

TALLINNA ÜLIKOOL
HUMANITAARTEADUSTE DISSERTATSIOONID

TALLINN UNIVERSITY
DISSERTATIONS ON HUMANITIES

Anne Lange

THE POETICS OF TRANSLATION OF ANTS ORAS

Abstract

 TLÜ KIRJASTUS

Tallinn 2007

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The dissertation is accepted for the commencement of the degree of *Doctor philosophiae* in literary studies by the Doctoral Committee of Humanities of Tallinn University.

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The academic disputation on the dissertation will be held at Tallinn University, Lecture Hall U-649, Uus-Sadama 5, Tallinn, on February 20, 2007 at 12.00.

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Anne Lange's monograph "Ants Oras" was published by "Ilmamaa"
ISBN 9985-77-163-X

ISSN 1736-3667 (abstract online, PDF)
ISBN 978-9985-58-472-9 (abstract online, PDF)

Tallinn University Press
Narva mnt 25
10120 TALLINN

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LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

- I. Anne Lange 2006. Transnational Consciousness and National Identity: A Case Study of Ants Oras. – Markku Lehtimäki, Julia Tofantšuk (eds). *Thresholds of Interpretation. Crossing the Boundaries in Literary Criticism*. Tallinn: TLÜ kirjastus, 89–102.
- II. Anne Lange 2005. *Ants Oras*. Tartu: Ilmamaa.
- III. Anne Lange 2004. Luuletaja ja tema tõlkija. – *Looming*, 11, 1709–1719.
- IV. Anne Lange 2004. Oras ja romantism. – *Vikerkaar*, 7–8, 175–181.
- V. Anne Lange 2004. Läbinägelik romantikupilk Miltonile. Ants Orase doktoritööst. – *Akadeemia*, 4, 807–842.
- VI. Anne Lange 2004. Orase Shelley. – *Keel ja Kirjandus*, 1, 11–24.
- VII. Anne Lange 2004. Saateks. – Ants Oras. *Luulekool II. Meistriklass* (Eesti mõttelugu 58). Tartu: Ilmamaa, 449–457.
- VIII. Anne Lange 2002. Eesti luule ja poeetika tagasivaates. Vestlus Vincent B. Leitchiga. [Interview with the doctoral student of Ants Oras at Florida University]. – *Vikerkaar*, 10, 90–102.

INTRODUCTION

The analysis to follow discussing the poetics of the translations of Ants Oras is supplementing the monograph study of his life and work. The latter, stemming from the realization that Oras as a major Estonian critic of pre and post World War II decades has every right for his biography and historical study, is an archival research on bio- and bibliographical data as these would have their inevitable impact on any further discursive treatment. It is only the chapter on Oras the critic that appears different: discussing a more familiar material, it includes its theoretical and cultural context, although the idiosyncrasies of Oras keep him at a certain distance from any domineering influence. Being a critic of a young national literature, Oras could be our Goethe and Hippolyte Taine, Walter Pater and T.S. Eliot, all in one, continuing the tradition of Young Estonians that endeavored to modernize Estonian culture.

The inclusion of the scholarly studies of Oras on Shelley and Milton or on the Elizabethan prosody draws attention to the lifelong persistency of Ants Oras in the field of essentially empirical specialized studies. Moreover, one becomes aware of the fundamental undertones in his polemical criticism, turning Oras from an argumentative critic into a literary chamber musician daring enough to venture big arenas.

The special focus on the translations of Ants Oras has other aims besides the biographical: Estonian cultural studies need to incorporate in its corpus of relevant texts also translations and has to find a way of describing them. The poetics of Ants Oras have been described in the hope that in future the work of other translators will be also studied. The dependence of translations on their target context as well as on the artistic convictions of the translator cannot be the peculiarity of the work of Ants Oras only but is hopefully valid with other decades and persons as well.

With every respect for the originality of Estonian culture, the present research has been written in the expectation that there will be prevalent a mental approach more favorable towards the significance of translators and translations in our discussions of literature and culture of both the present and the past. Nothing, national literatures included, can flourish in a vacuum, and our descriptions of Estonian culture could be more outspoken in this respect.

THE POETICS OF TRANSLATION OF ANTS ORAS

WHY POETICS?

Those standing for the autonomous discipline of translation studies would expect a description of the work of a translator to be grounded on a well-defined and as recent as possible a theory. Otherwise the reaction would show clear signs of impatience:

How many times have we been tortured by the clichés of the uninitiated, veteran or novice, that translation is never equal to the original, that languages differ from one another, that culture is “also” involved with translation procedures, that when a translation is “exact” it tends to be “literal” and hence loses the “spirit” of the original, that the “meaning” of a text means both “content” and “style”, and so on (Even-Zohar 1981: 1).

The embodiment of the bore in complaints like these is often the “innocent translator”, rediscovering “with great amazement time-honored commonplaces” (*ibid*). The science of translation, however, occupied with its own identity (Torop 1999: 42, Talvet 2006: 354), has not been too good at giving reliable tools – its metalanguage is indefinite, there is no unanimously accepted model of the translation process, and the initiated are wisely content with compiling lists of what could be done. In case the study of literature has no considerable tradition of translation research, anyone aiming at a portrait of a translator feels at loss, even though there is a clue of what has to be aimed at: it is “personal criticism, the monograph study of the work by a translator (methods, evolution, etc)” (Torop 1995: 32).

Estonian culture born of translation and in translation (like any other European culture; Meschonnic 1999: 32 ff), needs to overcome its traditionally grudging recognition of its translational character although the reasons for the grudge are ample: small nations in their fear of not only political and economic but also of cultural colonization, tend to stress in writing their cultural histories its difference from any other, often more prestigious and dominant cultures. Although this difference can never be pure, it makes clear the distinction between writing and translation, privileging the first. The realization like that of the German Romantic authors that translation is “the internal fate of the German language” (Steiner 1975: 401–402) – meaning that the development of the latter cannot be imagined without the translated Bible or the translated Shakespeare – has not been applied to the Estonian culture as its backbone.

Alongside with national self-defense there is another reason for passing translation as marginal – the inconvenience of its description requiring competence in minimum two sets of texts, that of the source and the receiving culture. Estonian literary studies in their brief, mostly harassed history of denied political independence have not yet managed to accumulate the required resources and emotional balance, and so the early translations, marking the beginnings of the Estonian written language, are usually passed over quickly referring to their “awkward foreigners’ Estonian” (Oras 1963: 2), while the later translations of mature linguistic performance are excluded from the Estonian literary studies. It is by no means unique: “in spite of the broad recognition among historians of culture of the major role translation has played in the crystallization of national cultures, relatively little research has been carried out so far in this area”, states Itamar Even-Zohar, and “as a consequence, one hardly gets any idea whatsoever of the function of translated literature for a literature as a whole” (Even-Zohar 2004 [1990]: 199). Yet even the most patriotic of researchers knows that it is only a question of time when the distinction between an author and a translator in cultural studies stops to be eliminative in order to focus on all influential writers.

Privileging writing over translation, any text in Estonian, be it translation or not, has to conform to the idea of the heterogeneity of the thought and the language: an acceptable translation has to impress its reader as an original, leveling cultural and linguistic differences in order to create the illusion as if the source language text had been written in the target language corresponding to the norms prevalent there. This practice is not unique either:

Translation never communicates in an untroubled fashion because the translator negotiates the linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text by reducing them and supplying another set of differences, basically domestic, drawn from the receiving language and culture to enable the foreign to be received there. The foreign text, then, is not so much communicated as inscribed with domestic intelligibilities and interests. The inscription begins with the very choice of a text for translation, always a very selective, densely motivated choice, and continues in the development of discursive strategies to translate it, always a choice of certain domestic discourses over others. (Venuti 2004: 482).

This statement, among other things, establishes the translator – as opposed to the translated author or the linguistic peculiarities of the translated text – as a figure of major significance in translation studies: he is

the one who determines every choice in the multiple possibilities of the translation process, being conscious of his options and/or responsibility to at least some extent. (Indeed, the translation research in Finland has been largely designed as a set of translator's portraits: <http://kvl.joensuu.fi/suomennoskirjallisuus/data/dispositio.pdf>). The present description of the translation poetics of Ants Oras is an attempt at a profile of an Estonian translator.

Centering translation studies upon a translator, there is the risk to replace the translation studies proper by bio- and/or bibliographical research. “/---/ the detail study, which usually has titles like “X as translator of Y”, or “X as translator” /---/ more often than not has more to say about either X or Y or their relationship to each other than about the process and problems of literary translation”, writes André Lefevere (Lefevere 1975: 2), complaining, too, that there isn't any generally accepted methodology to deal with the problem of translation as a whole. A quarter of a century later this larger-than-life wish has not been fulfilled: translation theories like literary ones cannot teach one write a good translational sentence and do not have the value of a manual but describe the process and the problems of translation in its separate aspects only. The translation, however, especially that of a literary text, cannot be reduced to a series of linguistic operations, and its semiotic description is centered rather on the product than on the process.

Henri Meschonnic, poet, translator and professor of linguistics, has solved this theory's seemingly inevitable inability with his propositions for a poetics of translation (Meschonnic 1973). His preference for poetics, instead of a translation theory, is substantiated first by the fact that unlike linguistic theories poetics does not separate the language and the literature (Meschonnic 1999: 61), maintaining in the post-Jakobsonian vein literature as a separate function of the language. While discussing the work of a translator of fiction, it is the *conditio sine qua non* without reducing fiction to poetry alone. The latter is excluded by etymology already: the Greek ποιειν means ‘to make, to do, to cause, to depict, to invent’, and only then to ‘compose verse’ (Unt 2003: 71–72). This is the semantics of the word that has turned it into a trendy term producing discussions on the poetics of adultery or of death, while in translation studies poetics has to be preferred for more reasons: poetics, being the how? and what? of translation, is the translation theory materialized, its the theory in practice. Indeed, the first part of Meschonnic's 1999 monograph is entitled *La pratique, c'est la théorie*, and the second *La théorie, c'est la pratique*, and anyone attempting at general statements about the work of a translator can guess the contours of his possible theoretical foundation by analyzing the translations made, i.e. their poetics.

Secondly, the poetics as a frame for a study of translation underlines one more aspect: as the unit for poetics can be only something continuous – rhythm, prosody –, the unit of study cannot be the word with its meaning (the sign) but the discourse (Meschonnic 1999: 23). Moreover, there is neither rhythm nor prosody without language, and by changing the latter, formal changes are inevitable, so the embarrassing “discoveries” listed by Even-Zohar in the beginning are referred to without much discussion. This, in its turn, blurs the traditional polarization of translators into ‘sourciers’ (those copying the original form as closely as possible) and ‘targeters’ (conveying and preserving primarily the content) as it does not allow to separate a text into its form and content parts. If this separation were possible, argues Meschonnic, the artistic mode of communication would have disappeared long ago (Meschonnic 1973: 312), while now it is only in “theory” where the translator as if translates content without form or attempts at linguistically impossible formal identity. The common experience and translation practice know too well that “a way of thinking does something to language, and what it does is what is to be translated. And there, the opposition between source and target is no longer pertinent.” (Meschonnic as translated by Pym 2004: 339).

Aiming at a text with a poetics of its own, translation has been included among arts and its product among literature: it cannot be just a transfer with its denotative information more important than the connotative meaning. A dubious double identity haunting all translations cannot be at that denied: those who do not know the original language tend to look at it as literature, those who do know it look at translation as a secondary product (Barnstone 1999: 10). Any way, the affiliation of translation to arts has its effect on the issue of equivalence, making one judge a translation first by its literary quality.

Historically this is not news. The notion of equivalence has rarely meant exact linguistic or poetic correspondence. Believing that a poetic form developed in one language and culture cannot be just so extracted from it, the task of the translator was to reproduce the original in a form that would function in the receiving culture in an analogous way. To give an example from the translation of poetry, one remembers as exemplary the 1715 Preface of Alexander Pope to his translation of “Iliad” reminding us the third aspect of poetics: it is as to its nature a social and historical phenomenon.

„It is the first grand Duty of an Interpreter to give his Author entire and unmaim'd,” wrote Pope (§164), believing that “no *Image, Description, and Simile*” can be changed in the “insolent Hope of raising and improving their Author” (§ 167) but has to be translated, trusting that “*Homer* will teach us if we will but follow modestly in his Footsteps” (§ 169). “I know no Liberties one ought to take, but those which are necessary for transfusing the Spirit of the Original, and supporting the Poetical Style of the Translation” (§ 167), states Pope, including as the translator’s “proper Province” „the *Diction* and *Versification* only, since these must be his own” (§ 161). Postulating this, Pope has taken the liberty to turn the quantitative hexameter of the original into the rhymed accentual pentameter of his translation seen as the 18th century English equivalent to the Greek heroic verse. In order to preserve the “just Pitch of [Homer’s] Style” (§ 171), his “Warmth and Elevation”, “Plainness and Solemnity”, “Fullness and Perspicuity”, “Shortness and Gravity” (§ 222), Pope has changed the form because “the Endeavour of any one who translates *Homer*, is above all things to keep alive that Spirit and Fire which makes his chief Character” (§ 219). Having considered “what Methods may afford some Equivalent in our Language for the Graces of these in the Greek”, Pope presented his contemporaries with a rhymed “*Iliad*”. A few years before madam Dacier – bearing certainly in mind the same aim – had published French “*Iliad*” in prose.

