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CHANGES IN THE PUBLISHING SYSTEM AND BOOK PRODUCTION IN ESTONIA

(From the beginning of independence in 1918 up to the present day)

A number of small new states emerged on the map of the world as a result of World War Two. The Austrian–Hungarian Empire desintegrated into three states – Austria, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. Five new states – Poland, Finland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia separated from the former Russian Empire.

The economic conditions and cultural levels of these new states were quite different. However, it is characteristic of all these states that the national culture, including literature and publishing, made very rapid progress during the next twenty years. The liberation from national oppression, the end of discrimination on the basis of language and rank had a considerable positive effect and enabled them, inspite of economic hardships, to overcome the centuries' lag from the developed countries in a brief period between the two world wars. Many indicators of cultural development, for example the number of titles per one million inhabitants, reached the same level as highly civilized countries, with long traditions of book–publishing.

The national bibliography of Latvia registered 1601 titles of books in Latvian in 1936, while its population was 2 million people.

1552 titles in Finnish were issued in Finland in 1938, where the population was 3.8 million.

1703 titles of books in Estonian were published in Estonia in 1936, the population being 1.2 million¹.

Although the principles of book statistics may differ in various countries to some extent, these are high figures and characteristic of nations with a well developed book culture and a wide range of reading interests².

The growth of printed matter was so rapid in Estonia, that more books and journals were published in 1918–1934 than during the previous four centuries³. The contents and types of printed matter changed even more radically – for the first time the textbooks for secondary schools and universities were published in Estonia. The publishing houses and various societies started to publish encyclopaedias, reference books, special journals in Estonian, scientific series, large scientific reviews about the land and people of Estonia. The classics of world literature were translated into Estonian and, at the same time, the best works of Estonian authors reached the world level.

¹ Lepp A. Kirjastus ja ajakirjandus 1936 // Eesti Statistika. 1938. Nr. 194.(1). Lk. 16–24.

² Escarpit R. Революция в мире книг. М., 1972. С. 69–73.

³ Antik R. Eesti raamat 1535–1935. Tartu, 1936. Lk. 26–29.

The structure of printed matter thus approached that of the developed countries. The prerequisites to this were created by adapting the publishing system to the specific needs of a small country and the state support to the most important issues.

Publishing and Publishers

The small number of inhabitants makes it much more complicated for smaller states to maintain a book production satisfying all the needs of the society than for the states with bigger population.

The main problems of the Estonian book market in the 1920s–1930s were the small printruns and slow circulation of the books as the market was small and saturated easily. Many publishing houses, founded enthusiastically after Estonia became independent, were in serious crisis as early as the end of 1922⁴. The book-trade catalogues demonstrate that a considerable number of books remained on sale for a long time and were eventually sold at prime cost or even at loss. Publishing was thus a highly risky business. This is illustrated by a great number of firms that were going bankrupt – from 53 publishing houses active in 1924, only 10 continued to publish books in ten years.

Publishing had been considered as part of the struggle for independence during the czarist rule, and it had received moral and material support from all patriotic Estonians. With the foundation of an independent state, the attitude towards publishing changed. Publishing houses were treated in the same way as other businesses, that were supposed to manage on their own. However, already the financial hardships of numerous publishing firms at the beginning of the 1920s demonstrated that in a country with a population of one million, publishing of many types of literature, indispensable for the normal development of the society, could not meet its costs. Such types as scientific books and special literature, university textbooks, part of classical belle-lettres, poetry, and short prose could not be issued without reliable structures to subsidize them⁵.

Some fields of publishing (mainly textbooks and the works of classics included in the school programmes), received long-term, low-interest loans from the state budget during the first years of independence⁶. But the irregularity of these loans and frequent bankruptcies of the publishing houses forced them to look for more efficient forms of support.

In order to support the production of books, which were vital to social progress but unprofitable, various funds were organized at the end of the 1920s and at the beginning of the 1930s. The funds were financed partly by the state, and partly by donations and membership fees. The most influential of them was the Fund for Furthering Culture, which was established in 1925 by a special law⁷.

⁴ Kriis kirjastuses // *Agu*. 1924. Nr. 41. Lk. 1369–1370.

⁵ *Aanist A. Meie kirjanduskultuurist ja kirjastusoludest* // *Eesti Kirjandus*. 1925. Nr. 7. Lk. 292–297.

⁶ *Riigilt laenu saanud kirjastused* // *KMKO*. F. 16. M. 68:1.

⁷ *Eesti kultuurkapitali seadus* // *Riigi Teataja*. 1925. Nr. 27/28. Lk. 133–134.

The main source of income of the Fund was the 2.5 per cent allocations from the state retail liquor sale returns, but money also came in from fines, donations, and legacies. The Fund's money was primarily used to support the development of professional art, literature, and science. The activities of the Fund included six directions – literature, music, the graphic arts, dramatic art, physical culture, and journalism. All these fields received a fixed share of the Fund's income. 50 per cent of the money stayed at the disposal of the Funds' Council and this was used for supporting scientific research and scientific publications. The gains of the Fund were quite unstable and diminished considerably during the years of the economic crisis (1929–1933). Still, the effect of this institution on the development of arts, science, and literature can be described, with hindsight, as quite amazing.

Nearly 20 per cent of the Fund's annual income was spent on promoting publishing. A great majority of the unprofitable works – reference books, special and scientific literature, music literature, classics of fiction – were published with the help of the Fund.

The Council of the Fund examined the situation in publishing and the use of the subsidies for book production more thoroughly in 1929⁸. Although some participants of the discussion were of the opinion that publishing firms should finance their activities themselves, the majority of experts backed the support for publishing. New principles of support were worked out during the discussion. It was decided that the subsidies for scientific works and others types of unprofitable publications should not be addressed to the publishing houses, but rather to academic and professional societies. All leading Estonian intellectuals gave their support to this idea. Henceforth, the state publishing programme was, first of all, realized through societies, which were non-profit organizations. This also provided professional evaluation of all sponsored publications and the societies prevented the publishing of weak manuscripts.

