aavik had spoken for (e.g. 1935: 9).

Aavik is also mentioned in the following part of the same letter from Sillaots, where she addresses the lexical side of *Termitide elu*. The translator explains that

she has tried to avoid foreign words and has used the Estonian alternatives included in ÕS instead (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 73). “As many of these are still unknown or less familiar to readers, I have added a list of unknown words at the end of the translation” (ibid.), she continues and admits, though, that despite this, she has still used some foreign words because she is not satisfied with certain other new ones, such as ‘häire’ (common in today’s Estonian, ‘alarm’), ‘mestama’ (not used in today’s Estonian, but a North Estonian dialectal word for ‘to risk’), ‘piirima’ (not used in today’s Estonian, ‘to define’), ‘taatlema’ (used in today’s Estonian for ‘verify’, ‘check’ especially for calibration of measuring equipment), ‘erk’ (used in today’s Estonian often in poetic context, ‘nerve’) (ibid. 73–74).

A separate paragraph of the letter is dedicated to words coined by Aavik, which have not been included in ÕS. She explains that she has used about six or seven such words, giving ‘olve’ for French ‘observation’ as an example. As EKS has published translations, which have included words previously absent from ÕS (e.g. the translation of *Niels Lyhne*), Sillaots hopes that the publishing house “will not make an issue of the very few [Aavik’s] words used in my translation” (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 74). She also says that she has opted for ‘termiidipesa’ (‘termite nest’) instead of ‘termiitide pesa’ (‘termites’ nest’) (ibid.). In Estonian, singular possessives are usually written as one word with the following noun (e.g. ‘termiidipesa’). Plural possessives are generally written separately from the following noun, although there are some exceptions, where writing as one word is practiced (e.g. ‘lasteaed’ (‘kindergarten’)).

Sillaots ends the letter by stating that this translation (*Termitide elu*) was a highly interesting task, which she has enjoyed, and adds that if the translation is acceptable to the publishing house (it has already been noticed that it was not entirely the case), she would be happy to perform such tasks in the future, as she finds translating from French most pleasurable (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 74). It is regrettable that the letters do not contain any such detailed descriptions of Sillaots’ translation principles regarding *David Copperfield*. This can partly be explained by the fact that most of the actual translating had been done several years earlier, or that Sillaots simply felt more confident about translating from French (after all it was her preferable language to work with) and could thus develop and elaborate the principles in a more explicit manner.

Before returning to *David Copperfield*, let us examine how the translation of *Termitide elu* ended. On 9 September 1931, EKS informs Sillaots that Johannes Semper has reviewed the translation, it is ready to be printed, and will soon be typeset (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 101). The publisher, represented by Daniel Palgi, adds:

your wishes regarding the language of the translation could not be fulfilled to the full extent, as we have the interests of a wider audience to consider. Nevertheless, I believe that the manuscript is now good and that you agree with the changes. I also think that it is not necessary to send you the manuscript, as it would be time-consuming. /.../ For greater intelligibility, we will include some illustrations copied from German editions and some lexical clarifications. (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 101)

Once again, the translator's wishes are overruled by the publisher, at least to some extent.

Sillaots responds promptly, on 10 September, and expresses her discontent with such a course of events.

Your last letter left me with the impression that you found the translation of *Termitide elu* quite disappointing. If you now believe the manuscript to be satisfactory, the corrections must be quite extensive. I would certainly like to see the manuscript before printing; it would not take too much time, as I could send it back to you immediately. (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 103)

This is not acceptable to the publishing house. In turn, they ask Sillaots "to reconcile with the current redaction since it quickens printing" (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 105). Their letter says: "the current work should by no means be taken as a masterpiece of literary art, where one should be alert to every written word. We would like to offer the book for wider readership and therefore leave out some of the less familiar words" (ibid.). Thus, the publisher wants the translation to be of good quality according to their standards, however, it should not be taken as a masterpiece, and the translator should therefore not insist on exercising her rights. Nevertheless, EKS must have sent the manuscript back to Sillaots, as she, with no further comments, reports to have sent it back to them with grateful regards on 24 September 1931 (ibid. 106). This indicates that she must have agreed to the changes made by the publishing house; otherwise, it is likely that she would have commented on something. Thus, the translator tries to exercise her agency and gets what she wants as one of the few examples of this in her career.

The tension between the publishing house and Sillaots is evident in a comment made by Sillaots in her letter of 10 September 1931, mentioned above. With regard to the foreword, where the publisher seems to have asked Sillaots to include a word of thanks to the editor, Johannes Semper, Sillaots writes:

I would not like to leave the acknowledgement of Johannes Aavik out of the foreword, as I feel I owe him great gratitude. It is another story with Joh. Semper, who edited the manuscript on behalf of the publishing house. Having seen some of his corrections, I would perhaps agree to mention his name in the foreword, although it is usually not customary to thank the editors of the publishing house, however commendable and tedious their work may be. (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 103)

Thus, Sillaots' greatest loyalty lies with Aavik, the linguistic innovator, rather than with her editor Semper and the publishing house. What ultimately appeared in the 1931 publication of *Termitide elu*, was a comment at the end of the foreword:

In general, the translation strives for simplicity in both lexical and syntactic terms. As far as vocabulary is concerned, the completely unknown neologisms (invented by MA Joh. Aavik) have only been used in exceptional cases. Explanations of the neologisms, foreign words and the less familiar terms included in ÖS can be found in the glossary at the back of the book. (Maeterlinck 1931: 9–10)

The translator, at least in this case, had her way – Semper was not included in her foreword.

Without intending to dwell on *Termitide elu* any further, it can be stated that as on several other occasions, Sillaots has to ask for her fees also for this translation, even when, according to the contract, her payments should have been made earlier (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 112).

While *Termitide elu* was published without delays, the *David Copperfield* saga keeps dragging on. On 22 October 1931, Sillaots lets the publishing house know that she has dispatched the second part of the *David Copperfield* translation manuscript (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 108), which is followed by the third part shortly, on 2 Nov (ibid. 112). It is only at the end of the next year (1932) that the issue comes up again. The economically difficult times must have affected Sillaots' family as she writes to EKS on 14 Nov 1932, asking whether they would have any translations to offer and adding that "hard times have hit me quite badly, especially as my husband has lost his steady job due to job cuts" (ibid. 130). The publisher replies on 1 December, noting that they appreciate her highly as a translator but have currently no literary translations to offer (ibid. 131). Sillaots reaches out to EKS again on 4 December, enquiring about the fate of *David Copperfield* and asking to be sent books at the expense of her translator's fees in the amount of 30–40 kroons. (ibid. 132). Although the publication of the work will not be feasible in the near future, the publishing house can still send books in the amount Sillaots had asked (ibid. 133). The publisher's alleged high regard for Sillaots did not bring her any real benefits; the pressure was hard also in the publishing industry.

David Copperfield comes up in the correspondence again on 2 October 1935, when EKS writes to Sillaots: "You can receive our society's publications on the expense of the fees of *David Copperfield*, but its publication cannot be foreseen at the moment" (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 154).

More than a year later, on 18 November 1936 a breakthrough finally comes as the publishing house takes up the issue of Sillaots' manuscript, which, as they write to her, has been waiting for "the better days to come" due to the unfavourable circumstances in publishing (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 161). Their board meeting has once again discussed the matter and there is a hope to publish *David Copperfield* "under certain circumstances" (ibid.) next year. It could appear in their series 'Maailmakirjandus' ('World Literature') in three volumes. They explain that its circulation is not large and EKS publishes it with "great surcharge based on fixed budget" (ibid.). The publishing house writes:

The fee per volume will be about 350 kroons. Thus, the total fee for *Copperfield* will be 1,050 kroons. However, considering that you have received payments in advance and therefore the whole amount will not be paid out at this point, EKS could increase the amount to 1,200 kroons. The condition, in that case, is that the costs of editing (and editing is necessary), 150 kroons, will be covered from the above-mentioned translation fees. (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 161)

This means that the total will still be 1,050 kroons. They end the letter by asking whether the proposed terms would be suitable for Sillaots, in which case the already signed contract must be altered, and the book would go to the printers immediately after Christmas (ibid.). EKS highlights the unprofitable nature of publishing the series and, at the same time, their own benevolence in setting more favourable terms by increasing the fee. The fact that some money has been paid in advance – according to the existing letters mostly in books and other publications of the publishing house – the deal is supposed to appear not too unfavourable for the translator. She admits in her letter of 19 November 1936: “As other prospects for publishing the translation of *David Copperfield* cannot be foreseen, I agree with the terms proposed by you. Please, send me a detailed breakdown of the amounts so far paid to me as fees for this translation” (ibid. 162). The next day EKS sends Sillaots the requested breakdown, where they state that she has by now been paid 693.80 (ibid.). On 24 November 1936, the changed *David Copperfield* contract is sent to her for signing (ibid. 164), but, as has often been the case with archival correspondence so far, the contract is not attached to the letter.

A little after her 50th birthday (12 May 1937) – marked by EKS with a postcard wishing “many work years as prolific as so far and the joy of achievement” (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 183) – *David Copperfield* surfaces again in the correspondence. On 16 June 1937, Sillaots reports having dispatched the last proof sheets of *David Copperfield* and asks when it will be published, how much will be deducted for editing and correcting, and when and how she will receive the rest of her due payment (ibid. 185). In their reply of 19 June, the publishing house informs Sillaots that the 1st and 2nd volume of the work have appeared and the 3rd one will follow in a month (ibid. 186). They also report that the cost of editing will be “75 kroons per volume, of which you have received 50 kroons” (ibid.). Of the remaining 1050 kroons Sillaots is entitled to, she has already received 699.20 kroons and the rest will, according to the contract, be paid out only in a year’s time (ibid.). As for ordering EKS’s literary production, she can do so (the cost being withheld from her fees) at any time, regardless of the payment deadline (ibid.). The rather tough conditions of the contract for the translator are thus mitigated by the publisher, though not without their own benefits in mind. Without further information about translation contracts of different publishing houses and translators, it is hard to generalise about the standard translation terms of the period. Nevertheless, in case of the current translation, at least a part of the fee was paid out only after the book had been published. EKS ends the letter by stating that they have sent 10 copies of the 1st and 2nd volume of *David Copperfield* by rail to Nõmme station (ibid.).

On 21 June 1937, Sillaots confirms having received the publisher’s letter and parcel containing the above-mentioned copies of the work, including one hardback copy (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 183). In her second letter of the same day, she tries to put her foot down and persuade the publishing house to ease the strict terms of their contract by saying:

Considering that the manuscript of *Copperfield* has lain in your hands for several years in vain and that fees paid to me have gone to A. Org, I would like you to shorten the deadline for payment at least partly and pay me in the near future at least one third of the due amount (350. 80 kroons). (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, 184)

What the arrangements between Org and Sillaots might have been is not recorded: we do not know how much he paid to Sillaots on the initial commission of the translation, nor whether the amount Sillaots paid to him during the transition process covered his expenses.

The 3rd volume of the book appeared on 13 August 1937, as the publisher writes to Sillaots on 4 September 1937: “The due date of the last part of your fees will thus be 13 August 1938. Today’s balance shows that at the expense of *Copperfield* you have received 819.20 kroons” (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 191). Thus, there is no sign of advance payment on behalf of the publisher. Also, the amount has decreased because Sillaots, as was typical, has asked for publications on the expense of her fees (ibid. 189). She is also informed that she would receive her 10 author’s copies of the 3rd volume by rail, to be dispatched on 13 September 1937 (ibid. 192).

David Copperfield is mentioned for the last time in this correspondence on 6 June 1938 (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 203), when Sillaots asks the publishing house to bring forward the date of her final payment, which is due in August 1938. She would like to receive the money at the beginning of July, as she plans to go on holiday and expresses hope that the request will be met with understanding. The outcome of this possible arrangement remains unknown.

The correspondence surrounding *David Copperfield* reveals not only the economic and contractual challenges faced by translators in interwar Estonia but also the strategies Sillaots employed to assert her professional agency. Despite restrictive terms and prolonged delays, she repeatedly negotiated for better conditions, demonstrating resilience within a system that offered limited autonomy to translators. Her growing involvement in Estonian Public Broadcasting in the late 1930s adds another dimension to her multipositionality, strengthening her cultural authority and expanding her influence beyond the literary sphere. This dual positioning – as a translator and a public intellectual – underscores how Sillaots navigated structural constraints while carving out spaces for recognition and professional leverage.

5.2 *David Copperfield* Reframed: The 1937 and 1991 Editions and Translator’s Paratextual Agency

The prolonged process of *David Copperfield*’s Estonian publication finally came to an end in 1937. The translator’s name appears on the title page, not on its verso as in the case with *Huckleberry Finn* in 1932. It has been noted that since the Noor-Eesti publications in the first decades of the 20th century, “the name of the author, the source language and the name of the translator are systematically

reported on the title pages of translation” (Monticelli 2016: 283). This was similarly characteristic to EKS translations in the 1930s, as *Termitide elu* (*La Vie des Termites*) also included Sillaots’ name on the title page in 1931. The imprint on the verso of the title page gives us information about the editor, who, in *David Copperfield*’s case, was Daniel Palgi (acting as both as “tegev ja vastutav toimetaja” – ‘managing editor and editor in charge’).

The correspondence gives us no clue as to whether the foreword signed by “Tõlkija” (1937: 10) (‘Translator’) was commissioned by the publishing house or offered by Sillaots, but it is likely that a book belonging to the ‘Maailmakirjandus’ series and serving as its inaugural work, was meant to have a foreword introducing the author, Charles Dickens, even if this was not the first time when he was translated into Estonian, as described earlier. However, a number of important Dickens’s novels were still missing in Estonian and *David Copperfield* was intended to fill one of these gaps. Sillaots’ foreword is 4.5 pages long and dedicates about 3.5 pages to Dickens’s biography. The translator also lists his most important works, including the popular *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club* (Tõlkija 1937: 7) (which Sillaots would translate in 1947, to be published in 1948). The list also includes *Oliver Twist*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, *The Old Curiosity Shop*, *Dombey and Son* and many others (ibid. 8–9). Sillaots’ literary critic’s voice becomes audible when she turns to *David Copperfield*, mentioning that Dickens loved this work the most, but that it “entails all his authorial virtues and vices” (ibid. 9). According to Sillaots,

Dickens did not have far-reaching ambitions regarding the perfection of form with this novel; his main aim was to interest and touch the reader. Every one of his works expresses warm compassion for those who suffer, a sympathetic interest in the life of ordinary people and bitter anger towards any kind of injustice. (Tõlkija 1937: 9)

At the same time Sillaots finds this compassion at times a little “too sentimental, the writer’s contemplations and discussions often too stretched”, but his imagination in creating characters is brilliant (ibid.) and in world literature there are no equals to the multitude of such characters (ibid. 10). She finds the figures of Uriah Heep or Rosa Dartle implausible, but describes, for example, Miss Trotwood as sharply original, Peggotty as motherly loyal, Traddles as kind-hearted, etc.

According to Sillaots, Dickens’ style in the book is “at times sprawling, too detail- and subtlety-oriented, sometimes also tediously prating – but it all pales next to his golden divine humour” (1937: 10). She finishes the foreword by stating: “Dickens’s humour – this is something unique: vibrant and smiling as an embodied joy of life: sparkling, stirring and warming like the sun” (ibid.).

Unlike *Huckleberry Finn*, in this foreword the translation process is not mentioned. While in *Huckleberry Finn* Sillaots explained the impossible task of translating the socio- and idiolects of the characters, in the case of *David Copperfield*, she found it not necessary, even though the source text contains

some linguistic varieties that are not marked in the translation, for example, the Peggoty family's local dialect.

The next version of the book appeared as late as 1991. The imprint on the verso of the title page includes both Lia Rajandi's (1929–2014) and Marta Sillaots' names as translators, with Lia Rajandi's name, quite justly, first. The afterword written by Lia Rajandi's husband Henno Rajandi (1928–1998), a well-known translator and linguist, placed at the end of the second volume of the 1991 two-volume edition, gives us some information about the extent of modifications the 1937 translation has undergone. Rajandi explains that the new version treated Sillaots' translation loosely, trying to maintain its lexical qualities, but moving closer to Dickens both content- and syntax-wise (1991: 382). The reasons for this approach lie mainly in the text being “outdated physically and also outmoded,” as it has been “published more than half a century ago” (ibid.). The way Sillaots' translation was handled in the new translation is the subject of the following subchapter, with a focus on the translator's textual agency (see 5.3).

Henno Rajandi's 1991 afterword is very different from the Sillaots' 1937 foreword. By then, it was no longer necessary to introduce Dickens to Estonian readers that thoroughly any more – his works had been included in the school curriculum already since the Soviet times. Dickens was an author who suited Soviet authorities, primarily for his association with “critical realism”, the literary movement into which some of his works were classified at the time. Rajandi engages critically with the existing reception of Dickens and provides new tips for understanding his works as well as their literary value. This was likely to explain why the new edition appeared and to highlight the more than 50-year gap between the initial translation and the new version. At the same time, it is also a reflection of Rajandi's personal interests both in the content and form of the writing.

Starting to describe reasons for Dickens' immense popularity, Rajandi positions himself as a bystander and offers a mildly critical perspective on these reasons, for example, “the illusion of personal acquaintance” (1991: 378), which drives people to visit the places their literary and imaginary characters have allegedly acted in. He even draws parallels to Dickens' characters and their venues from Estonia, mentioning Palamuse (the scene of Oskar Luts' *Kevade (Spring)* and Vargamäe (the scene of Anton Hansen Tammsaare's *Tõde ja õigus (Truth and Justice)*), where people engage with “devout self-deception” (ibid.).

Similarly to Sillaots, Rajandi (1991: 378) mentions the sometimes implausible and caricatured literary figures and unreal scenes (ibid. 378–379), but also Dickens' “forgiving” humour (1991: 379) – the feature Sillaots had highlighted as warm and compassionate. The “obvious errors, exaggerations and tastelessness” (ibid. 380) are likewise pointed out, as Sillaots did in 1937.

Rajandi does not give Dickens' biography as much line space as Sillaots did; rather, he mentions the real-life prototypes reflected in *David Copperfield* and broadly outlines the author's literary career. An important feature of this afterword is its critical approach to Dickens's reception in Estonia, which has so far focused on his early works (1991: 382) in most of the Estonian translations. Rajandi

suggests that “hopefully this unjust preference of early Dickens will be put to an end after the new edition of *David Copperfield*” (ibid.). The latter is said to be “still Dickens in its most perfect and purest form and deserves a new edition” (ibid.). This statement is followed by the lines about Sillaots’ translation and its treatment in the new edition, referred to above.

There is no draft version of Sillaots’ foreword; similarly to the translation manuscript, the only archival source for *David Copperfield* translations is the three edited volumes of the first edition, which Sillaots likely used for correcting in the 1940s. This dating is based on a single piece of information – a note on the half-title page reading “Evi Puskar 1948”. Evi Puskar must have been the owner of the volumes of the 1937 edition, which Marta Sillaots had edited either before or after giving the books to Puskar. Evi Puskar was one of the young people participating in the literary circle Sillaots led in 1940 at Nõmme Gymnasium (see 3.2.4 and Steinberg 2017). In these edited copies of the 1937 edition, Sillaots had not corrected or altered any of the footnotes and it cannot be said with certainty that she was their author. However, their partly inconsistent nature (similarly to *Huckleberry Finn*) as well as some other aspects mentioned below, point at the translator.

Turning to the 35 footnotes (see Appendix 5) accompanying the three volumes of the 1937 edition, they mostly address culture-specific items related to English culture. The comments also include some puns based on the names of the characters. The inconsistent nature of the footnotes means that, as in *Huckleberry Finn*, only a part of culture-specific items have been explained. Based on the correspondence as well as the published book, we know that it belonged to the EKS series of ‘Maailmakirjandus’, but its target readership must have been considered smaller than, for example, *Termitide elu*, which the publisher intended for a “wider readership” (EKM EKLA f 16, m 165: 6, p 105) and found possible to publish in 1931, whereas *David Copperfield* was left to wait for better times and was probably meant for more knowledgeable readers and/or more refined taste. The fact that *David Copperfield* underwent editing and proofreading at least twice also supports such intentions on the publisher’s part. Despite being *Bildungsroman*, there is no indication of the publisher aiming it exclusively at young readers. The ‘Maailmakirjandus’ series appears to have been intended for knowledgeable readers of any age group.

This, in its turn, means that it was not considered necessary to explain everything due to the presumed knowledge of the readers. However, at times, inconsistent footnoting, similar to *Huckleberry Finn*, may have been due to the lack of sources and translator’s/editor’s knowledge. For example, while Albion is footnoted: “St Pauli peakirik” (Dickens 1937: 374, vol 3) (“St. Paul’s Cathedral”, Dickens 2000: 696) is not. By contrast, “roly-poly-puddings” (Dickens 2000: 81), rendered as “*roly-poly-puding [italics in original]*” (Dickens 1937: 151, vol 1) is left without a comment. “Irish stew” (Dickens 2000: 516) is explained in a footnote as “Iiri toit lambalihast ja aedviljast” (Dickens 1937: 29, vol 3) (‘Irish food made of mutton and vegetables’).

There are other similar inconsistencies, for example, “knocker” (Dickens 2000: 600), which is footnoted: “Inglismaal tarvitatakse veel tänapäev uste küljes koputajat kella asemel” (Dickens 1937: 190, vol 3) (‘until today, instead doorbells, knockers are used on doors in England’), whereas “the new Pantomime” (Dickens 2000: 247), a special British form of comedy is left uncommented (Dickens 1937: 454, vol 1). It is just translated as “tummnäidend” (ibid.), which is not exactly what the British Pantomime is. Another example is “Whittington” (ibid. 164, vol 3), which is footnoted as “Poisike inglise muinasjutus, kes tänu oma kassile saab rikkaks ja õnnelikuks ja kellest lõpuks saab linnapea” (ibid.) (‘A boy in an English fairy-tale, who gets rich thanks to his cat and eventually becomes a mayor’). At the same time, the Dutch painter Ostade (ibid. 359) is neither commented in the footnote nor explained in the body of the translated text. The longest footnote is probably about the literary characters and books young David found comfort in on his hard days: “Roderick Random, Peregrine Pickle, Humphrey Clinker, Tom Jones, The Vicar of Wakefield, Don Quixote, Gil Blas and Robinson Crusoe” (Dickens 2000: 51), which the translator has supplemented with a lengthy footnote:

Peamise lugemisvara on andnud T. G. Smollet (*Roderick Random*, 1748, *The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle*, 1751, *The Expedition of Humphrey Clinker*, 1771; tema tõlkes on kättesaadav ka Le Sage’i romaan *Adventures of Gil Blas of Santillane*, ingl. k. 1749). Temale seltsivad siis Fielding, Goldsmith, Cervantes ja Defoe (Dickens 1937: 96, vol 1)

(‘The majority of the reading has been provided by T. G. Smollett (*Roderick Random*, 1748, *The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle*, 1751, *The Expedition of Humphrey Clinker*, 1771; Le Sage’s novel *Adventures of Gil Blas of Santillane*, available also in his [Smollet’s] English translation of 1749). He is accompanied by Fielding, Goldsmith, Cervantes and Defoe’).

The translator is not only clarifying who these authors are but also providing historical and biographic context: publication years and translation details. This goes beyond a simple gloss; it situates the works in their literary tradition and shows their availability at the time. Sillaots, as a literary critic and translator, had information about these works and this explains the sometimes inconsistent nature of the footnotes: the translator had information about certain phenomena but not about everything.

Sillaots’ footnotes are sometimes inaccurate, possibly indicating a lack of reference literature, for example, “Davy Jones” is accompanied by a footnote consisting of a single word “kurat” (‘devil’) (Dickens 1937: 47, vol 1), which is not exactly “the personification of the spirit of the sea, usually seen as a spirit malevolent to sailors” as indicated by the Britannica webpage. Similarly, “A hundred yards” (Dickens 2000: 274) has been added a comment: “Jard (yard) – inglise küünar (914.4 mm)” (Dickens 1937: 39, vol 2) (‘yard – an English equivalent of küünar (914.4 mm)’). This would probably have needed an extra sentence explaining that the Estonian ‘küünar’ was actually 0.533 metres or, in

case of ‘maamõõtjaküünar’ (‘land surveyor’s küünar’), 0.607 metres. An inaccuracy, or rather inadequacy in terms of British cultural context, occurs also with the well-known British puppet character “Punch”, which is supplemented with a brief footnote: “klaun, polišinell” (Dickens 1937: 233, vol 3) (‘clown, *pulecenella*’). Despite its correctness, it might have needed an extra explanation about its British peculiarity. Similarly, “sherry negus” has been footnoted as “punšiliik” (ibid. 392) (‘a type of punch’), whereas a type of mulled wine would have been more precise (University of Glasgow/MyGlasgow News 2016). These minor inaccuracies can be understood in their historical context and could, in fact, be considered sufficient explanations at a time when British culture was not overly familiar to Estonian readers. Another possible strategy would have been to take extra care to acquaint readers with the subtleties of the source culture.

At the same time, Sillaots deserves credit for going to great lengths in explaining and translating some linguistic puns and name-related jokes. This effort reflects the inevitability of such explanations, as linguistic jokes are mostly impossible to translate and may thus remain incomprehensible and confusing to the reader. In contrast, topographic and proper names do not necessarily have to be translated and can be ignored in translation.

Almost all such name-related linguistic puns are footnoted. The reason is mentioned above – otherwise the reader would have been kept in the dark about the jokes in the source text. For example, Steerforth, David’s school friend’s name, is misremembered by Mr Peggotty as “Rudderford” (Dickens 2000: 124), which is footnoted to make the reader understand the similarity in the meaning of the two names: “Steer – tüüri abil juhtima; rudder – tüür” (Dickens 1937: 232, vol 1) (‘Steer – to navigate with the help of rudder; rudder – steering wheel’). Another example is the character named Murdstone, whom David’s aunt refers to as “Murderer or a man with a name like this” (Dickens 2000: 172). This is translated as “Mõrtsukale – või umbes sellenimelisele inimesele” and commented in the footnote: “Murderer (mõrtsukas) ~ Murdstone” (Dickens 1937: 317, vol 1) (‘Murderer (murderer) ~ Murdstone’).

Some examples where the translator explicitly refers to translation problems she has encountered should also be mentioned. For example, “you HEEP of infamy” (Dickens 2000: 637) is translated “teie alatuse-hunnik” and footnoted as “Sõnademäng (you HEEP of infamy): Heap = “hunnik, kuhi, kogu” hääldatakse niisamuti nagu Heap, Uriah’ liignimi” (Dickens 1937: 261, vol 3) (‘word play (you HEEP of infamy): Heap = “a heap, pile, bundle” pronounced similarly to Heap, Uriah’s surname’). A great solution is found for a pun voiced by a vivid character, Miss Mowcher: ““Bob swore!” – as the Englishman said for “Good night,” when he first learnt French, and thought it so like English” (Dickens 2000: 287), translated as ““Punn suur,” ütles mede mees, kui ta hakkas prantsuse keelt õppima ja leidis, et see oli nii oma keele moodi” (Dickens 1937: 62, vol 2). The English pronunciation-based version of ‘bonjour’ (‘Bob swore’) has been rendered by a near homophone ‘punn suur’ in Estonian, which is a purely pronunciation-based translation using the words ‘punn’ (‘plug’, ‘stopper’) and ‘suur’ (‘big’). The translator has also added a footnote: “Sõnademäng, mida on võimatu tõlkida:

algupärandis lastakse inglase keelt õpib, prantsuskeelse “bonjour!” asemel öelda “Bob swore!” (‘Bob vandus!’)” (ibid.) (‘A word play impossible to translate; in the original an Englishman, who is learning French, is saying “Bob swore!” instead of the French “bonjour!”). Either accidentally or on purpose, Sillaots omits the source text reference to ‘Good night’ in her translation. Among all the footnotes, this is the only instance where the translator explicitly states the impossibility of the translation task and offers an explanation as well as a humorous translation, thereby trying to convey the essence of the joke in a manner equal in humour to the source text.