Itamar Even-Zohar has hypothesized that the poetic choices of a translator depend on the relative strength or weakness of his culture: “if T PS [target polysystem] is weak vis-à-vis S PS [source polysystem], then non-existent functions may be domesticated /---/ on condition that the position of the translated system within the PS is central” (Even-Zohar 1981: 7). So, “when a literature is “young”, in the process of being established”, when it is either “peripheral” [in the Western Hemisphere more often than not that of a small nation] or ““weak”, or both”; and “when there are turning points, crises, or literary vacuums in a literature” (Even-Zohar 2004 [1990]: 200–201), the translators often prefer the formal solutions of the source language (i.e. mimetic forms insofar as the identical ones are linguistically impossible). In case with “strong” literatures (like English or French), at that, the translator usually does not violate the norms governing the translating literature. Nothing, including the poetics of a translation, can ever be described “in terms of an a-historical out-of-context idealized state” (*ibid*: 204).

The traditional principle of the Estonian poetry translation until as late as the late 20th century has been “homorhythmic”, i.e. following the meter of the original, albeit often with an inverse meaning: the multiple verse systems of world literature were replaced – like in the German translation pattern – by the accentual-syllabic verse (Kaalep 1997: 65). The possibility to treat versification as “the proper province” of the translator occurred black-on-white only in the second half of the 20th century, and the necessary *opus magnum* to establish a new poetic pattern was the free verse translation without rhyme of Baudelaire’s “*Les Fleurs du mal*” (“*Kurja õied*”) by Tõnu Õnnepalu published in the last month of the year 2000. With the naturalized Baudelaire the reign of mimetic forms in Estonian poetry translation was over which can be treated as an indicator of change in the target culture at large. “The mimetic form tends to come to the fore among translators in a period when genre concepts are weak, literary norms are being called into question, and the target culture as a whole stands open to outside impulses” (Holmes 1988a: 28) as was the case with the Estonian culture between the two world wars. But the 21st century Estonian translator is more self-sufficient, possessing a classical confidence in the peculiarities of his own linguistic and cultural means (and in splitting the expression and the content planes).

Presenting one’s reader with a familiar/unfamiliar expression, the form has to do with either meeting or not the expectations of one’s reader. The awareness of the central norms of the target culture is a guarantee of breakthrough – unless the translator has reasons to be loyal to his “belief” in the conservatory form of his originals even at the cost of leaving his translation in the periphery. Even though Ants Oras must have been well aware of the mainstream tendencies of the post-World War II English poetry as well summed up by W.H. Auden – “in this age poetry ... can no longer be written in the High, even in the Golden Style, only in a Drab Style ... By a Drab Style I mean a quiet tone of voice and a modesty of gesture which deliberately avoids drawing attention to itself as poetry with a capital P. Whenever a modern poet raises his voice he makes me feel embarrassed” (quoted in Holmes 1988b: 14–15) – he chose to translate the Estonian end-rhymed patriotic poetry of firm declarations into English or German as close to the form of the original as possible (see Oras1964, 2002). In this way he is creating “discrepancy between the original central literature and the translated literature” (Even-Zohar 2004 [1990]: 202). Again, these are the historical and political realities that help to make sense of the poetics disagreeing with its context.

Translation, giving weight to culture and history, gives also weight to the linguistic structure of cultures, especially when confronted with what is perceived first as the untranslatable. As “the untranslatable is social and historical not metaphysical (the incommunicable, the ineffable, mystery, genius)” (Meschonnic

1973: 309), the translation has to be a text of novelties. In the Estonian context the latter is first and foremost associated with the early 20th century neologicistic movement related tightly to translation and following the pattern Even-Zohar has described as following:

Through the foreign works, features (both principles and elements) are introduced into the home literature which did not exist there before. These include possibly not only new models of reality to replace the old and established ones that are no longer effective, but a whole range of other features as well, such as a new (poetic) language, or compositional patterns and techniques. It is clear that the very principles of selecting the works to be translated are determined by the situation governing the (home) polysystem: the texts are chosen according to their compatibility with the new approaches and the supposedly innovative role they may assume within the target literature (Even-Zohar 2004 [1990]: 199).

The quotation serves well as an introduction to the poetics of translation of Ants Oras in its social and historical dependency. What follows is not based on the statistical analysis of the structure of the texts or of the devices used but on a sample reading of translations that have been described with the aim of getting the contours of the translator's profile.

THE POETICS OF ORAS'S PROSE TRANSLATIONS

Born in 1900 in Tallinn, in the then Baltic Province of the tsarist Russia, Ants Oras was the third student matriculated at the reorganized Tartu University giving now instruction in Estonian. The most sensitive years of his youth fell into the period opening up new social and political vistas for Estonians. The very possibilities were accompanied by a keen sense of responsibility: "it is no exaggeration to say that these were heroic years," writes Julius Mägiste, a member of the academic students' society Ants Oras also belonged to (Mägiste 1976: 9), bearing in mind the elevated atmosphere and the national and international consciousness that made him and his generation study and work in the hope of opening up new horizons also professionally. In the words of Oras: "We all remember how much we wanted to turn from a Baltic provincial into "a European", to attain "European standards" in literature like elsewhere" (Oras 2003a [1956]: 126). As Oras was a student of both Estonian and English, his aspirations had to concern translations opening up new linguistic horizons in both modern and classical texts. Indeed, the later translations of Oras from Horace to Huxley give a reason to say that the ample social opportunities granted him made him give in return texts of linguistic exuberance. Itamar Even-Zohar has pointed at a general tendency:

Periods of great change in the home system are in fact the only ones when a translator is prepared to go far beyond the options offered to him by his established home repertoire and is willing to attempt a different treatment of text making (Even-Zohar 2004 [1990]: 203).

The mirage of boundless possibilities with new obligations was supporting itself on the foundation built at least a generation before. The intellectual milieu of the early 20th century Estonia – like that in Ireland, Central-Europe, and the Baltic countries in general – was characterized by growing awareness of the strength of national cultures capable of equal participation in the Western civilization. There was just one precondition for Estonia: the intellectual horizon, too narrowly circumscribed by Germany and Russia, had to be widened further north and west, towards Finland and Scandinavia, France, England, and Italy. The new cultural endeavors were proclaimed by the Young Estonia group that had a decisive influence on the generation of Ants Oras: "The importance of Young Estonia far exceeds that of its distinguished literary achievement, for it is largely due to this movement that Estonia owes that thorough intellectual reorientation which made her an inalienable part of the West. A spirit of inquiry and aspiration had been created which set its sights very high indeed. /---/ A vigorous class of critical, independent intellectuals had been fostered, and its influence was felt in all areas of the life of the nation" (Oras 1963: 12).

The cultural stretch included a linguistic one as initiated by the Young Estonian Johannes Aavik guided by the principles of utility, aesthetics and native quality. Ants Oras has to be understood on the background of this linguistic experiment for his overt statements since the 1920s include him among the conscious innovators of the language:

the new mentality, the new poetry, the intellectual ambitions of this generation forcibly demanded a new, richer, more flexible literary language, less encumbered by Germanisms, more subtly shaded in its vocabulary, and ampler in its treatment of word order and syntax. /---/ innumerable suggestions for innovations, some cutting deep into the very structure of the language, at first seemed fool-hardy to many but in the long run in large part became common currency, changing the very face of Estonian. The native dialects, largely untapped, were ransacked for verbal and morphological riches; Finnish models were

followed, archaic expressions resuscitated, even new roots invented. The result was a language differing as much from mid-nineteenth-century Estonian as present-day English differs from the English of Caxton or Malory (Oras 1963: 9–10).

Oras had begun translating very young and in a reverse twist: he was fifteen when “Revaler Beobachter” published his translation of Estonian poetry into German. This was possible due to his bilingual childhood – his father, coming from a village in central Estonia, had studied in Hermannsburg, Germany, and so the languages spoken in his home were both Estonian and German – possibly complicating the sensitivity of the awkward age of Ants Oras. For in 1935, answering a magazine poll on his literary influences, Oras says that decisive for him had been the ideas of the Young-Estonians Gustav Suits and Friedebert Tuglas “deepening his belief in Estonia and convincing him that one can be an Estonian and an intellectual at the same time” (Oras 1935a: 818). Being an Estonian sounds here as if having been for Oras – besides the obvious accident of birth – also a personal choice made in the Babel of languages. Indeed, he had attended a Russian language school with French as his first and English the second foreign language, and that gives an explanation to the somewhat alien registers of some of his early translations.

This does not concern, however, the student translations of his university years: “The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde” by R.L. Stevenson, published in 1920; “The Prince and the Pauper” by Mark Twain, 1922, “The Treasure in the Forest” by H.G. Wells, 1922; “Meister Martin der Küfer und seine Gesellen” by E.T.A. Hoffmann, 1923; “System der Ästhetik” by Ernst Meumann, 1923; “Antike Religionsgeschichte” by Tadeusz Zielinski, 1924; and “Man and Superman” by G.B. Shaw, 1924. These prose translations of fiction from English and German together with German studies on empirical aesthetics and the religion of Ancient Greece (the latter already a translation from French) leave no doubt that Oras was familiar with the Dictionary of New Words by Johannes Aavik (published in 1919 and 1921) – new coinages are moderately used and patiently explained in footnotes. Nevertheless, it is also clear that he respected the normative Dictionary of the Estonian Language by Johannes Voldemar Veski (1918). Moreover, since 1920 Oras had been included in the committee that was to edit the second issue of the latter, so every competence in the standards was available for him. Reading the literary criticism Oras had begun writing since 1919 it is noteworthy that he was experimenting with neologisms in the articles of his own while in his translations used a more traditional and normative language. Or, in his own words: “language is something given but it is also living, capable of organic growth. One has to penetrate deep beyond its surface, listen to its covert harmonies and possibilities for harmony, rhythm and potential significance. These are all there – one just has to evoke them” (KM EKLA, f. 237, m 51:1, p. 21^{*}).

This statement of 1963 reiterates the linguistic principles Ants Oras, taking the *via media* between the reformers and “the normers”, maintained throughout his life. In late 1920s when the language issue was high on the agenda in Estonia he has compared language to a musical instrument that has to be refined to the quality of a Stradivarius or a Bechstein (Oras 1929b), making difference between two types of language-users: the “normal” speaker little qualified for independent linguistic and stylistic speculations, and the writer-stylist, the embodiment of the linguistic consciousness of his people (Oras 1929a). The latter has to work for language treated as an art (Oras 1929b: 101), developing the linguistic taste of his audience. In Meumann’s “The System of Aesthetics” Oras had translated: “a language cannot be elevated or changed at a stroke. It is against all the natural laws of linguistic evolution to find at a stroke hundreds of new linguistic means of expression. The naturalization of these needs the work of many generations, and their formation requires the most patient observance of the language usage and thought patterns of an age” (Meumann 1923: 81). What it means is that a text full of experimental neologisms risks with its endurance, and with the endurance of its author. “The quicker the development of a language, the easier it is for a style treated once as perfect to become obsolete,” Oras has written, “but one has to make this sacrifice, life must take its course” (Oras 1929d). It has to take its course weighing the proposals of language-conscious writers whose preferences have every ambition except that of being treated as a norm. As to foreign loans, for example, Aavik himself thought to be unsuitable in Estonian texts, Oras has professed: “I personally feel the need for the vigorous rhythm of Latin loans in texts of not too intimate a style. Foreign loans as a suggestion of the grotesque are wide-spread in some circles” (Oras 1929d).

* KM EKLA stands for the Archives of the Estonian Literary Museum (*Kirjandusmuuseumi Eesti Kultuurilooline Arhiiv*); m (*mapp*) for the dispatch box.

In the 1920s and 1930s Oras shared the conviction of the many: the Estonian literary language is still in its formative years (cf. Palm 1932: 24). Of all his prose translations* the most experimental, underlying the felt deficiencies (and addressing a specific model reader) is “Those Barren Leaves” by Aldous Huxley.

“We already have educated readers with true culture who have had to be generally content with the role of an orphan”; “the intellectual novel is the genre that has received relatively little attention”; the Estonian novel is only seldom depicting “the milieu with thought and arts feeling themselves at ease” – these quotes from the review of the Estonian novel in 1934 (Oras 1935d: 299–300) give a special justification to the Estonian rendering of “Those Barren Leaves”. Oras himself has called the novel “a collection of essays” (*ibid*) that sounds as a mild reproach to the novel as a novel. But as in 1930s the novel of ideas was a rarity in Estonia, Huxley was the dominant of all the prose authors Oras chose to introduce: besides the translation of “Those Barren Leaves” in 1933 he has translated Huxley’s “Farcical History of Richard Greenow” (1928), the short-story “The Monocle” (1932), and written on him in a daily paper (“Postimees” 1927, January 6, p. 5) as well as in longer articles in literary monthlies (“Looming” 1932, 6–7 and 1936, 7; “Akadeemia” 1938, 2). At first sight it is a lot but just proper for Huxley, an author who was careful to unite in his texts the intellectual and the moral, and Ants Oras definitely was a translator concerned with intellectual problems of social scale. His comparative opinion of Huxley is very high indeed:

Huxley has a stronger hand, richer mental baggage and a more passionate, inquiring mind than the majority of his contemporaries, even those known better. The novels of Virginia Woolf are more intimate, discrete and sensitive, those by D.H. Lawrence reach deeper in the subconscious, are more explosive and of original power, and those by Joyce are more gigantic in their total refusal to resort to compromise with the audience – but no one of them has the combination of the intellectual, the topical, the robust and the narrative skill that makes Huxley so inspiring, thought-provoking and living. His sharp formulations make you think as sharply while Virginia Woolf, Lawrence and Joyce are content with vague hints at formulas (Oras 1932: 835–836).