The majority of the societies issued publications connected with their main activities: academic societies printed their transactions, scientific information bulletins and periodicals; professional societies such as the Society of Librarians, the Society of Engineers, the Society of Writers, published books and journals on their professional fields. So the societies took the place of special publishing houses, as the small number of buyers made it impossible in Estonia to establish large publishing houses for professional literature.

Still, for the majority of societies, publishing was only a side line of their activities. However, some societies took special interest in publishing and issued publications that satisfied the needs of the whole Estonian society. For example, the Estonian Literary Society became an important publisher and the main channel for carrying out the state publishing plans.

The publication of folklore collectanea (for example “Estonian Folksongs”) was given maximum support, covering all the expenses connected with the preparation of

⁸ Kultuurnõukogu sihte määramas // Postimees. 1929. 12 juuni.

the manuscript and printing. Advertising, management, and distribution costs were covered from sales revenues. It was considered normal that this kind of publications were constantly on sale in larger book-shops. Many culturally significant series published by the Estonian Literary Society were sponsored in a smaller scale, by covering the authors' and translators' royalties. These series include, for example, "The World Literature", "Living Science", "The Biographies of Great Men". The Academic History Society gave out a large "Bibliography of the Estonian History" and "Estonian Biographical Lexicon" with the subsidies of the Fund. The latter was the first biographical reference book about Estonians and persons of other nationalities, connected with Estonia. Many outstanding publications were published on the same conditions by the Academic Society of the Estonian Language, the Academic Society of Literature, the Academic Estonian Society, the Teachers' Association and other institutions⁹. The Publishing House of the Society of Estonian Writers was founded in 1927 with the help of the Fund. This firm deserves special credit for publishing such types of unprofitable literature as poetry and short prose by Estonian authors.

The share of different institutions in publishing is illustrated by the following table, based on national bibliography¹⁰.

Table 1. The division of book production between various publishing institutions

Publishers	1918-1923 Number of titles	%	1937-1939 Number of titles	%
Publishing houses	1755	54.0	1906	39.3
Societies, associations and other institutions	1427		2732	56.4
Authors	3255	4.0	4839	4.2
Altogether	3255	100%	4839	100%

The table demonstrates that over half of the books were published by publishing houses during the first years of independence. This period was favourable to publishing as the prolonged war (1918-1920) had emptied the book market.

The need for books was also stimulated by the rapid changes in the social situation and the transition to education in the mother-tongue. The quickening of book sales created prerequisites for investments and the foundation of new enterprises. A considerable number of new publishing firms was established in the two bigger publishing centers, Tallinn and in Tartu, in 1918-1923. Among these, the publishing houses "Rahvaulikool" (1918-1940), "Odamees" (1918-1929), "Varrak" (1919-1928),

⁹ Kraut A. Kultuurkapitali osa kodanliku Eesti kirjastustegevuses: Diplomitöö. Tallinn, 1975. Lk. 189-204.

¹⁰ Antik R. Eesti raamatute üldnimestik 1918-1923. Tartu, 1931. Eesti raamatute üldnimestik 1937-1939. Tartu, 1941.

“Agronom” (1919–1940), “Loodus” (1920–1940), “Sõnavara” (1923–1929), and “A. Org” (1922–1929) are especially worth mentioning.

The growth of book production continued until 1922. Then the first serious hardships in selling books occurred. Books stayed in warehouses for a long time, the economic situation of the publishing houses became worse.

Among the above-mentioned publishing houses, only “Loodus” was able to maintain its activities in full scale under these complicated conditions. In a short time it became the biggest universal publishing house in Estonia. All the others met difficulties and many of them were liquidated in the next few years.

Consequently, many of the enterprises, which had published quite a number of valuable books, operated only for a short time.

The publishing societies, for example the Tallinn Estonian Publishing Society, “Postimees”, “Noor-Eesti”, adapted better to the unfavourable circumstances. These enterprises were founded already during the czarist rule, in order to support the fight for independence, and they mainly issued periodicals. Besides that, they also published other necessary publications – textbooks, handbooks, and fiction. In the crisis, they gave up the publishing of books and concentrated on periodicals. The only exception among them was “Noor-Eesti”. The main shareholders and authors of this publishing society were leading Estonian writers A. H. Tammsaare, Fr. Tuglas, O. Luts, H. Raudsepp, etc. It became the biggest publisher of the Estonian belle-lettres and was able to carry out even such costly projects as the publication of the collected works of the Estonian authors.

The book market stabilized at the end of the 1920s and the founding of new publishing houses began again. The newcomers mainly published textbooks (“Töökool”, “Kool”, “Koolivara” etc.), fiction or books for children (“Valik”, “Tapper”, “Paasuke”), concentrating thus on the types of printed matter, which were continually in demand. All these narrowly specialized publishing houses, for example, issued fewer books combined in 1937–1939 than the biggest universal publishing house “Loodus” by itself during the same period.

The limited circle of buyers made it harder for the narrowly specialized enterprises to stay in competition. Only a small number of them managed to stay in business for a longer period. Among them were the publishing society “Agronom”, which produced literature on agriculture, T. Mutsu’s “Teatrikirjastus” (1916–1940), specializing in books on theatre and drama and “Akadeemiline Kooperatiiv” (1929–1940), issuing scientific literature. The latter was a cooperative enterprise of the Tartu academic circles, which published scientific literature and university textbooks with small print runs, subsidized by various funds, including the Fund for Furthering Culture.

The main features of the publishing system and the division of the book-market between publishers were formed in the 1930s.

The greater part of the production of the publishing houses was issued by universal publishing enterprises, oriented on a wide range of readers. The most successful firm among this type was “Loodus”. It had numerous shareholders and owned bookshops, the biggest and the most modern printing house in Estonia, and branch

offices in Tallin and in Tartu. The more narrowly specialized firms mainly published textbooks and belle-lettres, trying to find in the flow of that type of literature its specific area.