The 1991 new edition by Lia Rajandi contains no footnotes. It is probably because of the two interrelated reasons: publishing practices were beginning to change – footnotes were becoming less welcome as readers were assumed to be more knowledgeable and additional sources were available, enabling interested readers to find their own way around. In what follows, I will apply the abovementioned footnote categories from the 1937 edition also to the text of the 1991 edition and bring some examples of the translator’s decisions in the later edition.

For example, Albion (Sillaots had commented on in the 1937 edition) is not footnoted or anyhow explained in the body of the text in 1991 (Dickens 1991: 316) – obviously not necessary considering the contemporary readers’ knowledge. “Irish stew”, which Sillaots had footnoted, is translated into “iiri moorpraad” (Dickens 1991: 137, vol 2) (‘Irish roast’). “Whittington”, which Sillaots had referred to in a footnote as “a boy in English fairy-tale, who gets rich thanks to his cat and eventually becomes a mayor”, emerges in the 1991 edition in the source-text-like form: “mille poolest ta Whittingtoni mõõdud igati välja andis, küll ilma kassita või vähimagi lootuseta ial linnapeaks saada” (ibid. 212, vol 2) (‘by which he measured up to Whittington, however, without a cat and a slightest hope to become a mayor’). This is almost the version Sillaots had provided in the translated text: “täiuslik Whittington, kuid ilma kassita ja vähimagi lootuseta linnapeaks saada” (Dickens 1937: 164, vol 3) (‘a perfect Whittington, but without a cat and a slightest hope to become a mayor’). However, Sillaots found it necessary to comment on this character, whereas Lia Rajandi did not. Whittington very probably still is and was then not a well-known literary figure for Estonian readers.

The literary characters explained in Sillaots’ lengthiest comment: Roderick Random, Peregrine Pickle, etc. are not commented on in the 1991 edition (50–51, vol 1) either. They are just listed as in the source text, with no additional information for the target reader, who is expected to use the available reference literature if necessary. It is quite unlikely that the Estonian readers in 1991 were aware of all these characters, but they certainly were more knowledgeable than the readers in 1937 and had access to more sources.

As for Sillaots’ inaccuracies in the footnotes, the situation in the 1991 edition has not become any clearer for the most part. For example, Davy Jones, footnoted by Sillaots as ‘devil’, is simply translated as “‘Kes Davy?’” küsis džentelmen. “‘Jones?’” (Dickens 1991: 23, vol 1) (“‘Davy who?’ said the gentleman. ‘Jones?’”

(Dickens 2000: 24)). So, the reader is not informed about this British cultural phenomenon, which was hardly more familiar to the Estonian audience in 1991 than it had been in 1937. ‘Yard’ that had been compared with Estonian ‘küünar’ by Sillaots, has not been localised into ‘küünar’ by Rajandi, but retained its English form, albeit slightly Estonianised as “jard” in the text (Dickens 1991: 280, vol 1). This decision is perfectly understandable since the reader of the 1991 edition is likely to have known that such a unit of measurement exists, even if its exact value was not widely known. ‘Punch’, footnoted in 1937 as ‘clown, *pulecenella*’, is ignored in the new edition and simply given in the text as “paisub mu rind uhkusest” (ibid. 250) (‘chest bursting with pride’), whereas in the source text it was “as proud as Punch” (Dickens 2000: 623). Rajandi has chosen to omit this puppet character. The ‘sherry negus’, which Sillaots annotated in 1937, appears in the 1991 edition as “šerrickokteil” (Dickens 1991: 335, vol 2) (‘sherry cocktail’).

Moving on to the interesting aspect of word play and name-related jokes, it can be said that most of these have been just ignored and not explained in the 1991 edition. Such is the fate of “Rudderford” (Dickens 1991, 124, vol 1), the mistaken name of Steerforth, as well as the semantic connection between the name ‘Murdstone’ and the word ‘murderer’, which is not explained and simply translated “mingile Mõrtsukale” (Dickens 1991: 171, vol 1) (“a Murderer”, Dickens 2000: 172). “You HEEP of infamy” (ibid. 637) that Sillaots had supplemented with a comment, is just rendered “teie alatuse kehastus” (Dickens 1991: 265, vol 2) (‘you, the embodiment of infamy’) and the reference to Uriah Heep’s name and the word ‘heap’ is ignored. Miss Mowcher’s ‘Bob swore’ in the Sillaots version of ‘Punn suur’, apparently referring to French ‘bonjour’, has undergone a total transformation in the new edition. The translation of the source text’s ““Bob swore!” – as the Englishman said for “Good night,” when he first learnt French, and thought it so like English” (Dickens 2000: 287) has become ““Ooravoor” – ütles inglane head aega soovides, kui ta parasjagu oli hakanud prantsuse keelt õppima, ja leidis, et see on väga inglise keele moodi” (Dickens 1991: 292, vol 1). What we see here is that Rajandi has referred to the French ‘*au revoir*’, doing it probably to create a more understandable link for Estonian readers. Hard to tell whether this strategy succeeded, i.e. would the link with ‘*au revoir*’ be more recognisable for the readers than ‘*bonjour*’.

Whether it were the strained economic circumstances of the 1991 edition, at the time the Estonian Republic was regaining its independence, that manifested themselves in the absence of footnotes or were there any other reasons remains unknown. Could it have been the translator’s/editor’s own knowledge that determined such a solution, or was it purely the publishing house’s decision to omit all the footnotes of the previous edition and avoid speculating what the reader might have known or not known? The inconsistent and sometimes inaccurate nature of Sillaots’ footnotes is evident, as shown above; however, the 1991 edition is hardly any more informative for readers regarding British cultural specificity. A number of phenomena belonging to the latter category are completely ignored, leaving the reader without any guidance. Provided the 1937 footnotes were authored by Sillaots (and I find it very likely), it can be said that the 1937 edition

manifests the translator's paratextual agency in two aspects: her foreword and footnotes. The 1991 edition has neither of them (the afterword was not written by the (co-)translator and editor Lia Rajandi).

5.3 *David Copperfield* Revisited: Shifts in Translator's Textual Agency Between 1937 and 1991

Unfortunately, the material allowing for a thorough study of the translator's textual agency is not as extensive as it was in the case of *Huckleberry Finn*. There is no surviving translation manuscript of *David Copperfield*; the existing material consists of the 1937 print edition, a copy of the same publication revised by Sillaots – apparently in the 1940s. A new edition of *David Copperfield* was published in 1991, which includes Sillaots' name in the impressum, but was in fact almost entirely re-translated by Lia Rajandi.

The version of *David Copperfield* that Sillaots revised presumably in the 1940s never made it to the print publication. During the war or after that, there may have been an intention to publish a new edition of the book and Sillaots might have revised her translation because of that, but the process could have been halted due to the difficult (post-)war circumstances. Based on the above-referred inscription (Evi Puskar 1948) it can be assumed that it could have been the late 1940s, but it is impossible to determine whether the book came into Evi Puskar's possession before or after the corrections were made.

In order to observe the development and dynamics of Sillaots' decision-making authority and the translator's agency, it is still useful to see the handwritten amendments she made to her original translation, even though they were never published. It will be possible to see how a relatively short period of time has affected language usage and the translator's perception of it, alongside the change of political regime, which may have influenced the process.

I have chosen Chapter 7 of the 2nd volume of the 1937 Estonian edition (corresponding to Chapter 27 of the source text), titled "Tommy Traddles", for closer inspection due to the relatively larger number of the amendments, allowing for a broader view of the corrections made. The revised version will not include page numbers, as the changes are made to the 1937 published translation and therefore correspond to the same pagination. The source text will also be juxtaposed with the translation.

The overwhelmingly largest number of corrections made by Sillaots to the revised copy were concerned with improving the accuracy of the translation by aiming at greater closeness to the source text at the levels of vocabulary, phrasing as well as syntax, but also keeping in mind the fluent flow of the target text. Sometimes it means adding a conjunction and joining two separate sentences, for example, "Ta reisiks määratud aeg oli ammugi möödunud. Ta asus väikeses tänavas Camden Town'i loomaarstide-kooli lähedal" (Dickens 1937: 161) – "Tema reisiks määratud aeg oli ammugi möödunud **ja** ta elas väikeses tänavas Camden Town'i loomaarstide-kooli lähedal" ("The time he had mentioned was

more than out, and he lived in the little street near the Veterinary College at Camden Town” (Dickens 2000: 342). The two separate sentences in the initial version have been joined by the conjunction ‘ja’ (‘and’) in the revised text. Such a small change still affects both the precision of the translation in relation to the original as well as the cohesion and fluency of the target text. In other cases achieving precision, while remaining conducive to cohesion may entail omitting words in the initial translation, for example, “ennem kellelegi **teisele** majas” (Dickens 1937: 162), the initial version presupposes a comparison ‘someone else’ as opposed to the previously implied person, – the edition “ennem kellelegi majas”, removes that contrast and refers non-specifically to any person in the house, mirroring the original: “for the edification of somebody in the house” (2000: 343). Adding a word can serve the same purpose by rendering the source text phrase more accurately in the target language. For example, “isegi kiriku pilti portselanpotil” (Dickens 1937: 164) is revised to “isegi **mingi** kiriku pilti portselanpotil”, corresponding more closely to the English “to the prospect of **a** church upon his china inkstand” 2000: 344). In quite a number of cases just substituting a word with a more precise one is sufficient to improve accuracy, as in “mis kuulus ehk salapärase hääle juurde” (Dickens 1937: 163) revised to “mis kuulus **arvatavasti** salapärase hääle juurde” (“**probably** belonging to the mysterious voice” Dickens 2000: 344). Overall, such revisions by Sillaots primarily reflect a consistent effort to enhance fidelity to the source text through syntactic adjustments, lexical precision and minor additions or omissions.

The second-largest number of amendments seems to place greater focus on the target language poetics, be it wording- or syntax-related, but also includes a notable number of corrections, which are difficult to classify – on the one hand, they seem to be closer to the source text, but on the other, also contribute to the target text fluency. A clearly target-text oriented syntax may be adjusted like this: “Olen vaimustatud, et teid näen” (Dickens 1937: 164) – “Olen vaimustatud teid nähes” (“I am delighted to see you” Dickens 2000: 344). In the 1937 publication, the translated sentence is clearly constructed directly based on the source text, whereas in the revised version it is shorter and more fluent in Estonian, meaning ‘I am delighted by seeing you’.

An example of a target-focused vocabulary change is also: “Aga taevake, nalja oli seal ka hulk” (Dickens 1937: 165) – “Aga taevake, nalja oli seal ka palju” (“But dear me, there was a good deal of fun going on” (Dickens 2000: 345). ‘Hulk’ is closer to ‘amount’, which, at least in present-day Estonian, is not common in such a context, whereas ‘palju’ means ‘many’/ ‘much’/ ‘a lot’ with a greater target relevance here. It could be also that language had changed and ‘hulk’ had been a common connotation earlier in such a phrase.

Another vivid example, demonstrating the translator’s target-oriented choices regarding wording, but also classified as one of the difficult and ambivalent ones is “Vähehaaval läks mul niisiis korda tarvilik sada naela kokku kratsida” (Dickens 1937: 168) (‘Little by little I managed to scrape up the hundred pounds’) – “Kokkuhoidlikult elades läks mul vähehaaval korda tarvilikud sada naela kokku kratsida” (‘By not living high I managed to scrape up the hundred pounds little

by little') ("So, by little and little, and not living high, I managed to scrape up the hundred pounds at last", Dickens 2000: 346). We can see the syntactic change as well as an added 'kokkuhoidlikult elades' ('not living high' in the source text), which had been missing in the 1937 translation. The original version of the translation seems to be adhering to the source text syntactically; the revised one alters it slightly and includes the missing part, resulting in a syntactically modified (thus target-text oriented) but more exact translation.

There are also other instances that are ambivalent and difficult to position between the source- and target-text orientation. They seem to be contributing to both: remaining close to the source text while being fluent in the target language at the same time – almost ideal solutions, then. For example, the source sentence "Of course I was!" (Dickens 2000: 345) was rendered as "Muidugi kasvatas!" (Dickens 1937: 166) in the original translation but cropped to "Muidugi!" in the revised version. The latter corresponds to the source phrase, where 'I was' can be easily omitted without much change in the meaning, whereas "Muidugi kasvatas!" ('of course, he raised') and "Muidugi!" are both acceptable in the target language. Another ambiguous instance is "There never was a young man with less originality than I have" (Dickens 2000: 346). In the 1937 translation, it has been rendered as "Iialgi pole olnud vähem algupärast noormeest kui mina" (Dickens 1937: 167) and later revised to "Iialgi pole olnud vähem omapärast noormeest kui mina". The degree of exactness of both these translations ('algupärane' and 'omapärane') is debatable – they both mean 'original' in English with 'omapärane' having an extra meaning of 'peculiar'. Perhaps 'algupärane' for a person is less common than 'omapärane', which may explain why the translator found it necessary to make the amendment.

The third major group of corrections is mostly due to the changes in language ideology. In the current translation these involve declension, conjugation, outdated vocabulary and the use of closed or open compounds. The phrase 'at home' (Dickens 2000: 343), used to be 'kodu' (Dickens 1937: 163) in the inessive case during the early interwar period. In the revised version, Sillaots has corrected it into 'kodus', which is the present-day inessive form of the word. A similar example would be the declension of the word 'viimse' in the phrase "hävitas mu viimse kahtluse" (Dickens 1937: 170) ("resolved any doubt in my mind" Dickens 2000: 347). The translator opted for 'viimase' in the reviewed copy, which is more common today and probably had become so already in the 1940s. Changes in conjugation are also corrected, for example, "et asju paremini imetella" (Dickens 1937: 169) ("to survey it with a greater admiration" 2000: 347). The verb has been changed into 'imetleda', which is a more contemporary *da*-infinitive in Estonian. "I had seen him beaten" (Dickens 2000: 345) had been rendered initially "näinud teda peksetavat" (Dickens 1937: 166) and later corrected 'pekstavat' into its modern form. The phrase "Simple character" (Dickens 2000: 344) originally translated as "lihtmeel" (Dickens 1937: 165) (an outdated word in terms of today's Estonian) is corrected into 'lihtsameelsus' in its contemporary form. Regarding compounds, there is a tendency towards closed forms in the corrections, for example, a previous "õhtu poolikul" (Dickens 1937: 161) has

become 'õhtupoolikul' ("afternoon" Dickens 2000: 342), or "kahevahel-oleku ajajärgus" (Dickens 1937: 172) has been corrected into "kahevaheloleku ajajärgus" ("one of those momentous stages" 2000: 349). Such corrections can primarily be seen as modernising Estonian language usage by updating declension, conjugation, vocabulary and compound structures to reflect contemporary norms.

Another quite surprising type of corrections involves changing the Estonian short pronoun (e.g. ma, sa, ta – I, you, he/she) into a long one (mina, sina, tema – I, you, he/she); for example, "minu väikesest arvest" instead of "mu väikesest arvest" (Dickens 1937: 162) ("little bill of mine" 2000: 343). There are quite a number of such corrections, and it is surprising because using the long forms was more common in the interwar period; from today's diachronic perspective (see Torop 1999b: 57) one might presume the change to favour the more widespread short forms. However, this is not the case here and therefore, at times, it can sound quite unnatural and archaic for our today's reader, for example, "tema lõuast kinni hakates" instead of "ta lõuast kinni hakates" (Dickens 1937: 163) ("taking her by her chin" Dickens 2000: 343). One can only hypothesise whether Sillaots, being not especially keen on the new Soviet power, wanted to turn back time and return to a familiar haven, or/and, provided the revision was made at the time of German occupation, express her hopes for a better future.

There are also some minor comma issues and seemingly one-off corrections that cannot be classified. Overall, however, there seems to be an aspiration towards the greater source-closeness while maintaining the fluency of the target text. This skilful balancing between the two only leaves us to regret that the corrections did not result in a new edition of the book, as the text could have been improved by this new translator's contribution. Perhaps then the 1990s edition would not have needed such a major transformation.

Despite the 57 years separating the 1932 and 1989 editions of *Huckleberry Finni seiklused* (*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*), the latter was not extensively edited, as we have seen above. This was not the case with *David Copperfield*. In fact (as mentioned above), Lia Rajandi has retranslated the work almost entirely, retaining only very few fragments of sentences from Sillaots' first translation. Thus, the fact that Sillaots' name is included in the impressum is apparently the courtesy by Lia Rajandi, her homage to the first translator. Sirge's retranslation of *Huckleberry Finn*, described in the previous chapter (see 4.6), represents the opposite case: Sillaots' translation was used extensively, yet there was not the slightest intention to acknowledge it.

From the perspective of Marta Sillaots' textual agency, it can be said that there is not much left in the 1991 edition. It would be an underestimation to say that everything (syntax, vocabulary, wording) has merely been edited; in reality the text has simply been rewritten/retranslated, but, as apparent, having Sillaots' translation on the desk. Some examples and notable features of the retranslation (which, in my opinion, would be a more accurate term instead of new edition) can still be outlined, based on the same chapter, "Tommy Traddles" (in vol 1 of the two-volume 1991 edition), which was analysed in the previous subchapter.

Rajandi’s sentence structure hardly ever overlaps with that of Sillaots. For instance, consider one of the many such sentences:

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| <p>Otsitud maja erines kõigist teistest – kuigi kõik olid ehitatud ühetaolise kava järgi ja sarnanesid oskamatu poisikese abitute katsetistega – mingi luitunult-suursuguse ilmega, mis mulle veel enam meenutas härra ja proua Micawberit. (Dickens 1937: 162, vol 2)</p> <p>The house I sought was unlike any other houses – though they were all built on one monotonous pattern and looked like the helpless attempts of a blundering boy – in a faded gentility that reminded me still more of Mr and Mrs Micawber.</p> | <p>Maja, mida olin otsinud, ilmestas teatav kirjeldamatu luitunud suursugusus, mis seda teistest selle tänava residentsidest mingil moel esile tõstis – olgugi, et need kõik nagu ühe mustri järgi olid ehitatud ja tekitasid tunde, nagu oleks nende kallal kätt proovinud käpardist õpipoiss, kes polnud veel esimestest müüriladumise harjutustest kaugemale jõudnud – mis mulle kokkuvõttes veelgi enam mr. ja mrs. Micawberit meenutas. (Dickens 1991: 350, vol 1)</p> <p>The house I sought was attached to by an indescribable faded gentility that distinguished it from the other residences of the street – though they were all built on one pattern and evoked a feeling that as if a blundering apprentice, who had not yet got out of his masonry exercises, had tried his hand on them – ultimately reminding me still more of Mr and Mrs Micawber.</p> | <p>An indescribable character of faded gentility that attached to the house I sought, and made it unlike all the other houses in the street – though they were all built on one monotonous pattern, and looked like the early copies of the blundering boy who was learning to make houses, and had not yet got out of his brick and mortar pothooks – reminded me still more of Mr and Mrs Micawber. (Dickens 2000: 342)</p> |
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Without an intention and competence to delve in-depth into the syntactic analysis of the source and target texts, it is nevertheless obvious that Sillaots has shortened the source sentence more significantly. Both translations have rearranged the clauses. Sillaots has almost entirely omitted the part “and had not yet got out of his brick and mortar pothooks”, whereas Rajandi condenses it into “kes polnud veel esimestest müüriladumise harjutustest kaugemale jõudnud”, which merges the two source clauses addressing the ‘blundering boy’ into “as if a blundering apprentice, who had not yet got out of the masonry exercises, had tried his hand on them”. Neither translation follows the source syntax, which, considering the coherent and readable target text, would have been very difficult to follow.

The same sentence reveals another distinguishable feature of Rajandi’s retranslation – she consistently incorporates numerous details that Sillaots had for some reason missed in the source text. Such details can be purely lexical, some words or phrases that Sillaots did not consider necessary to render, as in “minu

elus on olnud ajajärke, mil ma olin **paratamatult** sunnitud hetkeks peatuma” (Dickens 1991: 356) versus “minu elus on olnud ajajärkusid, mil ma pidin taanduma” (Dickens 1937: 172) (“there have been periods in my life **when it has been requisite** that I should pause” Dickens 2000: 349). There are also cases where English grammatical features absent in Estonian (e.g. the continuous tenses) prompted Rajandi to make them explicit by other (verbal) means to the target reader, for example, “Avaldasin selle üle **parajasti** heameelt” (Dickens 1991: 357); “Avaldasin selle üle heameelt” (Dickens 1937: 172) (“**I was expressing** my satisfaction”, Dickens 2000: 349). The word ‘parajasti’ (‘currently’/ ‘right now’/ ‘at the moment’) conveys the same meaning as the Past Continuous tense in the source text – action in progress at a certain moment in the past.

The modifications resulting from changes in language usage are quite understandable, given the 54-year gap between the two translations. Some of these corrections had already been made by Sillaots herself in the unpublished revised version of the 1940s, as discussed above, for example, ‘lihtsameelus’ pro ‘lihtmeel’, etc. For example, Rajandi has used “podagra” (Dickens 1991: 353) for Sillaots’ “jooksva” (Dickens 1937: 167) (“gout”, Dickens 2001: 345), or substituted Sillaots “vahetalitusega” (Dickens 1937: 174) with “komisjonitasu alusel” (Dickens 1991: 357) (“upon commission”, Dickens 2000: 350). Understandably, the old *-ella* infinitive has been replaced by the contemporary *da*-infinitive, as in “kujutella” (Dickens 1937: 174) vs “kujutleda” (Dickens 1991: 357), a change Sillaots’ herself had suggested in her revised copies in the 1940s.

A feature creating a link between the translation of *Huckleberry Finn* is the absence of socio- and idiolects (see 4.3 and 4.7) in some characters in Sillaots’ 1937 rendition of *David Copperfield*. Similarly to the former, this aspect was also improved in the later edition. In the observed chapter, a milkman in the source text says: “Because that there little bill has been running so long that I begin to believe that it’s run away altogether, and never won’t be heard of” (Dickens 2000: 343). Rajandi’s version is: “seesamune veike arve on jo nii kaua hallitand, et ta võib varsti sootuks ära hallitada, nagu poleks teda ilmaski olemas olnud” (Dickens 1991: 351), while Sillaots renders it as “minu väikest arvet on nii kaua venitatud, et see enam kuidagi ei veni” (Dickens 1937: 162). Rajandi has added ‘seesamune’ (‘this/that one’), ‘veike’ (‘small’/‘little’), ‘sootuks’ (‘altogether’) from the spoken ‘folk’ or dialectal language and ‘olnud’ (a shorter colloquial form of ‘olnud’ – ‘been’) to mark the idiolect of the character. At the same time, Sillaots has found an ingenious solution for the word ‘run’ in the context of the sentence and used the word ‘venima’ (‘drag on’/‘stretch’), which fits into the target sentence perfectly as it also has a connotation of delaying a payment. Rajandi’s ‘hallitama’ (‘to mold’) for ‘run’ in the same sentence is also a clever way out, as her sentence suggests that the bill threatens to ‘mold away’.

In Rajandi’s translation, Copperfield and his school friends say ‘sina’ to one another (Estonian singular for ‘you’ – a more casual address for friends and family), in the 1937 translation they use the polite and formal plural ‘teie’. In the present-day circumstances it would be hard to imagine school friends to be very

formal with one another, therefore, Rajandi's choice is understandable. What motivated Sillaots' to choose the formal version can only be guessed. Did she want to transpose a more formal Victorian atmosphere here? Personal communication was more formal in the interwar Estonia than now, but hardly that formal. For example, in Sillaots' translation of Jerome K. Jerome's *Three Men in a Boat* of 1923, the friends address each other 'sina' also in the Victorian setting, perhaps in a little more relaxed circumstances, though.

The chapter includes 27 phrases, fragments of sentences, and sentences (actually, there is just one full sentence) transferred from Sillaots' 1937 edition. I have included into this number the cases in which Rajandi has added just a single word, for example, "Kas mäletad **neid** õhtuid magamistoas?" (Dickens 1991: 353) ("Do you remember the nights in the bedroom?" Dickens 2000: 345). Rajandi has added the word 'neid' to render the definite article 'the' in the source sentence. In fact, in most of the instances where Sillaots' translation has been used, an attribute has been added by Rajandi, for example, "Palun **väga** vabandust, mr. Traddles" (Dickens 1991: 355) ("I beg your pardon, Mr Traddles" Dickens 2000: 348).

These 27 excerpts of the first translation show that Rajandi did, in fact, use Sillaots' translation: she read it alongside her own translation process and made an effort to accommodate and merge the earlier translation into her own. These fragments can be found through careful close reading and comparison. Thus, Sillaots' voice is faint and her textual agency almost dissolved in the 1991 edition. All the more noteworthy, then, is Rajandi's decision to add Sillaots to the imprint.

Let us recall and quote Henno Rajandi's afterword to the 1991 retranslation:

The first translation by Marta Sillaots was published more than half a century ago, in 1937, and is by now outdated and outmoded. The current Estonian translation has treated Sillaots' translation loosely, trying to retain its lexical values, but aiming at getting closer to Dickens both content- and syntax-wise. (Rajandi: 1991: 382)

Retaining the lexical values of Sillaots' rendition in the 1991 retranslation is debatable – based on the observed chapter, Rajandi has kept some of Sillaots' more vivid and figurative words such as "armupant" (Dickens 1991: 358) ("pledges of affection" Dickens 2000: 350), yet overlooked others that are equally effective and interesting, for example, "suurteks olevusteks" (1937: 173) ("great creatures" Dickens 2000: 349).

To sum it up, Rajandi's 1991 translation draws selectively on Sillaots' 1937 version, preserving some expressions while reshaping or omitting many others. Sillaots' voice becomes audible only through close comparison, her agency largely overshadowed by Rajandi's stronger stylistic presence. Yet her name stands on the cover, giving her a paratextual presence that acknowledges the earlier translator even as her contribution is substantially transformed.

5.4 From Heyday to Silence: The Missing Estonian Reception of *David Copperfield*

Unfortunately, attempts to find any metatextual reference to the 1937 translation of *David Copperfield* were unsuccessful. The only information available was a short paragraph in the daily *Päevaleht* (21 June 1937) in the section ‘Literature sent to the editorial office’, which provides a short introduction to the book. The rubric includes several new releases, with *David Copperfield* appearing first. Dickens is referred to as “one of the most readable writers of the world, as well as a great novelist, with *David Copperfield* as one of his most remarkable works. The translation has offered Estonian readership a possibility for memorable enjoyment” (Anon. 1937a: 5). The paragraph also addresses the distinctive features of the novel: its warm affection, humour, strong plot, the range of memorable characters and vivid descriptions (ibid.). This very brief overview seems to draw on Sillaots’ foreword, as it highlights the same qualities that she had emphasized there.

At the time that can be regarded as the heyday of translation reviews and considering that the work belonged to the world classics, it is quite surprising that it did not evoke any response in the Estonian translation scene. Apart from the new translation in 1991, there have been two further editions: an adapted translation by Jana Linnart in 1999 and the reprint of Rajandi-Sillaots version in 2007. This rather limited number of new editions suggests that the work has not enjoyed great popularity among Estonian readers. Again, it can be speculated whether the wider circulation of the first edition and some Soviet editions and/or reprints might have contributed to a larger readership of *David Copperfield* and helped to establish a firmer place for it in Estonian culture; However, when compared to *Huckleberry Finn*, it seems unlikely.