Huxley, aware of the simultaneity of the molecular and the ethical, the physiological and the symbolic, the inexplicable subjective experience and the norms of language and culture, was fictionalizing the complexities of his subtle thought and experience with vocabulary exhibiting profound erudition. Oras, in his turn, was translating into a language of thinner traditions, but he still must have known: “the cultural value of translations has always been in their ability to participate in solving the problems of the translating culture” (Torop 1999: 53).

“Those Barren Leaves” succeeded in the latter as testified by contemporary reviewers: e.g. Johannes Silvet begins his criticism applauding the choice for “a modern intellectual, as Huxley himself has said, is for many a reader an utter stranger as boring as higher mathematics” (Silvet 1934: 281). The translation together with the metatextual articles preceding it (Oras 1932) was in this respect of necessary heuristic value, yet, according to Silvet the reading is (linguistically) too laborious a task.

The primary reason for that is that Ants Oras – by 1933 a *privat-dozent* with an Oxford degree, a researcher who had presented a year before his habilitation thesis on the critical ideas of T.S. Eliot, a prolific essayist writing in Estonian periodicals, an active member in the board of the Estonian PEN, a man of letters with great prestige among the Estonian literati – was translating as a confident ideologist and a linguistic innovator. It is also valid for Oras’s word order, one of the polemical issues for Johannes Aavik who – although observing that what he called the German word order has also become the Estonian one – thought it possible to de-Germanize Estonian syntax, especially in more poetic, that is literary texts (Aavik 1936: 158–172). This is what Ants Oras has done, trying to turn the tide and eliminate the centuries’ long influence of German on Estonian: we seldom meet the verb on the second position of the principal clause that was (and is) the habitual Estonian word order (for examples see Lange 2004: 182–186). Life must take its course only after it has been given a chance to change it.

There are other proposals for linguistic innovation sounding now as daring as the word order – the frequent use of the essive case replacing the participial, abundant forms in the *i*-plural – but it is so not with all the proposals, and Oras has used also those now in general usage (the *i*-superlative, the short partitive plural), like he has left unused some possibilities of the innovation (met often in his poetry translations, e.g. shortened verb forms). He was by no means a subservient disciple of Aavik but a sovereign writer of his own way with the words.

* Besides those already listed “Sard Harker” by John Masfield, 1929; “The Development of Political Ideas and Forms from the City-State of Ancient Greece to the Present” by F.J.C. Hearnshaw and G.D.H. Cole, 1932; and “The History of Henry Esmond, Esq., Colonel in the Service of Her Majesty Q. Anne” by W.M. Thackeray, 1940.

The Estonian “Those Barren Leaves” is full of bizarre *ad hoc* loans transcribing English (like *indigneerumus*, *frugaalne*). This usage fell into the background consensus: “language teeming with foreign or new words means bad style. Their abundance turns the expression dry and abstract for the foreign and new words have, if at all, only a conceptual meaning and no emotional value” (Palm 1932: 25). With the coinages of Oras the meaning can be sometimes derived from their context (for *mumbo-džumbo* on p. 257) but sometimes the knowledge of Latin is required in order to make any sense at all (*kvadrupedantne* on p. 390). Here the metatext helps to explain the linguistic decision: Huxley is perseveringly exposing snobbery, writes Oras (Oras 1932: 830), translating Huxley in parts into a slightly snobbish Estonian. Moreover, the snobbish approach to one’s mother tongue seems to have been a part of the linguistic innovation: in translating it becomes clear very soon that the history of the Finno-Ugric Estonian, very different from the Indo-European English, makes the translation of some layers problematic. The faced problems were sometimes solved with the stiff upper-lip treatment of Estonian as a poor language with serious drawbacks (Palm 1932: 126–127). “Those Barren Leaves”, ridiculing the pretentious futility of its highly intelligent characters, was just the text to face its model reader with confusing language.

The translation in its adequacy is a micro-stylistic one if categorized according to the taxonomy of Peeter Torop (Torop 1995: 27). Preserving the realia of the original (the “Estonian” for lunch is *lunch*, titles remain unchanged) it assigns importance to the sense of foreignness in the classical Schleiermacher vein imagining this practice can help Estonian language and literature overcome the cultural and political domination of the German and Russian language. But it is helpful to think of this “exoticizing” character of the poetics not so much as of transporting the target reader into the source text but as of “work on the language, /---/ structuration of a subject and history” (Meschonnic 1973: 313–314; also 1999: 25). The wish to expand the receiving culture, covert in the poetics of the translation, is overt in the public statements of Ants Oras: in the heated discussions of the 1930s on the orientation of Estonian cultural policy Oras was firmly of the mind that the English culture, then practically unknown in Estonia,^{*} is “as if predestined to be fruitful here and help us out of our blind alleys” (Oras 1938; for more see: Lange 2004: 143–147). This, by now historical flavor of the poetics of the Estonian “Those Barren Leaves”, conveys the definite cultural milieu of the 1930s: written in “domestic dialects and discourses, registers and styles” it produces “textual effects that signify only in the history of the receiving culture” (Venuti 2004: 485). That is, “Those Barren Leaves” is a part of the attempted Estonian linguistic and cultural innovation, releasing “a domestic remainder, an inscription of values, beliefs, and representations linked to historical moments and social positions in the receiving culture” (*ibid*: 498).

The discursive poetics and metatextual comments of “Those Barren Leaves” present yet another aspect: the pre-World War II idealism of Estonia, treating translation as “the central concern of the intellectual life of a small nation /---/ that can intensify its intellectual atmosphere” (Oras 1931b: 609). Aspiring to establish “contact with the intellectual Europe, its present and past, trying to guess its future” (Oras 1935d: 299), Oras believed that “we need the culture of both London and Paris to oppose the hypnosis of Berlin,” as he has written in the daily “Päevaleht” on January 4, 1937. “Only then we can hope to escape from the mental province and develop our minds in close contact with the deepest and clearest springs of Europe.” In this context “Those Barren Leaves” is a very telling choice indeed and as if predicting the future conviction of Ants Oras: the difference of Estonian literature from its European counterparts is a value to be cherished. As *der Untergang des Abendlandes* or *The Waste Land* moods could not be dominant in Estonia with its newly gained independence and the need to make up for the centuries lost to history, Estonian literature was charged with energy the preservation of which had to be the task of a conscientious critic/translator (Oras 2003a [1956]: 136). But this has already taken us to the poetics of his poetry translations.

THE POETICS OF ORAS’S POETRY TRANSLATIONS

Oras has translated poetry from nine languages reproducing the metrical scheme of the original. In doing so, he must have considered “the poem in the ear” (Hollander 1985), i.e. poetry as a kind of music, as he resorts often to the musical analogue. Language is perceived as possessing “covert harmonies and possibilities for harmony, rhythm and potential significance”; the original gives the translator a “melody” that has to be “recreated”; a good translation has to have “a body of sound and rhythm, containing much of the soul of the poem, similar to that of the original” (Oras 1961: 367).

^{*} According to *Estonian Statistics* in 1929 the public libraries in Tartu had 40.5% of literature in Estonian, 37% in Russian, 20.8% in German, and only 1.7% in other languages, including English.

The rather vague musical comparisons stating the perceived aim can be supplemented with an extract from a letter of Oras to Ivar Ivask (written in autumn 1959), stating his perceived method:

Contrary to those who say that a translator should not have handwriting of his own, I think a true translator should – albeit flexible, sensitive and with wide amplitude of figures, but still a personal one. It is through one's person only that you can dive into other's personality and your produce has to be convincingly personal otherwise it would not be poetry of full weight! It has to be passionately experienced and passionately expressed – even though in a disciplined way. So, one can truly translate only what has been deeply experienced – and only if truly affirmed. There cannot be an absolutely universal translator translating everything. /---/ A translator-genius /---/ is a diver immersing fully in the text to be translated, subsiding from his earth-element into the sea-element, but his self still remains – a transformed, perhaps a transfigured one, “undergoing a sea-change. Into something rich and strange”. But the self is still the same. He has absorbed another, a greater spirit, letting this experience turn him greater. This is the experience he has to express – as a self, although changing like a great and truly inspired actor. He must do more than an actor because what is left of the original is only the skeleton – and yet it has to be of the same blood as the original – the basic inspiration, the basic ecstasy (if there is ecstasy) must be preserved. But it has to travel different paths leading to the same (= equivalent) objective. The reader must get from the result a similar innermost experience – the innermost. Only then it can have an effect. Knowledge, research may help, one must have discipline. But also this *Stirb und werde* attitude that gives birth to true life, being impossible unless you put at stake your very self, not your selflessness (Akadeemia kirjades 1997: 115–116).

There can be no doubt that Oras, whose critical method, too, was centered upon intuitive experience, is describing here his perceived translation practice of both past and future. His hint at “the principle of equivalent effect”, however, is of little explanatory help because equivalence, the controlling concept for most translation theory for the decades to come, can without specification mean many a thing. What is evident is that with the reproduced meter in another culture and another century “equivalent objective” must have had an idiosyncratic content for Oras who could have treated equivalence as an attempt to reproduce the original in its intuitive and historical value.

The translator's confessional evidence is only a shortcut needing a supplement. It is offered by the bibliography (see Appendix) listing at a cursory glance the languages Oras has translated from (these are, in the chronological order of their “entrance”, Finnish, English, Russian, German, French, Latin, Swedish and Greek) and the authors of predominantly central significance in their home culture. A closer look at the translations will be grouped according to the language of the original as the poetic solutions in a translation depend on the peculiarities of both the original prosody and the translation tradition (the more and the longer translations are made from language A to language B, the easier it becomes to translate from A to B; see Holmes 1988b: 13).

Translations from Finnish were the first ones into Estonian to be published. These were done during the post-graduate studies in 1924 when Oras was looking for a subject for his thesis and finally settled on Milton. In his professional career Finnish literature may have been a deviation but it was definitely not the case with Estonian culture (see Kultuurisild 2005): contacts with Finland have been traditionally the mainstream ones since the national awakening and in the 1920s the movement to promote closer ties among kindred people was as intensive as ever. For Oras, however, decisive for the interest could have been the impact of August Annist (1899–1972), a literary scholar and a translator, who belonged to the same students' society as him and exercised as significant an influence on Oras as Wordsworth on Coleridge. In 1924 Annist was editing the symposium “Soome maa, rahvas ja kultuur” (Finland: the Land, the People, the Culture); in 1930 there was to come out the first part of the three of the “Finnish Anthology” presenting translations of folk and modern poetry, edited again by Annist. This way Oras had the forum, both traditional and contemporary, to develop a conviction: many a tendency in Finnish literature could serve as a worthy example for Estonia (Kultuurisild 2005: 361).

The elegies by Veikko Antero Koskenniemi (1885–1962) from his 1917 collection “Elegioja” use the ancient elegiac couplet without following rigorously its metrical scheme but staying close to the colloquial Finnish. Koskenniemi, the professor of literature at Turku University, was for Oras a literary politician (Oras 1935e) who had realized with his poetry the aim Oras was to advocate in his literary criticism, reiterating the ideas of “Tradition and the Individual Talent”: one has “to write not merely with his own generation in his bones, but with a feeling that the whole of the literature of Europe from Homer and within it the whole of the literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence and composes a simultaneous order”. Koskenniemi's translations aim at analogous, not too puritan hexameter lines, aware that the text is

in Estonian, not in Greek or Latin. While reading them, however, there is no doubt that it is the quantitative metrical pattern that is shaping the rhythm of the romantic and melancholy lyric:

*Pikk ja pime ja külm on õhtu ja külmad on tähed,
laotuse külmuses tumm õhtune ääretu maa.*

By early 1920s the reign of normative poetics in Estonia was over (Pöldmäe 2002: 22): in 1921–1922 Johannes Aavik, standing on the prescriptive foundation, had published a series of articles on the “faults” of modern Estonian poetry, initiating a debate that made clear the distinction between meter and rhythm. Oras, beginning with his first translations, was a translator of “special laws” for every individual poet and poem, and can be described throughout his career as a translator of rhythm. His subtle reading of originals is well exposed in the 1933 critical article on Otto Manninen (1872–1950) whom Oras estimated to be the greatest Finnish poet beside Eino Leino (Akadeemia kirjades 1997: 72):

His rhymes have been chosen with the most sensitive instinct, his alliterations, phonetic instrumentation is mostly as close to perfect as possible. While the variety of stanza forms and meter is not great, the internal rhythm is always so individual, originating from the general mood, that one hardly ever has the impression of repetition /---/ After who-knows-how-many readings these poems still possess a formal, purely expressive exquisiteness that strikes with its novelty as a surprise. And what is most important – it is all internally related to the mood and the thought you get the closer the more you penetrate into the realm of those enchanted forms (Oras 1933a: 1161–1162).