The circle of literature, which was commercially unprofitable and needed sponsoring, had been determined by that time. Funds for subsidizing these kinds of books had been created as well as the principles and regulations for paying the subsidies.

As the unprofitable types of literature were supported mainly through societies, their role as publishers increased. Various institutions, first of all societies and associations, published 56.4 per cent of the whole book production in 1937–1939. The smaller part of their publications were statutes, standing rules, and reports of these societies addressed to their members. At the same time the majority of their publications were of interest to the wide public, they were put on the market and formed a complement to the production of the publishing firms.

The Book Production

The division of the Estonian book production by contents is presented in table 2. The comparison with earlier periods enables one to point out the characteristic changes in the contents of the printed matter and analyze their causes¹¹.

The most obvious tendency is the rise in publishing of practical, functional books and the decline in the publication of religious books and fiction. These two types formed nearly a half of the whole book production in the earlier centuries, while in 1918–1940 their share of the whole production was 23 per cent.

At the same time, the share of books on social sciences, applied sciences, natural sciences, exact sciences, history, geography, and arts increased considerably.

Political freedom and the founding of the independent state set new demands for printed matter. For the first time official publications, legal documents, and statistical collections were published in Estonian. The share of political literature increased considerably as the democratic system of government brought along numerous publications of political parties. The great number of the statutes (1615 titles) in the production was caused by the active founding of clubs and societies, which had started already in the 19th century. Nearly 28 per cent of the publications on the social sciences treated economics, the work of economic organizations, as well as various economic issues.

Fiction still takes quite a considerable place in book production. Belle-lettres formed 17.5 per cent of the whole book production in these years instead of the earlier share of 25 per cent. However, in absolute figures, the publishing of fiction increased. The relative decrease in the share of belle-lettres can be observed in the book production of the majority of the European countries in the 20th century and is considered to be an attendant phenomenon of the scientific-technical progress.

¹¹ Antik R. Eesti raamat 1535–1935... Lk. 47–74.

Table 2. The Estonian Book by Contents (by UDC)

	1525-1917		1918-1940	
	Number of titles %		Number of titles %	
0 General works, calendars	2337 1597	16.1	2421	10.2
1 Philosophy	220	1.5	199	0.8
2 Religion	3437	23.7	1351	5.7
3 Social sciences	2155	14.9	6520	27.3
Statistics			115	
Economics	461		1805	
Law	123		437	
Statutes	891		1615	
Education	244		1024	
4 Linguistics	652	9.6	959	4.0
5 Natural and exact sciences	178		1353	5.7
6 Applied sciences	1204	8.9	3544	14.8
Medicine	297		538	
Technics	4		296	
Agriculture	339		1534	
7 Arts and sports	366	2.5	1835	7.7
8 Belle-lettres, Theory of Literature	2616	24.9	4188	17.5
9 History, Geography	339	2.3	1498	6.3
History	184		863	
Geography	83		635	
Total	14503	100%	23868	100%

More than a half of the belle-lettres (53.4 per cent) were works by Estonian authors. In 1924, 88.8 per cent of them were first editions, the corresponding figures being 83.3 per cent in 1928 and 81.7 per cent in 1938¹². The gradual increase of the share of reprints demonstrates the growth of the basic reserve of Estonian literature. Its reprints formed the classical part of the national literature.

The belle-lettres of the first years of independence were dominated by short genres – collections of poetry, short stories, and stories. Interest in poetry and short prose diminished in the second half of the 1920s. This resulted in narrower publishing opportunities for short genres and a considerable decrease in their print runs. The age of prose had begun – novels and longer stories dominated in the works of writers as well as in book production. The outcrop of the novel was largely due to the subsidies of the Fund for Furthering Culture, which enabled the writers to create longer works. The readers also favoured novels, which created better prerequisites for publishing.

¹² Uurimusi eesti raamatu arenguloost. Tallin, 1980. Lk. 49.

20–25 novels and 5–6 collections of stories by Estonian writers were issued each year in the 1930s. The collected works of some leading writers were also published, which required large investments.

A relatively big share of translations (46.6 per cent of all literary works) is characteristic of other small European states as well. Before independence, the educated readers orientated themselves mainly to imported books in foreign languages. In independent Estonia, the majority of readers preferred books in Estonian to those in foreign languages.

The education in foreign languages was replaced by the education in the mother-tongue in the independent state. This led to the formation of a learned class, which used the Estonian language. These intellectuals, who sprang from the Estonian-language culture, naturally knew foreign languages, but still preferred to read world literature in their mother-tongue.

The translations were mainly published in series. The best series were “The Nobel Prize Winners” (50 volumes, 1935–1939) by “Loodus”, “World Literature” (1936–1940) by the Society of Estonian Literature and “The Novels of the Nordic Countries” (24 volumes, 1934–1940) by “Eesti Kirjastuse Kooperatiiv”. Besides these, numerous series of light reading were issued. The books were mainly translated from English. 44 per cent of all the translated literary works in the second half of the 1930s were translated from English. The second place was occupied by translations from German and French language (á 8 per cent)¹³. Translation of German literature decreased before the Second World War. Translations from Russian were quite rare. Translating from Russian became more active at the end of the 1930s. Mainly the works of the Russian classics were translated rather than the works by contemporary authors.

The popularity of the literature of the Nordic countries could be expected. The translations of Finnish and Scandinavian literature formed 20 per cent of all the literary translations of this period. This was probably due to the similarities in lifestyle and way of thinking, the general orientation on Scandinavia and the spread of the Baltoscandia ideas in the 1930s.

More suprising was the important role of Polish literature among the translations. In addition to the numerous translations of the works by famous Polish writers W. Reymont and H. Sienkiewicz, many popular novels by modern Polish authors like Z. Nalkowska and E. Szelburg-Zarembina, etc., were translated.