6. EVERYDAY AGENCY: FOOD, TRANSLATION, VOICE

In translator studies, it has been found that not reducing translators to their profession but rather perceiving them as human beings contributes to a more holistic understanding of translation (Kaindl 2021: 23). As noted above, Anthony Pym has been one of the first translation historians to speak about the “flesh-and-blood bodies” ([1998] 2014: 161) of translators, referring to their actual physical needs and activities, while at the same time reminding that everything about their private lives should have bearing on “the field of translation” (ibid. 167).

The problematic nature of the term ‘agency’ (including translator’s agency) has been addressed in Chapter 2 of this dissertation and has also manifested itself in the previous chapters of the dissertation, where it has become evident that a translator’s agency can be influenced by other fields of (literary) activities in which the translator is engaged in, thereby revealing the multipositional nature of their agency.

Yet, there is another aspect: a person’s professional agency (or agencies) is often strongly influenced and informed by the everyday. The problem with including everyday in research and in the study of (translator’s) agency is that the relevant material may not exist. However, if it does, why should it be overlooked? Translators are sometimes among these privileged few whose documents, letters, manuscripts, journals and personal papers may have been preserved not only just due to their position in the society and culture, but also because they worked away from offices and workplaces, at their homes, maintaining communication and contact with authors, publishers and other actors in the field. These preserved archives may, besides the aspects highlighted above, help to bridge gaps in translation history and history in general. Moreover, the seemingly trivial everyday matters may have some bearing on the actual translations.

The opportunity to catch a glimpse (however brief) of the translator’s everyday presented itself in a tangible way – through a 100-year-old letter with willow catkins glued to it, sent by Sillaots to her sister in Berlin (EKM EKLA f 243, m 9: 1, p 7/17). Besides the aspects that have become public by means of published translations, the more hidden – the quotidian – thus became strikingly material. Sillaots’ archive included her personal letters that offered glimpses into her everyday life at moments in time and revealed her actual daily working conditions. Furthermore, it contained a specific aspect of her daily life that was hard to ignore. Observing the coverage of food in the translator’s documents illustrates all four advantages that microhistory has over macrohistory, as outlined by Jeremy Munday: “It appeals to a wider public /.../; it is “realistic” [*quotation marks in original*]; it conveys personal experience; and it links the individual case study with the general socio-historical context” (2014: 75).

Besides food as a material issue, the vocabulary related to food – i.e. “the language of food” (Charron and Desjardins 2011), or the translator’s “food voice” – is another aspect worth looking into, as it may reveal whether the respective language and the food culture itself have developed at the same pace. This is best

observed in archival documents, personal letters and papers, as they usually contain the first-hand, real-life language usage.

Thus, in the first section (6.1) of this chapter I will have a look at the translator's everyday with the focus on food and eating by juxtaposing two periods of time: 1923 and 1951. The second subchapter (6.2) seeks to link the translator's everyday life, her translation of J. K. Jerome's *Three Men in a Boat* (1923), and the broader social context of 1923 by analysing the translation of food items in the book. The subchapter aims to show how the translator's voice, as an aspect of agency, can become a bridge connecting the quotidian, professional practices and the wider socio-cultural context.

6.1 Food and More in 1923 and 1951

The topic of the current subchapter presented itself already on the very first pages of the translator's archive. Food appeared in Sillaots' letters, in her memoir, even in her journalistic writings right next to translations and other current matters. Fried potatoes, chocolate and the mysterious *nipi* were there, on the translator's table, side by side with the translations of *Kolm meest paadis* (*Three Men in a Boat*), *Vennad Zemganno* (*Les Frères Zemganno*) and *David Copperfield*.

Before beginning the journey to the year 1923, the prologue takes us back to 1915, when Marta Sillaots, an aspiring journalist at the time, had started working for several periodicals. Besides her other journalistic work, Sillaots had her own column in the weekly *Tallinna Kaja* and she also wrote pieces on topical issues for the same newspaper. Estonian eating habits must have been a concern for Sillaots, as she considered it necessary to write an article titled "On Eating"⁷², which must have been of potentially wider interest as the newspaper decided to publish it. The article starts with a grim statement: "Estonians do not know how to eat" (Sillaots 1915: 637). In a largely agrarian society, eating in public was clearly a recent phenomenon that had caught Sillaots' attention. Besides educating readers, the article also shows the author's passionate relationship with food and eating.

There are many things for which Estonians are reproached. According to Sillaots, their eating-culture is lacking: they either fill their stomachs or devour their food quickly in an unattractive manner (Sillaots 1915: 637). She states, "My ancestors were too poor to learn to eat with pleasure and in a nice way /.../. And this is exactly how it should be done – with pleasure and nicely" (ibid. 637). Sillaots argues that eating is one of the most important aspects of a person's life. She insists that one must eat at the same time every day and no more than three times a day. "Only children and the sick are allowed four mealtimes" (ibid. 637). The author points out that meals should be eaten at home and not just anywhere but in the dining room. It is also mentioned that common meals are not only about eating but also serving a communicative purpose, bringing the family around the table (ibid. 638). Sillaots points out that the colour of food is significant as well –

⁷² "Söömisest"

it should be appetising. Eating too much too quickly is not acceptable: “Only savages can eat like animals” (ibid. 638). The author finds that the slower a person eats, the more pleasure they derive from it, and that one should eat only agreeable things (ibid. 639) – a fairly modern idea at the time when diet was not as diverse and abundant as today. “Meat is poison and the less it is eaten, the better” (ibid. 639). This reflects a broader debate in Estonian society in the early 20th century, when vegetarianism was advocated following Scandinavian and Finnish examples. This was caused by World War I, but also by growing awareness of healthy eating (Kannike and Bardone 2018: 46–47). Sillaots states that bread is nourishing and cheap and should therefore be eaten more (1915: 639). Eggs, she notes, are hard to digest, while sour milk is good in that respect. Vegetables should be served with sauces (ibid.). The less one uses spices, the less one craves meat, she argues. “Women should be aware that the secret of good complexion lies in pure vegetarian food; this is better than all the French creams and ointments put together” (ibid.). Interestingly, the article is not signed by Sillaots but by someone called ‘Eating-artist’ (“Söömise taidur”) (ibid.). The authorship was disclosed when I found the manuscript of the article in Marta Sillaots’ folder in Eduard Virgo’s (editor in *Tallinna Kaja*) archive (EKM EKLA f 155: m 28: 1, pp. 212–232).

Little did Sillaots know at the time that soon the question of ‘how to eat’ would be replaced by ‘what to eat’. The years of World War I, the Russian Revolution of 1917, the turbulence of which also reached Estonia, and the subsequent Estonian War of Independence (1918–1920), following the Declaration of Independence and foundation of the Republic of Estonia in 1918, brought hunger to this part of the world. According to Sillaots’ autobiography, the situation was worst in October 1917: “when everything edible had become scarce, even potatoes were considered a delicacy. Sugar had disappeared long ago, so had rice, semolina and groats; after long queuing one could get a handful of blackish-brown macaroni” (Sillaots [1939] 2009, 124). Potatoes, which have until today been regarded as an Estonian staple present at nearly every meal, were hardly ever considered a delicacy. Groats in Estonian context mean mostly barley groats that have been one of the basic ingredients of homemade soups, stews and casseroles.

The acute food shortage of the young republic reached another crisis in 1919 (Kannike and Uibo 2022: 16). Sillaots also writes about it in her memoir *Sealt-poolt künniseid* (Beyond the Thresholds) (2009: 139). However, food aid was provided by some wealthier foreign countries, which, besides alleviating hunger, also introduced novel trends in culinary culture and offered the possibility to become acquainted with: “new, manufactured and standardised foodstuffs and modern nutritional standards” (Kannike and Uibo 2022: 22). From the perspective of this paper, which addresses translation strategies, there is more to consider than just the food shortage of a certain historical period. Estonians’ diet had so far been rustic by nature, in compliance with their peasant way of life: “potatoes, dark rye bread, cereal dishes with occasional meat and fish” (ibid. 23) were common on Estonians’ tables in rural areas also in the early 20th century. As living standard started to improve quite rapidly in the mid-1920s, Estonians’ diet became richer and more varied (ibid.).

6.1.1 A Year in Letters: Tastes and Tables of 1923

In the year 1923, at the age of 36, Sillaots married and became a stepmother for two daughters. The years of undernutrition were over, life in independent Estonia had stabilised and she had just started a career as a freelance writer and translator. However, food remained a topic she frequently addressed in her correspondence with her sister, Erna Reichenbach (1897–1986), who lived and worked in Berlin. As the above-mentioned 1915 newspaper article indicates, healthy and informed nutrition had also been an issue for Sillaots for quite some time.

Sillaots' stepdaughters were of primary school age, which suggests that cooking must have been a part of the family's daily routine. It is hard to tell whether it was still a commonplace practice to eat at home, as Sillaots had suggested in 1915, but the letters bear no witness of her own family having dined anywhere outside the home.

The 1923 letters filed in the archive cover the period from February to October. At the end of the year sister Erna returned to Estonia as the economic situation in Germany was getting more complicated, the inflation gained momentum and it became harder to do business there (Sillaots [1939] 2009: 151). The letters are written in Estonian but include some German loanwords as some of the examples below show.

The topic of food pervades almost all the letters, running in parallel with updates on translations in progress and other matters (e.g. fashion trends and family affairs). Sillaots often reports what she and her family have been eating. The first letter (dated 20 February 1923) gives an account of Sillaots' husband's birthday celebration, which had featured *kringel* (EKM EKLA f 243: m 9: 1, p 2/3) – a large, sweet, soft, plaited home-made pastry – and candles.

For Sillaots' family, special occasions included Easter, prior to which Sillaots asks her sister whether chocolate eggs and marzipan birds are already on sale in Berlin, noting that they are available in Tallinn. She offers to buy some for her sister from Stude, a legendary Tallinn baker and confectioner, and send them to her sister (ibid. p 3/6). On Easter Sunday, Sillaots had received a huge marzipan egg from Rott ('Rat' – her husband's nickname) and a box of *gefüllte Schokolade* (ibid. p 10/26) ('chocolate bonbons'). For Sillaots' own birthday (12 May), she asks her sister to buy some strawberries and eat them with *Schlagsahne* ('whipped cream') to join the celebrations from Berlin (ibid. 18/49). As for her own homely birthday, she mentions having made *nipi* that morning (ibid. 19/51) – a mysterious dish the recipe of which is not revealed, but which is baked in the oven and has to be taken great care of in order to turn out well. It seems that it was only made on special occasions, possibly a kind of soufflé and probably sweet. According to her letter, *nipi* turned out well this time and was accompanied by a huge *kringel*, oranges, a box of chocolates and date biscuits (ibid.). She even promises to send some *kringel* and *nipi* to Erna as well (ibid.).

As for everyday food, bread and cheese are mentioned as a light meal on a couple of occasions (EKM EKLA f 243: m 9: 1, p 3/7; p 15/42). There is also a humorous reference to a herring that Rott has eaten, which, as Sillaots reports,

probably ‘wants to swim’ as Rott keeps drinking water (ibid. p 6/14). Potatoes certainly occupy an important place, as usual in Estonian cuisine. They are either fried and accompanied by fried bread (ibid. p 8/70), boiled (ibid. p 11/29), or mashed with cauliflower (ibid. p 18/71) – the latter must have been on the sister Erna’s menu as Sillaots asks, “Does this really fill your stomach?” (ibid. p 18/71) and adds her own observation: “the less you eat meat and fat, the more you want sweets” (ibid. 18/71). In one of the earlier letters, a good *moorpraad* (‘potroast’) has been praised (ibid. p 11/29), which shows that her (and probably the society’s) attitudes towards meat had changed, although these are the only instances where meat is mentioned in the 1923 letters. Milk is bought in the amount of 2 *toops* (an old unit of volume = 1.23 litres) a day while on holiday in Haapsalu (a resort in western Estonia).

Chocolate, cakes and other sweets are not only present on the party table, but are mentioned relatively often: for example, Einmann cakes and chocolate (EKM EKLA f 243: m 9: 1, 2/2; p 11/31), soft chocolate (ibid. p 12/34), chocolate-pâté (*Schokolade-pasteet*) (ibid. p 12/34), etc. Cakes are either bought from the confectioner’s (ibid. p 2/2) or baked at home (ibid. p 32/89). Fruit also had a firm place on the family’s table. According to Sillaots, she eats an orange a day (ibid. p 10/28), mentions strawberries in summer (ibid. p 31/86) and apples in autumn (ibid. p 36/105). Names of food items, especially sweets, were even considered worthy of use as nicknames. In addition to her customary nickname Mats, she sometimes used Martsipaap when writing to her sister (ibid. p 8/19; 27/77) – probably a blend of Mats, Marta and marzipan.

In the few cases when the preparation of food is mentioned, it is always ‘us’ who have put food on the table, for example, “We made *nipi* in the morning” (EKM EKLA f 243: m 9: 1, p 19/51) or “tomorrow we will make *nipi*” (ibid. p 8/17). This does not necessarily mean that she and her family members always cooked together, but it is a strong possibility that cooking was not just a woman’s duty in this family.

Sillaots frequently asks her sister whether and what she has eaten (EKM EKLA f 243: m 9: 1, p 2/2; p 2/3) and offers suggestions on what to buy and try. Some of her letters include newspaper clippings with advertisements of certain sweets, for example, *Mandelinchen* (ibid. p 6/14), which she recommends her sister to try in Berlin. The advertisement glued to the letter is entirely in German, so it might be taken from a German newspaper, or there may have been German advertisements in Estonian newspapers at the time.

The price of food is not mentioned often and when it is, then not because it poses a problem, but as just another food-related observation. “How cheap the oranges are!” she exclaims once, adding that she eats them every day (EKM EKLA f 243: m 9: 1, p 10/28). However, while on holiday in the seaside resort town Haapsalu, she complains that the milk they buy there has become more expensive and, on top of everything, seems to be watered down (ibid. p 29/87). There are also a few cases where it is implied that not everything is affordable, for example: “Maybe Italian apples would be better, but the Rulli-people [name

of the street where Sillaots' family lived at the time] do not have money for this" (ibid. p 36/105).

Besides food, a number of these letters discuss Sillaots' work in progress, which throughout the year 1923 was mostly translation. February and March are occupied by *Three men in a Boat* (see also 6.2), which she planned to send to her sister for editing in a short time (EKM EKLA f 243: m 9: 1, p 2/3). Her pace of translation was approximately one chapter a day, as she writes to Erna on Monday 5 March 1923 (ibid. p 3/4): "If nothing unexpected comes up, I will finish it by Saturday. Then you will have something more fun to read /.../. Rott reads and laughs every evening" (ibid. p 3/4). As planned, the job was finished on Saturday, 10 March, when Sillaots rejoices: "I have just finished my *Three Men*. I am so happy I could do somersaults. 327 lengthy pages altogether" (ibid. p 4/9). With this, and also with the translations that followed, she asks for her sister's advice on linguistic matters (ibid. p 4/9). Since Estonian written language was in an active phase of development at the time, many rules had yet not been settled and standardised by the relevant authorities.

In March, there was also talk about translating *David Copperfield*, after the task had been rejected by another translator (EKM EKLA f 243: m 9: 1, p 6/15) and which the publisher, Albert Org, had offered to Sillaots. She considers accepting it at first (ibid. p 6/15) but writes in one of the following letters that she is not keen on the idea, as there are "1000 pages, I am going to spend half of my life on it!" (ibid. p 8/19). Despite that, Sillaots eventually translated the book, which was published only in 1937 (see 5.1).

The publisher Albert Org made sure that Sillaots remained professionally occupied. On 24 June, *Three Men in a Boat* recurs in a letter, as Sillaots tells Erna not to strain herself too much with reading the manuscript – "you will have to do the proofreading anyway" (EKM EKLA f 243: m 9: 1, p 27/77).

Another translation mentioned in the letters is *Les Frères Zemganno* by Edmond de Goncourt, which the translator, in her letter of 23 May, refers to as a task that needs to be finished prior to her planned visit to Haapsalu and to Erna in Berlin (EKM EKLA f 243: m 9: 1, p 22/58). According to the letter dated 9 June, "the job will be finished soon. About twenty more pages to go!" (ibid. p 23/61). Plans of visiting her sister were becoming increasingly concrete – the date of departure was set for 16 July (ibid. p 23/62). In the letter of 15 June, Sillaots describes that she has been translating *Zemganno* day and night in order to be able to travel to her sister (ibid. p 25/67), and adds in the evening that the job is now finished: "I am wildly happy, do I have to do a somersault? Oh dear! It really is ready! What have you got to say about it?" (ibid. p 26/71). The trip to Berlin never took place, though. The reasons are not clear, as the letters do not cover the period from August to September 1923. Whether Sillaots became aware of Erna's forthcoming return to Estonia or whether financial constraints were to blame can only be guessed.

6.1.2 Bread, Letters and Longing: 1951 in Valga Prison

The circumstances of 1950–1951 in Sillaots' life have been covered in Chapter 3 (see 3.2.4). After her imprisonment on 21 December 1950, she was taken to Valga (a town in South-Estonia) women's prison camp in 1951, where she stayed until May 1952 (Saluäär 2009, 161).

Sillaots' prison letters from Valga to her sister Erna describe living conditions as quite satisfactory. She hardly ever complains but rather gives objective situation reports regarding the living environment and her health problems. The spiritual strength she demonstrates on the pages of these letters is remarkable. Her agency is very limited, though; she is dependent on other people and has to survive in these imposed conditions. Deprived of her translation work and any other professional activity, the only work available for her is making buttonholes for clothes. The small amount of money earned from this can be spent on the limited selection of foodstuffs available in the prison shop (EKM EKLA 243: f 9: m 1, pp. 46/156–46/157). Even the food on her table is beyond her control at this time.

6.1.2.1 Between Hunger and Hope: Food and Valga Prison

As the letters indicate, the food in Valga prison was not necessarily of poor quality and taste, but undoubtedly of less nutritional value and lacked variety. Sillaots' health was also deteriorating: she writes about being extremely thin, suffering from abdominal pains (a chronic condition already since youth), a heart condition and recurrent pneumonia accompanied by a persistent cough. All of this, compounded by vitamin deficiency, made her yearn for more varied food to balance her diet. Although there was a shop in prison, its limited selection included only margarine, some candy and sometimes fish (EKM EKLA 243: f 9: m 1, p 38/181). The only option for getting at least something to diversify the diet, is asking for help from family members.

Understandably, food was not the only thing that Sillaots requested. She also asked for various consumer goods and cigarettes, which she smoked at a rate of five packs a week (EKM EKLA 243: f 9: m 1, p 39/119). Even flowers were sent to her on multiple occasions, and she never failed to express gratitude for them (e.g. *ibid.* p 46/153). The money for these items likely came from her author's royalties, which she asked her sister to claim on her behalf (*ibid.* p 37/108). She was allowed two letters per month, but the number of packages was not limited (*ibid.* p 37/108). It is therefore not surprising that the letters contain lists of desired foodstuffs and vivid descriptions of how the things she received had tasted.

The list of the foodstuffs she asks to be sent is impressive and ranges from seasonal fresh produce to *kringel* (see 6.1.1) from her mother's birthday table. The "green stuff" (EKM EKLA 243: f 9: m 1, p 40/122; p 44/147), as she calls it, including herbs, fruit, vegetables and berries, depends on the season as in Estonia the period for fruit and vegetables generally lasts from May to September. She asks for garlic, onion, chives, radish, dill, horseradish, cucumber, rhubarb,

berries (strawberries and gooseberries in particular), plums, apples, apricots, peaches, lemons, green beans, cauliflower, tomatoes, new potatoes (ibid. pp. 37/108–57/230), etc. Sillaots, as a typical Estonian, must have developed a special relationship with potatoes as in one of the letters she states: “if I get hot potatoes every day, I have a feeling I have eaten properly. I am like our mother in this respect” (ibid. p 57/227).

Not all of the above-listed fruit is grown in Estonia, for example, apricots, peaches and lemons, but Sillaots must have assumed they were available at the time. Gooseberries are mentioned on several occasions, among others, as a good ingredient for soup. The notion of soup in Estonian culture does not apply only to savoury dishes, but also denotes a sweet, dessert kind of dish (‘kissell’ in today’s language – a dessert, made from berries or fruit, boiled with sugar and water and thickened with potato starch). Therefore, it is possible to make a soup with blueberries, gooseberries, apples, etc., and Sillaots adds an instruction, “If you are going to send gooseberries for the soup, do not forget potato-starch and sugar. They are not sold here” (EKM EKLA 243: f 9: m 1, p 46/156).

As noted, the relationship with meat had already changed by 1923. Due to its constant shortage and the general poor diet in prison, Sillaots mentions meat on numerous occasions, referring to her special craving for it (EKM EKLA 243: f 9: m 1, p 39/116) and asks for “some kind of meat that can be warmed up” (ibid. p 43/142); “a piece of roast goose” if anyone has made it (ibid. p 54/210); ham with lard being cut into small pieces and fried properly because “that would make a good bread supplement” (ibid. p 46/155), chicken as “due to my belly I did not want meat for some time, but I would like chicken now” (ibid. p 56/219), etc. As for the other animal products, eggs are mentioned often, once with a warning to send them hard-boiled, not semi-soft (as it obviously had happened) (ibid. p 46/153). Butter is often mentioned either as something she finds tasty or has run out of (e.g. ibid. p 39/116; p 42/128; p 50/182, etc.), cheese may turn out to be a pleasant and unexpected surprise (ibid. p 55/216) and fish is something “that we do not get here very often” (ibid. p 38/112). “I would really have liked your spicy Baltic sprats”⁷³ (ibid. p 59/210) as the letter says. Sillaots also recalls her favourite dishes from home and wants to make a potato salad (ibid. p 12/140), or dreams about having a *rosolje* (a salad made with beetroot, potatoes and herring).

Sillaots has not lost her sweet tooth and again we may find the reasons behind this in the general insufficient and poor nutrition. Cakes, candy and other sweets appear frequently in her letters. She longs for some curd cake (similar to cheesecake, but made with curds) (EKM EKLA 243: f 9: m 1, p 39/119; p 41/129); thanks her sister for the cream candy (ibid. p 12/140) and *stritsel* (a plaited pastry similar to *kringel* but of smaller size); tells that she would ‘die for’ some *keeks* (an Estonian alternative to pound cake); asks to be sent biscuits – especially the ones sold in the café “Tallinn” (ibid. p 46/153) –, pancakes (ibid. p 51/188) and chocolate (ibid. p 44/147). Jam, as a well-preserving source of

⁷³ Baltic sprats – Estonian local specialty made according to a medieval recipe and still popular nowadays.

sweetness, is what Sillaots also wants, be it blackcurrant (ibid. p 41/129) or raspberry (ibid. p 55/2016), but mostly there is no particular preference (ibid. p 46/153; p 51/188, etc.). Due to her persistent cough, she appreciates every jar of honey highly (e.g. ibid. p 47/161) and mentions that “besides other things, it is an effective heart medicine” (ibid. p 54/209). Coffee must also have been a special delight (ibid. p 41/128), often enjoyed in the company of fellow prisoners (ibid. p 45/151).

Sharing the contents of one’s packages was a commonplace practice among the prisoners. They took part in each other’s joys, sorrows and food deliveries. There was probably not always enough to share with everyone, but a closer circle got to taste the contents of the packages. “Send the gooseberries and we – me and Linda – will make a soup; she has an aluminium pot” (EKM EKLA 243: f 9: m 1, p 45/151). Sillaots also became close friends with a woman named Reet, who helped her a lot during her illnesses by cooking warm meals and taking over her daily chores (ibid. p 56/220).

The deliveries always received positive feedback from Sillaots. There was just one occasion, when the package was detained somewhere, resulting in “the apples and pears rotten and meat covered with mould” (EKM EKLA 243: f 9: m 1, p 50/182). It can be assumed that her sister Erna was likely quite busy with buying the necessary items and compiling the packages on a regular basis. Sillaots was very grateful to Erna and worried about her wellbeing, sometimes with selfish implications, which are understandable under the circumstances. “Should you get sick, what will become of me? I will not live then and will not want to live” (ibid. p 51/188), she writes on one occasion. In one of the letters, she asks Erna to go to a café at her expense (covered by the royalties) and not to scrimp (ibid. p 56/122). The letters also confirm that Erna visited Sillaots in prison in August 1951 and they had a brief 20-minute meeting.

Prison food is not often mentioned, but the comments that exist are not overly critical of it. Bread is appreciated highly: “The bread we have here is exceptionally good – just like home-baked” (EKM EKLA 243: f 9: m 1, p 38/111). She also reports that they get “stewed cabbage now almost every day, sometimes with carrots. Beetroot is also often served and cucumbers...” (ibid. p 50/112); also, “a fresh cabbage and beetroot soup which is quite tasty” (ibid. p 57/227).

Despite the endured hardships, it seems that for Sillaots, her own welfare was not the only concern. A common thread of all the letters is her husband’s fate. Julius was taken to Narva prison. Their correspondence was rather limited and, unfortunately, not available in the Estonian Literary Museum. Sillaots expresses her concern about Julius not getting enough packages and asks for confirmation that Erna has sent the ones Sillaots had requested to him. She felt responsible and guilty for what happened to her husband, “he serves his sentence because of me /.../. Can you understand how this is troubling me?” (EKM EKLA 243: f 9: m 1, p 47/162). She also speaks about her young friend Vidrik (a member of the literary circle (see 3.2.4) headed by Sillaots) and asks Erna to try to return his possessions left in her house, for example, his typewriter (ibid. p 37/109) and books (ibid. p 41/128). When Vidrik goes to study in Moscow, Sillaots asks to

send him money at her expense (ibid. p 56/219) and to continue supporting him if possible (ibid. p 57/230). Despite the severe restrictions and hardships of imprisonment, Sillaots' letters reveal a life sustained by small comforts and deep bonds of care. Her requests for food, books and everyday items were no indulgences, but attempts to preserve dignity in an environment designed to strip one away. In this way, these letters offer a poignant glimpse into how material needs and moral strength intertwined in her struggle for survival.

6.1.2.2 Between Habit and Hope: the Everyday as Cultural Continuity

As mentioned above, Sillaots was deprived of her work as a translator following her imprisonment. However, this does not mean that she stopped thinking and writing about it; it was still on her mind despite the changed circumstances and had to be replaced by something, any means or sources of cultural (self-)expression.

In one of the letters, dated 21 October, the topic of her literary work is addressed in greater detail. Sillaots asks Erna whether the *militsiya* (Soviet police) detective in charge of her investigation has returned her manuscripts, as he had promised to do. The handwriting has partially faded, making it impossible to determine whether the manuscripts included translations; however, there are three children's plays that Sillaots asks about. One of the plays was about peace, another about Stalinist mass construction, while she cannot recall the subject of the third one (EKM EKLA 243: f 9: m 1, p 55/217). She also reports that a woman, probably from the Soviet authorities, had visited the prison and had, among other things, taken interest in Sillaots' professional activities. "Can you find her and ask if I can send her two short plays I have written here? She finds it is necessary for me to work here, but how can that be put into practice? Could you please explain to her /.../ that I want to work in my profession if I am allowed" (ibid. p 55/214), she continues.

Sillaots' translations had not entirely left her behind. She writes that she read in the paper that a children's play translated by her will be staged in the autumn in the Estonian Drama Theatre and asks her sister to find out about it. "Then there is a chance of getting some kopeks [Soviet coins] of royalties, which of course is a welcome development" (EKM EKLA 243: f 9: m 1, p 18/172). Later in the autumn she returns to the subject and states that the production⁷⁴ has already been talked about in the press (ibid. p 52/157).