Oras who has been traditionally described as having “strict formal demands” is definitely a translator who cannot admire formal qualities *per se* for his mistrust of smooth forms with no variety and thus “no character” (Oras 1925) is explicit. In his much later letter to Aleksis Rannit of March 28, 1957, he has written: “‘Phèdre’ versus ‘King Lear’. Which of them is greater? The question may be of little value. But my feelings have always preferred ‘Lear’ although its formal ends are often loose and sometimes it seems that the content has erupted half-formless.”

The impression, however, that Oras was for formal polish, is not entirely groundless. His translations are famous for their perfect end rhymes so that these have been described as “sounding in Estonian better than in the original” (Paukson 1935: 827) – even if these are absent in the source text. Like in “Tänavapilt” (“Kulkue”) by Uno Kailas (1901–1933) that was published in 1931 in “Looming”, and in 1934 Part 3 of the “Finnish Anthology” (and again in Kailas 2002). The original establishes its rhythm impulse by using internal rhymes and word, even phrase repetition that are not reproduced in the translation but compensated by the most effective of rhymes, the perfect masculine end rhyme, met in the original only once.

Oras has explained the flaunting character of his translations by the prosodic peculiarities of Estonian that, when compared to Finnish, has stronger initial and weaker secondary stresses. He writes: “Estonian suffixes end often with a short open vowel (*vetesse: sügise, lõpeta: lõhkema, oligi: liiati*) and the secondary stress on them is mostly weak. Therefore, as rhymes they are usually inexpressive” (Oras 1961: 368). True enough, Estonian original poetry of 1920s and 1930s had by and large avoided suffix rhymes while Finnish verse used them a lot, decreasing this way the importance of rhyme in verse. The imitation of Finnish rhymes in Estonian could leave one with “the impression of stylistic inaptitude” (*ibid*) while the Estonian rhyming practice was in opposition to the trends in Finnish poetry and disturbingly ostentatious (cf. the Estonian “Luiged” and English “Swans” to the original “Joutsenet” by Otto Manninen in Lange 2004: 210–213).

Another and even more conspicuous difference between an average Estonian and Finnish verse line is that the former has usually more words than the latter. Estonian, more analytical if compared to Finnish, has shorter words, and it needs more of them to express the same idea than Finnish – even if the number of syllables remains the same. So, Estonian tends to have a “more chopping, broken rhythm” (Oras 1961: 368), and to smooth it Oras has used alliteration more than the original. This again, serves the same objective: translations of Finnish poetry tend to be more emphatic than the originals.

*Ei, ei! Punajuova jäi ylös otsalle taivaan:
kas, sinne on pirskahtellut kontion verta!
Ei kuollut rotokossansa hän haavojen vaivaan,
kotipolkua vain hän on mennyt päin sinimerta.*
Uno Kailas. Punajuova

*Ei, too punane joon taeva palgel nüüd särabki aeva –
sinna piserdus pritsmeid, see kastund ta verre.
Ei ta koolnud koopas, ei nõrkend haavade vaeva:
koduteed vaid sammus ja saabus sinimerre.*
Laanehaldja surm

The post-World War II translations from Finnish, done predominantly in 1957–58 while Oras was the visiting professor at Helsinki University, have not changed as to their poetic character. The choice of poems, however, deserves a comment: Oras had published only one poem by Eino Leino (1878–1926) while still at home but in exile, deciding by his archives, he made fifteen more translations about half of which were also published. The old grudge against Leino’s talent – Oras has called him a windbag (Oras 1933a: 1154) knowing no restraint (Oras 1935e: 670) – has subsided, leaving behind the will to translate the divinely favored poet. Leino’s rhyming poems (in “Tulimuld” 1958, 1), of course, are congenial to the rhyming talent of Oras: the “underlined rhymes flow as if spontaneously” (Paukson 1935) like always, “as if erupting from the subconscious and betraying no hard work” (Väljataga 2005: 1748). But of surprise value are the translations of Leino’s ballads in “Mana” 1960, 4. Oras has retranslated the texts rendered before the war by Annist in the archaized style (because the originals use the meter of runo songs). Finnish runo songs, however, are linguistically much closer to the modern literary language than Estonian folk poetry, and Leino’s “Helkavirsiä” is in principle a collection of modern verse. Oras, taking into account this linguistic difference, has avoided archaisms but observed the quantitative rules of Balto-Finnic runo verse. In folk poetry, however, it can be only the ear that decides the length of a syllable, not a set of rules (or “the syllable in the eye”), while the general metrical tendency – the thesis cannot be filled with a short (u) and the arsis with a long (–) initial syllable – is present (accepting deviations in the first foot):

u –	uu	u –	– u
<i>Yler-</i>	<i>mi pe-</i>	<i>remees</i>	<i>ülbe,</i>
u –	--	– u	– u
<i>täkul</i>	<i>tungis</i>	<i>templi-</i>	<i>tarra,</i>
– u	– u	– u	u –
<i>lause</i>	<i>laeva</i>	<i>alt la-</i>	<i>jatas:</i>
--	--	– u	uu
<i>“Siin on</i>	<i>mees, on</i>	<i>seesu-</i>	<i>gune,</i>
uu	--	– u	– u
<i>tegu</i>	<i>tehtut</i>	<i>ei ka-</i>	<i>hetse</i>
uu	– u	– u	– u
<i>ega</i>	<i>ihka</i>	<i>taeva</i>	<i>armu.”</i>

“In isolation your mother tongue acquires quite a special image and value. It can’t be taken for granted anymore – as the surroundings require other languages – and it loses its everyday and utilitarian nature. /---/ Nothing is done with it on the spur of the moment. Instead, you want to reach its essence, its Platonic idea.” This extract from a letter of Ants Oras to Tiina Rannit on January 1, 1967 in a way comments on the choice to translate Leino’s “Helkavirsiä”: the ballads are the embodiment of Finno-Ugric archetypal passions conveyed in diction archaic and modern at the same time. Also, these translations are an answer to the call of “Veljesto”, the students’ society of Oras: to “create the content and the form of Estonian culture that would justify the independence of our people” (Aspel 2000: 320).

Translations from English were introduced in 1925 by the verse of Edgar Allan Poe. In the 1920s Poe was “one of the few truly popular representatives of Anglo-Saxon literatures [in Estonia]” (Oras 1931a: 15–16), known mostly by his stories of linguistically innovative translations by Johannes Aavik; otherwise there was practically no Estonian tradition of translating from English. Free of precedents, with freedom exceptional in his career, Oras has translated “The Bells” adding some dozen lines to both the 2nd and the 4th part of the poem:

Hear the mellow wedding bells,
 Golden bells!
 What a world of happiness their harmony foretells!
 Through the balmy air of night
 How they ring out their delight!
 From the molten-golden notes,
 And all in tune,
 What a liquid ditty floats
 To the turtle-dove that listens, while she gloats
 On the moon!
 Oh, from out the sounding cells,
 What a gush of euphony voluminously wells!
 How it swells!
 How it dwells
 On the Future! how it tells
 Of the rapture that impels
 To the swinging and the ringing
 Of the bells, bells, bells,
 Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
 Bells, bells, bells –
 To the rhyming and the chiming of the bells!

*Kuule pehmeid pulmakellu –
 kuldseid kellu,
 avatlevaid, meelitlevaid rõkkavasse rõõmustellu!
 Läbi öise õrmond õhu
 üks nad lõhu iga rõhu,
 iga raskuse ja paine pisarduvat nukrustust!
 Kuis neil hõisata on lust,
 hõisata ja heli heita
 õhumerre –
 üks neid nähta, üks neid leita
 voolvatena, lendvatena, rändvatena tuviperre
 turteltuviperre, räästalt vaatavasse kübekerre
 tõusva kuu!
 Oo, neist helin otsatu,
 helin tõstuv, helin kostuv, helin summutav kõik muu!
 Paisub see,
 tõtleb see,
 ütleb kuuljatele tee
 tulevikku ihatusse,
 ammu, ammu oodatusse –
 peidab, katab tülka tee
 minevikku valulikku,
 vihatusse, põlatusse,
 rõõmutusse,
 hõiskab – ah, et hüppaks su'sse,
 tulevik!
 Tuleviku hääli kuuldu,
 mineviku haavu tuuldu,
 pahkub, lahkub muljuv mure mahajääva valutee!
 Kuula kellu, tõusvaid ellu,
 kutsuvaid meid õnniskellu,
 veetlevaid meid, viipavaid meid ellu suurde,
 rõõmund ellu.*

Six years later, in 1931, Oras explained in his Introduction to the Selected Poems of Poe that most of his there translations were done under the influence of one (emphasis by Oras) strong impulse during a two-week period.

The translations have been processed later but the then mood has been difficult to renew. Because of that a few deviations from the original in e.g. “The Bells” /---/ have not been dared to alter and the then form has been preserved in its outlines. The translations want first to be poems, rendering Poe’s mood and music, sticking to his words as much as possible, but avoiding pedantry. The translator has experienced Poe’s verse in his individual way and has to express willy-nilly these emotions in his translations. /---/ He could not treat his task as purely philological although as to his education he is a philologist. “Scientific” translations of this poetry of nerves have usually failed. Translations, too, must be done with nerves (Oras 1931a: 16–17).

The added motifs of gloom (making one think of the premature death of Oras’s brother in March 1925, just prior to the initial publication of “The Bells”) and the 1931 explanation both testify to the characteristic reliance of Oras on “self, not selflessness”.

Translator’s routine work, at that, was not excluded for the same Introduction leaves no doubt that Oras had studied Poe’s translations into Russian, German and French, and was aware of the two planes of Poe’s poetry: (1) the clear and linear story that has to hint at (2) “cryptic symbolism and neurasthenic hallucinations” (*ibid* : 15). The cryptic and the neurasthenic are definitely there, the linear not always: Oras is ready to sacrifice lexical clarity for the sake of sound and uses syntax more complicated than the original. Euphony, of course, is the part and parcel of Poe, but it is evident that irrespective of his sacrifices, Oras himself could not be satisfied with the result: his translation of “The Raven” uses more (compensatory) word repetition and alliteration than the original, and the 1931 version in the Selected Poems is more alliterative than the one published in 1929. Even less contentment can be derived from the story as the innovative words (explained at the back of the book) and abundant elliptical word-forms used by Oras turn

Poe's narratives into a guess-work and the translations first and foremost experiments on the expression plane that dominates over the content.

With Lord Byron as the first translated English poet Oras could leave the misleading impression to be a translator of the notorious and the glamorous. The total list of his translations, however, convinces that he selected primarily the authors important for the English themselves. Indeed, his article on Alfred Edward Housman begins with the paragraph pointing at the sometimes incompatible fate of authors at home and abroad:

There are authors, set on a pedestal in their own country, whose works almost everyone remembers but who are not known abroad or if, then only by name. This is valid for Racine whom only a few appreciate as highly as the French themselves who usually put him on the first position in their literature. This bears also on Puschkin whose comparison with Shakespeare or Goethe or Dante can be met only in Russia. The English, on the contrary, do not understand why the lyrics of Byron are seen as exemplary so that only Shakespeare of all the English poets can be treated as surpassing him, or why people are still impressed by Oscar Wilde, or how they can think Bernard Shaw or even Galsworthy to be equal to Thomas Hardy or even better. They do not understand why the lyrics and ballads of Wordsworth or Milton or Coleridge or the essays of Pater or the novels of George Moore are not read and admired enough abroad (Oras 1935f: 1135).

The lyrics of Byron have met only a cursory attention of Oras (see Appendix 1929, 1941) and of greater significance are the extracts from "Don Juan" (published in 1934) trying to correct the idea Estonia had of Byron by introducing his achievement in the mock-style. The rendering is following meticulously the verse form of its source, copying the meter and run-on lines, the rhyme scheme and the variety of rhyme types. As *ottava rima* had its literary precedents in Estonia – e.g. the form had been used by Fr. R. Kreutzwald in his "Lembitu" – the translator could rely on the intertextual interaction of his work. Indeed, in his comparative passage of the introduction Oras recalls Betti Alver's short *ottava rima* poem "Ulla", published a year before the translation.

As the introduction referred also to the original socio-cultural situation, giving the basic facts about the fate and fame of Lord Byron, the only dubious discrepancy concerns the third plane of the translation (as described by Holmes 1988c [1971]: 47–48), the lexicon: with its unusual patterns (à la *ta voorus saavutas ta aru*) it underlines not only the inventiveness of the translator but also the inhibitions of the original. As English was the competence of only a few in Estonia, the slightly exoticizing translation could leave the reader with the impression of its exotic cultural background (if he did not reject the Estonian as just snobbish).

The inhibitions of the original are also present in the translations of Shakespeare. Oras began with "Macbeth", believing that he was translating in "an age of rapid linguistic ripening" (Oras 2003c [1927]: 21), "corresponding closely to the linguistic spirit of the Elizabethan Age" (Oras 2004b [1960]: 100). The latter he has characterized as the period of "linguistic experiments and creativity", "breaking constantly the routine, spilling new words, phrases, stylistic combinations, using loans, changing the function of words, making abundant innovative use of old suffixes, insatiably and without limits" (*ibid*: 99–100). Prolonging the "linguistic and stylistic revolution" of the early 20th century up to the late '20s and early '30s, Oras aimed at translating Shakespeare into a language that would be "rich, flexible, bold and non-philistine, not one adapted for children" (Oras 2003c [1927]: 21, 30).