Traditional cultural contacts with Finland fostered the translation of Finnish literature. The number of translations of Finnish literature follows the translations from English, German, and French literature, and forms nearly 6 per cent of all literary translations¹⁴.

The value of the translations of fiction from Finnish cannot be compared with the world level. These books, as well as in the original language as in the translated

¹³ Uurimusi... Lk. 45–49.

¹⁴ Uurimusi... Lk. 45–46.

form, acquired additional value for the Estonian readers due to the closeness of the turn of mind and the customary world outlook represented in them. In any case, the publishing houses did not form their programmes on the basis of kindred romanticism, but responded to the readers' constant interest in the literature of the neighbouring country¹⁵.

The publication of translations was complicated by the accession with the Berne convention of copyright in 1927. Estonia's cultural exchange was rather one-sided and the abidance by the convention caused serious financial difficulties to the Estonian publishers. It particularly limited the opportunities to publish modern foreign literature¹⁶.

The increase of the share of the literature on applied sciences from 8.9 per cent to 14.8 per cent of the whole book production came mainly on account of books on agriculture. The radical land reform in Estonia in the first years of independence brought many people in the farms, who had no experience of practical farming. This created a need for literature to teach and consult them. At the same time Estonian agriculture was adjusted to the demands of the world market, which brought along certain difficulties of reorientation. These tendencies influenced the emergence of agricultural literature, which was issued by agricultural societies and associations as well as by the publishing house "Agronom".

The majority of books on agriculture treated rational managing of the farms. Special attention was paid to the improvement of breed and dairy cattle husbandry. The herdbooks for cattle, pigs, and other more important species were published regularly as well as surveys of the agricultural system in the USA, Denmark, and other countries with highly developed agriculture. The publication of large handbooks and reference works started in the second half of the 1930s. "The Farmer's Handbook" in several volumes, "The Handbook of Practical Gardening and Agriculture" and 13 fascicles of "The Agricultural Encyclopaedia" were given out then. The agricultural experimental stations and research centres, financed by the state, issued many practical and scientific series. The publication of books on agriculture was subsidized from the Fund for Furthering Culture and state budget.

The development of technical literature was hindered by Estonia's orientation on agriculture between the two world wars. Only the industrial rise in the middle of the 1930s and the founding of the Tallinn Technical University in 1936 gave an impulse to the publishing of technical literature. Many general technical handbooks and textbooks were issued as well as technical glossaries.

Still, technical literature formed only 1 per cent of the whole book production.

The share of philosophical literature diminished. However, it actually demonstrated "the liberation" of the Estonian book production from numerous "interpreters of dreams", "fortunetellers", etc., which were classified as "philosophy" in the 19th century. The philosophical literature in Estonian emerged only in

¹⁵ Annist A. Meie iseseisvusaege tõlkeklassika ja Eesti Kirjanduse Selts // Eesti Kirjandus. 1939. Nr. 5. Lk. 214–215.

¹⁶ EKS-i kiri Haridusministeeriumile Berni konventsiooni asjus // KMKO. F 16. M 84:2. Lk. 16–17.

independent Estonia. Translations of well-known authors such as W. Jerusalem, W. James, and H. Höffding were mainly given out in the 1920s. This made some basic works of Western philosophy available to Estonian readers and created the basis of terminology in Estonian. Original philosophical literature began to form in the 1930s, with publishing of the works by the professors of Tartu University, A. Koort, W. Freymann, K. Ramul, etc.

It is not easy to examine the changes in the structure and typology of the book production as the book statistics of earlier centuries did not include corresponding data. Synoptical data is presented only about textbooks¹⁷.

Before independence, textbooks were issued mainly on languages and religion. Spelling books and reading books formed over half of all the textbooks. Sacred histories and catechisms helped to carry out religious instruction. Natural history and mathematics also occupied a noteworthy place. All the other subjects were treated on a lesser scale in the former public primary schools and only a few textbooks were issued on them.

Textbooks formed up to 20 per cent of the whole book production in the first years of independence. The significant role of textbooks can be explained by the transition to education in the mother-tongue and changes of the social ideas and views, characteristic of revolutionary periods. This is inevitably accompanied by the substitution of former textbooks. Textbooks of the czarist period were unusable in independent Estonia for their contents and world outlook. It was necessary to replace them with new textbooks by Estonian authors. There were no Estonian-language textbooks for secondary schools and universities in Estonia in the earlier periods. Books by foreign authors did not include material on Estonia. The new textbooks were compiled by the best teachers and professors and they changed the contents of education.

Considerable changes took place also in the publishing of scientific literature. Scientific publications formed 2–3 per cent of the whole book production in the first years of independence. A noticeable rise in publishing of scientific literature began in 1925 due to the enforcement of the Law on the Fund for Furthering Culture. Henceforth, the number of scientific publications increased proportionally with the general growth of printed matter and stabilized approximately at around 7–8 per cent of the whole book production. The growth of funding and the more intensive development of science resulted in a further increase in the production of scientific literature in the end of the 1930s, when scientific publications made up over 10 per cent of the whole book production.

48.3 per cent of the scientific literature treated the humanities, 15.6 per cent, the natural and exact sciences, and 36.1 per cent, the applied sciences (mainly agriculture and medicine). Technical sciences were represented by only a small amount of publications¹⁸. The division of scientific literature by contents corresponded to the

¹⁷ Antik R. Eesti raamat 1535–1935 .. Lk. 67.

¹⁸ Lott M. Teaduskirjanduse väljaandmisest Eestis 1920–1930 aastatel // VII Eesti raamatuteaduse konverents. Tartu, 1975. Lk. 24–27.

general tendencies in the development of Estonian science, characterized by the priority of the sciences treating Estonia.