It also appears that there was a drama club in Valga prison and Marta Sillaots was tasked to find some plays that they could stage. She addresses her sister with that request in several letters (EKM EKLA 243: f 9: m 1, pp 40/123; p 42/136). The task must have not been very easy for Erna to fulfil as Sillaots keeps reminding it to her, "What about the plays? Are we going to get some?" (ibid. p 48/170) and "The drama circle keeps waiting for the plays. They say that there must be an amusing one, titled *Tiina*; I do not know the author's name". Finally,

⁷⁴ The play under question is probably *Dini kingitus* (<https://teater.ee/naitekirjandus/naidendid/dini-kingitus/>)

the problem is solved, but apparently not with Erna's help as Sillaots reports to her that they got the play *Tiina* and another one will be bought soon (ibid. p 52/196). There is, however, no information on whether the plays were staged or not.

The only newspaper primarily focussed on at the time in Estonia was *Sirp ja Vasar* (Hammer and Sickle). This is also often brought up in the letters as Sillaots wants it to be sent to her. "Vidrik could send me the June and July [1951] issues of *Sirp ja Vasar* and perhaps some more interesting issues of the daily *Õhtuleht* as well" (EKM EKLA 243: f 9: m 1, p 46/153). Later, when Vidrik had left for Moscow, she addresses her sister with the same wish (ibid. p 47/162; 50/185) and when the papers start arriving on more or less regular bases, she reports that after having read them she sends them to Krasnoyarsk, to a woman named Rutt Elinser (ibid. p 59/202).

What Marta Sillaots thought about or hoped for regarding her imprisonment is not explicitly stated in the letters. She never openly revealed her hopes or fears about her situation. It can only be guessed that, due to her positive and resilient nature, she hoped that everything would turn out for the better. At least she was still in Estonia in 1951 and could communicate with her family members and get food on the table with their help. As mentioned in the subchapter 3.2.4, in the spring of 1952 Sillaots was taken to Russia with a final stop in Nizhny Tagil.

Everyday food responds to both minor and major changes of life, at both individual as well as social level. It reflects a person's capacity to make decisions, and it traces the crooked line of social developments. As Guy Debord has put it, "Everyday is the measure of all things" (cited in Felski 2000: 78). When changes take place and our *everyday* is taken away from us, we begin to long for even the simplest routines as they used to be (Felski 2000: 92). Food is one of such routine elements. Especially in the turbulent times, agency is not about innovation, but about "everyday rituals" (ibid. 84). Moreover, food and cooking have traditionally belonged to women's everyday life, making them all the more a matter of female routine. The deprivation of usual domestic routines of the everyday may therefore strike women harder.

Culture and everyday have often been treated as separate, as if the latter could somehow tarnish the noble essence of the former. In reality, it is the lower that often leads to the higher. A brief glance at an aspect of an Estonian translator's everyday life has shown that "the everyday and the non-everyday" exist side by side and are inseparably intertwined (Felski 2000: 92).

The observed years – 1923 and 1951 – reveal very different situations at both individual and social level. In 1923, Marta Sillaots was a young woman – a wife and mother, establishing her career as a translator and an author. Her freelance status may not have brought her wealth, but despite her constant financial negotiations with publishing houses, she had food on her table and led a full family and professional life. She was free to decide what to eat and what to translate. We learn that her family's dining table was diverse and, besides the usual foodstuffs of Estonian society at the time, they had their own unique family traditions such as celebrating birthdays with *kringel* and *nipi*. Both of the aspects

discussed in this chapter – food and translation, elements of her everyday – gave her pleasure and contributed to her sense of agency in the year 1923.

We can also observe how attitudes changed within just eight years (1915 vs. 1923). Meat was clearly no longer considered poison. Also, vegetables, which in 1915 were strongly recommended as the basis for a healthy diet, may not have seemed sufficient to fill the stomach, as Sillaots states in 1923. The 1915 warning not to eat too much seems to have been an advice she herself did not always follow later. In one of her letters, Sillaots admits that she has overindulged in Einmann cakes and chocolate and now suffers from bellyache (EKM EKLA 243: f 9: m 1, p 2/2). This change in attitude may partly reflect the periods of hunger that the whole society endured during 1917–1918.

It is possible to gain insight into the social aspects that food reflects. In 1923, food was sold by small grocers, bakers, confectioners, etc. The above references to Einmann and Stude clearly indicate that people had their favourite shops and cafés, which they frequented and were familiar with the quality of the products offered there. From these details, it is possible to form an idea of what the dining table of an Estonian translator looked like and to see the local and seasonal nature of the food culture.

As for the linguistic aspect of the food-related vocabulary of 1923, it is evident that Estonian language had not yet developed its own alternatives to some direct loans mostly from German – a phenomenon that primarily applies to confectionery vocabulary. Sillaots uses the following German words: *Schokolade*, *Schlagsahne*, etc. in her otherwise Estonian-language letters. Estonian language was in the active phase of development at the time, and the food vocabulary had not kept pace with the increasing range of foodstuffs that had become available in the stores.

In 1951, Marta Sillaots was living in completely changed circumstances. Due to the imprisonment, the scope of her activities and agency is limited, but her spirit is still strong and refusing to give way to self-pity and despair. This is evident in her explicitly stated willingness to work and longing for culture and information. The plays she wrote in prison demonstrate her desire to reclaim at least a part of her agency as an author and translator, seeking self-expression in whatever form was possible. The same tendency is reflected in her wish to recover her manuscripts, as well as photos, letters and other personal papers (EKM EKLA 243: f 9: m 1, p 55/217). These are not just things to be returned but also an epitome of dignity.

Longing for the familiar, for everyday routines, is also reflected in the food that Sillaots asks to be sent to prison. *Kringel* from her mother's birthday table serves as a symbolic link to the family at home. A similar yearning for domestic life is evident in the wish to make potato salad or *rosolje* – dishes that have apparently been on her family's table on a regular basis. Even the flowers, mentioned above, speak of the desire to re-establish the everyday of the past, the routine that involved beauty. In Felski's words, "The temporality of the everyday /.../ is that of repetition, the special ordering of the everyday is anchored in a sense of home, and the characteristic mode of experiencing the

everyday is that of habit” (2000: 81). It is worth remembering, that Sillaots’ home was frequented by friends, acquaintances, the friends of her friends – the salon-like openness of the home was also a base where attitudes and mindsets developed, strengthened or were, maybe, overthrown. All this was either denied to her or substituted by new prison acquaintances and communication – a different kind of everyday, lacking several important aspects “layered with meaning, value and memory” (ibid. 89).

The social aspects of 1951 also manifest themselves in the form of unanswered questions related to the wide range of foodstuffs Sillaots requested. It is clear that she did not receive even remotely as much as she wanted, yet the fact that she asked for things such as apricots, peaches and lemons shows that she assumed they were available. It is documented that she regularly received meat, eggs, even lemons and sweets, something that contradicts the commonly existing knowledge of the period. The accounts from my family members, relatives and other sources describe a very different reality at that time: there was a serious shortage of many food groups, especially fruit, meat, other animal products and sweets. How was it possible for Sillaots’ sister to obtain such a range of products? Moreover, the cost of these items must have exceeded Sillaots’ author royalties. For now, these questions remain unanswered.

As stated above, the food packages of 1951 served not just as food, but also as an attempt to re-establish the lost agency and restore a sense of normal everyday. Sharing was a part of this compensation – it was at least something through which a person could exercise agency and contribute not just to the common table but also to the collective identity.

The linguistic aspect, covered in relation to 1923 when some German words were directly transferred, is not an issue in 1951. All the foodstuffs are referred to in their Estonian or Estonianised form. *Schocolade* has become *šokolaad* in its modern written Estonian usage.

The intertwined nature of translator Marta Sillaots’ everyday, where the mundane and the cultural exist side by side, can be summarised by her own words written in Valga prison camp on 24 August 1951: “In my mind’s eye I can see the times when I am again deeply engaged with writing work /.../. Life is such a great thing. And I would not give up anything I have experienced – it is all interesting and beautiful in a way” (EKM EKLA 243: m 9: 1, p 49/178).

6.2 Cultural Codes on the Menu: Food and Voice in the First Estonian Translation of J. K. Jerome’s *Kolm meest paadis* in 1923

How can a translation long out of print and hardly available for readers contribute to translation history? Does it offer any value for translator studies? Is there any reason to discuss a modest book, obviously a product of the meagre circumstances of Estonia in 1923, with very little metadata to start with? Albert Org’s Publishing House classified the genre of J. K. Jerome’s *Kolm meest paadis* (*Three Men in a Boat*) (1889) as youth literature and included it in their book series ‘Home and

School Literature'. It was translated by Marta Sillaots and edited by Hugo Raudsepp. The translator's voice does not manifest itself in paratexts: there are no forewords or afterwords, no footnotes or comments. Its availability at present is practically non-existent – one of the very few publicly available copies is held in the Academic Library of Tallinn University, and its state would hardly allow it to be lent out of their premises. It is apparent that the cultural memory footprint of the translation is not large, although there are researchers who have regarded it as one of Sillaots' best works (Saluäär 1987: 677). The readers of this centenary translation are probably gone and Estonian culture has become much more familiar with the retranslation by Tiiu Viires in 1978, which has seen new editions and reprints alongside its transmedial reappearances in the theatre, radio, etc.

I will focus mainly on the target language and culture within the 1923 framework and contextualise the translation of culture-specific food items in the 1923 Estonian translation of *Kolm meest paadis*. The seriality of translation is evident with this translation: as mentioned above, 55 years after the first translation, a new version appeared in 1978, translated by Tiiu Viires. The latter is also used for comparison here.

The main premise of this subchapter regarding the translation strategies is based on Dirk Delabastita's table of translation operations and strategies, which relate to the cultural and, in some cases, linguistic code (1993: 39). Although Delabastita's table was not specifically designed for the translation of culture-specific elements, it aims (drawing on Saussurean structural linguistics) at "giving us a conceptual grip on the various sorts of changes and non-changes that may be distinguished in transfer processes between the two systems [source and target language]" (ibid. 33). For this purpose, he employs the five translation operations (borrowed from ancient rhetoric): *substitution*, *repetition*, *deletion*, *addition* and *permutation*, which may occur at the linguistic, cultural and textual code levels (ibid. 37). Under each code and category, he offers a number of actual translation decisions a translator may opt for, for example, the operation of *substitution* at the level of cultural code may involve *naturalization*, *modernization*, *topicalization*, or *nationalization*, with varying degrees of linguistic equivalence (ibid. 39). Delabastita acknowledges the limitations of the descriptive potential of the table, for example, "the problematic nature of the theoretical boundaries between the three codes; the fuzzy borders of the first category (substitution)" (ibid. 37), etc. Employing his table for this subchapter was motivated by its intriguingly universal descriptive potential and the wish to test its applicability within the framework of culture-specific items. From the current perspective, the cultural code is of greater interest; however, as the analysis of particular translated items is inevitably linked with the linguistic code, the latter often accompanies the analysis.

The corpus consisting of food- and drink-related items was first identified in the source text (199 words and phrases), 124 of which could be defined as culture-specific to greater or lesser extent. This number includes the recurring instances of the same items as they were sometimes translated differently. These 124

culture-specific food items were then identified in Sillaots' translation, organised into food groups, and analysed to determine Sillaots' translation strategies at both the cultural and linguistic levels. This served as a source corpus for generalisations regarding Sillaots' translation strategies and for the more vivid and/or problem-entailing translation examples, which I include here. Viires' translation is also used for comparative reasons, primarily to demonstrate the similarities and differences considering the 55-year gap between the two translations. Where relevant, the selected examples are set against the background of the Estonian culinary situation of the time. Anu Kannike's writings, especially *Moodsa elu õppetunnid* (Lessons of the Modern Life), have served as a valuable resource. The subchapter concludes with observations on translation strategies and the translator's voice within the sociocultural context.

The culinary culture of Estonia has briefly been covered in the previous subchapter (see 6.1) as well as have the translator's own eating habits and preferences, based on her archival letters of 1923 to her sister Erna (EKM EKLA f 243, m 9: 1) and written during the time when she translated *Kolm meest paadis*. Whether it was the translation of this book (which includes a considerable number of food items) that prompted Sillaots to raise the issue of food often in her letters, or simply life itself, which in the case of the two sisters located in two different countries, quite literally feeding the subject to them, is hard to tell. Both reasons seem plausible and have greatly inspired the emergence of this section of the dissertation.

English culture, including its culinary culture, was not overly familiar in the young Republic of Estonia. According to Anne Lange (2009: 151), stepping into the English cultural space occurred gradually during 1918–1940. English became the official first foreign language in Estonian schools in 1936 (ibid.). The increasingly popular home economics schools of the interwar Estonia started to introduce culinary traditions of foreign countries in the 1930s and the UK was among them (Kannike and Uiho 2022: 68). *Three Men in a Boat* was translated earlier, though, and Sillaots, who had not studied English at school, was unlikely to have any specific knowledge of the gastronomic specificities of the source culture. This historical and cultural context underscores the challenges faced by Sillaots in rendering English culinary references for an audience largely unfamiliar with them, highlighting the significance of her translation choices within the developing Estonian culture.

Culinary codes in two translations of *Kolm meest paadis* (*Three Men in a Boat*)

Various meat dishes formed the food group with the highest number of items (35) in the source text and the prevailing translation operation here was *naturalization by substitution*, with higher or lower degree of linguistic equivalence. For example, “Beefsteak” (e.g. Jerome 1994: 10), one of the cornerstones of English cuisine, is mentioned repeatedly in the original and was translated as “pipstükk” in 1923 (e.g. Jerome 1923: 9, 104). This term is a German loan (‘bibstück’) that has undergone a degree of Estonianisation. Despite its German origin, the

translation operation can be defined as *naturalization* since this was the word used in Estonian for ‘beefsteak’ at the time of translating. Unfortunately, the *Eesti etimoloogiasõnaraamat* (Estonian Etymology Dictionary) does not include this entry, but the *Õigekeelsussõnaraamat* (ÕS) (Dictionary of Standard Estonian) reveals a certain shift in meaning: in contemporary usage ‘pipsükk’ refers to “beefsteak or some other fine cut of meat” (ÕS 2018). At the same time, it needs to be kept in mind that considering the fairly recent food shortage at the time of translation as well as the generally modest culinary background of peasant Estonians, ‘pipstükk’ was likely associated with fine dining in the early 1920s. ‘Beefsteak’ is also used in other collocations in the novel for example, ‘beefsteak pie’ has been naturalised by substituting a more specific term with more general – simply “liha” (meat) (Jerome 1923: 20) or “lihapiirkad (e.g. ibid. 69) (‘meat pies’). The former operation could therefore also be categorised as *universalization*, where ‘pie’ has been deleted altogether. In contrast, in Viires’s 1978 translation, the term already appears as “biifsteek” (e.g. Jerome 1978: 9) in its domesticated modern form, while Viires’s version of ‘beefsteak pie’ is “lihavorm” (ibid. 60) (‘meatloaf’).

It is difficult to determine the exact proportion of beef in the Estonian diet at the beginning of the 1920s, but there is reason to believe that this type of meat was not widespread. Pork was – and still is – the meat that Estonians consume the most. Nevertheless, in a letter to her sister dated 8 March 1923, Sillaots reports that she has eaten “roast veal” (*vasika moorpraad*) that tasted “really good” (EKM EKLA f 243, m 9: 1, p 11/29). This suggests that veal was available, at least occasionally, in her social context. Interestingly, the English word ‘beefsteak’ may not have been familiar to her at the time.

“Eggs and bacon” (Jerome 1994: 31, 41), another pillar of British gastronomy, has been moderately naturalised as “munad ja sink” (‘eggs and ham’) in both the 1923 translation (e.g. Jerome 1923: 33, 44) and the 1978 retranslation (30, 39). At the time of both of the translations, the word ‘bacon’ may have been familiar for the Estonian public but was not yet part of everyday vocabulary – unlike today, when ‘peekon’ is a common term. Sillaots has also used this naturalising strategy for ‘bacon’ in one of her later translations, that of *Huckleberry Finni seikhused* (*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*) in 1932, where she had opted for “seakülg” (Twain 1932: 38) (‘pork side’)

‘German sausage’ (Jerome 1994: 136) is translated as “Saksa suitsuvorstikesed” (Jerome 1923: 154) (‘German smoked sausages’) in 1923. The diminutive suffix ‘-ke’ in ‘vorstikesed’ brings the translation a little closer to the source, which likely refers to smaller barbecue sausages similar to ‘bratwurst’. In the later translation, “viini vorstid” (Jerome 1978: 130) (‘Vienna sausages’ or ‘wiener’) also represents a moderately naturalising strategy, comparable to the 1923 version.

The second-largest category in the translation of meat dishes is *exoticization*, which, as is shown in some of the following examples, is combined with *naturalization* – a combination not accounted for in Delabastita’s framework. For example, “Irish stew” (Jerome 1994: 134) has retained its original, untranslated form and therefore has an exoticising effect in the 1923 translation (Jerome 1923:

152). Viires, by contrast, opts for a paraphrastic translation: “ühepajatoit iiri moodi” (Jerome 178: 128) (‘hotchpotch *a la* Ireland’). Sillaots must have struggled with this unfamiliar dish and, lacking any reliable reference material, chose to copy the source term. Her conscious intention to exoticise can surely be also considered; however, with regard to the general proportion of her translation strategies in the text, this seems unlikely. In her 1937 translation of *David Copperfield*, “a nice Irish stew” (Dickens 2000: 516) does not retain its source text form either but is accompanied by a footnote: “Iiri toit lambalihast ja aedviljast” (Dickens 1937: 29, vol 3) (‘Irish food made of mutton and vegetables’).

“Hot ham” (Jerome 1994: 13) represents a translation operation that is hard to classify and appears in several instances involving meat dishes. The term refers to cooked ham, ‘keedusink’ (‘boiled ham’) in contemporary Estonian, but is rendered by Sillaots as “küpse sink” (Jerome 1923: 13) (‘baked/mature ham’) and by Viires “‘tuline sink” (Jerome 1978: 13) (verbatim translation of ‘hot ham’). Neither version sounds natural in modern Estonian; therefore, adding the adjective ‘küpse’ in Sillaots’ version, or even more factitious ‘tuline’ in Viires’, creates an exoticising effect.

In the interwar Estonian Republic, particularly in the 1930s, the range of different semi-prepared culinary products increased significantly: a great variety of sausages and ham products entered the market (Kannike and Uibo 2022: 29), but the availability of hot ham cannot be confirmed by the sources available to me. During the Soviet era, all meat products were rather scarce, though they did exist. There is also a possibility that neither of the translators fully understood the exact meaning of the source phrase and went for the partial calque instead, Sillaots to a lesser extent and Viires to a greater extent, creating a slight alienation effect. While ‘küpse sink’ can be understood to some degree, it is hard to believe that in 1978 anybody spoke of ‘tuline sink’. Examples such as “hot bacon” (Jerome 1994: 115) – “kuuma küpsetatud sealiha” (Jerome 1923: 130) (‘hot baked pork’) – “praetud sealiha” (Jerome 1978: 110) (‘fried pork’) or “cold beef” (Jerome 1994: 115) – “külma loomaliha” (Jerome 1923: 130; Jerome 1978: 110) can similarly be categorised, on the one hand, as *naturalization*, and, on the other, as *exoticization*, primarily conveyed by the word-for-word translation of adjectives that sound unnatural in the target text. There is also one example where such an adjective has been omitted by both translators: “boiled beef” (Jerome 1994: 13) – “loomaliha” (Jerome 1923: 12; Jerome 1978: 13) (‘beef’).

Drinks formed the second largest group, consisting of 25 items, and again, *naturalization by substitution* was the prevailing translation operation. Both “brandy” (Jerome 1994: 33) and “wine” (ibid. 35) were rendered as “viin” (Jerome 1923: 38, 35) (‘vodka’/‘alcohol’) by Sillaots. It should be noted that in Estonia, the most widespread alcoholic drink at the time of translation was vodka, which, in the early 1920s, came with restrictions: it was sold at a rate of 0.5 litres per person a month (Kannike and Uibo 2022: 31). Wine production gained some momentum in the late 1920s (ibid.), but wine was not particularly popular in interwar Estonia. At the same time, ‘viin’ was often also an umbrella term for all alcoholic beverages, making it understandable that the more specific alcoholic

drinks, such as “sack” (Jerome 1994: 49), were also translated as “viin” (Jerome 1923: 54) in Sillaots’ version, while in the second translation they appear as “vein” (Jerome 1978: 48). Another noteworthy aspect is that considering the heyday of the influential Temperance Movement of the period and the fact that *Kolm meest paaadis* was issued in the ‘Home and School Literature’ series, even deletion of alcoholic beverages might have been expected, but this was not the case. In the 1978 translation, “vein” (Jerome 1978: 34) (‘wine’) and “brändi” (ibid. 31) (‘brandy’) occur in the present-day usage.

Some alcoholic drinks had obviously been so unfamiliar in Estonia at the time of the first translation that the translator opted for non-translation, copying the term directly from the source text. For example, “whisky” (e.g. Jerome: 1994: 19, 22, 35), which occurs in the source text on multiple occasions, retains its original form and spelling in the 1923 translation (e.g. Jerome 1923: 18, 23, 34). In contrast, the later 1978 translation uses its domesticated equivalent “viski” (Jerome 1978: 18, 21, 34). It suggests that such an alcoholic drink was largely unfamiliar in Estonia in the 1920s, hence the exoticising operation. On one occasion, however, Sillaots has transformed the “brandy” (Jerome 1994: 93) of the source text into “whisky” (Jerome 1923: 104). Hard to tell why it may have happened, was it just a mistake or did it sound more source-oriented for her? If so, then it could be categorised as *exoticization* “through the positive addition of foreign cultural signs” (Delabastita 1993: 39). Interestingly, whisky did not undergo the same transformation as ‘wine’ and ‘brandy’, which were rendered as vodka, as the examples above have shown.

Non-alcoholic drinks were also subject to *naturalization*. For example, “lime-juice” (Jerome 1994: 126) appears as “limonaadi-ekstrakt” (Jerome 1923: 143) (‘lemonade extract’) in the 1923 translation, whereas in the 1978 version it becomes “pudel sidrunimahla” (Jerome 1978: 120) (‘a bottle of lemon juice’).

Fishing, one of the main topics in one of the chapters of the story, introduces another significant category: fish. There are 15 fish-related items in the source text, all of which have been naturalised to varying degrees, with substitutions ranging from close equivalents to more culturally adapted terms.

While “pike” (Jerome 1994: 162, 167) is consistently and correctly rendered as “haug” in both translations (e.g. Jerome 1923: 184, 189; Jerome 1978: 155, 159), “perch” (Jerome 1994: 162, 163) has become “säinas” (Jerome 1923: 184) (‘ide’) in one instance and “koger” (ibid. 186) (‘crucian carp’) in another. Viires has translated it as “ahven” (Jerome 1978: 155, 156) in its exact equivalent form. Within this category, Sillaots’ translation shows more inconsistencies. For example, “dace” (Jerome 1994: 162, 164) is translated as “säinas” (Jerome 1923: 184) (‘ide’) as well as “koger” (ibid. 186) (‘crucian carp’) by Sillaots, whereas in Viires’ translation the exact Estonian equivalent “teib” (Jerome 1978: 155, 157) occurs in both cases.

Desserts and cakes (14 items) have all been naturalised with different degrees of equivalence. “Strawberries and cream” (Jerome 1994: 13) has undergone a transformation of “karumarjad vahukoores” (Jerome 1923: 12) (‘gooseberries in whipped cream’). It is unclear why strawberries were replaced by gooseberries

here, as elsewhere they are referred to as “maasikad vahukoorega” (Jerome 1923: 33) (‘strawberries with whipped cream’). However, the fact that ‘cream’ has become ‘vahukoor’ (‘whipped cream’) in the 1923 translation is remarkable – in the 1978 translation the same item is translated as “maasikad koorega” (Jerome 1978: 13, 30) (‘strawberries with cream’). Delabastita does not list *topicalization* in relation to the operation of *addition*, yet, classifying the current example as *historization* or *exoticization* would not be quite correct. The translator has just added some source culture context by adding the word ‘vahu’ (‘whipped’/ ‘clotted’) and thus topicalised the solution either consciously or unconsciously – brought the target text more into line with the source culture circumstances as this is exactly how strawberries are eaten in British culture. In Estonia, during the interwar period, the range of dairy products also expanded (Kannike and Uiibo 2022: 25). Whipped or clotted cream had been available already earlier, though primarily as the raw material for butter. In the letter to her sister Sillaots refers to it using the German word: “Buy some strawberries for my [birth]day and eat them *mit Schlagzahne*. My mouth is watering when I think about it now” (EKM EKLA f 243, m 9: 1, p 18/49). The dish was evidently familiar to the translator, but the German word was probably used just for fun – after all she was writing to her sister who resided in Germany at the time.

“Hot muffins” (Jerome 1994: 93) is another phenomenon apparently not known in the target culture neither in 1923 nor in 1978. Both translators resolved the problem through *naturalization*. Sillaots offered “kuumad pannkoogid” (Jerome 1923: 104) (‘hot pancakes’) in her translation, while Viires used “tulised saiakesed” (Jerome 1978: 89) (‘hot rolls’) in hers. As in some previous examples, the adjective ‘hot’ does not sound natural in this collocation in Estonian, especially the 1978 ‘tulised’.

With baked goods (10 items, which could not be classified as desserts and cakes), the only operation used in translation was *naturalization*. Some attention can be given to “dry toast” (Jerome 1994: 14) and bread in general. It is necessary to explain here that in Estonian ‘bread’ (‘leib’) stands for dark rye bread, whereas the white bread commonly known in European countries is called ‘sai’ (‘white bread’) in Estonian. Sillaots has translated ‘dry toast’ as “kuiv leib” (Jerome 1923: 13), Viires has used a more precise “rõstitud sai” (Jerome 1978: 13). ‘Bread’, however, has remained ‘leib’ in both translations (e.g. Jerome 1923: 75; Jerome 1978: 65), even if it is eaten with jam. The operation here can be classified as unintentional *naturalization*, i.e. direct translation where other options are not seen.

Another example worth highlighting is the translation of “long loaves” (Jerome 1994: 184), the bread that the main characters encounter in the French restaurant at the end of their trip. Sillaots’ translation is especially figurative: “kobedad saiad” (Jerome 1923: 208). The adjective ‘kobe’ can be translated in various ways depending on the context, for example, ‘mellow’, ‘loose’, ‘fluffy’. In this case ‘fluffy’ would be a suitable option, but the word ‘kobe’ is not widely used in today’s language and if it is, it seems rather to have a colloquial or even slang connotation of ‘good’ or ‘nice’. However, the word was probably much more common at the time of the first translation, in 1923. ‘Loaves’ have been

rendered “saiad” (ibid.) (‘white bread’) by Sillaots. Viires, on the other hand, has translated the phrase “pikad leivaviilud” (Jerome 1978: 176) (‘long slices of bread’) and thereby moved further from the source version.

Soups and sauces include 9 items and in terms of translation strategies, this category is no exception: *substitution* by *naturalization* is the operation used here. There is one example where *exoticization* can be considered and it is included among the examples below.

An interesting specialty, “beef tea” (Jerome 1994: 12), is translated into “rammuleem” (Jerome 1923: 11) (‘broth’) by Sillaots. As a *naturalization*, it is the exact equivalent to the source term. In the later translation, the translator has opted for simply “puljong” (Jerome 1978: 12) (‘bouillon’), which is commonly used nowadays.

The seemingly innocent “soup” (e.g. Jerome 1994: 13, 20) has been rendered consistently “leem” (e.g. Jerome 1923: 12, 20) (‘broth’) by Sillaots. Whether it was the commonly used word for soup at the time, the wish to avoid the Estonian ‘supp’ due to its German origin, or because ‘supp’ denoted also a sweet, dessert-like dish, is not entirely clear here. The latter option is mentioned by Kannike (2022: 23) as well as Sillaots herself, as evidenced by her letter to her sister, where she writes about wanting to make some “apple soup” (EKM EKLA f243, m 9: 1, p 36/105).