The very vocabulary of Oras – revolution, rapid ripening – makes one cautious about a possibly exaggerated translation only bordering on intelligibility. Indeed, the 1929 "Macbeth" is full of neologisms, *ad hoc* coinages, roundabout phrases, and sentences sounding good (because of abundant alliteration) but making little sense or requiring footnotes. Shakespeare, of course, does require concentration like in Act II, scene i:

Being unprepar'd,
Our will became the servant of defect;
Which else should free have wrought.

But the translation – *Teind tahte / meil teenriks puudusile varumatus, / meel oleks muidu töösklend vabalt* – is meaningful only after having read the translator's footnote (*Varumatusse tõttu ei saanud me paremalgi tahtmisel kõrvaldada puudusi*), even though the latter, with its neologistic *varumatus*, stays still enigmatic. "In general the translation can be understood quite well by those who are used to reading concise poetry," writes Johannes Silvet (Silvet 1929: 297), the contemporary reviewer who was rather patient, being used to

the language of many of the then translations. “The translation of poetry [in Estonia of 1920s and 1930s] was to great extent either the work of enthusiastic laymen or a linguistic-aesthetic experiment of a *salon*,” says Jaan Kross (Kross 1968: 104), summing up the reasons why most of the translation poetry of the period cannot be enjoyed anymore. Even though Oras himself has written that Shakespeare was not an abrupt revolutionary in his style (Oras 2004b [1960]: 99), his first translations of Shakespeare are defying readily linguistic conventions – for the sake of rhythm and rhyme.

However experimental the language, a literary text of the pre-World War II Estonia had to be conventionally decent. The cultural norms have shaped the translation and its review alike, with the latter apologizing: “By now the opinion as if all the rough or vulgar parts in Shakespeare have not been written by him but have been added later has been laid aside” (Silvet 1929: 296). As a result, the lower registers of Shakespeare are as vague as one could wish, like the Porter in Act II, scene iii:

Marry, sir, nose-painting, sleep, and urine. Lechery, sir, it provokes, and unprovokes; it provokes the desire, but it takes away the performance: therefore much drink may be said to be an equivocator with lechery: it makes him, and it mars him; it sets him on, and it takes him off; it persuades him, and disheartens him, makes him stand to, and not stand to; in conclusion, equivocates him in a sleep, and, giving him the lie, leaves him, that is in translation:

Vaadake, härrad, see värvib nina punaseks, toob und ja ajab vett viskama. Õrritab ja narritab libutsema; õrritab ihale, narritab teol; häbitöös joomine sellepärast mõtteväänur; seab isupidi ja veab ninapidi; paneb pihta ja pillub paigast; ajab turja ja nurja; kihutab püsti ja tõmbab risti; sõnaväänutseb uniseks ja valelikuna jätab sinnasamma.

But if it were not for the words (and the story of the dramas), the blank verse rhythm and the Shakespearean “broken line” (Oras 2003c [1927]: 22) – i.e. irregularities “injecting realistic freshness to the formal web of poetry so that almost every line, every interruption, exclamation or aside vibrates with vitality” (Oras 2004b [1960]: 102) – is there from the very beginning. For a closer examination of the blank verse line let us take a lexically more mature translation of “Coriolanus” from the early 1940s:

11/5/9	Should we be silent and not speak, our raiment	11/4/7	<i>Kui jääski suu meil tummaks, meie riided</i>
10/5/8	And state of bodies would bewray what life	10/4/6	<i>ja nägu reedaks, millist elu me</i>
11/5/9	We have led since thy exile. Think with thyself	11/5/6	<i>su maapaost saadik eland. Arva ise,</i>
11/5/7	How more unfortunate than all living women	11/5/5	<i>kui palju õnnetumalt kõigist naistest</i>
11/5/10	Are we come hither: since that thy sight, which should	11/4/8	<i>me saabund, sest su vaade, millest silm peaks</i>
11/7/10	Make our eyes flow with joy, hearts dance with comforts,	10/5/4	<i>rõõnniiseks saama, süda hüppama,</i>
11/5/9	Constrains them weep and shake with fear and sorrow;	10/3/4	<i>toob nuttu, muret, hirmuväriinaid</i>
10/5/8	Making the mother, wife and child to see	11/4/7	<i>ning sinu ema, laps ja naine näevad,</i>
11/4/8	The son, the husband and the father tearing	10/5/6	<i>kuis poeg, mees, isa rebib kodumaal</i>
10/5/8	His country's bowels out. And to poor we	10/4/4	<i>seest sisikonna. Meile vaestele</i>
11/4/7	Thine enmity's most capital: thou barr'st us	11/4/7	<i>on surmlikem su vaen: sa keelad meile</i>
11/4/9	Our prayers to the gods, which is a comfort	10/3/5	<i>me palve jumalaile – tröösti, mis</i>
10/5/9	That all but we enjoy; for how can we,	11/5/7	<i>on kõigil pääle meie; sest kuis paluks,</i>
11/4/8	Alas, how can we for our country pray.	10/3/7	<i>ah, kuis me paluks kodumaa eest, mis</i>
13/5/8	Whereto we are bound, – together with thy victory,	10/3/6	<i>me kohuseks, – ja sinu võidu eest,</i>
11/5/9	Whereto we are bound? alack, or we must lose	11/4/7	<i>mis ka me kohus? Häda meile! kadund</i>
11/5/9	The country, our dear nurse, or else thy person,	11/4/7	<i>meil maa, me imetaja, või su isik,</i>
10/5/8	Our comfort in the country. We must find	10/4/8	<i>me trööst sel maal. Meil ees vaid õnnetus</i>

11/4/6	x x x x An evident calamity, though we had	10/4/7	x x x x <i>ka siis, kui see saab võidu, kellele</i>
10/5/9	x x x x x Our wish, which side should win: for either thou	10/5/7	x x x x x <i>me seda soovime. Emb-kumb, kas pead</i>
10/5/7	x x x x Must, as a foreign recreant, be led	10/4/6	x x x x <i>kui võõras roist end laskma ahelais</i>
10/4/7	x x x x With manacles thorough our streets, or else	11/3/5	x x x <i>me tänavatel vedada või tammud</i>
10/5/6	x x x x x Triumphantly tread on thy country's ruin,	10/3/4	x x x <i>triumfis üle laastat kodumaa,</i>
10/5/8	x x x x x And bear the palm for having bravely shed	11/4/7	x x x x x <i>pääs pärg su naise-lapse vere tasuks,</i>
10/5/8	x x x x x Thy wife and children's blood. For myself, son,	11/5/8	x x x x x <i>mis sa nii vapralt valand. Poeg, ent mina</i>
10/5/8	x x x x x I purpose not to wait on fortune till	11/4/6	x x x x x <i>ei oota saatust, kuni lõppend sõda:</i>
12/5/8	x x x x x These wars determine: if I cannot persuade thee	11/5/6	x x x x x <i>kui ei saa mõlemale maale panna</i>
11/5/9	x x x x x Rather to show a noble grace to both parts	10/3/4	x x x x <i>sind halastama selle asemel,</i>
11/5/10	x x x x x Than seek the end of one, thou shalt no sooner	10/4/6	x x x x x <i>et tahta ühe hukku, katsu vaid</i>
10/5/8	x x x x x March to assault thy country than to tread –	11/4/6	x x x x x <i>me linna tungida ning (selles ole</i>
10/5/9	x x x x x Trust to't, thou shalt not, – on thy mother's womb, x x That brought thee to this world.	11/4/6	x x x x x <i>sa täitsa kindel) tallama pead üska,</i> x x <i>mis tõi su ilmale.</i>

However subjective the interpretation, the comparative reading of Volumnia's soliloquy of Act V, scene iii, shows the 32 lines of the text equal as to the number of sentences (6 in both the original and the translation), and equal enough as to the number of syllables per line (the first figure in the column preceding the text). Repeating in his translation the abundance of run-on lines, the rhythmic difference most conspicuous comes in with the difference in the number of words (the last figure in the column): there are less of them in Estonian, and so there are less possibilities to accentuate words (the central figure of the columns; accentuation marked here for the semantic rhythm as in Frye 1957). The concept of blank verse for Oras must have been rather that of a 10/11-syllable line than those of five iambic feet, for the 5-accent lines are in clear minority in his translation (in the present reading these amounts to 8 while in the original to 24). At the same time, however, one can also scan the extract letting secondary stresses mark the metrical pattern – the impression of metrical anarchy was not the translator's aim either as his preface clearly states (Oras 2004a [1941]: 95).

The translation of “King Lear”, an unpublished work undertaken to commemorate the 400th anniversary of William Shakespeare and preserved in the Estonian Literary Museum in Tartu, deserves study as to its pause patterns as it was done after Oras had completed his academic study on the Elizabethan and Jacobean drama (Oras 1960b), i.e. he was translating, aware of the graphs he had drawn for the tragedy. He knew that 40 of all the punctuation marks of the play within the five-stress lines occur after the 1st syllable, 104 after the 2nd, 56 after the 3rd, 405 after the 4th, 160 after the 5th, 547 after the 6th, 223 after the 7th, 131 after the 8th and 40 after the 9th syllable (*ibid*: 68), i.e. the majority of the internal pauses are in the later part of the line (60.9%) and on even positions (69.6%), with the 6th position dominating. Oras had explained the frequency of masculine (i.e. even) pauses in his study by the experiences “Lear” is about: these are “massive and disturbing, demanding more vigorous means of expressions – such as, among other things, the masculine pauses” (*ibid*: 15). As to late pauses, Oras observed that these make for a run-on technique, adding: “After a line has achieved a certain momentum, for which space is needed, a pause, especially a strong masculine pause, cutting into the vigorous rhythmical movement, strikes the reader or listener with greater unexpectedness and seems more emphatic. The surprise effect must have been even greater in a period that had only recently learned to use any kind of pause in the second half of the line. This may help to explain the tall sixth-position peaks in the B- and C-sequences [i.e. in the graphs for “strong pauses” showing all other punctuation marks other than commas (B) and “line splits” dividing speeches by different characters (C)] for “King Lear”” (*ibid*: 16–17).

The comparison of pause patterns of the original and the Estonian translation in the same way as practiced by Oras in his Gainesville study is in a way problematic because Oras recognized a pause by the punctuation of the original (in case with Shakespeare, the 17th century) edition, that is of the time prior to the publication of normative dictionaries fixing the rules of syntactic punctuation. The punctuation of a late 20th century Estonian text, at that, can be only syntactical observing Estonian grammars prescribing more commas than English ones. In the extract to follow the Estonian translation has 74 (punctuation) pauses as opposed to the 54 original ones, but it need not mean 20 more pauses in every particular reading of the text. “Few readers will pause in exactly the same places when reading the identical passages of verse,” reminds us Oras in his study, and this way the mistrust of comparability need not be too great. Moreover, relying on the statistical method, the results turn out to be reasonable enough. The Estonian translation shows the same preference for line-end pauses (50 of the 74 are after the 4th position) but it differs as to the position of the pause in the foot: only 29.7% of them are masculine ones (while the corresponding figure for the original extract is 55.5). The result is the metrical regularity blurred in the translation to the point of losing its marked presence at all. It can be only welcome in the context where the iambic meter is often treated as an alien meter to the Estonian prosody:

LEAR:	pauses	LEAR:	pausid
Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! rage! blow!	1/2/6/7	<i>Põsk puhu lõhki, torm! Tuul, mölla, möirga!</i>	5/6/7/9
You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout	9	<i>Üürga, orkaan, sülitä vett, et upub</i>	2/4/8
Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the cocks!	7	<i>torn kirikul ja tornil mattub kukk!</i>	-
You sulph'rous and thought-executing fires,	-	<i>Mõttena sähvav, väävelkirbe leek,</i>	5
Vaunt-couriers of oak-cleaving thunderbolts,	-	<i>kiirkäskjalg nooltel, millest murdub tamm,</i>	5
Singe my white head! And thou, all-shaking thunder,	4/6	<i>kõrveta pääst mu valged juuksed! Julm,</i>	9
Strike flat the thick rotundity o' th' world!	-	<i>kõiksust kõigutav kõu, lamedaks löö</i>	6
Crack Nature's moulds, all germens spill at once	4	<i>maakera mõhk, purusta looduse vorm,</i>	4
That makes ingrateful man!		<i>alatu inimsoo eod!</i>	
FOOL:		NARR:	
O nuncle, holy-water in a dry house is better than this		<i>Oi onu, hoovkonna pühavee pritsmed kuivas</i>	
rain-water out o' door. Good nuncle, in, and ask thy		<i>hoones on paremad kui see pritsiv vihm siin</i>	
daughters' blessing; here's a night pities neither wise		<i>väljas. Kallis onu, mine majja, palu tütreilt</i>	
men nor fools.		<i>õnnistust – ei see öö heida targa ega narri</i>	
		<i>pääle armu.</i>	
		LEAR:	
KING LEAR:		<i>Mürista isu täis! Löö, leek! Voola, vihm!</i>	6/7/8/10
Rumble thy bellyful! Spit, fire! spout, rain!	6/7/8/9	<i>Vihm, tuul, kõu, pikne pole ju mu tütreid.</i>	1/2/3
Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters:	2/3/5/6	<i>Ei näe teis, ürgjõud, tänamatust: teile</i>	3/5/9
I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness;	4/8	<i>ei annud riiki, lasteks iial teid</i>	5
I never gave you kingdom, call'd you children,	7	<i>ei nimetand – teid kohustus ei seo.</i>	4
You owe me no subscription: then let fall	7	<i>Mässake õudses rõõmus: seisan siin –</i>	7
Your horrible pleasure; here I stand, your slave,	6/9	<i>te ori, vaene, haige, hüljat rauk;</i>	3/5/7
A poor, infirm, weak, and despis'd old man:	2/4/5	<i>kuid õelaiks käsikuiks teid siiski nean,</i>	-
But yet I call you servile ministers,	-	<i>et kahe võika õega liidus nii</i>	-
That have with two pernicious daughters join	-	<i>kõrgusest sõõstes riindavad te rinded</i>	-
Your high-engender'd battles 'gainst a head	-	<i>vaest, vana, valget pääd. Oh ilgust! ilgust!</i>	1/3/6/9
So old and white as this. O, ho! 'tis foul!	6/7/8	<i>/---/</i>	
/---/			
		LEAR:	
KING LEAR:		<i>Te, suured jumalad, kes määratsete</i>	1/6
Let the great gods,		<i>nii koledalt me kohal, kätte leidke</i>	7
That keep this dreadful pother o'er our heads,	-	<i>nüüd vaenlased. Nüüd, vilets, värise,</i>	4/5/7
Find out their enemies now. Tremble, thou wretch,	6/8	<i>kel põues püdleb salaroim, mis kohtul</i>	8
That hast within thee undivulged crimes,	-	<i>veel nuhtlemata; veripatune,</i>	5
Unwhipp'd of justice: hide thee, thou bloody hand;	5/7	<i>verdnõrguv käsi, vandemurdja, teesklev,</i>	5/9
Thou perjured, and thou simular <i>man</i> of virtue	3	<i>võik vagatseja, peitu! Lõhke, pelgur,</i>	5/7/9
That art incestuous: caitiff, to pieces shake,	5/7	<i>kes salatseva kombe katte all</i>	-
That under covert and convenient seeming	-	<i>teind mõrva; varju pugend süü, tao kaas</i>	3/8
Hast practiced on man's life: close pent-up guilts,	6	<i>päält tükkideks ja palu armu suurelt</i>	-
Rive your concealing continents, and cry	8	<i>ja hirmsalt hüüdjalt. Olen mees, kes vähem</i>	5/8
These dreadful summoners grace. I am a man	7	<i>on teind kui talund pattu.</i>	7
More sinn'd against than sinning.	7	KENT:	
KENT:		<i>Ah, päägi katmata</i>	
Alack, bare-headed!		<i>teil, õilis isand! Siin on lööv, selt saab</i>	1/5/8
Gracious my lord, hard by here is a hovel;	4	<i>ehk tormis külalahkust. Puhake,</i>	7
Some friendship will it lend you 'gainst the tempest:	-	<i>siis vaatan, kas säält majast, kalgimast</i>	3/7
Repose you there; while I to this hard house –	4	<i>kui kivid, millest koosneb, – samast, kus</i>	3/7/9
More harder than the stones whereof 'tis raised;	-	<i>just praegu, kui teid otsisin, mul uks</i>	3/7

Which even but now, demanding after you,	5	<i>ees kinni löödi, – pigistada suudan</i>	5
Denied me to come in – return, and force	6	<i>ehk tilga inimlikkust.</i>	7
Their scanted courtesy.	6	<i>LEAR:</i>	
KING LEAR:		<i>Taip ju pööritab...</i>	
My wits begin to turn.		<i>No, poju, tule! Kuidas? hakkab külm?</i>	1/3/5/7
Come on, my boy: how dost, my boy? art cold?	2/4/6/8	<i>Ka mul on külm. Kus põhud on? Kui osav</i>	4/8
I am cold myself. Where is this straw, my fellow?	5/9	<i>ja nupukas on häda – näotumagi</i>	7
The art of our necessities is strange,	-	<i>teeb kalliks. Nii, nüüd lobudikku, poiss!</i>	3/4/9
That can make vile things precious. Come, your hovel.	7/8	<i>Sa vaene narr, mu südames on sopp,</i>	4
Poor fool and knave, I have one part in my heart	4	<i>mis haletseb sind veel.</i>	
That's sorry yet for thee.			

Although the translations of T.S. Eliot are not numerous – “Preludes”, “Portrait of a Lady”, “The Hippopotamus” and “The Hollow Men” in 1929, and “Ash-Wednesday”, “Marina”, “Burnt Norton” and “Little Gidding” in 1960 – these deserve attention as the 1932 habilitation paper of Oras on the critical ideas of T.S. Eliot testifies to the significant dialogue with the poet – even though the wish to distance himself from Eliot is equally significant (see Lange 2004: 164–165, 365). Moreover, these translations represent the free verse in clear minority in the list of poetry translations of Ants Oras.

The 1929 renderings of early Eliot have decreased the number of rhymes organizing the rhythm of the original, like in Prelude I:

The winter evening settles down	<i>Ju talveõhtu <u>laskumas</u>, (1)</i>
With smell of steaks in passageways. (1)	<i>praelõhnu immitseb passaažis.</i>
Six o'clock.	<i>Kell on kuus.</i>
The burnt-out ends of smoky days.	<i>Hulk otsi suitsuohtrast päevast.</i>
And now a gusty shower <u>wraps</u> (2)	<i>Tuul tõuseb, kiire sajuriink</i>
The grimy <u>scraps</u>	<i>on <u>raskumas</u>,</i>
Of withered leaves about your <u>feet</u> (3)	<i>lööb määrdind, koldseid lehti iil,</i>
And newspapers from vacant <u>lots</u> ; (4)	<i>maast ajalehti riisub, <u>ränk</u>,</i>
The showers <u>beat</u>	<i>taob luuke – taob</i>
On broken blinds and chimney- <u>pots</u> ,	<i>vihm korstnaid, tossates taob <u>trampi</u> (2)</i>
And at the corner of the <u>street</u>	<i>nurgal üksik tõllaruun.</i>
A lonely cab-horse steams and <u>stamps</u> . (5)	
And then the lighting of the <u>lamps</u> .	<i>Ning siis näed helendavat <u>lampi</u>.</i>

At that the translations are far from being close interlinear versions: the colloquial register of the original has been replaced by literary diction (*sajuriink on raskumas, tõllaruun*), the word repetition (*taob* in the above passage) seems to be compensating the absence of rhymes, adding at the same time to the affected style, the frequent use of inversion (like *hing mehe pingund taevani* in Preludes IV) makes Estonian Eliot sound elevated (without a tint of irony). Free verse had a tradition of its own in Estonian poetry but the translations of Oras as if doubt whether it is poetry enough and apologize for the form by adding exaggerated “poetic” phrases like *košmaari öine tiibekohin* (in “Portrait of a Lady” 1 for the original *cauchemar*), *kui ta aimaks koltund laasi / sügishingedes* (in “Portrait of a Lady” 2 with nothing similar in the original), or *tundub raug hää / iili huljuval sonaadil / palju pühalikum, kaugem* (in “The Hollow Men” 2 for the original ‘And the voices are / In the wind’s singing / More distant and more solemn’). To make the impression worse still, the rhymes used face the reader with the artificial euphony of new coinages or verbose diction, like in “Portrait of a Lady” 2:

‘Yet with these April sunsets, that somehow recall	<i>“Ent aprillikuul, kui kustub <u>päiksehõõg</u>,</i>
My buried life, and Paris in the Spring,	<i>katkeb jällegi mu elu <u>valulõõg</u>,</i>
I feel immeasurably at peace, and find the world	<i>meeles taas Pariis ja kevadpark, ja hing</i>
To be wonderful and youthful, after all.’	<i>rahulik ja rõõmus uuesti.”</i>

The voice returns like the insistent out-of-tune	<i>Jälle kordub hää kui viiul kärisev</i>
Of broken violin on an August afternoon.	<i>helgel sügisel, nukker, nõrk ja värisev.</i>

The quoted stanza points at another device used, it seems, consciously: the abundant compounds (incl. *päiksehõõg, valulõõg*) underline the polysyllabic character of Estonian (especially *uduauruhõng* in “Portrait of a Lady” 1) – like in the original poetry of Gustav Suits whose free verse poems Oras must have born in mind.

The translations were preceded by a dozen-page article on Eliot's early poetry "retelling" his first two collections and "The Waste Land". The prose paraphrase, showing that Oras understood very well what Eliot was after, makes one think that he, considering Eliot "in many respects more a musical than a literary" poet (Oras 1929: 557), doubted in the effectiveness of Eliot's hard imagist style in Estonian, preferring to that a more high-flown and unearthly (and in the context of the original – anachronistic) verbal baroque.

The 1960 translations maintain the linguistic peculiarity of all the translations of Oras – the language of the poetry is different from the language of the everyday:

Because I do not hope to turn again
 Because I do not hope
 Because I do not hope to turn
 Desiring this man's gift and that man's scope
 I no longer strive to strive towards such things
 (Why should the aged eagle stretch its wings?)
 Why should I mourn
 The vanished power of the usual reign?
 Because I do not hope to know again
 The infirm glory of the positive hour
 Because I do not think
 Because I know I shall not know
 The one veritable transitory power
 Because I cannot drink
 There, where trees flower, and springs flow, for there is nothing
 again

Kuna pole lootust **pöörd**a taas
 kuna pole lootust
 lootust **pöörd**a
 ei teiste au, ei jõu, ei ande ootust
 siis **las kängub ihk, mis ihaldusse viib**
 (miks eatand kotkal **pinguma** peaks tiib?)
 miks leinama peaks meel
 enam **riiki, mis rusudena maas?**
 Kuna tean, et ei iial tunda taas
 saa **tahterünnu reetvalt tõusvat sõudu**,
 kuna mõelda ei saa,
 kuna tean, et ei iial tunda saa
 toda **mööduva ainsat tõelist jõudu**,
 iial juua ei saa
 kus lätteid, lilli täis on maa, sest tühjus
 tuleb taas.

The *licentia poetica* of the "Ash-Wednesday" above and the Quartets alike, concern elliptical forms and markedly poetic phrases that stand out not only if compared to the language of the original – *las kängub ihk, mis ihaldusse viib* for 'I no longer strive to strive towards such things' – but differ in their register from the then translations and poetry of homeland. In his 1969 letter to August Sang, Oras, comparing his translations to those made in Estonia, has written: "The general impression is that /---/ for some reason there's the fear to be "noble"" (KM EKLA, f. 300, m. 2:21, pp. 3/4). In this light the ennobled vocabulary of his exile translations seems to be not only a question of taste but it is the poetics of defiance, combining poetry and politics.

As to the rhythm, Oras does not change its more obvious parameters: he follows the heterogeneous character of the original free verse, reproduces its parts of regular meter, and observes the length of lines and the use of instrumentation (the latter often emphasized). But he is surprisingly careless about the internal rhythm of a line using in his translation only syntactical punctuation subduing Eliot's voice (e.g. lines 3, 4, 5 below):

Midwinter spring is its own season
 Sempiternal though sodden towards sundown,
 Suspended in time, between pole and tropic.
 When the short day is brightest, with frost and fire,
 The brief sun flames the ice, on pond and ditches,
 In windless cold that is the heart's heat,
 Reflecting in a watery mirror
 A glare that is blindness in the early afternoon.
 And glow more intense than blaze of branch, or brazier,
 Stirs the dumb spirit: no wind, but pentecostal fire
 In the dark time of the year. Between melting and freezing
 The soul's sap quivers. There is no earth smell
 Or smell of living thing. This is the spring time
 But not in time's covenant. Now the hedgerow
 Is blanched for an hour with transitory blossom
 Of snow, a bloom more sudden
 Than that of summer, neither budding nor fading,
 Not in the scheme of generation.
 Where is the summer, the unimaginable
 Zero summer?

1 Südataalve kevad on eri aastaateg,
 2 igavene ealt, kuigi veerenguni vettiv,
 3 ajas jäänd rippu keset poolust ja pöörjoont.
 4 Kui üürikene päev säras pakast ja tuld,
 5 põgus päike tiiges ja kraaves läidab jää
 6 tuuleta külmas, mis südame kuumus;
 7 vesipeegel heiastab
 8 kiirgust, mis lööb pimestavaks vara pääle lõunat.
 9 Ning põlevamat hõõgust kui sõe või puie lõõsk
 10 tunneb tumm vaim – ei tuult, vaid nelipühituld
 11 aasta süngel ajal. Pool-külmav, pool-sulav,
 12 viirgab hinge mahl. Ei mullalõhna mingit,
 13 ei hingelise hõngu. See on kevadaeg,
 14 ent ei aasta leppes. Nüüd tunniks ajaks hekk
 15 lööb helkima hebenevaid lumeõite helbeid –
 16 äkilisem õitseng
 17 kui suviäitsmeil – punglemata, närbumata ilu
 18 sigimiskavatu hurm.
 19 Kuhu siis kaob suvi, kujutlematu
 nullpunkti suvi?