The growth of the scientific potential in the end of the 1930s expressed itself in the increase of research works. The publication of information literature dominated in the 1920s, mainly statistical surveys, observation data, information on the work of scientific establishments were published then. The share of research literature began to grow in the 1930s, the publications of research works formed 60 per cent of all the titles of scientific literature and 75 per cent of its volume in 1938. The number of highly educated Estonians had decupled by this time and there were relatively many research workers, including internationally well-known scientists in Estonia.

A considerable number (around 30 per cent) of scientific literature was published in foreign languages. This fostered the exchange of publications and contacts with scientists from other countries.

The Estonian research institutes regularly exchanged their publications with foreign research centers: Tartu University had 330 exchange partners, the Estonian Learned Society, 250, the Society of Naturalists, 320.

The rise of the educational level of people, the growth of the number of students, and the emergence of staffs of researchers favoured a growth in the publishing of popular science and reference literature.

The popular science literature won a firm position in the Estonian book production in the 1930s, forming 6 per cent of the whole production. Many books were published in series: "Living Science" was issued by the Estonian Literary Society with the help of the Fund for Furthering Culture in 1932–1940 and included over a hundred titles representing various scientific fields. The series acquired a permanent circle of readers and contained only books chosen and checked by experts. The books, issued in this series, form the basic works of popular science literature in Estonian. 62 per cent of the publications were original works, half of which treated Estonian topics. Many of these books were actually original researches on Estonian material, for example, H. Helm "Brief History of the Estonian Journalism", Fr. Tuglas "Brief History of the Estonian Literature", G. Ränk "The Folk-Culture of Ancient Estonia".

The academic societies had an outstanding role in publishing reference literature. They compiled many highly important reference books and bibliographical editions.

The Estonian Learned Society together with other societies and research institutes issued the bibliography on humanities under the title "The Annual Review of Estonian Philology and History" (1918–1923, 1929–1931).

The Academic Historical Society compiled and published "The Bibliography of Estonian History" and prepared the manuscript of "The Estonian Biographic Lexicon", which was issued by the publishing house "Loodus"

¹⁹ Tartu Ülikooli ajalugu. 3. kd. Tallin, 1982. Lk. 66.

The journal of the Estonian Literary Society "Estonian Literature" started to publish monthly lists of books issued in Estonia and in Estonian in 1924. They were all later assembled in four volumes, titled "The General Bibliography of Estonian Books". The fifth volume, which contained the publications from 1918–1923, was compiled retrospectively by R. Antik. Estonia had thus acquired a current national bibliography, which included books, brochures, maps, music printings, newspapers, and journals, and met all the requirements to these type of editions.

The greatest achievement in issuing reference literature was the publication of "The Estonian Encyclopaedia" in eight volumes. This was the first encyclopaedical reference work in Estonian, corresponding to the world standards. The part, which treats Estonia, is a noticeable accomplishment of the Estonian science in the period of independence. The encyclopaedia includes 75 754 articles, maps and numerous pictures.

Changes in the Publishing System in 1940 and its Consequences

The annexing of Estonia to the Soviet Union brought along profound changes in all spheres of life. The reorganization of social life began according to the principles of socialism, and the changes, naturally, concerned publishing. In the course of this cardinal upheaval the publishing system of independent Estonia was completely destroyed.

Soviet rule ended freedom of speech and freedom of press. Publishing became a state monopoly, controlled by severe censorship. All the publishing houses, which worked in Estonia in 1940 were nationalized and publishing on the whole was concentrated in the hands of the State Publishing Centre of the Estonian SSR.

There was no need for numerous competitive publishing enterprises in a totalitarian state, and the number of publishing houses was reduced to a minimum. 99 publishing houses were nationalized in 1940–1941 but, in the State Publishing Centre, only five were formed to replace them. Four of them issued books, each specializing in a certain type of literature – political, scientific, pedagogical, and belle-letters. The fifth issued periodicals²⁰.

Analogous changes also took place in the other Baltic states incorporated into the Soviet Union. They were based on the Soviet publishing system, which had formed in 1930, in the atmosphere of the Stalinist "general offensive of socialism". An Association for Publishing Books and Journals was founded in the Soviet Union in this year, which united publishing houses, typified by subjects and types of literature. Only one publishing house issued literature on one particular field, which made it easier to direct and control them.

In the course of an all-union reform in publishing in 1949, all the four publishing houses were joined together, forming the Estonian State Publishing House. It was

²⁰ Eesti raamat 1525–1975: ajalooline ülevaade. Tln., 1978. Lk. 243.

the only publishing house in Estonia in 1949–1964. The aim of the extreme concentration was the stricter control of publishing.

The next all-union reform in 1963 brought along the division of this huge universal enterprise into two publishing houses, “Eesti Raamat” and “Valgus”. Art books were issued by a small publishing house “Kunst” since 1957. Regardless of this, there were still too few publishing houses in Estonia, and the range of their publications was too wide, which resulted in the inhibition in publishing of many types of literature. Scientists and representatives of cultural life repeatedly suggested the establishment of new publishing houses, but these attempts remained unsuccessful. The all-union publishing policy did not favour the dispersion of publishing. The number of enterprises and institutions having the right to publish independently was continuously diminishing. Even the Academy of Sciences of the ESSR and higher educational establishments were deprived of the right to give out monographs to their employees from the mid-1960s. This was a heavy blow, considering that there were no special publishing houses for issuing scientific literature, textbooks for higher educational establishments, music and many other types of literature in Estonia. The societies, which had performed their functions in independent Estonia in 1918–1940, were already liquidated in the 1940s.

The all-union publishing policy attached great importance to large print runs, keeping the number of titles more or less at the same level. The number of titles published in Estonia annually was quite modest. Approximately 1000 titles were issued annually in the 1940s–1950s; that was considerably less than in the end of the 1930s. The publishing level of the Republic of Estonia was achieved only in the beginning of the 1960s. From that time the increase of annually published titles slowed down and remained around 2000 till the end of the Soviet period.