“Worcester over his chop” (Jerome 1994: 18), another highly culture-specific example, is transformed into “piprakaste” (‘pepper sauce’), which is put “liha pääle” (Jerome 1923: 17) (‘on the meat’) in 1923, but in 1978 appears as “Worcesteri kaste” (Jerome 1978: 17) (‘Worcester sauce’). Viires translates chop as “karbonaad” (ibid.), which is an equivalent to the source word. It seems unlikely that behind the Iron Curtain, in 1978 Estonia, Worcester sauce would have been better known than in 1923, yet, unlike Sillaots, Viires’ has chosen not to naturalise it.

“French sauces” (Jerome 1994: 184) is an example that differs from the otherwise dominant operation of *naturalization*. Sillaots has added the word ‘peened’ (‘fine’/‘posh’) to her translation: “peened Prantsuse kasted” (Jerome 1923: 208) (‘fine French sauces’), which is quite understandable considering the source narrative and Estonian cultural context. Thus, according to Delabastita, this constitutes a case of *exoticization* by offering the more explicit text, i.e. overtranslation. In terms of the plot, it occurs in the final act of the story, when the characters leave the river for the mainland and decide to dine at a French restaurant before returning home – the translator may have wished to visualise for the Estonian reader the special refinement of the French cuisine and the ambience of the setting. According to Kannike (Kannike and Uibo 2022: 34), French and Russian cuisine started to gain popularity in the 1920s and 1930s, at least in the bigger Estonian towns.

Vegetables (5 items) also include some cultural specificity worth illustrating with examples. The prevailing translation operation is still *naturalization*. “Pickles” (Jerome 1994: 15) entails a degree of cultural specificity one might expect Sillaots not to have been familiar with. In her 1923 translation ‘pickles’ appear as ‘kurgid’ (Jerome 1923: 15) (‘cucumbers’), demonstrating that she

was aware of the produce ‘pickles’ are made from. Viires, on the other hand, has translated them as “marineeritud kurgid” (Jerome 1978: 14) (‘marinated cucumbers’) and has come closer to the source item.

“Tomatoes” (Jerome 1994: 35, 38) is another example of *naturalization* by *substitution*. Sillaots’ translation presents them as “tomaadid” (Jerome 1923: 37, 41) (with double ‘a’, not like in present-day Estonian ‘tomatid’). The spelling reflects the fact that in 1920s tomatoes were relatively exotic and rare on Estonian tables; by the end of the decade some tomato varieties emerged, but the vegetable was “treated with caution and grown only by progressive larger farms” (Kannike and Uibo 2022: 24). There are also my family stories reporting good profits in the interwar period for growers, as the popularity of tomatoes increased.

The two remaining categories of fruit and meal courses, each represented by 5 items, are similarly to all the above-listed categories, translated using the operation of naturalisation by substituting the source text elements with the equivalents in the target text.

As the naturalising operation prevailed across all categories, it is impossible to say that certain culture-specific food groups were more or less familiar to the translator at the time of translating. What can be observed is the varying degree of equivalence achieved through *naturalization* within these food groups. When it comes to *exoticization*, present in almost all the categories, it mostly seems to result from the translator’s insufficient knowledge of the source culture and the lack of reference material. At the same time, there are some cases when conscious decisions can also be considered. Another of Sillaots’ translations from a slightly later period – *Huckleberry Finni seiklused* in 1932 – shows similar tendencies in terms of translation strategies. Toomiste (2023) found that the prevailing translation strategy of the culture-specific elements in *Huckleberry Finn* is also *naturalization/domestication*.

The translator’s voice, at least from the angle observed here, seems uncertain at times and not always consistent in her choices. There are some questionable, or rather unclearly motivated decisions, but also some ingenious translation solutions. The prevailing *naturalization* in the translation of food items corresponds to its genre as youth literature. Sillaots had started her career as a freelance translator a year before this translation was published, in 1922, and was still at the beginning of what would become a prolific translator’s career. Her translation principles had probably not emerged explicitly yet – let us keep in mind that the majority of her translation reviews were written in the 1930s. The voice that we hear here is not yet that of a mature, experienced translator we know from her later work in the 1930s. Yet, the humour of the source text has been well conveyed and the satisfaction and joy of this new profession shine through the translation.

The requirements imposed by the book series to which the publishing house assigned the translation, set its limits and influenced the choice of translation strategies. There are also intuitive decisions, which may have stemmed from the unfamiliarity of some of the source culture elements. The book series was published with an aim to minimize the costs, and the publisher Albert Org, chose

to print his books in Berlin. Although the manuscript of the translation has not survived or reached the archival collection, this product of modest circumstances appears to have undergone little editing. Based on Sillaots' letters to her sister Erna, it was probably just proofread (EKM EKLA f 243, m 9: 1, p 3/4). This, in turn, means that what we hear is largely the translator's voice and her uncut agency in textual terms, at least insofar as the limitations and restrictions of the series framework and the overall situation on the literary landscape permitted.

The development of the Estonian translation scene has been discussed earlier (see 3.1). What can be restated here is that the 1920s marked the beginning of the emancipation of translation as a genre in its own right. The translation discourse of the time reflects a strong target-language orientation: "translation is considered good if it adapts to the generally followed norms of the receiving culture, if the translation sounds natural" (Sütiste 2009: 912). Therefore, the naturalising translation operation corresponds to the norms of the day. Furthermore, the fact that the current book was placed, somewhat unexpectedly, within youth and children's literature required at least a degree of *naturalization*.

Both of the translations addressed here (1923 and 1978) are situated at a considerable historical and cultural distance from the source text. In the 1920s, the young Republic of Estonia was only beginning to make its first steps towards a deeper knowledge of English culture, and Sillaots' translation contributed to this process. By 1978, however, the Iron Curtain made it difficult (or near-impossible) for Estonian translators and readers to familiarise themselves with the source culture, something that would otherwise have been possible during the intervening decades. Therefore, translation problems regarding culture-specific items, particularly food, remained. In this sense, the clock seems to have gone backwards here. The 55 years between the two translations did not significantly narrow the cultural gap between the source and the target culture. In Viires's translation, some domesticated items of the source culture appear, such as 'viski' ('whisky') and 'biifsteek' ('beefsteak'), yet there are also instances of items that had not yet entered Estonian cultural space or collective memory over the 55 years. In order to cover the full range of reasons for the retranslation, it would be useful to analyse the translation not just from a single perspective, as in the current case, but as a whole (Torop 1999c: 63), i.e. from the different angles of linguistic, cultural and textual codes (Delabastita 1993: 39).

Retranslation is a double act. On the one hand, a retranslation constitutes a form of active forgetting – it creates new cultural memory and enables forgetting of the previous translation; on the other hand, it extends a hand to its predecessor, regardless of the reasons for its loss of topicality and place in cultural memory.

Translation practices, along with translators' choices and decisions, are mechanisms that shape cultural memory, and this is why forgotten translations also deserve a voice: they have much to offer. Let them contribute to our cultural history. Despite today's abundantly laid tables, let us also enjoy the tomatoes, Irish stew, hot ham, gooseberries and, why not, whisky from the rich pantries of our past translations. May they be served in moderate yet enjoyable portions for the common health of our cultural history and memory.

7. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

From the start of this research, Marta Sillaots' translator's agency has emerged as an integral aspect of her multipositionality. Her role as a translator was only one among several positions she occupied within the Estonian literary field – but it was the most prominent and widely recognised. The various fields she was active in informed one another, often serving as mutual points of departure and occasionally intersecting. Some of these multiple positions accompanied her – whether willingly or unwillingly – throughout her life. At the same time, these multiple activities provided a backdrop against which her translator's agency becomes both distinguishable and evident.

As has become clear throughout this dissertation, it was the archival materials that revealed the emergence of Sillaots' multipositionality and showed the dynamics among its different aspects. However, it seems that in the early years of her career – the first decades of the 20th century – the multiprofessional nature of her activities was more visible and more clearly delineated, making it possible to trace the reciprocal and causative relationships between her different fields of activity. This visibility can be attributed to the fact that this was the time she was seeking possibilities for self-realisation – her path in life. Later, when she had already gained recognition as an established translator with a solid reputation, her multipositionality became somewhat more discreet, though still distinguishable, as the archival evidence from the two translation events demonstrates. The archives also opened a window to the everyday – the “flesh-and-blood” (Pym [1998] 2014: 161) existence of this literary figure – serving as a bridge between the past and the present and making translation history tangible for the researcher.

The multipositional nature of Sillaots' agency is rooted in the formative influences of her childhood, including her family background, home environment, and the societal expectations and restrictions that shaped her professional interests and career. Her early experiences, together with her work as a teacher, led her to independently study child psychology and human nature. This knowledge informed her original literary works and transferred across her other activities through a sustained interest in human types and literary characters.

Due to her multiple activities in the Estonian literary landscape, I would like to propose the term ‘multipositional agency’ to describe Marta Sillaots and other translators who are active in other (literary) fields besides translating. Sillaots' positions in the Estonian cultural and social sphere can be identified as those of teacher, journalist, writer, literary and translation critic (with a specific expertise in children's and the so-called women's literature), and translator. Her work as a journalist acquainted her with many Estonian cultural and literary figures, strengthened her social nerve and paved the way for her role as a writer and literary critic. Sillaots' relatively unsuccessful literary debut, coupled with the harsh and patronising attitudes of male reviewers, likely contributed to her shift towards translating and literary criticism, effectively silencing her original literary voice in the works for adult readership for almost two decades (see 3.2.1). Despite the relatively modest debut as a writer, it should be borne in mind that

Sillaots' original literary production also covers several genres. Beside the stories she started out with, her literary legacy also includes novels written later in life and children's stories. In her archival letters there is also a reference to her poems, which seem not to have survived.

By the 1930s, Sillaots had established herself as a literary critic. She was someone whose opinion carried weight, as some of the reviewed authors have confirmed (see 3.2.3.2). Female characters were a special focus of her reviewing activity and her background as a teacher, which was, in critical context, more than once referred to by the male reviewers of her literary works (see 3.2.1 and 4.6.), played a role in her becoming an expert in the field of children's literature. At the same time, it should also not be overlooked that Sillaots expressed her willingness to review less important works. This was probably, at least partly, motivated by her financial circumstances – reviewing secured her income quicker than translating – but also because she had the skill to find something good even in the second- and third-rate works (see 3.2.3.2).

Sillaots' work for women's rights was not characterised by forcefulness; rather, she pursued this cause through tireless and prolific work in covering the topics such as women's lives, their aspirations, the hardships they face in society and their portrayal in literature, etc. These themes recur throughout her numerous articles and reviews in different periodicals, as well as in her literary works.

As an aspiring writer and a translator, Sillaots' seems to have been pushed towards this "softer" area within the Estonian literary landscape – despite her being a prolific translator, she still was not included into the list of the leading Estonian translators at the beginning of the 1930s (see 3.1.1). This dissertation has shown that children's literature was the domain where her authority and agency were indisputable – even the harsher critics of her translations (see 3.2.3.2) adopted a different tone when asking her advice on matters related to this field.

Sillaots' translator's position, agency and poetics were examined here in the framework of two translation events: Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finni seiklused* (1932) (*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*) and Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield* (1937) (see Chapters 4 and 5), complemented by the perspective of the translator's everyday in 1923 and 1951 as well as the 1923 translation of Jerome K. Jerome's *Kolm meest paadis* (see Chapter 6). Each translation event was analysed from the point of view of extratextual, paratextual and textual agency. I will follow the same structure in presenting the main findings on Sillaots' translator's agency and related aspects of her work, including everyday practices, before concluding with a synthesis of her translator's profile and agency.

7.1 Translator's Agency beyond the Text

There were both similarities and differences between the two translations – *Huckleberry Finni seiklused* and *David Copperfield* – and in the ways they evolved. Both translations ended up being published by a different publishing house that had initially started the process with Sillaots. In the case of *Huckleberry*

Finn, Noor-Eesti Publishing House had first sought Sillaots' opinion as an expert in children's and youth literature and subsequently offered her the job, but the translation was transferred to the Loodus Publishing House. As for *David Copperfield*, the book had been partially translated by Sillaots for Albert Org's Publishing House as early as the 1920s, but the project was halted because of financial problems at Org. When the Publishing House of Eesti Kirjanduse Selts became aware of the manuscript, it took over the project, which culminated in publication by EKS in 1937.

The correspondence between the translator and the publishing houses reveals the rather limited scope of Sillaots' extratextual translator's agency. She does exert her agency when consulted within her area of expertise (i.e. children's literature), but she is mostly not proactive. Her extratextual agency in the process is thus restricted: she largely accepts the terms set by the publishing houses (see also Gielen 2012a: 105) and her expertise remains confined to the domain of children's literature. In this case, we may say that Sillaots' agency is present, but remains subdued, overshadowed by the publishing houses control and the narrow confines of her recognized expertise. At the same time, this very recognition is important, as it testifies to the cultural capital she possessed and to the authority attributed to her within that particular literary field.

In both translation events, the transfer of her translations was accompanied by a clear undermining of her translator's agency. For example, in the case of *Huckleberry Finn*, the "initial revision" of the translation was swiftly generalized by Loodus Publishing House into a broader claim about the quality of Sillaots' translations (see 4.1). According to them, her translations often needed multiple corrections, which incurred extra cost for the publishing house because the text needed to be typeset anew. However, the number of corrections may not have been as extensive as Loodus expected, given that the time period between the completion of the translation and its publication was relatively short.

In the case of *David Copperfield*, the translator had to go to great lengths to meet the demands set by EKS. As for *Huckleberry Finn*, the existence of the manuscript and proof sheets makes it possible to address the extent of corrections (see 7.3), for *David Copperfield* such evidence is limited to correspondence, which documents repeated revision requests in 1930–1931 and a prolonged publication process culminating in release six years later. This delay also postponed the final settlement of Sillaots' fees until 1938, more than a half of which she had received in advance, mostly in the form of different EKS publications. Although Sillaots attempted to protect her rights, she was unable to secure an earlier payment date.

The only instances in which Sillaots attempted to exercise her agency were when she defended her use of Johannes Aavik's neologisms and requested that they be retained in *David Copperfield* and Maeterlinck's *Termitide elu*, which she translated for EKS concurrently in 1930–1931. These interventions largely conflicted with the publisher's linguistic norms and were mostly removed during editing. Manuscripts and correspondence thus provide valuable evidence of the

variety of translator's suggestions, even though final decisions regarding language use and remuneration remained with the publishing house.

Similarly to the case of *Huckleberry Finn*, Sillaots' correspondence with EKS shows how a translator's other professional roles could facilitate raising translation-related issues even if they did not function as direct "door-openers" for translation commissions. Sillaots' role as a reviewer for *Eesti Kirjandus* enabled her to approach EKS also with translation-related issues, though this did not guarantee positive responses from the publishers. This dynamic was reciprocal, as EKS could likewise approach her regarding their children's series and request (favourable) reviews from Sillaots, highlighting a relationship of mutual usefulness rather than equal agency.

The tight-knit nature of the Estonian publishing industry becomes evident in both translation events, particularly regarding the information about the potential "collisions" or existing translation manuscripts. Everyone knows everyone, news travels quickly and personal relationships play a significant role.

The protracted development of *David Copperfield*, spanning from 1923 to 1937 (or 1938, if measured by the final payment deadline), reflects not only Sillaots' relatively insecure position and agency as a translator, but also the socio-economical difficulties of the Estonian publishing industry in the early 1930s. The manuscript was put on hold for several years and reached publication only in 1937, when conditions improved. As for the translation of *Huckleberry Finn*, Loodus agreed to pay the same fee as Noor Eesti upon its translation and stated that this rate (4 cents for 5 ¼ corpus lines) exceeded their usual 2–3 cents per corpus line. *David Copperfield* was not intended for a very wide readership and was described by the publisher as an unprofitable endeavour, whereas *Huckleberry Finn* was seen as filling a gap in boys' literature within the children and youth segment, and was therefore considered a more profitable project.

The translation contract of *David Copperfield* was clearly weighted in favour of the publishing house, leaving the translator little room for negotiation and Sillaots ultimately accepted the terms imposed. Thus, based on the two translation events, we may infer that publishers were generally the dominant parties in such partnerships during the interwar period. Access to translation contracts (which are unavailable in this case), could further clarify these practices. As the *David Copperfield* case demonstrates, part of the fee was paid only after the publication and the additional work Sillaots undertook through multiple revisions went uncompensated.

The translation of *Huckleberry Finn* was completed in about two months, a pace characteristic to Sillaots throughout her career (see 3.2.3.1). Her surviving translation manuscripts from the interwar period are mostly handwritten, making it unclear whether she calculated her workload based on manuscript pages or the printed book. The published book comprises 320 pages, which would amount to roughly 7.3 printed pages per day, assuming a working period of about 44 days within two months.

Some archival materials, such as correspondence by Bernhard Linde and Johannes Aavik (outside the scope of this study), suggest that male translators

may have been more assertive and persistent in promoting their agendas and offering translations, even if they did not always succeed. By contrast, the examined archival collections contain no evidence of Sillaots initiating translation proposals; rather, she responded to publishers' inquiries (mostly concerning children's literature), requested translation tasks and generally accepted what was offered, on the terms provided.

7.2 Between the Margins: Mapping Translator's Paratextual Agency

While agency and voice are closely intertwined, they represent distinct yet complementary dimensions of the translator's presence in the translation process. Agency refers to the translator's capacity to act – through choices, negotiations, or strategies – within socio-cultural, institutional and economic constraints. It encompasses both proactive and reactive behaviours, shaped by external factors such as publishing practices, norms and power relations. In this study, agency has been examined across extratextual, paratextual and textual levels, as well as through multipositionality, which situates the translator within overlapping professional roles.

Voice, by contrast, is the manifestation of the translator's subjectivity in the text and its surrounding discourse, appearing explicitly in paratexts, or implicitly through stylistic choices and translation strategies. While voice signals individuality and interpretive stance, it does not necessarily entail autonomy, as translators may leave discernible traces even under strict constraints. Conversely, strong agency does not always result in a prominent voice, particularly when institutional control overrides individual preferences.

Both *Huckleberry Finn* (1932) and *David Copperfield* (1937) include translator's footprints in the form of forewords and footnotes. In the case of *Huckleberry Finn*, it can be said with full certainty that the footnotes are also the translators'. As for *David Copperfield*, neither the publishing house's nor the translator's archival collections contain the manuscript; thus, it cannot be stated with full certainty that the footnotes belong to the translator. However, the analysis of the translation event has shown that there is reason to believe that they are Sillaots'. Unlike contemporary practice, interwar Estonian publications did not indicate authorship of footnotes.

The translator's name is included in both translations, in line with EKS conventions of the 1930s: at the top of the verso of the title page of *Huckleberry Finn* and on the title page of *David Copperfield*. Later editions of *Huckleberry Finn*, the "comet's tail", reveal significant shifts. The 1954 Soviet joint edition with Anna Bergmann's translation of *Tom Sawyer* omits the names of both translators, reflecting the political repression that rendered Sillaots *persona non grata*. The 1956 edition, an almost identical copy of the 1954 edition, restored the translators' names, but the 1970 single-volume *Huckleberry Finn* edition incorrectly credits Anna Bergmann for the translation. Although the error is

corrected at the end of the book, it nevertheless reduces the visibility of the translator. By contrast, the 1991 new edition of *David Copperfield* explicitly acknowledges two translators, Lia Rajandi and Marta Sillaots.

The examination of the first editions reveals two forms of translator's paratextual agency: forewords and footnotes, which do more than signal the translator's presence; they actively construct a dialogic space between source text and its new cultural context. The foreword serves as an interpretive frame, signalling the translator's awareness of the literary significance of the original work and its author, while also guiding the readers' reception. Similarly, footnotes function as a site of mediation revealing the role of the translator as both interpreter and cultural mediator. Together these features underscore the translator's agency: the translator's active role in shaping the text's meaning and position within the target literary system. The brief foreword to *Huckleberry Finn* (also preserved in manuscript form) focuses mainly on Twain's life and locates the translator within Twain's literary legacy. The superlative epithets describing *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn* imply to the reader that the latter was selected for translation because of its merits and that the translator had a say in this, thereby linking her extratextual and paratextual agency. The translator's presence becomes explicit when addressing Twain's socio- and idiolectal language, which Sillaots declares impossible to reproduce fully. Instead, she reports replacing the "uncultivated" and "gibberish" speech of the characters, with Estonian colloquialisms and folk language, a strategy that also functions as a pre-emptive response for the potential criticism.

The foreword to *David Copperfield*, of which no manuscript survives, differs markedly in tone, and functions more as a literary-critical essay than as a translator's intervention, leaving Sillaots' translator's voice largely implicit. Besides being longer (4.5 pages), it also dedicates most of its space to the author's biography (similarly to *Huckleberry Finn*'s foreword), listing his major literary works and engaging critically with some of them, *David Copperfield* among others. Despite the fact that *David Copperfield* also includes the marked dialectal features of some characters, this time it is not commented on in the foreword and also not conveyed in the Estonian translation. The archival correspondence regarding *Huckleberry Finn* shows that Sillaots proposed to write a short foreword that the publisher agreed to, whereas in the case of *David Copperfield* it is not known whose initiative it was.

Later editions show an even greater reduction of paratextual presence. Neither the Soviet nor 1989 edition of *Huckleberry Finn* contain a foreword, leaving no "comet's tail" in this respect. The 1991 edition of *David Copperfield* has an afterword, written by Henno Rajandi, which explicitly comments on Sillaots' earlier translation. The afterword states that the retranslation treats Sillaots' earlier version quite loosely and seeks closer adherence to Dickens, motivated by the assessment that the earlier translation had become outdated.

The 1991 afterword by Rajandi seeks to reframe Dickens' reception in Estonia by positioning the new translation as a response to the ageing of the earlier version and to the changed reader expectations. While more than half a century

separates the two translations, the decision to credit both translators Lia Rajandi and Marta Sillaots, ensures recognition of the first translator's contribution. The extent to which Sillaots' voice is heard in this new edition, will be summarised in the next subchapter.

Examination of the footnotes in both translations reveals several shared features in paratextual agency. Once the translation was approved, the translator was also granted the authority to add footnotes. *Huckleberry Finn*'s existing manuscript showed that there were only a few cases where the editor(s) had deemed the translator's footnotes unnecessary. The first edition of *Huckleberry Finn* had 29 footnotes by Sillaots, mostly regarding the cultural realia of the U.S. southern states but also concerning some other far and exotic countries such as India. As for *David Copperfield*, the three volumes of the 1937 edition include 35 footnotes, addressing mostly British cultural specifics, though the extent of editorial revision remains unknown.

Audience expectations seem to have been behind Sillaots' use of footnotes. Assumptions about what the readers were likely to know or not know influenced what she chose to explain, allowing her to fulfil the educational aims of both of the publications. At the same time, the phenomena addressed in the footnotes also depend on the translator's own knowledge and the availability of relevant reference literature. The detailed analysis of the translator's paratextual agency regarding footnotes has shown that her paratextual practices were modelled according to the text at hand. The relatively small number of footnotes in relation to the size of the book *David Copperfield* can probably be attributed to its assumed narrower readership, expected to be more familiar about the cultural context. *Huckleberry Finn* was aimed for young readers and required more explanation and instruction. At the same time, Sillaots' had exercised her paratextual agency with remarkable skill and ingenuity, for example, in footnoting her translations of the linguistic puns in *David Copperfield*. There, she explains her decisions and choices, among other things. These remarks strongly suggest that the *David Copperfield* footnotes were also written by Sillaots.

In the 1991 edition of *David Copperfield*, all the footnotes were removed, whereas the Soviet and the 1989 edition of *Huckleberry Finn* contained some edited footnotes, along with additional new ones. This development partly "dissolves" the first translator's paratextual voice, even if traces of it remain. Most of the changes were introduced by Tiidus, the editor of the 1954 edition; subsequent Soviet editions are simply reprints with different editors' names. Among the 6 marginally edited footnotes, some involve single word omissions, while others perpetuate an error present from the first 1932 edition through the last 1970 Soviet edition, for example, confusing the *Domesday Book* with *Magna Carta*. Other edits include replacing colloquial name adaptations with pronunciation guidelines. A slight ideological twist can be suspected in the footnote concerning the surname of the last French king, Capet, as well as among the 13 footnotes added in the Soviet editions. However, the latter mostly comment on the historical figures not footnoted in Sillaots' 1932 translation. The 40 footnotes in the 1989 edition bear witness to the changed socio-political circumstances.

16 of these originated from Sillaots, 12 from the Soviet editions, and 12 were newly added. The latter largely explain biblical figures and topics, which were not necessary for the 1932 readers, but due to the cultural disruption had to be explained to the young readers of 1989.

The absence of footnotes in the 1991 edition of *David Copperfield* effectively silences Sillaots' paratextual voice. This is to some extent a natural process that was witnessed also with *Huckleberry Finn* – times change and so do the cultural phenomena and readers' knowledge of them. At the same time, the later (1954, 1956, 1970, 1989) editions of *Huckleberry Finn* had kept the footnotes, a number of which were Sillaots' original. The target group of Twain's work was, of course, a different one and the publishing practices of the Soviet period had not changed in terms of footnotes that much. Notably, the presence of 16 original footnotes in the 1989 edition – 20 years after Sillaots' death – attests to the enduring, if diminished, paratextual agency.

By contrast, the absence of footnotes as well as in-text explanations in the 1991 *Copperfield* arguably weakens the educational function and may render the Dickensian world somewhat less colourful and accessible. In this respect, the 1937 publication of the book could be described using Pekka Kujamäki's words about another translation he examined: "The use of footnotes here is rather a question of the general aims and functions of the publication: it is precisely with these delicate explanations that the translation gets its specific time-bound polishing" (2001: 56). The two editions of *Copperfield* thus demonstrate that the translator's paratextual presence and agency can operate to bring the readers closer to the source text, even though reader competence, editorial priorities and co-translational decisions inevitably change over time.

Thus, such a seemingly extraneous and small paratextual element – footnotes – can be illuminating as their presence or absence mirrors broader societal, ideological and institutional shifts. Later editorial interventions, evolving readership knowledge and changing publishing norms all shape these outcomes, often excluding the original translator from further paratextual agency. The existence or absence of commentaries can be regarded as a translation norm according to Lange (2015: 148) and the above-described paratextual aspect of the translation events can confirm that footnotes were more common in the interwar Estonian Republic and at the Soviet times than they are today.

The gradual "dissolution" of the translator's paratextual visibility in later editions is nevertheless inevitable. As time goes by, the changing social processes with the accompanying restrictions or freedoms leave their mark on book publishing, including paratexts, giving a stronger voice to editors, who can adapt translation to these changing norms and/or ideological shifts, especially when the translator is no longer present to revise the manuscript.

7.3 Between the Lines: Mapping Translator's Textual Agency

Huckleberry Finni seiklused allows for a reconstruction of the translation's genesis, thanks to the preserved 1932 manuscript with the translator's and editor's corrections, supplemented by corrected proof sheets of some chapters and a test copy of the book. Besides the translator, these materials also reveal the contributions of other agents: editors, proofreaders, etc. – the multiple translatorship involved. As mentioned, no comparable archival record exists for *David Copperfield*: apart from correspondence, the only surviving sources are the copies of the 1937 publication with the translator's own corrections, made presumably in the 1940s.

The correspondence between Noor-Eesti and Sillaots shows no disputes regarding the quality of the translation of *Huckleberry Finn*. Although the correspondence between Sillaots and Loodus Publishing House has not been preserved, the preconception about Sillaots' translation quality, the short time span between the translating and the publication indicate that there could not have been extensive editing and quality problems. It also became clear that the proof sheets were not sent to Sillaots, even if she had requested them from Noor-Eesti. Whether this request was forgotten, ignored, or replaced by a new agreement between the publishing house and the translator can only be guessed.