With its smoother rhythm (even the number of syllables per line as if counted) and explanatory additions (like *ilu* and *hurm* in lines 17 and 18) the translation impresses one rather as an adjustment of the original than a translation. Indeed, in his letter (preserved in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library) to Aleksis Rannit from August 1960 Oras has been explicit: “Never take T.S. Eliot as a pattern”, and although the discussion concerns the style of Eliot’s prose, it could have its bearing on Eliot’s poetic diction.

The line like the above (15) *lööb helkima hebenevaid lumeõite helbeid* is a manifestation of the unmistakably lyric talent of Ants Oras wishing his word to be sublime, carrying its reader far from the madding crowd. In this respect his life-long interest in Shelley, the most lyric of lyric poets, comes not as a surprise – nor indeed his decision to introduce Shelley in Estonia as a lyric author of imagination. In his essay on Shelley Oras has called him “a splendid word-painter of atmospheric phenomena and sea-scenes”, dissolving “everything in the flood of light into shimmering mists” (Oras 1935c). Shelley for him was everything but an intellectual, and he never discussed Shelley’s conflicting ideas (materialism vs. the belief in a spiritual principle governing the universe), referring to them only in passing. This critical decision of Shelley’s first translator into Estonian was related to his conviction that “Estonia has had enough of the speculations of Germans and Russians”, “enough of vague notions and vague minds” (Oras 1929c), and so he overlooked the polemical Shelley, focusing on aspects of potential significance for the Estonian culture. Believing that Shelley could “open up our choked emotional resources” (Oras 1935c: 218), Oras has translated Shelley’s Selected Lyrics to refine Estonian poetry and perception reinforcing this way his opposition to the “objective lyrics” of the Closeness to Life movement.

The first translations of Shelley, “The Cloud” and “Ode to the West Wind”, were published in 1929. As the latter has been for Oras a poem of symbolic value (see Lange 2004: 66–69), a closer study of its poetics would be appropriate (using the latest version from “Eesti Looming” 1945, 3). The translation, aimed at the preservation of the original form, has 38 lines of eleven and 32 of ten syllables vs. the original predominantly 10-syllable lines (52) because the masculine rhymes do not come easy in Estonian. There are, in fact, only three one-syllable rhyming triplets in the translation – *suust/juust/luust* of Part II, *näis/käis/täis* of Part IV and *saa/maa/ta* of Part V – complemented by rhymed compounds of *eetrikaar/saar* in Part I, *pilvereas/seas/lapseas* in Part IV and *huul/tuul/kevadkuul* in Part V. The impression of the smoother rhythm of the translation is, besides the feminine rhymes, created by the lines of less words than in the original and the absence of catalectic lines the original has in the end of Part II (‘Will be the dome of vast sepulchre’, and ‘Of vapours, from the atmosphere’). The original and the translation both begin their lines with the stressed syllable on 23 occasions, achieving syncopating effect in again approximately equal number of cases (11 in the original, 10 in the translation) when they are preceded by the routine line with stress on its last syllable. The number of sentences in Part I is 1 in the original and 2 in the translation; in Part II the figures are 2 and 2; in Part III 2 and 2, in Part IV 5 and 7, and in Part V 7 and 8. As the difference in run-on lines is not too great either (31 for the 34 original ones), the meter and rhythm of the translation are mimetic:

O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn’s being,
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves are dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,

*Oh metsik läänetuul, oh sügisvõimu
külm hingeõhk, kes lehti keerlevaid
viid ees kui sortsisõna tondihõimu,*

Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O thou,
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

*mustpaatjaid, leekjaid, kahkjaid, punakaid
kui kopsuhaigeid, katkust haarat summi!
Kes tiivulisi seemneid mööda maid*

The wingèd seeds, where they lie cold and low,
Each like a corpse within its grave, until
Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow

*viid unne, jättes tarduma noid tummi
kui hauda, kuni heliseb fanfaar
su kevadõel all taeva sinikummi,*

Her clarion o’er the dreaming earth, and fill
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
With living hues and odours plain and hill:

*et ärkab maa ning naerev eetrikaar
toob õhku jooma pungakarjad puule
ja hõngab, helgib kink ja neem ja saar:*

Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;
Destroyer and preserved, hear, oh, hear!

*oh vaim, suur vaim, kes üürgad läbi tuule,
oh hävitaja, päästja, kuule, kuule!*

The manuscript translation in the Estonian Literary Museum preserves the capitals of the original (West Wind, etc), a literary intertext absent in the 1945 printed version probably by the will of the editor. The will of the translator, however, is behind the change in the “dramatis personae” of the poem: the original is vague about whether the West Wind and the Wild Spirit stand for one and the same figure but the translation with its phrase *vaim, suur vaim, kes üürgad läbi tuule* has split them as unidentical.

Otherwise the “plot” of the poem is congenial to the original to the extent that it is a translation achieving the rare union of macro- and microstylistic recoding being at the same time also an act of Estonian poetry. What applies for one poem, however, cannot be easily applied for the selection as a whole. As is often the case with mimetic translations, they require the reader to stretch the limits of his sensibility by facing him this time with too abstract and vague statements. Even though Oras does not depart from the images of the original, he veils them with his roundabout diction so that the primary impression is that of the sound smothering the sense. Remembering the 1925 review of Oras partly already quoted above,^{*} it is but understandable that the euphonic result violated the tastes of Oras himself. They have not stood the test of time, was his comment a quarter of a century later (KM EKLA f. 300, m. 2:21, p. 3).

Translations from Russian are exceptional in this respect that these include the few cases of indirect translations Oras has made: first, the two poems by the Latvian poet Jānis Rainis (using the Russian translations of Valery Bryusov) at the very beginning of his career in 1925, and second, the produce of the Stalinist regime, the 1941 translations of Georgian poets Grigol Orbeliani (1804–1883), Alekhsandre Tshavtshavadze (1837–1907) and Giorgi Leonidze (1900–1966). The translation list of Russian poets proper is short. Of importance here are the pre-World War II translations of Pushkin, and the 1960 translations of Pasternak, the latter rendered already into English.

The translations of Pushkin in the 1936 “Selected Poetry” together with their introductory essay and their reviews of diametrically different opinions (Paukson 1936 and Kärner 1940) have probably been instrumental in shaping the image Oras has among Estonian translators: his euphonic virtuoso can be trusted but his lexical tact must be doubted. Even though in his introduction Oras had written: “The task of the translator with Pushkin is especially difficult because of the simplicity of his means”, his translations are full of bizarre linguistic coinages:

*По дороге зимней, скучной
Тройка борзая бежит
Колокольчик однозвучный
Утомительно гремит.*

Зимняя дорога, 2

*Kiired traavid veavad saani
sõidul tüütul, talvisel,
norgund tuju muljub maani
lakkamata kiljuv kell.*

Unlike Pushkin, Oras mistrusts the poetic potential of the colloquial and this way fails to convey one of the essential attributes of the original. But again, as his readers were familiar with Pushkin from their Russian-language schools, Pushkin, more than anyone else, was the poet to call for the individuality of his interpretation to justify it at all. This is what August Sang pointed out in 1940 when he listed the best translations of Oras, including Pushkin alongside with Shakespeare and Fröding, saying: “within the limits of the original and in accordance with the translator’s character these achieve the maximum effect” (Sang 1940: 328).

An extract from a much later letter of Oras, written in January 1962 to Arno Vihalemm (quoted in Laak 1998: 919), explains well the peculiarities of his poetics: “A picture in poetry can impress only together with the sound; they must be born together so that their effects can redouble and impress sometimes as endless, opening up vague but strongly felt perspectives beyond the horizon.” These are the dominant sounds of the original that have, among other agents, as if guided the decisions of Oras (*Колокольчик гремит* vs. *lakkamata kiljuv kell*). In another case, the acoustics of a snow-storm has shaped the translation of “Winter Evening”, helping to coin the rhyme for ‘*vaevleb*’ as ‘*raevleb*’, with their diphthongs recalling the feel of a blizzard.

In the post-war Russian translations into English, however, Oras could still do with words found in dictionaries. This goes for his two dozen translations of Pushkin available in the Estonian Literary Museum (some of them published in 1972 in “The Sewanee Review”), and for the Dr. Zhivago poems by Boris

^{*} „There is virtuosity, the means of expression are well exercised and of good effect /---/ from the purely formal point of view, as to the linguistic sound, the phonetics, many a piece is flawless; it is quite difficult to find an indiscriminate, careless phrase /---/ but this preoccupation with the beautiful sound /---/ cannot be respected as it is not plausible as an experience” (Oras 1925: 84).

Pasternak. The latter Oras thought to be “the culmination of modern poetry” as they possess “the fine mastery that alone can give full value to their strive for the infinite” (Akadeemia kirjades 1997: 104). The translations are rhymed, and accompanied by “A Note on Translating Pasternak’s Verse” (KM EKLA f. 237, m. 46:12, pp. 10–13).

Oras was translating Pasternak five years after Vladimir Nabokov had published his “Problems of Translation: “Onegin” in English”. As a translator of “Onegin” himself (parts of it included in the 1936 Selection), it is highly probable that Oras was familiar with the text stating: “It is impossible to translate “Onegin” in rhyme” (Nabokov 1955: 512). At least Oras is well aware of the hazardous choice of his translation method, ending his Note on a defiant note: “I know I have disregarded much sage advice – *mea culpa*”. Oras could not violate the corner-stone of his poetics – in poetry the expression plane is its dominant –, letting it this time sound as “one of the central facts about Pasternak’s verse is that it is all of a piece” (KM EKLA f. 237, m. 46:12, p. 10).

The rhymes of the translation are, as expected, phonetically more exact than in the original while Pasternak himself uses a lot imperfect rhymes. Oras comments: “The reason for my approach lies in the difficulty of producing near-rhymes as striking and convincing as those of Pasternak. Near-rhymes in present Anglo-American practice frequently are hardly rhymes in any phonetic sense. They have a way of becoming vague echoes, barely sufficient to indicate links between lines, to suggest some sort of stanzaic structure. They may organize the rhythm, but their quality of immediate expressiveness seems on the point of dwindling almost to nil. In the case of Pasternak the effect on the ear seemed too important to be disregarded: hence the choice of the unfashionable alternative of greater phonetic strictness” (*ibid*: 11). At that the monotony of monosyllabic line endings is far from the sinuous rhythms of the original, and Oras has made abundant use of the feminine rhyme, largely unexplored in the English-language poetry, to hint at the not only di- but also tri-, tetra- and even pentasyllabic rhymes of the original, avoiding by and large the latter as “they tend to sound labored or savor too much of studied ingenuity” (*ibid*).

While describing the sound effects of Pasternak’s poetry, Oras resorts to his familiar musical analogue, speaking of “phonetic orchestration” creating “innumerable echoes, both at line end and within the line”, “a singing tone with many ripples and waves, but genuine *bel canto*”. As these are the sounds of the original that lift “the most realistic passages, otherwise entirely colloquial /---/ high above prose”, it can be only expected to have the translations crafted with acoustic care.

Стояла зима.
Дул ветер из степи.
И холодно было младенцу в вертепе
На склоне холма.

Deep winter. Chill
From wold and wild
Keen winds blew at the freezing hill.

Его согревало дыханье вола.
Домашние звери
Стояли в пещере,
Над яслями теплая дымка плыла.

No warmth but the breath of the ox in the cave.
The cows and sheep
Stood, watching his sleep.
Steam veiled the manger, a shimmering wave.

Рождественская звезда

The meter of the translations is either accentual-syllabic or accentual composed often of triple feet. The translation of “The Miracle”, however, does not imitate the triple lilt of the original, explaining in the Note: “Here the decisive line, the line containing the central idea, had, in my opinion, to be translated literally, if at all: “No chudo yest’ chudo, i chudo yest’ bog”: “But miracle is miracle, and miracle is God.” In English this is an iambic fourteener of the well-known ballad type. The rest of the poem had perforce to be built around this verse, that is, necessarily iambic. By using the jog-trot of fourteeners throughout the poem, I felt I should have utterly ruined its tone, so I chose pentameters as the basic meter, interspersing a few Alexandrines at points of special intensity in order to prepare the reader’s ear for the culminating length of the most important line, which comes shortly before the end” (*ibid*: 13).

The Note ends with a paragraph revealing the mistrust of Ants Oras of theory’s fundamental value in the translation process: “There is no theoretical panacea for translation, particularly for translation in verse that wants to be poetry. All one can do, it seems, is plunge into the work, soak oneself in the originals, understand them as fully and feel them as intensely as possible, and then try to write them again in another language in such a way as to reproduce as much of their characteristic features, their distinctive beauty, their individual force as one’s personal resources in the language chosen for the translation permit. “Beauty is audacious,” says Pasternak, and some audacity on the part of the translator consequently seems indicated.

Of course not foolhardiness. The translator sometimes may be unable to distinguish between the two. In that case others will soon show him the error of his ways. The method can be judged only by its results” (*ibid*).