A similar situation can be observed in Latvia, where the number of annually published titles remained at the same level in the 1960s–1980s. (2354 titles were published in 1960, 2165, in 1987). A small growth in the number of titles can be found in Lithuania (2206 titles were published in 1960, and 2942, in 1987)²¹.

At the same time, large print runs can be noticed. The average number of copies was 1500–2000 in 1918–1940, the corresponding number in the Soviet period was 6770²².

No notice of the readers' interests and needs was taken into account in the determining of the print runs and the choosing of the titles. The publishing houses followed the instructions of the ruling organs of the Communist Party and were financed by the state. A favourable aspect of this system was the possibility to publish a number of unprofitable academic publications, which were of great value for the preservation of national culture, at a low price.

The small number of titles published meant that readers were offered one-sided reading material; the varied book-production of the period of independence

²¹ Печать СССР в 1988 г. М., 1989. С. 143–151.

²² Liivaku U. Trüüksõna koht Eesti rahvskultuuris // Keel ja Kirjandus. 1987. N. 9. Lk. 521.

in 1918–1940 was replaced by a uniform literal output and people lacked any choice.

Soon after Estonia became a Soviet Republic in 1940, banning and destruction of the literature printed in 1918–1940 began, aimed at severing the continuity of Estonian culture and isolating Estonians from their past and traditions. The range of forbidden literature was rather wide and included nearly all the more valuable books published in Estonia during the independence. About 10–12 million books and 5–6 million annual sets of newspapers and magazines were destroyed from 1940 to the mid–1950s. This was one third of the total literary output of the Republic of Estonia during 1918–1940²³.

In addition to the past, the Estonian book was also isolated from contemporary development in other countries of the world. The translations from Russian took the place of Western literature, dominating especially in the first post-war decade. Slightly more than half of all the books published during these years were translated from Russian. The share of original literature started to increase in the 1960s but, among the translations, Russian preserved its leading role till the end of the Soviet period.

Literature on applied sciences was mainly published in the Soviet period. Books on technics, medicine and agriculture formed about 33.5 per cent of the entire book production. The greater part of them were official editions with limited distribution, various instructions, regulations, and norms, which were of no interest to larger circles of readers.

Political and economical literature formed 14.4 per cent of all the titles published during the Soviet period. Their share was as high as 25 per cent in 1940–1955. The publishing of fiction decreased considerably as compared to the level of the Republic of Estonia in 1918–1940, forming only 11.6 per cent of the whole book production. The issuing of scientific and popular science literature also diminished. These types formed correspondingly 7 per cent and 3.6 per cent of all the titles published in the Soviet period. There were especially few popular books on modern scientific problems, contemporary achievements in technical areas, and nature, which was very popular among the readers.

Textbooks were published rather actively, forming 16 per cent of all the titles. Although in many subjects (history, geography, biology), only the use of translations from Russian was allowed, the Estonian pupils mainly learned from original books. 87 per cent of the secondary school textbooks and instructive material were compiled by Estonian authors.

The Soviet regime exerted severe pressure on the Estonia book, attempting to disrupt the publishing traditions, which had formed during the period of independence. However, this attempt was not entirely successful. The solid basis of the Estonian book during the Soviet period made a considerable contribution to the preservation of the Estonian language, culture, and nation.

²³ Ebaõiglus ootab heastamist // Ohtuleht. 1990. 8 juuni.

Although the Russification led to a continuous decrease of the share of the publications in the mother-tongue in the whole book production, the books in Estonian maintained their positions relatively well, in comparison with many other national languages of the Soviet Union. The books in Estonian formed 63 per cent of all the titles published in Estonia in 1988, while the books in Latvian formed 50 per cent of the books published in Latvia, the books in Uzbek made up 43 per cent of the books published in Uzbekistan, and the books in Ukrainian formed 21 per cent of the whole Ukrainian book production in the same year²⁴.

The above-mentioned high share of original textbooks can also, at least partly, be explained with the influence of the independent book publishing before 1940. The publishing houses managed to issue classical works of Estonian literature, even during the most difficult years of Stalinism in 1947–1953.

When the atmosphere became a bit more liberal in the mid-1950s, the Estonian publishers started to issue series of foreign literature. The publication of the literary magazine “Looming”, which had first been issued already during independence, continued throughout the whole Soviet period.

The democratization of the society in the end of the 1980s and the restoration of independence in autumn 1991 created the prerequisites for a principal renewal of the publishing system. Censorship and state monopoly on publishing were liquidated already at the end of the 1980s. Private publishing houses were founded very actively, and books were issued by numerous corporations, societies, firms, and research establishments. 512 publishers issued books in 1994²⁵.

The publishing houses, which worked in Estonia in 1918–1940 have not been restored after a fifty-year interval, but this period is often studied in search of models for organizing the publishing. The problems, faced by contemporary Estonian publishers are quite similar to the hardships of their past colleagues. This especially concerns the need for subsidizing the commercially unprofitable types of literature. In this field, the pre-war experience has been used in a direct form; the Fund for Furthering Culture started to work again in spring 1995.

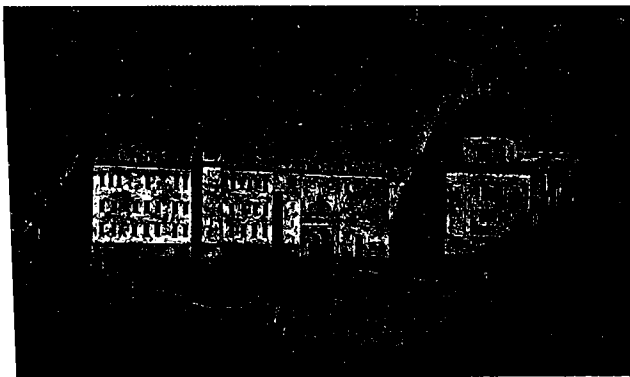
The publication of scientific literature and other unprofitable types is also sponsored by other funds, endowments, local governments and from the state budget. However, the amount of subsidies can not so far be considered sufficient.