The surviving manuscript contains corrections by Sillaots and possibly two other editors, while the proof sheets include interventions by the Loodus editor Helmut Pürkop. It is likely that the manuscript had been edited by Noor-Eesti and proofread by Loodus. The manuscript corrections are mostly marginal, concerning word order, some minor lexical/stylistic issues and orthography. The only editor who it was possible to identify was the above-mentioned Pürkop. He seems to have been involved at the proofreading stage, and he made different types of corrections. As noted, the translator had no chance to correct the proof sheets. The detailed account of corrections is given in 4.3; therefore, let it merely be mentioned here that the proof sheets were corrected more than the manuscript. The editor's corrections seem to have been meant for increased fluency of the target text; they also bear clear signs of comparison with the source text. An intriguing finding is that Pürkop has in some cases levelled down the translators' aim of marking the characters slang, socio- and idiolect or dialectal features. It has not been done extensively and does not silence the voice of the translator, though. The text has remained largely as it was in the manuscript version. As demonstrated in the previous subchapter on paratextual agency, once the negotiations were finished, the translator was free to make her choices and exercise her discretion.

Based on the correspondence discussed in 7.1, the translation process of *David Copperfield* was not as smooth as that of *Huckleberry Finn* and the translator was asked to revise the manuscript several times. EKS systematically compared the translation with the original and found various shortcomings, such as omitted sentence segments, loss of Dickens' humour, etc. In one of the later revisions, she is told to revise the syntax, as she tended to put the verbs at the end of the

sentences. Putting verb at the end of the sentence was another one of Aavik's novelties Sillaots tried to implement but was often not allowed due to editors' intervention. At the same time, Sillaots, never refused to revise her own translations and took the suggestions into account without any objections. On the rare occasions when she tried to explain her choices and decisions, they were often not enough to convince the publishing house – they had the final say. However, Sillaots managed to use at least some of Aavik's innovations, for example, 'sulnis', in the translation of *Copperfield*.

Given the dynamics and development of Sillaots' translator's agency, it is worth summarising the revisions she made to *David Copperfield* after its publication in the 1940s. It is unclear whether these corrections were requested in preparation of a new edition or undertaken on her own initiative. Most of the revisions aim at a greater closeness to the source text, both in terms of vocabulary and syntax. A second sizable group of self-corrections improve the target text, although these changes are sometimes difficult to categorize as clearly source- or target oriented. Another set of corrections reflect language change, including declination and conjugation patterns, outdated vocabulary and closed or open compounds. The new socio-political (i.e. Soviet) order did not leave its mark on the corrections and, as we know, Sillaots was unlikely to introduce such corrections into her translated text even if asked.

It is also relevant that during the early Stalinist period in Estonia, literary translated texts themselves were mostly not manipulated. It was the paratexts (fore- and afterwords, footnotes, comments, etc.) that served to guide the readers towards the 'correct' interpretations of the text. This was the case with another of Dickens' translation by Sillaots, *Pickwick-klubi järelejäänud paberid* (*The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club*), published in 1947 (see Steinberg 2017), where an ideologically reliable editor was chosen to supply the afterword and comments. These paratextual interventions foregrounded ideologically "correct" aspects of the text and indicated how it should be perceived.

As noted earlier, both translations have a "comet's tail" of later editions. Based on the close examination of the sample chapter, it can be said that *Huckleberry Finn* was not extensively edited in 1954, the first of the Soviet editions. There are only a very few minor changes that can be attributed mostly to the changed linguistic conventions, in addition to a small number of corrections indicating that the editor, Hardi Tiidus, of the 1954 edition had consulted the source text. These corrections were made keeping in mind the readability, fluency and organic sounding of the target text, moving away from the source text to some extent. Another emerging feature of the editor's corrections was that Aavik's word order (e.g. verb at the end of the sentence) was now often applied. Thus, Tiidus effectively reinstated forms that Sillaots had used in her first manuscript. It is also noteworthy that apart from one example (see 4.5), the new 1954 edition displayed no signs of ideological intervention in the text. The 1954 and 1956 editions are identical.

The only difference between the 1954 (1956) and 1970 editions of the examined chapter concerns a minor detail, the translation of 'tiptoeing', suggesting no

largescale alterations in the 1970 edition. We therefore have reason to believe that once again the editorial intervention did not silence the translator's voice in the text of the later Soviet editions of *Huckleberry Finn*. The agency of Sillaots' translation remained intact even when she was in a Siberian prison camp.

The 1989 edition marks a clear departure. It was reworked to reflect Jim's African American vernacular, whereas the other socio- and idiolectal features marked in the source text have not found their way into the translation. The remaining corrections are quite marginal and do not twist the translator's voice in textual terms.

A notable archival discovery, the 1954 translation manuscript of *Huckleberry Finn* translated by Rudolf Sirge, has further complicated the understanding of Sillaots' translator's agency during her turbulent times. As an apparent attempt to overscribe and/or erase Sillaots from the translation history of this particular work, a Soviet writer and literary functionary translated the work "anew", but being caught in the changing translation canons and conventions as this research hypothesises, his endeavour resulted in the plagiarism scandal. The new translation of the work was either commissioned by the Soviet Estonian only publishing house at the time, Eesti Riiklik Kirjastus, or offered by Sirge himself. The fact that Sirge had used Sillaots' translation extensively must have seemed an acceptable practice to him. However, after Stalin's death the previously acceptable way of conduct – using the translations of the non-reliable "bourgeois" translators extensively in the "new" Soviet translations – was not approved any more. The plagiarism scandal reached the pages of a national newspaper. Although Sillaots was not named, the controversy recast her translation and agency in a new light.

Despite the 57-year gap between the 1932 and 1989 editions, *Huckleberry Finn* was only minimally edited, whereas the new *David Copperfield* (1991) represents a full retranslation, albeit crediting Marta Sillaots as co-translator alongside Lia Rajandi. The close-read sample chapter has shown that only very few fragmentary pieces of Sillaots' translation remain in the retranslation of *David Copperfield*, although evidence suggests that the first translation was present on the new translator's desk. Sillaots' sentence structures rarely find their way to Rajandi's translation. Moreover, details that Sillaots had missed in the source text were recovered by Rajandi. Consequently, Sillaots' voice is faint, and her textual agency is almost "dissolved" in the 1991 edition.

The considerable 54-year interval between the *David Copperfield* translations, especially in terms of linguistic change, is apparently one reason for the retranslation. As outlined in Henno Rajandi's afterword to the new edition, there were also other considerations besides the change of linguistic conventions.

When comparing the 1937 and 1991 editions of *David Copperfield*, both can be seen as rooted in their cultural context. Each remains faithful to the source, trying to convey Dickens' realia, humour, detailed descriptions, moods and the atmosphere. Both manage to strike a reasonable balance between source-closeness and target-readability. Lia Rajandi's translation tends to move a little closer to the source text; at the same time there are also some examples, where

Sillaots' has remained more source-oriented, sometimes, at the expense of target fluency. Rajandi's greater attention to detail places her probably closer to Dickens while still producing a fluent and well-readable target text. Largely, the aims outlined by Henno Rajandi in his afterword have been achieved by Lia Rajandi.

A broader question emerges when comparing *Huckleberry Finn* and *David Copperfield*: why was their fate so different, why was the former minimally edited and the latter fully retranslated? Both first appeared in interwar Estonia, and their later editions (1989 and 1991) were published in the same transitional post-Soviet moment. Any explanation remains hypothetical. One possibility is that the continuous Soviet-era republication of *Huckleberry Finn* created the illusion that the text had already been sufficiently updated, even though the 1989 edition clearly involved new footnotes and sociolect marking. Alternatively, *Huckleberry Finn* may have been more adaptable to linguistic and cultural change.

The near-complete retranslation of *David Copperfield* may also stem from its prolonged and uneven publication history. Much of the translation was completed well before its 1937 release, and despite the revisions, it may have seemed outdated for the readers in 1991, 54 years later. In the absence of manuscripts and other pre-print materials, the extent of earlier editorial intervention remains unknown. In contrast, *Huckleberry Finn* appears to have had more "life breathed into it", to use Sillaots' own metaphor, than *David Copperfield*. This intangible quality, together with the prolonged and perhaps sometimes strained publication process, may have shaped the divergent alternatives, though, as said, these observations remain speculative.

Another factor is that *David Copperfield* was never (re)published during the Soviet period, despite Dickens being ideologically acceptable, resulting in limited readership. The modest 1937 print run, the scarcity of copies and Sillaots' status as a *persona non grata* further reduced its circulation. While the 1991 retranslation restores access to the novel, whether it has been fully integrated into Estonian literary culture and canon, remains uncertain – a reminder that the fate of literary translations is shaped by multiple interacting variables beyond the translators' control.

7.4 Beyond Words: Translator's Everyday Agency

A key question of this research is whether the study of the translator's multi-positional agency can be expanded beyond textual analysis to include the translator's lived, material circumstances. Although any retrospective account of a past life is mostly textual – memoirs, articles, manuscripts, letters, or other materials – Sillaots' archival collection renders her life and everyday unusually tangibly, bringing the days lived over 100 years ago closer to the present.

Sillaots belongs to a relatively small group of privileged female translators whose archival collections have survived, albeit fragmentarily. This may be explained by the fact that translators often work in domestic spaces, where professional and everyday life intersect. In Sillaots' case, letters to her sister Erna

provide insight into her daily routine, notably through references to food, thus linking translation history with social history (see 6.1). A comparison of 1923 and 1951 reveals a stark contrast: in the former the dining table and the writing desk coexist, whereas by 1951 professional translation was no longer possible.

Examining Sillaots' everyday also offers a window onto broader societal and cultural change, including shifts in Estonian food and eating habits. We witness how major societal changes occur and bring along changes in individual lives. An unexpected outcome was that, despite the dramatically changed conditions of 1951 – resulting in the limited agency and scope of activities, compounded by the loss of her professional output, the translator's food did not change that radically, although she had to ask for it. On the one hand, the fact that Sillaots could retain at least some of her eating habits while being imprisoned seems to be compensating for the lost professional output and contribute to her agency even if to a limited extent. On the other hand, relying on others in order to preserve at least a part of her everyday, her eating habits, again tells us of the diminished and limited agency. Strong family ties, however, enabled her to preserve a degree of continuity in everyday life, even under conditions of incarceration.

Food as a culture- and location-specific phenomenon, offers insight into national eating habits, regional peculiarities and the development of Estonian food vocabulary. The fact that Sillaots was both the translator and author, whose primary tools were words, may explain why we are able to learn so much about her daily life. Writing was as natural a part of her everyday existence as eating.

By observing the “forgotten” 1923 translation of Jerome K. Jerome's *Kolm meest paadis* (*Three Men in a Boat*) alongside Sillaots' letters from the same year (see 6.2), translation emerges as a culturally situated reception space (Torop 1999b: 21–22). This perspective also contributes to the evolutionary or diachronic aspect of translation history (ibid. 57) – its linguistic and contextual aspects – the development of the translation in time and space (ibid. 60), leading to the reasons behind retranslations. The cultural-historical aspect (ibid. 64) is also revealed in the process, showing if and how the translator's voice resonates with the sociocultural context and with the translation norms and principles of the day. Such analysis can activate cultural memory through translation history (Sütiste 2012: 155). Food, as cultural realia, can be easily identified in the text and, at the same time, be significant from the cultural-historical perspective. It is equally important in the source and target texts and carries non-linguistic potential – food can be visualised in the readers' imagination and represented in other non-verbal ways. It is likely to engage the reader, since he/she has a personal connection to it.

Periods of transition in translation culture tend to amplify the translator's voice and agency, as the field is still defining its norms, limits and principles. Even inexperienced translators may gain greater agency at such moments. Overlooked or “forgotten” translations can therefore reveal individual development, broader cultural processes and the conditions that later give rise to retranslations.

7.5 Tracing Explicit and Implicit Poetics in *Huckleberry Finni seiklused* (Chapter 2, 1932) and *David Copperfield* (Chapter 7, Vol 2, 1937)

When addressing the translator's implicit poetics, that is the translation principles Sillaots applied in her own translations (see Torop 1999c: 50–51), it is reasonable to return to the first editions of *Huckleberry Finni seiklused* (1932) and *David Copperfield* (1937), as these likely reflect her poetics in its purest form, with minimal editorial intervention. Comparing Sillaots' implicit poetics with her explicit poetics – her declared principles articulated in reviews, essays and paratexts – offers valuable insight into how her stated ideals align with or diverge from the strategies realized in practice.

In *Huckleberry Finn*, a central feature is close adherence to the source sentence structure, sometimes down to punctuation. Long and complex sentences are frequently retained almost intact, with only minor lexical shifts, such as the naturalisation of 'witches' as 'vaimud' ('ghosts'). This structural fidelity links Sillaots' practice to contemporaneous translations, notably Tammsaare's *Lord Jim* (1931), which similarly preserved source syntax (Lange 2015).

By contrast, in *David Copperfield* greater syntactic adaptation is evident. Dickens's long compound sentences are often shortened or rearranged to maintain Estonian readability and fluency, though modifications remain generally moderate. Typical changes include adjustments in word order and sentence division, as illustrated in Chapter 7 of volume 2 (1937). These shifts were largely dictated by target-language coherence, rather than by a departure from source orientation.

In *Huckleberry Finn* most structural changes concern punctuation and the segmentation of long sentences (see 4.3). While splitting colloquial source sentences may flatten their flow, this is compensated by vivid Estonian colloquialisms, preserving the spoken quality of the dialogue. At the same time, such passages expose occasional semantic slippage, as in the rendering of 'a bothersome lot' as 'hirmus hulk', where quantity overrides the sense of nuisance. As this example shows, colloquial speech poses particular risks, requiring inventive compensation strategies and increasing the likelihood of error, especially given Twain's heavy use of slang, sociolects and idiolects.

There are instances when the translator's source-faithfulness in *Huckleberry Finn* was curtailed by the editors. For example, "That ain't no sort of style" (Twain 2001: 174) was rendered by the translator following the source text: "Ses pole mingit stiili" (EKM EKLA f 56, m 522: 0, manuscript p 34). However, the editor has chosen a more idiomatic but less source-faithful option: "See pole kellegi õige asi" (ibid. proof sheets p 5) ('This is not the right thing at all'). In general, Sillaots' translation abounds in ingenuous and natural-sounding Estonian idioms and popular phrases (see 4.3). These examples illustrate how Sillaots skillfully balanced source-text fidelity with the natural flow of Estonian, often enriching the translation with idiomatic expressions that enhance the readability while preserving the spirit of the original.

As the extent of editorial intervention in *David Copperfield* cannot be reconstructed, one can only note that stylistically, Sillaots has done her best to convey the Dickensian atmosphere, for example, the wordplays and puns mentioned in one of the previous subchapters. At the same time there have been features that Sillaots has missed, such as the sociolects and dialectal features. This is common to both *David Copperfield* and *Huckleberry Finn*. However, some of these linguistic features, at least in *Huckleberry Finn*, were marked and compensated for by other means, for example, popular expressions, some colloquialisms, etc. Sirge's comments about a woman of *Töchterschule* background not being suited to translate "boys' literature" (see 4.6) seem unjust. Sillaots' and the editors have gone to great lengths to make the text sound natural for Estonian (young male) readers. The direct speech of the boys is sufficiently "rough" and realistic, despite the target-text dominance that levelled certain source text features.

Sillaots consistently aimed to balance fluency and naturalness in Estonian with fidelity to the source text, a demanding equilibrium that, in the case of *Huckleberry Finn*, resulted in a translation that is still read in the 21st century and not found necessary to retranslate. Despite some minor issues – bearing in mind that at the time Estonia was only just entering the Anglo-American cultural space – Sillaots' translation has become a part of our literary culture and has been embraced by several generations of Estonian (young) readers, as evidenced by 6 new editions and reprints (1954, 1956, 1970, 1989, 2005, 2015). The situation differs markedly with *David Copperfield*. A textual comparison with Lia Rajandi's 1991 retranslation shows that there is very little left of Sillaots' initial translation. What might have been the translation's fate had Sillaots' revised version of the 1940s been published can merely be hypothesised.

When distilling Sillaots' implicit translation poetics from the two translations addressed and set it against the background of her explicit poetics and Gielen's study (2012a), one of the outstanding key words in her translation reviews is style. According to Gielen (2012a: 106), the style of the author and the one of the translator have to tally but, at the same time, the translator has to have respect towards the original. "Vulgarising the atmosphere of the original" (Sillaots: 1930: 84) and "mistakes against the original's style" (ibid.) are the signs of disrespect. It is debatable in *Huckleberry Finni seiklused* and *David Copperfield* whether the relative lack of idio- and sociolects of the characters in translation is disrespectful towards the original – in the case of the former the translator has acknowledged the problem as visible in the foreword of the translation and tackled it in the way she thought was best. The absent sociolect and dialectal features of *David Copperfield* have not been stated explicitly by the translator in the paratext of the translations. The certain loss of the style of the original (1934a: 334), which Sillaots' had condemned in one of her reviews, is therefore present in both of these translations. As for the vulgarising its atmosphere, by which Sillaots meant stylistic inadequacy and inappropriate register, I dare say neither of the observed translations bear the signs of it. She has tried to compensate for it either by textual means or paratextually (e.g. footnoting the puns). The

figurative expressions alongside the other solutions contribute to melting the translations “into a new work of art” (Sillaots 1933: 42) and trying to “breathe life into the translation” (ibid.). As it has been mentioned in one of the previous chapters (see 3.2.3.3), it seems that the 1937 edition of *David Copperfield* has a little less life in it. This, of course, may not be the fault of the translation, but also reflect the style of the original.

Lexical and syntactic fluency in the target text is another core feature in Sillaots’ translational thinking, clearly foregrounded in her reviews, as shown by both the present study and Gielen’s article (2012a: 107). Whether Sillaots has conformed to that principle in the two translations is hard to assess without knowledge in historical linguistics. Although from today’s perspective, there are not many instances where verbatim translation has been opted for “while there are good Estonian options available” (Sillaots 1932a: 568); most of these occasions have been edited out in *Huckleberry Finn*.

Sillaots repeatedly foregrounds avoidance of the “foreign effect” (1930: 84; 1932a: 568) in sentence structure in her reviews and this principle clearly informs both translations examined. Despite the fact that the sentences in the target text may occasionally copy the source text structure, she has skillfully managed to make them sound natural and fluent in Estonian. Syntactically, in both of the observed translations there are some quite natural instances of minor deviations from the original (e.g. dividing the source clauses into separate sentences in the target text) due to the syntactic differences between the two languages, and very few more notable ones (e.g. the notably shortened target text sentence of *David Copperfield*, see 5.3). Direct speech remains organic in both works, fitting the Southern U.S context of *Huckleberry Finn* and the Victorian British setting of *David Copperfield*. In the later editions of *Huckleberry Finn*, only very few corrections have been made regarding the sentence structure as we have seen. This, however, is not the case with *David Copperfield*’s later edition (see 5.3) as Gielen has also confirmed (2012a: 110–112).

Sillaots has explicitly argued that lexical inaccuracies and excessive use of foreign loanwords should be especially avoided in youth literature (1934b: 383) and that translating for young readers demands extra attention and dedication (ibid.; 1932b: 639). The educational aim of translated literature, which should cultivate (not just the young) readers’ taste, is brought out by Gielen, too (2012a: 107). In both *Huckleberry Finn* and *David Copperfield* there are no foreign loanwords used or noteworthy lexical inaccuracies found. The educational aim of the works is visible also in the existence of footnotes that explain mostly the culture-specific phenomena.

Most interwar Estonian translation norms (see 3.1.2) are compatible with Sillaots’ explicit and implicit translation poetics. Sillaots’ translations of *Huckleberry Finn* and also *David Copperfield* took place in the period of degermanising Estonian language, culture and translation, which has been elaborated on above (see 3.1.3). It also coincides with the consequent rise in Anglo-American translations and a similar upheaval in the fields of both translation and children’s literature as independent literary domains. We have also seen that

target language and culture have been dominant in the translation – its fluency and values are reflected by the relative “levelling of the source linguistic markers”, which is characteristic also to other Estonian translations of the period (Lange 2015: 112).

A key translational goal of the period, articulated by Gustav Saar as the harmonious functioning of the internal and external form (Saar 1927: 753), can assumedly be attributed to Sillaots’ practice, even though this balance may at times unsettle the relationship between the original and the translation. As for being the author’s soulmate to grasp his/her worldview and the original’s style, which were also prerequisites of good translation outlined by the translation critics (e.g. Saar 1927: 755 and Palm 1932: 124) of the period, it is quite complicated to assess. Sillaots was familiar with Twain’s and Dickens’ heritage, she knew the value of both literary works and understood their lexical and linguistic peculiarities, even if she could not convey all of them all in her translation. Thus, the author’s “sense of style” (Palm 1932b: 124) can be seen as largely captured in both translations: the works function in the target language and for the target readership, in line with the contemporary norms of source fidelity (see Palm 1932a: 20), with some compensating mechanisms adopted by the translator to convey the linguistic uniqueness of the original (e.g. popular/ colloquial/ dialectal lexical features that Sillaots employed to mark the socio- or idiolect of the characters). It is quite remarkable that despite having no or very few quality aids for translating (the shortage of foreign dictionaries, which Palm had pointed out in 1932 (1932b: 128), Sillaots managed to translate these Anglo-American source texts abounding with dialectal, slangish, etc. features in such a short time. Ultimately, Sillaots’ practice exemplifies the principles she herself valued the most: dedication, care and respect for the original, which recur more consistently in her explicit translation poetics than the ideal of authorial “soul-mateship” and are borne out both explicitly and implicitly in her translations.

Despite being an established translator and reviewer by 1932, Sillaots was not included into Palm’s list of “good translators” which featured only male translators such as Suits, Tuglas, Saareste, Semper and Oras (Palm 1932a: 28). Sillaots still had to prove herself as publishing houses did not accept her work for granted.

8. CONCLUSIONS

Examining the life of Marta Sillaots' and the way she negotiated her multipositional agency from different angles, including the framework of translation event as extratextual, paratextual and textual agency, accompanied by insights into the translator's everyday life, demonstrates that the study of translator's agency can be productively extended beyond textual categories to include working conditions and embodied, lived experiences.

The complex nature of the translator's agency (Lange 2015: 122) is well illustrated in the extratextual aspects of the two translation events, for example, the negotiation processes of the translations, which can be followed only due to the existence of archival correspondence. In one of the cases (*Huckleberry Finni seiklused*), the publishing house proposed that Sillaots undertake a translation and, at the same time, asked for her opinion about the literary work, which is due to her already established role as an expert in the field of children's literature, to whom publishing houses regularly turned for advice. In the case of *David Copperfield*, the publishing house was aware that Sillaots had the translation manuscript, and it was easy to reach out to her as their associate and prolific reviewer with the journal *Eesti Kirjandus* (published by EKS, the publishing house that issued *David Copperfield*). Sillaots could also approach the publisher with translation issues and the latter, in turn, could ask for her opinion regarding children's literature. The subject-dependent variation in the tone of the publisher's letters showed the relevance of multipositionality in the extratextual translator's agency. Nevertheless, in general, Sillaots' did not force her extratextual agency: instead of offering translations to the publishers, she was asking for translation tasks and accepted what was given to her. The terms and final decisions tended to rest with the publisher. At the same time, Sillaots sometimes managed to achieve some compromises, for example, in including some of Aavik's new words in her translations, thus extending her textual agency.

Despite the limits of the translator's extratextual agency, once the translation was commissioned, the translator was granted relative freedom in terms of paratexts accompanying the publication. Sillaots could decide how to write the forewords, which in the case of *Huckleberry Finn*, remained practically unaltered from the manuscript to the published text and, for the most part, choose what to footnote and what not. As for *David Copperfield*, the publishing house made one suggestion concerning the foreword – to make the book more attractive – but there is no evidence of any extensive editing of this paratext. The sources of this relative “paratextual freedom” can be seen beyond the translator's (extratextual) agency – in her activities in the other literary fields, such as children's literature and literary criticism. These domains function as “source fields” from which Sillaots' expertise was transferred into translation and this influence is evident in her paratextual agency in both translations examined.

At the same time, as seen in *Huckleberry Finn*, paratexts can start living their own lives in the later editions and reprints, reflecting the changes taking place in the society. Being more flexible and relatively small in scope, paratexts can be

altered with less effort, but at the same time frame the literary work in a suitable way. Thus, they are liable to ideological twisting and, due to their explanatory nature, bound to undergo the same changes as the society itself. The footnotes originally added by the translator in 1931 (when the translation process actually took place) have been modified and new comments added in the reprints of the Soviet period (1954, 1956, 1970) as well as the 1989 edition. The added footnotes explicitly reflect societal turns, often quite vividly; however, they do not render the translator completely voiceless. As noted above, the 1989 edition of the book still retained 16 of the original footnotes, some slightly altered.

In a rather unexpected way, the study of *Huckleberry Finn* became a snapshot into a particular historical turn, which denied the translator completely of her agency, yet at the same time granted her translation some agency at the darkest times in her life. *Huckleberry Finn* appeared in 1954 despite the attempt to erase and overwrite her work, as evident by Rudolf Sirge's unpublished retranslation. Translation history can offer insights into places, where literary and cultural history may not reach: the border zones where the translator operates, deep in the heart of the changing socio-political circumstances, thereby helping to "detect the cracks, conflicts and contradictions in the grand narratives of translation" (Kaindl 2021: 23). The analysis shows that the translator's voice, particularly as manifested in paratexts and textual decisions, serves as a bridge between everyday professional practices and the broader socio-cultural context in which translations circulate. A translator's impact can be "dissolved" over time through later reprints, yet, at the same time, pave the way to a translation that was close to being forgotten today. The "principled" Soviet translator's retranslation failed, while Sillaots – branded "an enemy of the nation" – was published by the early post-Stalinist Soviet publishing machinery. This study demonstrates that a translation can exercise agency even in situations where the translator's personal and embodied agency is severely constrained or entirely denied.

This, in some ways paradoxical instance, further blurs the concept of translator's agency and raises several questions. The case of a translation published while its translator was imprisoned highlights a paradoxical but empirically verifiable configuration of agency: although the translator's personal agency was effectively nullified, her translation continued to function as an agent within the literary system. Agency as a concept is also applied to translations (Kaindl 2021: 20); the findings of this study support the conclusion that when socio-political circumstances strip a translator of personal agency, their translations may still retain and exercise agency in the target culture. The material further suggests that translator's agency may be indirectly manifested in the quality of a translation, which can contribute to its continued circulation and the absence of retranslation, among other factors.

When turning to the aspect of the translator's textual agency, the two translation events reveal notable differences. Neither the first 1932 edition of *Huckleberry Finn* nor the later Soviet editions underwent extensive editing; with an exception of the 1989 edition, where the character Jim's African American slang is compensated with the Estonian folk-speech. *David Copperfield*'s exact

extent of editing is not known due to missing manuscripts and other pre-print materials, but the correspondence between the translator and the publishing house indicates that they might have been quite extensive. However, these changes were made by the translator herself, following the guidelines provided by the publishing house. This preserved the translator's voice in the translated text, even though the publishing house initiated the reviewing process. Also, considering that the translation of *David Copperfield* had started several years before it reached EKS Publishing House, and keeping in mind the 1920s and 1930s were still marked by active linguistic debates, it is quite understandable that the publishing house wanted to revise the initial manuscript.

Thus, when addressing the balance between the three types of translator's agencies, it can be said that the balance leans toward the translator's paratextual agency, with the varying degrees of textual agency between the two translations examined. However, as the manuscripts and proof sheets of *David Copperfield* are missing, there is not enough material to draw any decisive conclusions on this matter. The stronger paratextual agency can likely be attributed to the translator's expertise in the field of children's literature, at least in the case of *Huckleberry Finn*. This is also a likely reason for the relatively minimal editing of the 1932 publication of the book. The later editions of both translations reveal the translator's agency in different ways – there are notable paratextual shifts in the 1954 Soviet and 1989 editions of *Huckleberry Finn*, contrasted with the denied paratextual voice of the first translator of the 1991 edition of *David Copperfield*, compounded by the actual retranslation in that edition, where Sillaots' voice (as the manifestation of her subjectivity in the text and its surrounding discourse) is almost entirely absent textually. The reasons for these developments have been addressed above.

Sillaots' explicit and implicit translation poetics revealed no great disparity; she translated according to the principles she had laid down in her translation reviews, and the textual analysis of the two translations corresponded to the translation norms of her era.

What can be stated as a generalisation regarding most translators and translations and what the two translation events examined here clearly illustrate, is that translation does not usually emerge as a result of a single individual's agency, quite the contrary. The agency that facilitates the emergence of a translation is inherently shared. This corresponds to the concept of "multiple translatorship" (Jansen and Wegener 2013: 1), which involves several parties and depends also on the society's willingness and ability to welcome a translation – what Luhman (cited in Lange 2015: 124) calls the "interplay of system and the environment" as a "productive complex of circumstances" (ibid.). It can be assumed that an individual's agency, understood as "willingness and ability to act" (Koskinen and Kinnunen 2010: 6), at least in terms of ability, *a priori* incorporates the system's restrictions and possibilities. At the same time, the willingness and ability to act, multiplied by several individuals, facilitates society's demand for certain phenomena, including cultural exchange in the form of translation. The paradox lies in the fact that society's – or system's – willingness simultaneously diminishes

or dissolves the individual's agency while reinforcing it by accepting its choices and responding to them.

Based on the material covered, it can be stated that the birth of translations can be different in each individual case. It can be influenced by various factors, such as the society's need; for example, the "collision" surrounding *Huckleberry Finn*, translators' agency and position within a culture, personal traits; the different prestige of source languages and cultures, as well as other possible aspects the limited and often fragmentary archival depository does not reveal.

The translator's personality and multipositionality, her not-so-forceful nature, as well as the economically constrained circumstances that prevented Sillaots from asserting herself in negotiations with publishing houses, can be seen as both impeding and favourable factors, depending on perspective. The study of Sillaots' extratextual agency demonstrates that her agency was likely constrained due to her personality (and gender) and that the other agents may have taken advantage of it. Both translation events reveal the multipositional agency of the translator and demonstrate how expertise in one literary field can be transferred to another, albeit with varying success. Thus, a very clear and rigid distinction between the person's different professional agencies may be difficult to draw; they can be intertwined and reciprocally interactive, as we have seen in the case of Marta Sillaots.

The examination of Sillaots' everyday agency revealed her strong family ties, warm relations within her close circle and a stable home environment she could rely on. Her mealtimes and food preferences – the quotidian routine – were a part of her daily existence and supported her professionally demanding life. This routine likely contributed to her level-headed, problem-solving nature, which she demonstrated both in her professional activities, through hard work and thoroughness, and in her personal life, enduring hardships with calm dignity. Multipositionality and everyday practices help us understand the reasons behind translators' professional choices and add depth to the complex social context surrounding translations.

Therefore, this dissertation suggests that, where applicable, multipositionality and everyday practices should be incorporated into the study of translators, as they add depth to the analysis of translation processes and agencies. Just as translations need to be examined as thoroughly as possible, so too do the translators and their historical time. The two are most fruitful when studied together. Microhistory and seemingly insignificant (archival) details can create a link between translators' everyday life and professional performance, the context in which they operate and the broader diachronic perspective of their often multipositional agency – ultimately contributing to our cultural heritage today.

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 - 1930f. Järeilmärkus H. Barbusse’I “Põrgu” tõlke asjus. *Eesti Kirjandus*, 5, 250.
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 - 1931a. J. P. Jacobsen – Niels Lyhne. *Eesti Kirjandus*, 2, 118–120.
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 Hendrik (1887).

APPENDIX 1: Marta Sillaots' Timeline⁷⁵

- 1887 – Marta Reichenbach's birth in Rakke, Estonia
- 1907 – Reichenbach's first published text in Esperanto
- 1912 – Reichenbach adopts the pen-name Sillaots.
Literary debut *Algajad* (Beginners)
Elga: Ühe naese päewaraamat (Elga: A Woman's Diary)
First translation review (L. Onerva's *Murtoviivoja/Murdjooned*, translated by Eduard Virgo)
- 1913 – *Anna Holm*
- 1914 – *Lapsed: Kirjeldused laste elust* (Children: Descriptions of Children's Lives)
- 1915 – First translation of a longer literary work, Edgar Wallace's *Nelja kohus/The Four Just Men*
- 1919 – Translation of H. Löns' *Kuldkael* (probably based on Löns' contribution to a collection *Lebensbilder aus der Tierwelt*)
- 192? – Translation of Molière's *Arst wastu tahtmist/Le Médecin malgré lui*
- 1921 – *Kodukäijad: jutustused ja pildid* (Revenants: Stories and images)
- 1922 – Sillaots becomes freelancer
- 1923 – Sillaots marries Julius Voldemar Gerland (Estonianised into Rannat on 20 July 1936)
Translation of J. K. Jerome's *Kolm meest paadis/Three Men in a Boat*
Translation of A. de Lamartine *Graziella*
Kodu: kogu koduloolist materjaali I (Home: Collection of Materials on Local History) (with H. Riikoja)
- 1925 – *A. Kitzberg'i toodang* (A. Kitzberg's Works)
Eduard Wilde naistüübid (Eduard Wilde's Female Characters)
- 1926 – Translation of R. de Haas', J. London, A. Heye's *Kolm jutustust* (Three Stories) (with O. Treu)
- 1927 – *A. H. Tammsaare looming* (A. H. Tammsaare's Works)
- 1928 – Translation of P. Loti's *Minu vend Yves/Mon frère Yves*
- 1929 – Translation of H. Barbusse's *Põrgul L'enfer*
Translation of A. France's *Thais*
Translation of E. de Goncourt's *Vennad Zemganno/Les frères Zemganno*
- 1930 – Translation of W. H. Hudson's *Rohelised kojad/Green Mansions*
Translation of G. de Maupassant's *Tugev kui surm/Fort comme la mort*
Translation of O. Mirbeau's *Toaneitsi päevik/Le Journal d'une femme de chambre*
Translation of É. Zola's *Sa ei pea mitte abielu rikkuma/Thérèse Raquin*

⁷⁵ The translated titles of Sillaots' original works, as well as of the translations the titles of which have been modified in Estonian, are given in brackets and not italicised.

- 1931 – The Rannats move to Nõmme, Valguse Str 19.
 Translation of P. Benoit's *Koenigsmarck*
 Translation of P. Louys' *Naine ja hüpnukk/La Femme et le pantin*
 Translation of M. Maeterlinck's *Termitide elu/La vie des termites*
 Translation of K. Michaelis' *Bibi*
 Translation of A. F. Prévost d'Exiles *Manon Lescaut*
- 1932 – Translation of M. Twain's *Huckleberry Finni seiklused/The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*
 Translation of R. Dorgelès' *Puuristid/Les croix de bois*
 Translation of K. Michaelis' *Bibi suur reis/Bibis store Rejse, en lille Piges Liv*
 Translation of J. Verne's *Kapten Granti lapsed/Les enfants du Capitaine Grant*
- 1933 – Translation of Colette's *Kallim/Chéri*
 Translation of M. Maeterlinck's *Mesilaste elu/La vie des abeilles*
 Translation of K. Michaelis' *Bibi ja Ole/Bibi og Ole, en lille Piges Liv*
- 1933–1934 – Translation of R. Kipling's *Kim*
- 1934 – Translation of G. Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*
 Translation of K. Michaelis' *Bibi ja vandeseltslased/Bibi og de Sammensvorne*
- 1935 – Translation of E. Bulwer-Lytton's *Pompeji viimsed päevad/The Last Days of Pompeii*
 Translation of P. Istrati's *Onu Angel: Adriaan Zograffi jutustused/Les Récits d'Adrien Zograffi/ jutustused*
 Translation of P. Istrati's *Onu Angeli kolgata* (Uncle Angel's Golgotha)
 Translation of R. Rolland's *Colas Breugnon*
Trips, Traps ja Trull: jutt väikestele lastele (Trips, Traps and Trull: Story for Young Children)
- 1936 – Translation of J. Galsworthy *Forsyte'ide saaga/The Forsyte Saga*
 Translation of I. Turgenev's *Isad ja lapsed/Отцы и дети/ Trips, Traps ja Trull Tartus* (Trips, Traps and Trull in Tartu)
- 1936–1937 – Translation of R. Rolland's *Jean-Christophe*
- 1937 – Translation of Ch. Dickens' *David Copperfield*
 Translation of H. Barbusse's *Tuli/Le feu* (co-translation with Aleksander Aspel)
 Translation of M. Bedel's *Armastus põhjalaiuse 60. kraadil/Jérôme 60° latitude nord/*
 Translation of G. Duhamel's *Märtrite elu/Vie des martyrs*
 Translation of H. R. Mackintosh's *Jeesuse Kristuse isik/The Doctrine of the Person of Christ*
 Translation of K. Michaëlis' *Bibi Taanimaal* (Bibi in Denmark)
Viiskümmend (Fifty)
Trips, Traps ja Trull Haapsalus (Trips, Traps and Trull in Haapsalu)
- 1937–1939 – Translation of Th. Mann's *Võlumägi/ Der Zauberberg/*
- 1938 – Translation of J. Galsworthy's *Patriits/The Patrician*
 Translation of R. Martin du Gard's *Perekond Thibault/Les Thibault/* (Vol 1)
Neli saatust (Four Destinies)
Matkamehed (Hikers)

- Trips, Traps ja Trull saavad sõbra* (Trips Traps and Trull Get a Friend)
Admittance to Estonian Writers' Union
- 1939 – Memoir *Sealtpoolt künniseid* (Beyond the Thresholds)
Play *Ema linnasõit* (Mother's Trip to Town)
- 1940 – Translation of F. Dostoevsky's *Idioot/Идиот*
Translation of R. Rolland's *Võlutud hing/Annette ja Sylvie*
Armi ja vana vares (Armi and Old Crow)
Romain Rolland: tõe ja inimsuse eestvõitleja (Romain Rollad: Fighter for Truth and Humanity)
- 1941 – Translation of J. London's *Valgekihv/White Fang*
Translation of L. Tolstoy's *Sõda ja rahu/Война и мир*, Vol 3 and 4
- 1942 – *Kolm lugu lastele* (Three Stories for Children)
Salme ootab kevadpühi (Salme Awaits Spring holidays)
Tähekeste juures (Near the Starlets)
- 1944 – Translation of Th. Storm's *Mesilinnujärv/The Lake of the Bees*
- 1945 – Translation of J. B. Priestley's play *Ta tuli/An Inspector Calls*
- 1946 – Translation of A. Afigenov's play *Mašake/Машенька*
Translation of A. Tolstoi's *Kuldvõtmeke, ehk Buratino Seiklusi/Золотой ключик, или Приключения Буратино/*
- 1947 – Translation of M. Gorki's *Valitud jutustusi* (Selected Stories)
Translation of L. Kiatšeli's *Gvadi Bigva*
Translation of I. Turgenev's *Valitud jutustusi* (Selected Stories)
- 1948 – Translation of N. Brodski's *V. G. Belinski* (co-translation with Eugen Hange)
Translation of Ch. Dickens' *Pickwick-klubi järelejäänud paberid/The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club*
Translation of E. Grin's *Viimane heinakuhi* (The Last Haystack) (with J. Piik and A. Tulik)
Translation of V. Kaverin's *Kaks kaptenit/Два капитана*
Translation of K. Simonov's play *Vene küsimus/Русский вопрос*
- 1949 – Translation of F. Schiller's *Salakavalus ja armastus/Kabale und Liebe/*
A revised translation of I. Turgenev's *Isad ja pojad/Отцы и дети*
- 1950 – Sillaots' arrest and imprisonment in Valga, Estonia and Russia
- 1955 – Back in Estonia
- 1961 – Translation of H. Barbusse's *Selgus/Clarté*
Translation of M. Pons' *Kingsepp Aristoteles/Le Cordonnier Aristote*
- 1965 – Admittance to the Writers' Union of Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic
- 1966 – Translation of I. Turgenev's *Jutustused* (Stories) (with V. Linask)
- 1968 – Translation of I. Turgenev's *Mumuu/Муму*
- 1969 – Death in Tallinn

APPENDIX 2:

Bibliography of Marta Sillaots' Literary and Translation Reviews Published in *Eesti Kirjandus* 1912–1940

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2. Reichenbach, Marta. 1916. A. Kitzberg. Külajutud 1. *Eesti Kirjandus*, 7, 245–246.
3. Sillaots, Marta. 1927. A. Kitzbergi mälestuseks. *Eesti Kirjandus*, 11, 577–580.
4. Sillaots, Marta. 1927. Neli “Inimest ilma eluloota”. *Eesti Kirjandus*, 10, 543–549; 11, 606–612.
5. Sillaots, Marta. 1927. Reed Morn: Andekas parasiit. *Eesti Kirjandus*, 12, 662–665.
6. Sillaots, Marta. 1927. Betti Alver: Tuulearmuke. *Eesti Kirjandus*, 12, 665–667.
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8. Sillaots, Marta. 1928. A. H. Tammsaare viiekümnendaks sünnipäevaks. *Eesti Kirjandus*, 1, 1–6.
9. Sillaots, Marta. 1928. Johannes Semper: Sillatalad, *Eesti Kirjandus*, 1, 50.
10. Sillaots, Marta. 1928. Johannes Semper: Ellinor. *Eesti Kirjandus*, 1, 51.
11. Sillaots, Marta. 1928. Ernst Krusten: Kanarbik. *Eesti Kirjandus*, 1, 62–63.
12. Sillaots, Marta. 1928. August Gailit: Ristisõitjad. *Eesti Kirjandus*, 2, 114–118.
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14. Sillaots, Marta. 1928. Hugo Raudsepp: Kohtumõistja Simson, *Eesti Kirjandus*, 3, 168–171.
15. Sillaots, Marta. 1928. Hugo Raudsepp: Siinai tähistel, *Eesti Kirjandus*, 4, 220–223.
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81. Sillaots, Marta. 1935. Jules Renard: Punapäa. *Eesti Kirjandus*, 6, 285–286.*
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107. Sillaots, Marta. 1939. Aleksander Antson – Sina ei pea mitte himustama... *Eesti Kirjandus*, 4, 183–184.
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In 1940, 7 issues (including the joint issue of June and July) were published.

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APPENDIX 3:
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*Translation reviews

APPENDIX 4:
Footnotes: *Huckleberry Finni seiklused*
(1932, 1954, 1956, 1970, 1989)

Footnotes in the 1932 edition

| No | Original (the 2001 edition) | Translation | Footnote | Gloss of footnote |
|----|----------------------------------|-----------------|--|--|
| 1 | sugar-hogshead (p 169) | suhkruvaat | Huckleberry Finni asukoht "Tom Sawyeri seiklustes". (p 13)* | Location of Huckleberry Finn in <i>The Adventures of Tom Sawyer</i> . |
| 2 | mulatter (p 188) | mulatt | Valget tõugu inimese ja neegri segavereline järeltulija. (p 40) | Mixed-race descendant of a white person and a negro. |
| 3 | nabob (p 188) | naabob | Kuberneri aunimi Indias; rikas mees. (p 40) | Governor's honorary name in India; a rich man. |
| 4 | buckskin (p 206) | kuradinahk | Tugev puuvillriie. (p 66) | Strong cotton cloth. |
| 5 | St Petersburg (p 213) | St. Petersburg | Linnake Põhja-Ameerika Ühendriiges. (p 76)* | Small town in North America. |
| 6 | wigwam (p 216) | vigvam | Vigvam – indiaanlaste telk (p 80) | Wigwam – an Indian tent. |
| 7 | harem (p 226) | haarem | Naisteruum muhamediusuliste elamus. (p 94)* | Women's room in a Moslem house. |
| 8 | dolphin (p 227) | dauphin | Dauphin – Prantsusmaa kroonprints, troonipärija (enne revolutsiooni). (p 95) | Dauphin – French crown prince, heir to the throne (before revolution). |
| 9 | free States (p 229) | vabad osariigid | Osariigid, kus enam orjapidamist ei olnud. (p 98) | States, where slavery no longer existed. |
| 10 | Night /.../ rather thick (p 239) | õhk paksuks | Õhk oli paks – meremeeste keeles: õhk oli sompus, udune. (p 111) | The air was thick – in sailors' parlance: the air was muggy, misty. |
| 11 | scalp (p 242) | skalpeerima | Skalpeerima – vaenlase peanahka maha nülgima (nagu indiaanlased). (p 115) | To scalp – to skin the enemy's scalp (similarly to the Indians). |
| 12 | blue jay (p 242) | siniähk | Siniähk (p 115)* | Blue jay. |
| 13 | Arkansaw (p 243) | Arkansas | Arkansas – P. A. Ühendriikide osariik. (p 116) | Arkansas – state of the N. A. [North American] States. |
| 14 | mosquito (p 258) | moskiito | Moskiito – soojamaine sääsk. (p 135)* | Mosquito – gnat of warm countries. |
| 15 | mesmerism (p 260) | mesmerism | Mesmerism – õpetus looma magnetismist. (p 138)* | Mesmerism – a study of animal's magnetism. |
| 16 | phrenology (p 260) | frenoloogia | Frenoloogia – pealuu- ja peaju-teadus. (p 138)* | Phrenology – the science of skull and brain. |

| | | | | |
|----|---|----------------------------------|---|---|
| 17 | My Lord (p 261) | “Mu lord” | Inglise aunimi (p 140) | An English honorary name. |
| 18 | Marry Antonette (p 262) | Mari Antoneti | Marie Antoinette. (p 141) | Marie Antoinette. |
| 19 | muse (p 266) | muus | Kunsti kaitsejumalanna. (p 146) | The protective goddess of art. |
| 20 | <i>Richard II, Romeo and Juliet</i> (p 266) | “Richard III”, “Romeo ja Juulia” | Shakespeare’i näidendid. (p 146) | Shakespeare’s plays. |
| 21 | Capet (p 271) | Capet | Viimse Prantsuse kuninga perekonnanimi (nagu viimse Vene keisri perekonnanimeks oli Romanov). (p 153) | The surname of the last French king (similarly to the last Russian empire’s surname Romanov). |
| 22 | Domesday Book (p 285) | Põhiseaduse raamat | Domesday-Book – Põhiseaduse raamat, a 1086. alustatud inglise vanim riigi põhiseadustekogu. (p 174) | Domesday Book – book of Constitution, the oldest compendium of English constitutional law, started in 1086. |
| 23 | funeral orgies (p 196) | matusorgia | Orgia – metsik viinajumala teenimine, ohjeldamatu lõbutsemine, pöörane hullamine. (p 189) | Orgy – wild worship of the wine god, intemperate merrymaking, preposterous frolic. |
| 24 | Fourth of July (p 300) | neljas juuli | Ühendriikide isesisvuspäev. (p 195). | The Independence Day of the United States. |
| 25 | mumps (p 314) | mumps | Taudiline kõrva-süljenäärme põletik ehk epideemiline parotiit. (p 207)* | An infectious ear-salivary gland inflammation or epidemic parotitis. |
| 26 | mesmerising (p 327) | mesmerism | Mesmerism – õpetus loomamagnetismist. (p 231)* | Mesmerism – a study of animal magnetism. |
| 27 | acre (p 334) | aakr | Aakr – inglise pinnamõõt, 2/5 hektaari. (p 240) | Acre – English surface measure, 2/5 hectares. |

*Footnotes that do not exist in the 1970 edition.

Footnotes added to the 1954, 1956 and 1970 editions that do not exist in the 1932 edition

| No | Original | 1932 translation | 1954, 1956, 1970 translation | Footnote (pagination of 1970 reprint) | Gloss of footnote |
|----|---|---|---|--|--|
| 1 | sah (p 200) | noorhärä (p 57) | massa | Massa – isand. Nii kõnetasid orjad oma peremehi. (p 48) | Massa – master. This is how slaves addressed their masters. |
| 2 | Abolitionist (p 200) | orjavarjaja (p 58) | abolitionist | abolitionist – orjade vabastamise pooldaja (p 49) | Abolitionist – a proponent for liberation of slaves. |
| 3 | Polly-voo-franzy (p 228) | Polly-voo-franzy (96) | Polli-vuu-franzi | Parlez-vous francais (parlee vuu fransee) – räägite prantsuse keelt? (p 86) | Parlez-vous francais (parlee vuu fransee) – do you speak French? |
| 4 | Looy the Sixteenth (p 261) | Lui XVI | Louis XVI | loe: Lui. (p 129) | Read: Lui. |
| 5 | Garrick the Younger (p 265) | Garrick noorem (p 146) | Garrick noorem | Garrick, David – inglise näitleja ja dramaturg XVII saj. (p 134) | Garrick, David – English actor and playwright of the 17 th century. |
| 6 | Baron Trenck, nor Casanova, nor Benvenuto Challeeny, nor Henry IV (p 349) | Parun Trencki, ei Casanovat, ei Benvenuto Cellinit, ei Henry IV (p 261) | Parun Trencki, ei Casanovat, ei Benvenuto Cellinit, ei Henry IV | Trenck, preisi parun, Casanova, itaalia seikleja. – XVIII saj. Aferistid. Cellini, itaalia kujur, seikleja, Henry IV, Navarra kuningas, hiljem Prantsuse kuningas. Suri XVII saj. algul. (p 238) | Trenck, Prussian baron, Casanova, Italian adventurer. – 18 th century. Scammers. Cellini, Italian sculptor, adventurer, Henry IV, King of Navarre, later King of France. Died at the beginning of the 17 th century. |
| 7 | Langudoc (p 350) | Langedokk (p 262) | Languedock | Provints Lõuna-Prantsusmaal. (p 239) | Province in South France. |
| 8 | The Iron Mask (p 351) | Raudnäokatt ega mees (p 264) | Raudse maskiga mees | “Raudne mask” – salapärane vang, keda peeti XVII sajandil Pariisi vanglas Bastille’s. Vangi nägu oli alati varjatud raudse maskiga. (p 241) | Iron mask – mysterious prisoner, held in the 17 th century Paris prison of Bastille. The prisoner’s face was always disguised by the iron mask. |
| 9 | Castle Deef (p 353) | Castel d’ If (p 266) | D’ If | Vangla Dumas’ romaanist “Krahv Monte Christo”. (p 243) | Prison in Dumas’ novel <i>Count Monte Cristo</i> . |

| | | | | | |
|----|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|--|---|
| 10 | William the Conqueror (p 263) | William Võitja (p 279) | William Vallutaja (p 255) | William Vallutaja, inglise normanni soost kuningas XI saj. (p 255) | William the Conqueror, English Norman king 11 th century. |
| 11 | Mayflower (p 263) | “Mayflower” (p 279) | “Mayflower” | “Mayflower” – esimene laev, mis tõi puritaanlastest koloniste Inglismaalt Ameerikasse (XVI saj.). (p 255) | Mayflower – the first ship that brought puritan colonists from England to America. |
| 12 | Old Northumberland (p 364) | vana Northumberland'i hertsog (p 281) | vana Northumberlandi hertsog | John Dudley, Northumberlandi hertsog, võttis oma pojale Gilfordile naiseks inglise kuninga Henry VIII lapselapse Jane Grey, taotledes sel teel pojale inglise trooni. 1553. a laskis kuninganna Mary Verine nad kõik hukata. (p 256) | John Dudley, the Duke of Northumberland, married his son Gilford to Jane Grey, the granddaughter of the English king Henry VIII, thereby claiming his son the English throne. In 1553, Queen Bloody Mary had them all executed. |
| 13 | Pitchiola (p 368) | “pitchiola” (p 287) | “picciola” | lill itaalia keeles. (p 262) | Flower in Italian. |

Footnotes modified in the 1954, 1956 and 1970 editions

| No | 1932 translation | 1932 footnote | 1954, 1956, 1970 translation | 1970 footnote (pagination of the 1970 reprint) | Gloss of footnote |
|----|--------------------|---|------------------------------|---|--|
| 1 | dauphin | dauphin – Prantsusmaa kroonprints, troonipärija (enne revolutsiooni). (p 95) | dauphin | Dauphin – Prantsusmaa kroonprints, troonipärija. (p 85) | Dauphin – French crown prince, heir to the throne. |
| 2 | Mari Antoneti | Marie Antoinette (p 141) | Marie Antoinette | Loe: Marii Antuanet. (p 129) | Read: Marii Antuanet. |
| 3 | muus | Kunsti kaitsejumalanna (p 146) | muusa | kaitsejumalanna. (p 134) | protective goddess |
| 4 | Capet | Viimse Prantsuse kuninga perekonnanimi (nagu viimse Vene keisri perekonnanimeks oli Romanov). (p 153) | Capet | Prantsuse vana dünastia nimi. (p 141) | Name of an old French dynasty. |
| 5 | Põhiseaduse raamat | Domesday-Book – Põhiseaduse raamat, a 1086. alustatud inglise vanim riigi põhiseadustekogu. (p174) | Põhiseaduse raamat | Domesday-Book – Põhiseaduse raamat, 1086. alustatud inglise vanim riigi seadustekogu. (p 158) | Domesday-Book – book of Constitution, the oldest compendium of English state law, started in 1086. |
| 6 | aakr | Aakr – inglise pinnamõõt, 2/5 hektaari. (p 240) | aaker | Aaker – inglise pinnamõõt, 2/5 hektarit. (p 219) | Acre – English surface measure, 2/5 hectares. |

Footnotes of the 1989 edition that do not exist in any of the previous editions

| No | 1989 translation | Footnote | Gloss of footnote |
|----|--|--|---|
| 1 | Mooses ja kõrkjad | Vihje piiblegendile, mis pajatab Moosesest, kes imikuna Niiluse kõrkjastikku peideti, ja kelle vaarao tütar sealt leidis (p 219) | Reference to a Bible legend, speaking of Moses, who was left in the reedbed and who the pharaoh's daughter found there. |
| 2 | Aadam: paistis teine üleni savist tehtud | Piiblegendi järgi tegi Jumal esimese inimese Aadama savist. (p 246) | According to a Bible legend God made the first human being, Adam, from clay. |
| 3 | delirium tremens | Joomahullus (ladina k. <i>delirium tremens</i>). (p 248) | Potomania (Latin <i>delirium tremens</i>). |
| 4 | “Palveränduri teekond” | Inglise kirjaniku John Bunyani (1628–1688) teos, mis inglise ja ameerika peredes oli pikka aega Piibli kõrval tähtsuselt teine raamat. (p 319) | Work by English writer John Bunyan (1628–1688), being the second most important book in English and American families beside the Bible. |
| 5 | sisemisjõn | Usulevitamine omal maal. (p 340) | Spreading the faith in one's own country. |
| 6 | Kain | Piibli järgi Aadama ja Eeva poeg, kes tappis oma venna Aabeli. (p 372) | According to the Bible, Adam's and Eve's son, who killed his brother Abel. |
| 7 | Noa | Piibli järgi ehitas Noa laeva, milles tema, ta pere ning üks paar kõigist elusolendeist pääses ülemaailmsest veeputusest. (p 377) | According to the Bible, Noah built a ship, where he, his family and a couple of every living being escaped the global flood. |
| 8 | Koljat | Hiiglasakasvu vägimees Piiblis, kelle kahevõitluses tappis noor karjapoiss Taavet, hilisem kuningas. (p 419) | Giant strongman in the Bible, who was killed by a young shepherd boy, David, the later king. |
| 9 | Metuusala | Tegelane Piiblist, Noa (vt. viide lk 377) vanaisa; olevat elanud 969 aastat vanaks. (p 444) | Character from the Bible, Noah (see page 377) grandfather; is said to have lived to be 969 years old. |
| 10 | Navarra | Ajalooline piirkond Hispaanias ja Prantsusmaal (p 454) | Historical region in Spain and France. |
| 11 | Tüleri | Tuileries – kunagine Prantsuse kuningate eluase, loss Pariisis. (p 482) | Tuileries – former residence of French kings, a castle in Paris. |
| 12 | Nebukadnetsar | Babüloonia valitseja (604–562 e. m. a.). Tema hullusest on juttu Piiblis (p 493) | Ruler of Babylon (604–562 BCE). his madness is addressed in the Bible. |