The Estonian book production has not yet achieved the balanced structure of the period of 1918–1940 and may not meet the requirements of all the fields of life at the present time. It does not resemble the structure of the book production of the developed Western countries, but the last couple of years demonstrate the movement of Estonian book publishing in this direction.

²⁴ Печать СССР в 1988 г. М., 1989. С. 142–145.

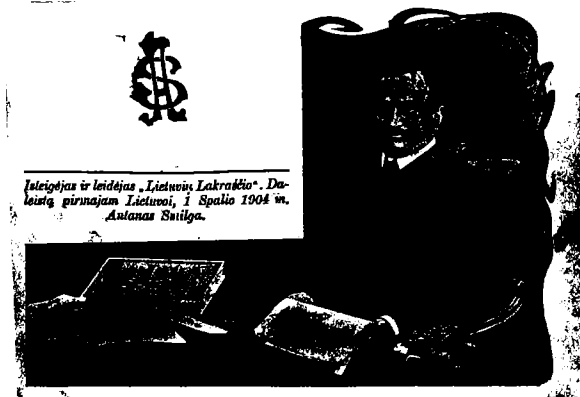
²⁵ Naber K. Eestiraamat 1994 // Eesti kaasaegne trükkis. Konverents 30.–31. mai 1995. Tekstid. Tln., 1995. Lk. 13.

Z. TOLIUSIO STRAIPSNIO ILIUSTRACIJOS



Vilnius. Katedros dalis ir pirmbuvusioji pils, pastatyta didž. Lietuvos kunig. Gedimno 1322 m. čia gyveno daugumas didžiųjų Lietuvos kunig. telp-pat ir sv. Kazimieras.

vav. Vilniaus katedra ir didžiųjų kunigaikščių rūmai. N. Ordos litografija. nus, P. Vileišio leidinys, apie 1905 m.

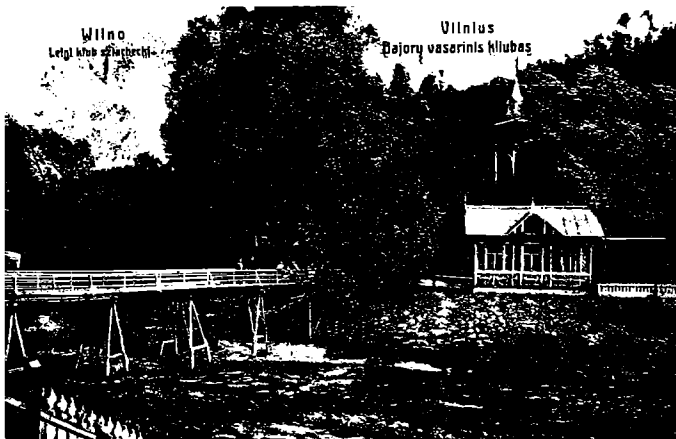


Isteigėjas ir leidėjas „Lietuvių Laikraščio“. Dėleisčių pirmajam Lietuvai, 1 Spalio 1904 m. Antanas Smilga.

pav. „Lietuvių laikraščio“ steigėjas ir leidėjas A. Smilga. Vienas pirmųjų asijoje leistų lietuviškų atvirukų.



1 pav. J. Ambrazaitis (Šiaulių dėdė) ir G. Landsbergis (Žemkalnis). Vilnius, f. Šlapelienės knygyno leidinys.



2 pav. Vilniaus bajorų vasaros klubas. Vilnius, B. Stadzevičiaus leidinys, T. Pientkos paustuvė Breslavoje, apie 1906 m.

Turgavietė Kretingo. Targ w Krelyndze.



5 pav. Kretingos turgus. Palanga, P. Mongirdaitės nuotrauka ir leidinys.



Lietuvos tįpai — Les tįpes de Lithuanie

• 8 Editoas D. Vizna, Vilna

6 pav. Lietuvos gyventojų etnografiniai tįpai. Vilnius, D. Vizuno leidinys.



Gruss aus Littauen

Litauische Kahnbauer in Schwarzort

7 pav. Mažoji Lietuva. Lietuvių valčių statytojai Juodkrantėje. Tilžė. R. Minzloffo nuotrauka ir leidinys.



MAŽOJI LIETUVA.
Žuvininkų sodžius Gilija.

PREUSSISCH LITHAUEN
Fischerdorf Gilje.

8 pav. Mažoji Lietuva. Gilijos žvejų kaimas. Lietuvių centro komiteto įgaliotinio J. Savickio Kopenhagoje leidinys.



Lietuvaitės pas Rambyną
(Litauerinen am Rombinus)

9 pav. Mažosios Lietuvos merginos. R. Mizloffo nuotrauka. Tilžė, "Birutės" draugijos leidinys.

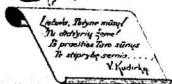


11. П. Чудовичас
"Моясь арабавас"
(Вест. "Мирь Морянава" 1921)

12. Чюрльонис
Мист де симфоніе
ев. ф. А. Тудманас

11 pav. P. Rimšos piešinys iš ciklo "Karas". Maskva, S. Jackevičiaus, M. Steigvilos ir ko leidinys, "Lietuvių spaustuvė", 1915 m.

ATMINIMUI APVAIKŠČIOJIMO 50 MET. SUKAKTUMUI
sąjimo V. Kudirkos.
(1828-1908)



Dr. M. Drukas

10 pav. V. Kudirkos 50-mečio atvirukas. JAV Tėvynės mylėtojų draugijos leidinys, 1908 m.



12 pav. M. K. Čiurlionis. Kapinių motyvas. Šv. Eugenijos draugijos leidinys.

I. KORSAKAITĖS STRAIPSNIO ILIUSTRACIJOS



3 pav. Nežinomo dailininko iliustracija.
Gulivero kelionės. Vilnius, 1911).