APPENDIX 5: Footnotes of the 1937 Edition of *David Copperfield*

Volume 1

| No | Original | Translation | Footnote | Gloss of footnote | Remarks |
|----|--|--|--|---|------------|
| 1 | when I shall again put forth my two green leaves once a month (p 3) | mil ma jälle ilmutan oma kaks rohelist vihku kuus | <i>David Copperfield</i> ilmus esimeses trükis annete kaupa, iga kahe nädala tagant üks anne; annetel olid rohelised kaaned. (p 12) | First edition of <i>David Copperfield</i> was published in parts, a part in every two weeks; the publications had green covers. | |
| 2 | fifteen guineas (p 5) | viieteistkümne guinea | Guinea (hääldada: gini) = 21 šillingit. (p 14) | Guinea (pronounced. gini) = 21 shillings | |
| 3 | half a crown (p 5) | pool krooni | Kroon = 5 šillingit. (p 14) | Crown = 5 shillings | |
| 4 | a Baboon; but I think it must have been a Baboo – or a Begum (p 6) | Paaviani seltsis elevandi seljas sõitvat; minu arvates võis see aga ennem olla mõni sealtmaa isand või vürstitar. | Sõnademäng: baboon – paavian; baboo – isand (Ida-Indias); begum – daam, vürstitar (Ida-Indias). (p 16) | Word play: baboon – a monkey; baboo – master (in East India); begum – a lady, princess (in East India) | |
| 5 | ‘Davy who?’ said the gentleman. ‘Jones?’ (p 24) | “Mis Davy?” ütles härra, “Jones?” | Davy Jones = kurat. (p 47) | Davy Jones = devil | inaccurate |
| 6 | a Yarmouth Bloater (p 28) | Yarmouthi suitsu-heeringaks | Yarmouthi elanikkude pilkenimi. (p 55) | Nickname of the residents of Yarmouth | |
| 7 | From that blessed little room, <i>Roderick Random</i> , <i>Peregrine Pickle</i> , <i>Humphrey Clinker</i> , <i>Tom Jones</i> , <i>The Vicar of Wakefield</i> , <i>Don Quixote</i> , <i>Gil Blas</i> , and <i>Robinson Crusoe</i> , came out (p 51) | Sellest õnnistatud kambrikesest tulid <i>Roderick Random</i> , <i>Peregrine Pickle</i> , <i>Humphrey Clinker</i> , <i>Tom Jones</i> , <i>Wakefieldi kirikuõpetaja, Don Quijote</i> , <i>Gil Blas</i> ja <i>Robinson Crusoe</i> | Peamise lugemisvara on andnud T. G. Smollett (<i>Roderick Random</i> , 1748, <i>The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle</i> , 1751, <i>The Expedition of Humphrey Clinker</i> , 1771; tema tõlkes on kättesaadav ka Le Sage’i romaan <i>Adventures of Gil Blas of Santillane</i> , | Main reading has been provided by T. G. Smollett (<i>Roderick Random</i> , 1748, <i>The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle</i> , 1751, <i>The Expedition of Humphrey Clinker</i> , 1771; also, the novel by Le Sage <i>Adventures of Gil Blas of Santillane</i> is available in his translation in | |

| | | | | | |
|----|--|---|---|---|------------------------|
| | | | ingl. k. 1749). Temale seltsivad siis F i e l d i n g, G o l d s m i t h, C e r v a n t e s j a D e f o e. (p 96) | English in 1749). He is accompanied by Fielding, Goldsmith, Cervantes and Defoe. | |
| 8 | Rudderford (p 124) | Rudderford | Steer – tüüri abil juhtima; rudder – tüür. (p 232) | Steer – to navigate by the help of rudder; rudder – steering wheel. | |
| 9 | Lord Mayor’s Show (p 136) | Linnapea Rongkäigus | Uue linnapea ametisseastumise puhul peetav tradit- siooniline uhke rongkäik, millest osa võtavad muude hulgas kõigi ameti- alade esindajad. (p 252) | Traditional procession held on the occasion of inauguration of a new mayor, participated in, among others, by the representatives of all walks of life. | |
| 10 | flip (p 149) | flip’i | Soe jook õllest, viinast ja suhkrust. (p 275) | Warm drink of beer, vodka and sugar. | slightly inaccurate |
| 11 | A Murderer – or a man with a name like it (p 172) | Mõrtsukale – või umbes sellenimelisele inimesele | Murderer (mõrtsukas) ~ Murdstone. (p 317) | Murderer (killer) ~ Murdstone. | |
| 12 | ‘Auld Lang Syne’ (p 228) | <i>Auld Lang Syne</i> ’i | Šotikeelne rahvalaul, milles ülistatakse sõprust. (p 418) | Scottish traditional folk song, praising friendship. | |
| 13 | Proctor (p 241) | Proktor | Eriõiguslik korralvur Inglise ülikoolides (p 445) | Security guard of special legal status at English universities. | slightly inaccurate |
| 14 | You are a very Daisy. (p 248) | Te olete päris karikakar. | Algupärandis sõnademäng: Davy ~ Daisy (= karikakar). (p 457) | Word play in original: Davy ~ Daisy | |

Volume 2

| | | | | | |
|----|---|---|--|---|--|
| 15 | a hundred yards (274) | sada jardigi | Jard (yard) – inglise küünar. (914,4 mm) (p 39) | Yard – English <i>küünar</i> (914.4mm). | |
| 16 | “Bob swore!” – as the Englishman said for “Good night,” when he first learnt French, and thought it so like English (p 287) | “Punn suur,” ütles mede mees, kui ta hakkas prantsuse keelt õppima ja leidis, et see oli nii oma keele moodi. | Sõnademäng, mida on võimatu tõlkida: algupärandis lastakse inglase, kes prantsuse keelt õpib, prantsuskeelse “bonjour!” asemel öelda “Bob swore!” (Bob vandus!). (p 62). | Word play impossible to translate: in the original an Englishman, who is learning French, is let to say “Bob swore” instead of the French “bonjour!”. | |
| 17 | Jip – short for Gipsy. (p 337) | Kelle nimi oli Gipsy | Mustlane. (p 150) | Gipsy. | |
| 18 | Copperfull; firstly, no doubt, because it was not my name; and secondly, I am inclined to think, in some indistinct association with a washing-day. (p 341) | “härä Copperfulliks”; esiteks kahtlemata sellepärast, et see mitte mu nimi ei olnud, ja teiseks arvatavasti vist sellepärast, et see meenutas talle ebamääraselt pesupäevi. | Copper – vaskkatel; copperfull – katlatäis. (p 158). | Copper – copper cauldron; copperfull – the full cauldron. | |
| 19 | tide (p 356) | looded | Looded – veetõus ja mõõn. (p 184) | Tides – the high and low tide. | |
| 20 | If I am reserved to wear a wig, (p 454) | Kui mulle peaks olema osaks antud kord parukat kanda, | Inglise kohtunikud kannavad ametis olles parukat. (p 370) | English judges wear wigs while in office. | |

Volume 3

| | | | | | |
|----|---------------------------|------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|--|
| 21 | Bath water (p 506) | Bath'i vee | Supellinnake Lääne-Inglismaal. (p 13) | Small resort town in West England. | |
| 22 | A nice Irish stew (p 516) | Mõnusat <i>Irish stew</i> 'd | Iiri toit lambalihast ja aedviljast. (p 29) | Irish food of mutton and vegetables. | |
| 23 | guava (p 520) | guajaavasid | Eksootiline puuvili. (p 39) | Exotic fruit. | |
| 24 | Paragon (p 540) | Paragon | Tähendab: muster, eeskuj. (77) | Meaning: a model, example. | |

| | | | | | |
|----|--|--|--|---|------------|
| 25 | a game or two at cribbage (p 548) | paar voori <i>cribbage</i> 't | Kaardimäng. (p 90) | Card game. | |
| 26 | a perfect Whittington (p 588) | täiuslik Whittington | Poisike inglise muinasjutus, kes tänu oma kassile saab rikkaks ja õnnelikuks ja kellest lõpuks saab linnapea. (p 164) | Boy in English fairy-tale, who becomes rich and happy thanks to his cat and ends up as a mayor. | |
| 27 | Bow Street (p 588) | Bow Street'ile | Londoni politsei peakorter. (p 166) | Headquarters of London police. | |
| 28 | no knocker on the door (p 600) | Ukse küljes polnud koputajat | Inglismaal tarvitatakse veel tänapäev uste küljes koputajat kella asemel. (p 190) | In England, knockers are used on doors instead of doorbells until nowadays. | |
| 29 | Immortal exciseman nurtured beyond the Tweed. (p 606) | Tweed'i taga kasvanud surematu aktsiisiametniku | Šoti luuletaja Robert Burns. (p 200) | Scottish poet Robert Burns. | |
| 30 | as proud as Punch (p 623) | uhke nagu Punch | Klaun, poliisinel. (p 233) | Clown, Pulcinella | |
| 31 | you HEEP of infamy (p 637) | teie alatuse-hunnik | Sõnademäng (you HEEP of infamy): Heap = "hunnik, kuhi, kogu" hääldatakse niisamuti nagu Heep, Uriah' liignimi. (p 261) | Word play (you HEEP of infamy): Heap = "pile, stack, bulk" pronounced as Heep, the surname of Uriah. | |
| 32 | to the last farthing (p 644) | viimse farthingini | Farthing – ¼ ingl. penni. (p 275) | Farthing – ¼ of the English penny. | |
| 33 | from a capstan (p 674) | voorupi juurest | Püstvinn. (p 333) | Seine fishing gear. | |
| 34 | Albion (p 686) | Albioni | Albion – Inglismaa. (p 355) | Albion – England. | |
| 35 | Miss Crewler – Miss Sarah – Miss Louisa – Margaret and Lucy! (p 703) | Preili Crewler, – preili Sarah, preili Louisa, Margaret ja Lucy! | Inglismaal on kombeks mitut vallalist öde esitelles vanimat nimetada perekonnanimega, teisi eesnimega. (p 387) | While introducing several unmarried sisters, in England it is customary to call the eldest by the surname, the others by their first names. | |
| 36 | a glass of warm sherry negus (p 705) | klaas sooja <i>sherry negus</i> 't | Punšiliik. (p 392) | Type of punch. | Inaccurate |

SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN

Marta Sillaots: tõlkija ja tema mitmepositsiooniline agentsus sõdadevahelise Eesti Vabariigi kirjandusmaastikul

Siinne doktoritöö käsitleb mikroajaloolise juhtumiuuringuna Marta Sillaotsa (1887–1969) elu ja loometeed viljaka tõlkija, kirjanduskriitiku ning autorina. Vaatluse all on Sillaotsa mitmekülgne tööalane tegevus Eesti kirjandusmaastikul ning tõlkija agentsuse dünaamika sõdadevahelises Eesti Vabariigis, tema kõige aktiivsemal professionaalse tegevuse perioodil. Kuna Sillaots oli tegev mitmetes erinevates kultuuri ja kirjandusvaldkondades – õpetajana, ajakirjanikuna, kirjanikuna, kirjandus- ja tõlkekriitikuna ning tõlkijana – on tema mitmepositsioonilisus (*multipositionality* – Meylaerts 2013) üks tööd raamivatest mõistetest.

Sillaotsa mitmepositsiooniline agentsus, mida vaatlen liigendatuna ekstra-tekstiliseks, paratekstiliseks ning tekstiliseks agentsuseks, avaldus tema arhiivikogu materjalides ilmekalt juba töö algusjärgus. Seetõttu on arhiivimaterjalid olnud selle töö suunaandjaks ja juhtlõngaks. Inglise keelest tõlgitud teoste hulgast oli rohkem materjali kahe tõlke: „Huckleberry Finni seikluste“ (1932) ja „David Copperfieldi“ (1937) kohta. Need allikad on Sillaotsa tõlkijaagentsuse uurimise peamiseks aluseks, kuid töö sisaldab ka muid varem avaldamata arhiivimaterjale, näiteks uurimistoimikut, millesse kogutud materjalide alusel Sillaots 1951. aasta kohtuprotsessil nõukogude võimude poolt süüdi mõisteti ja lõpuks Siberi vangilaagrisse saadeti.

Positsioon mitme kultuuri piirialal, erinevates sotsiaalpoliitilistes tingimustes võib tingida tõlkija sattumise ühiskonna äärealale või, vastupidi, kõrgendatud tähelepanu alla. Tõlkija isikule on senisest enamat tähelepanu pööranud teiste hulgas näiteks Anthony Pym (1998), kes on muu hulgas pidanud vajalikuks käsitleda ka tõlkijate võimalikke erinevaid tegevusalasid ([1998] 2014: 164), mis käesolevas tööski mitmepositsioonilisuse raamistikuna käsitlemist leiab.

Siinse doktoritöö seisukohast on oluline ka tõlkija argipäev: tema keheline eksistents oma aegruumis professionaalse tegevuse kõrval. Õigupoolest pole argipäevas eksisteerimist ja erialast tegevust ju võimalik lahutada – meie keha on meiega nii kodus ja igapäevaolmes kui töökohal. Selleski kontekstis on põhjust viidata Pymile, kes ühena esimestest tõlkeloolastest on rääkinud tõlkijate lihast ja luust olemusest ([1998] 2014: 161). Nii on jõutud tänapäevaste tõlkija-uuringuteni (Chestermani 2009), milles nüüdisajal osutatakse tähelepanu ka tõlkija elu ja töö nendele aspektidele, mis varem on tähelepanu alt välja jäänud. Sedamööda, kuidas mikroajalooline lähenemine on populaarsemaks saanud, on üha enam hakatud rääkima ka tõlkijate töötingimustest, nende igapäevasest töökorraldusest ning rutiinsetest tegevustest (nt Paloposki 2010: 88).

Eestis on tõlkelugu viimastel kümnenditel astunud edasi üsna jõudsal sammul. Marta Sillaotsastki on kirjutatud mitmed autorid, näiteks Alma (Aira) Kaal (1937), Reet Krusten (1967), Anu Saluäär (1987; 2009; 2013) ja Katiliina Gielen (2012a, 2012b; 2013). Kõigi nimetatute kirjutised on olnud siinse töö seisukohalt väärtuslikud allikad.

Nagu mainitud on seda tööd suunanud arhiivimaterjalid kannustatuna soovist jõuda lähemale tõlkijale kui inimesele ja isiksusele, tema inimlikule mõõtmele (Kaindl 2021: 3). Seda teed on sillutanud arhiivitööga seotud inspireerivad ja innustavad artiklid (nt Guzman 2020; Paloposki 2009, 2010, 2017, 2021; Munday 2014). Arhiivimaterjalid on aidanud avada Sillaotsa tegevuse mitmepositsioonilisust Eesti kirjandus- ja kultuurimaastikul ning toonud päevavalgele tema seotust teiste literaatidega, aga ka ajastu(te) sotsiaalse ja poliitilise olukorraga.

Töö sissejuhatusele järgnevas teises peatükis käsitletakse töö aluseks olevaid metodoloogilisi lähenemisi ning kontseptsioone, seal hulgas tõlkesündmus, mitmepositsioonilisus, agentsus, tõlkija hääl, argipäev, ning peatutakse lähemalt arhiivitöö ja -materjalide eripäradel.

Kolmandas peatükis kirjeldadan-mõttestan Marta Sillaotsa kujunemisaastate sotsiaal-kultuurilist tausta, annan ülevaate 20. sajandi alguse ning sõdadevahelise Eesti Vabariigi tõlkemaastikust, Sillaotsa noorusaastatest ning tema mitmepositsioonilisuse kujunemisest.

Neljandas peatükis on vaatluse all „Huckleberry Finni seikluste“ (1932) tõlkesündmus kolmest vaatenurgast. Tõlkija ekstratekstilist agentsust puudutavas peatükis leiab käsitlemist tõlke sünd peamiselt tõlkija ja kirjastuste vahelise arhiivikorrespondentsi kaudu. Paratekstilist agentsust ehk tõlkija ees- ja järel-sõnu, tõlketeosele lisatud kommentaare ja märkusi uurin nii 1932. aasta esma-väljaandes kui nõukogude (1954, 1956, 1970) väljaannetes ning 1989. aasta väljaandes. Viimane kuulub küll nõukogude perioodi, kuid erineb eelnenud kolmest väljaandest. Tõlkija tekstilise agentsuse vaatlemiseks oli olemas üsna rikkalikult arhiivimaterjale, seal hulgas tõlkija käsikiri, kirjastuse korrektuuri-küljed ning teose proovitrükk. Seeläbi oli võimalik välja tuua ka tõlke teised osapooled, nt toimetajad. Peatükki kuulub ka 1932. aastal üsna napiks jäänud tõlke retseptsioon ning tõlkija tekstilise agentsuse vaatlus 1954.–1989. aasta väljaannete lõikes. Omamoodi lisana kuulub peatükki veel arhiivileid Rudolf Sirge „Huckleberry Finni“ plaanitud uustõlkest 1954. aastal, ajal kui Sillaots oli Siberi vangilaagris. Uus tõlge ei ilmunud, küll aga tõusis sellega seoses plagiaadi-skandaal.

Viies, „David Copperfieldi“ (1937) tõlkesündmusele pühendatud peatükk, järgib neljanda peatüki ülesehitust selles, mis puudutab tõlkija ekstratekstilist, paratekstilist ja tekstilist agentsust. Ekstratekstilist agentsust, ehk tõlke sünnilugu on taas võimalik vaadelda tõlkija ja kirjastuse arhiivikirjade vahendusel. Tõlkija eessõna ning joonealused märkused on aluseks paratekstilise agentsuse alapeatükile, et aga erinevalt „Huckleberry Finni seiklustest“ pole „David Copperfieldist“ säilinud ei käsikirja ega korrektuurimaterjale, saame siin võrdlusmaterjalina kasutada vaid teose 1991. aasta uut tõlget, milles Sillaots küll Lia Rajandi kõrval on kaastõlkijana ära toodud, kuid tegemist on siiski uue tõlkega. Tõlkija tekstilist agentsust käsitlen samuti võrdluses 1991. aasta uue väljaandega, lisades juurde ka Sillaotsa poolt arvatavasti 1940. aastatel käsitsi tehtud parandused 1937. aasta esmatrüki köidetele. Peatüki lõpetab alapeatükk tõlketeose esma-väljaande pea täielikult puudevast retseptsioonist.

Kuuenda peatüki esimeses pooles (6.1 ja 6.2) leiab kajastamist tõlkija argipäev toidutemaatika kaudu. Kuna võrdlemisi rikkalik arhiivimaterjal seda võimaldas,

käsitlen Sillaotsa toidu- ja töölauda võrdlevalt 1923. ja 1951. aastal, toetudes õele, Erna Reichenbachile kirjutatud kirjadele. 1923. aastal lähetati kirjad Berliini ning 1951. aastal saadeti need Valga vangilaagrist. 1951. aasta puhul pole siiski enam võimalik rääkida töölaust, sest erialase tööga Sillaots enam tegeleda ei saanud. Peatüki teine pool (6.3) seob toidutemaatika ja tõlke, sest 1923. aastal tõlkis Marta Sillaots huumoriklassikasse kuuluvat Jerome K. Jerome'i teost „Kolm meest paadis“, mis samal aastal ka ilmus. Selles alapeatükis uurin, milliseid tõlkeoperatsioone (Delabastita 1993) Sillaots inglise kultuuriga seonduvaid toidunimetusi eestindades kasutas ning otsin seoseid nii arhiivikirjadest õele Berliini, kui ka ajastu toidukultuuri ülevaadetest (nt Kannike ja Uibo 2022). Tõlkija argipäev ja selle seosed tõlketgevusega, on samuti üks teemadest, mille juuri saab otsida arhiivimaterjalidest ning mis on selle töö kirjutamist inspireerinud.

Seitsmendas peatükis annan ülevaate töö peamistest tulemustest, analüüsin tõlkija agentsust ekstratekstilisest, paratekstilisest ning tekstilisest seisukohast, millele lisan ka igapäevaelu aspekti ning analüüsin tõlkija eksplitsiitset ja implitsiitset tõlkepoetikat iseloomustavaid jooni.

Töö viimases, kaheksandas peatükis esitan peamised järeldused, millest järgnevas ülevaate teen. Marta Sillaotsa mitmepositsioonilise elu, tema erinevate rollide ning tõlkijaagentsuse käsitlemine eelmainitud kolmest vaatenurgast tõlkesündmuse raamistikus, on andnud ainet lisamaks tõlkija agentsuse uurimisel tahke, mis arhiivi või muude allikate olemasolul heidavad valgust ka neile aspektidele, mis tõlkija-uuringutes enamasti käsitlemist ei leia.

Tõlkija agentsuse mitmekihiline olemus avaldub eriti kujukalt kahe tõlkesündmuse ekstratekstilistes aspektides, näiteks tõlgete saamislood tõlkija ja kirjastuse vahelises korrespondentsis. Selles tulevad üpris kiiresti ilmsiks ka tõlkija mitmepositsioonilise agentsuse teatavad põhjused – vähemalt „Huckleberry Finni seikluste“ puhul oli ettepaneku tegemine Sillaotsale tingitud tema positsioonist lastekirjanduse eksperdina. „David Copperfieldi“ käsikirja olemasolust oli Eesti Kirjanduse Seltsi kirjastus teadlik ning kuna Sillaots tegi selle kirjastusele kaastööd ka teises valdkonnas, kirjanduskriitikuna Eesti Kirjanduse veergudel, oli tema poole pöördumine hõlbus. Üldiselt oli Sillaotsa ekstratekstiline agentsus mitte eriti jõuline – vähemalt siinses töös uuritud materjali alusel ei pakkunud ta ise tõlkeid kirjastustele, vaid pigem küsis neid ning enamasti nõustus sellega, mida talle pakuti.

Kui aga tõlge juba tellitud oli, anti tõlkijale siiski üsna suur paratekstide kirjutamise ja lisamise vabadus. „David Copperfieldi“ eessõna puhul kirjastus veidi küll sekkus, kuid olulisele paratekstilise vabaduse kärpimisele allikad ei osuta. Siingi võib teatud puhkudel põhjusi otsida Sillaotsa mitmekülgsest tegevusest Eesti kirjandusväljal – lastekirjanduse eksperdi omale lisandus positsioon kirjanduskriitikuna. Nagu „Huckleberry Finni“ puhul nähtud, võivad paratekstitid hilisemates väljaannetes ning muutunud riigikorra tingimustes elada ka nõ oma elu. Samuti on üllatavad arhiivileiud (Rudolf Sirge „Huckleberry Finni seikluste“ 1954. aasta „uue“ tõlke käsikiri) ajendanud püstitama hüpoteese tõlkija ja tõlke agentsuse kohta. Kui represseeritud tõlkijal pole agentsust, küll aga on seda samal ajal tema tõlkel, mida isegi korduvalt välja antakse, siis on alust arvata, et sellisel puhul realiseerub tõlkija agentsus tõlke kaudu.

Tõlkija tekstiline agentsus on kahes tõlkesündmuses, „Huckleberry Finni seikluste“ ja „David Copperfieldi“ puhul, avaldunud teatud aspektides erinevalt. Esimest tõlketest toimetati üsna vähe nii esmatrüki kui järgnevate väljaannete seisukohast, välja arvatud 1989. aasta väljaanne, milles ühele tegelastest omistati tõlkes afro-ameerika dialekti kompenseeriv idiolekt. „David Copperfieldi“ 1937. aasta väljaande toimetamise kohta pole trükieelsete materjalide puudumise tõttu informatsiooni, kuid kirjavahetus tõlkija ja kirjastuse vahel osutab, et need võisid olla üsna ulatuslikud. Korrespondentsi põhjal võib samas siiski eeldada, et suurema osa käsikirja toimetamisest tegi tõlkija ise. „David Copperfieldi“ järgmine väljaanne 1991. aastal näitab, et hoolimata uue tõlkija Lia Rajandi austusavaldusest Marta Sillaotsale tema kaastõlkijaks lisamisel, on teos siiski uuesti tõlgitud ning esmatõlkija hääl selles vaevukuuldav.

Analüüsitud materjali põhjal võib öelda, et Sillaotsa tõlkijaagentsus avaldub tugevamalt paratekstilise agentsusena, tema ekstrateksiline agentsus pole kuigi jõuline ning tekstilise puhul on vaadeldud tõlkesündmused paljastanud seda erinevalt: „Huckleberry Finni seiklused“ demonstreeris seda üsna tugevana ka siis kui tõlkijal enesel polnud võimalik selles kaasa rääkida, „David Copperfieldi“ puhul oli tegu kirjastuse jõulisema sekkumisega, ehkki parandused viis suuremalt jaolt sisse tõenäoliselt tõlkija ise. Sillaotsa eksplitsiitne ning implitsiitne tõlkepoetika olid vastavuses – ta toimis oma töös suuresti nende printsiipide järgi, mille oli oma tõlkearvustustes seadnud.

Töö lõpus olevate lisade hulka kuuluvad Marta Sillaotsa tähtsamate elusündmuste ning tõlgete ülevaade ajajoonel, tema Eesti Kirjanduses ning Loomingus sõdadevahelisel perioodil avaldatud kirjandus- ja tõlkearvustuste bibliograafiad ning „Huckleberry Finni seikluste“ ja „David Copperfieldi“ väljaannetele lisatud joonealused märkused.

Tõlkesündmused näitasid kujukalt, et tõlge ei sünni ühe inimese jõupingutusena, vaid kollektiivse panusena (*multiple translatorship*, Jansen and Wegener 2013: 1) ning iga kord erinevana, mõjutatuna ühiskonna ootusest ning valmidusest tõlke vastu võtmisel, tõlkija agentsusest, soost ja positsioonist kultuurimaastikul, isikuomadustest, lähtekultuuride prestiižist ning paljudest muudest (sageli juhulikest) asjaoludest. Oluliseks teguriks on ka tõlkija teised tegevusalad: üks positsioon mitmepositsioonilisuse ampluaast võib mõjutada teisi. Mida enam positsioone, seda suurem on vähemalt võimalus oma häält kultuurimaastikul ning ühiskonnas laiemalt kuuldavaks teha. Agentsuse uurimisel tuleks minu arvates silmas pidada ka tõlkija argipäeva konteksti, mis avab meile eduka erialase tegevuse tagamaid, aga ka seob üksikisiku laiemate ühiskondlike protsessidega. Sillaotsa toetav kodune keskkond, lähedased peresuhted nii oma abikaasa ja tütardega kui ka õdede ja vendadega võimaldasid tal olla produktiivne, sihikindel ja põhjalik ning küllap andsid talle jõudu tulla toime ka katsumustega.

Soovin doktoritöös tähelepanu juhtida mitmepositsioonilisuse ning argipäeva aspektidele tõlkija agentsuse uurimisel uskudes, et tõlkijaid ja nende tõlkeid võiks käsitleda võrdse tähelepanuga ning lootuses, et see aitab meil näha mineviku tõlkijaid ja nende tööd tulevikkusuunatud pilguga.

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Association of Estonian Adult Educators Andras, 2006–2011
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Tallinn University, 2003–2004
Translator (subcontracting)

Mainor School of Economics, 1997–2000
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