Marytės katytė.

Eina Marytė su indeliu pieno p
susitinka savo katytę.



— Ką, ar pieno užsimanei?
Marytė, — palauk, tuojais atnešiu
suprato, atsitūpė ant tvoros, raiš
ir laukia.

51726

14 pav. P. Kalpoko iliustraciją.
P. Mano dovanėlė. Ryga, 1913



15 pav. K. Šimonio iliustracija. (Eglė žalčių karalienė. Šiauliai, 1924).

P. NAGIO ATSIMINIMŲ ILLUSTRACIJOS



8 pav. "Minties" spaustuvės direktoriai (iš kairės): P. Nagys, E. Nagienė, Kyzelis. 1961 m.



9 pav. "Minties" spaustuvė. 1965 m.

Conclusion

The Republic of Estonia created a publishing system, which enabled the country, with its 1.2 million population, to develop a varied book production, corresponding by contents and form to that of countries with a high cultural level.

The greater part of books on sale were issued by big universal publishing houses. The production of commercial publishers was completed by societies, issuing non-profitable literature, which needed sponsoring (scientific literature, classics of fiction, reference works, etc.).

The publishing of various societies was subsidized from the state budget as well as (since 1925) by the Fund for Furthering Culture. As the small number of inhabitants hindered the founding of special publishing houses, the societies performed their functions.

Book production is characterized by the growing number of titles, the forming of new types and kinds of literature, and an important role of translations.

The changes in the contents of printed matter are connected with the development of the social and economical life in Estonia. The founding of an independent state brought along an increase in publishing official editions, law documents, and statistical surveys. The publications of applied sciences (medicine, technics, agriculture) were dominated by books on agriculture, which were also sponsored by the state. The books on technics were not numerous, forming only 1 per cent of the annual book production. Original works dominated among belles-lettres, but the translations also formed nearly half of all the fiction. The classical works of world literature were frequently issued in series such as "World Literature", "The Nobel Prize Winners", etc. The publication of scientific works had an important place in book production, nearly half of the scientific publications treated the humanities. Popular science and reference literature were issued along with scientific literature.

The Estonian book production had reached the level of countries with a highly developed culture by all the main indices in the end of the 1930s.

The historical experience of the 1920s–1930s presents one possibility of organizing publishing and balancing book production in a small state with modest economic potential.

The annexing of Estonia to the Soviet Union led to the destruction of the publishing system, which had been formed in independent Estonia in 1918–1940, substituting it with a state monopoly on publishing and the publishing system, corresponding to the Soviet model.

The experience of this period is studied very actively at the present time, as patterns for organizing publishing are being searched after the restoration of independence in 1991.

ESTIJOS KNYGŲ LEIDYBOS IR GAMYBOS SISTEMOS POKYČIAI
(nuo nepriklausomybės pradžios 1918 m. iki šių dienų)

MARE LOTT, AILE MÖLDRE

S a n t r a u k a

Estijos Respublika sukūrė knygų leidybos sistemą, kuri sudarė sąlygas leisti vertingą ir įvairaus turinio bei formos mažos valstybės (1,2 mln. gyventojų) spaudos produkciją, būdingą išvystytą knygos kultūrą turintioms šalims. Ketvirtojo dešimtmečio pabaigoje Estijos knygų gamyba pasiekė pagrindinių Europos šalių lygmenį pagal daugelį svarbių rodiklių (knygų pavadinimų milijonui gyventojų skaičių, mokslinės ir mokslo populiarinimo literatūros spausdintos produkcijos procentą, pasaulinės ir nacionalinės literatūros klasikos santykį).

Daugiausia knygų prekybai skirtų leidinių išleido didelės universalios leidyklos („Loodus“ ir kt.). Komerčių leidyklų produkciją papildė draugijos ir sąjungos, leidusios tą spaudą, kuri neatsipirko ir kuriai reikėjo papildomo asignavimo (mokslinė ir siauro profilio profesinę literatūrą, literatūros klasišką, žurnų leidinius ir kt.).

Draugijų ir sąjungų leidybinė veikla buvo subsidijuojama iš valstybės biudžeto, o nuo 1925 m. – ir iš specialaus fondo, sukurto nacionalinės kultūros plėtrai (vadinamojo „Kultūros kapitalo“). Kadangi Estijoje dėl pernelyg siauros knygų rinkos nebuvo prielaidų kurti specializuotų leidyklų, jų vaidmenį iš dalies atliko draugijos ir sąjungos.

Be socialinių ir ekonominių faktorių, knygų produkcijos formavimuisi įtakos turėjo bendras gyventojų kultūros ir išsimokslinimo lygis, literatūros, mokslo ir technikos raida. Atsirado naujų tipų ir rūšių leidinių iš įvairių pažinimo sričių: universalios ir šakinės enciklopedijos, žinymai ir žodynai, mokslinės monografijos, vidurinių ir aukštųjų mokyklų vadovėliai. Pradėta leisti nacionalinė einamoji bibliografinė rodyklė.

1920–1930 m. knygų leidybos istorinis patyrimas rodo, kad nedidelė, kuklų ekonominių potencialų turinti valstybė gali organizuoti knygų leidybą ir subalansuoti spaudos produkciją.

Estijos aneksija ir prijungimas prie Tarybų Sąjungos 1940 m. sunaikino 1918–1940 m. sukurtas leidybos sistemas. Knygų leidyba tapo valstybės monopolija, leidyklų darbą kontroliavo partijos organai ir cenzūra. Daugiausia dėmesio buvo skiriama politinės literatūros ir taikomųjų mokslų knygų leidybai. Palyginti su 1918–1940 m. laikotarpiu, sumažėjo grožinės, mokslinės ir mokslo populiarinimo literatūros leidyba.

1918–1940 m. leidybinio darbo patirtis pradėta aktyviai tyrinėti atkūrus Estijos nepriklausomybę 1991 m.