Translations from French were initiated in 1931 by an article on the French alexandrine (Oras 1931c), the most effectual of the texts of Ants Oras as it introduced new possibilities for the syllabic meter in Estonian rendered hitherto traditionally as accentual-syllabic. Although the six-page article has been recognized as the theoretical founding for the syllabic system (Põldmäe 2002: 26) it was decisive in the decision to describe the translations of Oras in terms of poetics and not theory. Poetics of translation can hardly do without theory while the latter, when applied, has its limitations.

The article instructs to treat alexandrine not as an iambic hexameter but as a twelve-syllable verse-line combining iambic and anapestic feet divided by the masculine caesura after the sixth syllable. The material for this statement comes from the analysis of a limited number of Baudelaire’s originals and relies on the statistical description of their meter. Even though in the Estonian translations by Johannes Semper and Gustav Suits (omitting the pioneer translations of Johannes Aavik) the number of syllables has been carefully counted, the comparative reading of the two sets of texts lays bare that the scheme behind the translations must have been more monotonous than in the originals. To put his finger on the pulse of the French alexandrine Oras makes use of the terms of the accentual meter – the word stress inevitably shapes the general rhythm impression of a poem – and describes Baudelaire’s alexandrine as mixing anapests and iambs, the latter often inverted. As all the rhythm types are present in the Estonian language, he proposes to apply these all alongside with iambs, and his two translations, including *Parfum Exotique*, serve as an example:

*Quand, les deux yeux fermés, en un soir chaud d’automne,
Je respire l’odeur de ton sein chaleureux,
Je vois se dérouler des rivages heureux
Qu’émoussent les feux d’un soleil monotone;*

*Kui uimastab mind hõng su rinnast, hõrk ja palav
sügisõhtuti, ilm mil hääletu ja kuum,
kinnisilmade ees kauge ranniku ruum,
ülal päikene, üksluiselt helendust valav;*

*Une île paresseuse où la nature donne
Des arbres singuliers et des fruits savoureux;
Des hommes dont le corps est mince et vigoureux,
Et des femmes dont l’œil par sa franchise étonne.*

*saar õnnelik ja laisk, kus loodus üliküllas
toodab saledaid puid, mil võõraid vilju murd;
kus väike meestetõug näib nii visa ja turd
ja naiste kiirgav pilk imejulge ja üllas.*

*Guidé par ton odeur vers de charmants climats,
Je vois un port rempli de voiles et de mâts
Encor tout fatigués par la vague marine,*

*Ning kauneid valgmaid näen su hõngust, mille kais
maste otsatu hulk, lõtvuv purjede pais
veel väsind iilidest, millest merestik pulkas,*

*Pendant que le parfum des verts tamariniers,
Qui circule dans l’air et m’enfle la narine
Se mêle dans mon âme au chant des mariniers.*

*kuna lõhn, mille levitab lai tamarind,
mis sõõrmeid paisutab, millest pakitseb rind,
liitub lauluga laevult, mis kutsuv ja uljas.*

The anapestic lines (or the half-line) of the first stanza – *sügisÕhtuti, ILM mil HÄÄleTU ja KUUM, / kinniSILmade EES kauge RANniku RUUM, / ülal PÄikene, ÜKSLuiselt HELendust VALav* – exclude the possibility to read the poem, repeating the iambic beat of the first line (*kui UImasTAB mind HÕNG su RINnast, HÕRK ja PALav*) but as the caesura after the 6th syllable is undeniable only in the third line (*kinnisilmade ees // kauge ranniku ruum*), the feel of the rhythm is delayed and becomes clear only in the second half of the first sentence: *saar õnnelik ja laisk, // kus loodus üliküllas / toodab saledaid puid, // mil võõraid vilju murd; / kus väike meestetõug // näib nii visa ja turd / ja naiste kiirgav pilk // imejulge ja üllas*. The third part of the article had warned its reader: “probably the achievable alexandrine will not be as strict as to its pauses as the classical French one” (Oras 1931c: 377), hoping that anapestic lines with caesura will fix the rhythm and make acceptable also those without. But as the translation begins with the line with an additional pause after the ninth syllable, the first rhythm impression is confusingly tumbled. Rhymes, richer in sound, but vaguer in their meaning, can compensate for it only partially (cf. *palav/valav : d’automne/monoton*; or *murd/turd : savoureux/vigoureux*).

The meticulous reading of the original had not been undertaken for the sake of the form: “it seems that the less flexible form of Semper has made him simplify also the content and draw his contours in the rough. The sacerdotal abstraction of Baudelaire has been decreased and the translations impress instead with their specific tangible briskness” (Oras 1931c: 377). Replacing the syllabic meter with the accentual one, the

French verse loses its “balance”, its “traditional charm” (*ibid*: 376); so the preference for imitative forms is not only showing respect for the poetic history but stems from the realization that the form reflects the history of the mind.

Introducing his translations Oras has written: “I underline: in more skillful hands it is definitely possible to achieve greater variety and find more satisfactory caesurae, following more exactly the example of the French verse. I can present here only a few fumbling attempts.” It is a repeated practice in his work: what is realized in reading has not been realized in writing, the critical sensitivity is as if greater than that explicit in its implementation. Or, the implementation as if aims more at the change of an aspect in the general translation practice than at a definitive translation.

The 1931 article had begun with the analysis of the *Correspondances* as translated by Johannes Semper. Oras himself publishes his translation of the sonnet in 1960.

*La Nature est un temple où de vivant piliers
Laissent parfois sortir de confuses paroles;
L'homme y passe à travers des forêts de symboles
Qui l'observent avec des regards familiers.*

Suur templisammastik on loodus – elav saal,
kus inimene käib kesk sümbolite hiisi:
nende sosinas kõrv kuuleb tuttavat viisi,
salasõnumeid täis on pühalik portaal.

*Comme de longs échos qui de loin se confondent
Dans une ténébreuse et profonde unité,
Vaste comme la nuit et comme la clarté,
Les parfumes, les couleurs et les sons se répètent.*

Ning nagu huikesse kaob huike huilgav pikkus,
nii kõike siduvas ja süvendavas jõus,
nii määratus kui öö, kui päeva kiirgav tõus,
sulab värvide, lõhnade, kõlade rikkus.

*Il est des parfums frais comme des chairs d'enfants,
Doux comme les hautbois, verts comme les prairies
– Et d'autres, corrompus, riches et triomphants.*

Kui lapseihu hörk, mõni hõljub aroom,
on õrn kui oboe, täis heinamaade haljust.
Ent on ka rikutuid, täis võidutsevat valjust,

*Ayant l'expansion des choses infinies,
Comme l'ambre, le musc, le benjoin et l'encens,
Qui chantent les transports de l'esprit et des sens.*

üles voogavaid – uhkeid kui ääretu doom,
viiruk, muskus ja mürr ja bensoe – nad loodi
laulma vaimu ja meelte ekstaatilist oodi.

Not much change after thirty years except that the caesurae have been more carefully observed: the rhythmic variety is perceptible, like the “over-rhymed” and alliterative texture of the lexical high style: Baudelaire’s *parole* has become *viis*, his *forêt* translated as *hiis*; *päeva kiirgav tõus* must stand for *clarté*. The reasons for alliterations can be guessed: *huikesse kaob huike huilgav pikkus* is *comme de long écho*; *siduv ja süvendav* of the next line comes from the repeated sound in the *ténébreuse et profonde*. The initial repetition of the translation, being more marked than the internal one, as if serves again the aim of underlining the poetic of the original, leaving the translation with an instructive flavour.

Oras did not limit his attempts at the imitation of the syllabic system with lyrics only; he has also translated the dramatic verse of Molière (the verse of *Le Misanthrope* and *Le Malade imaginaire* in 1936, and the full texts of *Le Tartuffe* and *Les Femmes savantes* in 1940) without sacrificing his linguistic preferences to the altar of the democratic genre: his Estonian is Frenchy to the point that the translations have been called exemplary as the ones that have substantially left the original untranslated (Ojamaa 1974: 13). The same critic, though, admits that this way Oras could give the Estonian language preciousness it could not possibly have for historical reasons: ironically enough, the parody of preciousness had to coin it at the same time. “Perhaps the malady of snobbery has to be ailed in order to achieve true refinement,” Oras has written in 1968 (quoted in Laak 1998: 132), evaluating best his own practice.

*Mon Dieu, des mœurs du temps, mettons-nous moins en peine,
Et faisons un peu grâce à la nature humaine;
Ne l'examinons point dans la grande rigueur,
Et voyons ses défauts, avec quelque douceur.*

Le Misanthrope, I: 145 (Philinte)

*Mu jumal, milleks nii teha maha me aega!
Võiks ju kaaluda ka pisut soodsama vaega;
veidi sobivam näiks mulle sõredam sõel –
teie arvustav pilk on liiga karm ja õel.*

Molière 1936: 12

In the post-World War II translations from French – with Baudelaire continuously the dominant author – of significance are the translations of Paul Valéry. Not surprisingly, Valéry is the only French poet Oras has also written about in Estonian: his formal discipline was of convincing communicative value for Oras and had to be amplified by an obliging prose paraphrase (Oras 1957). The translations – only six in number – follow the former practice of the syllabic meter: the length of the lines has been observed (syllables counted in columns 2 and 4) and the monotonous accentuation avoided:

<i>Tes pas, enfants de mon silence,</i>	8	<i>Oma vaikuse last, su samm,</i>	9
<i>Saintement, lentement placés,</i>	8	<i>püha, summutet samme häält,</i>	8
<i>Vers le lit de ma vigilance</i>	8	<i>siin voodis ootan – aiman ammu</i>	9
<i>Procèdent muets et glacés.</i>	8	<i>noid õrnu hõljeid öiselt jäält.</i>	8
<i>Personne pure, ombre divine,</i>	8	<i>Oh kergelt liikuv vari, siiras,</i>	9
<i>Qu'ils sont doux tes pas retenus!</i>	8	<i>puhas kaju, pühakupalg!</i>	8
<i>Dieux!... tous les dons que je devine</i>	8	<i>Mis eal, mis eal nii rikkalt viiras,</i>	9
<i>Viennent à moi sur ces pieds nus!</i>	8	<i>tõi su arglik, alasti jalg!</i>	8
<i>Si, de tes lèvres avancées,</i>	8	<i>Kui juba eest kui langeks kate,</i>	9
<i>Tu prépares pour l'apaiser,</i>	8	<i>kui otsib huult su soojuv huul,</i>	8
<i>A l'habitant de mes pensées</i>	8	<i>et trööstiks olla vaevlevate</i>	9
<i>La nourriture d'un baiser,</i>	8	<i>mõtete võõral, tummalt truul,</i>	8
<i>Ne hâte pas cet acte tendre,</i>	7	<i>pea kinni, kuis ka meel ei hellu –</i>	9
<i>Douceur d'être et de n'être pas,</i>	9	<i>oled, ei ole – võlut ring!</i>	8
<i>Car j'ai vécu de vous attendre,</i>	9	<i>Mind seob ju vaid see ootus ellu,</i>	9
<i>Et mon coeur n'était que vos pas.</i>	8	<i>su samm, su samm on minu hing.</i>	9
<i>Les Pas (Charmes, 1922)</i>		<i>Tulimuld 1966, 1</i>	

Even as formal a quality as the number of syllables brings here out a symptomatic feature of the poetics of Oras: to blur the semantic clarity of the original. The halted rhythm of Valéry in the last stanza introduces its focal twist, the reliance on the polysemy of the French *pas*. The smooth Estonian rhythm does not waver and the translation enters into the dim sphere of not polysemic but enigmatic Estonian that is meant to represent Valéry's *l'état chantant*. In his "Notes on Paul Valéry" Oras, as if preparing the reader for his poetics, had translated: "Poetic inevitability is inseparable from the perceived form; the thoughts expressed in or hinted at in the text are far from being the only or the most important goal, these are but means that effect us on the equal basis with sounds, cadences, rhythm and ornamentation, kindling and preserving a tension or exaltation, creating a world – or a state [of mind] that is absolutely harmonious" (Oras 1957 : 22). Yet, for kindling true curiosity in the Estonian reader, there is too little semantics in the linear reading, even though the humming sound of the first stanza or the orchestrated ideas (*hellu/ellu, ring/hing*) of the last are conspicuous.

Alo Raun, analyzing the translation of Valéry's *Palme*, has concluded: it is "rather a variation than a translation of the poem by Paul Valéry, a creative adaptation based on an essentially aesthetic choice of words" (Raun 1965 : 74). The cradling effect of the Estonian language and perceptible vowel sequences (cf. Aspel 2000: 340–341) are the dominants of the translations of lyric poetry for Oras, and one must not expect too much in terms of comparable statements. These are translations that ask for the original to accompany them. "If I knew only my translations of Under," Oras has written to Aleksis Rannit on July 15, 1968, "I wouldn't dare to lecture on her – however impressive the translations. With dramas it is different, but with lyric poetry the metaphores (that can never be transmitted entirely) are so important that no one can treat an author based on translations. I do not think anyone could write adequately on the sonnets of Eliz. Barret-Browning knowing only Rilke's translations."

Translations from German are dominated by Goethe, including also Heine's "Germany" and a few poems by Schiller, Rilke and Gottfried Benn. As by 1930s "the name of the Estonian translators from German is legion" (Oras 1935b), the context and feel for the source culture was markedly different from that for the translations from English or French. Heine's "Germany", Oras's first bigger work from German as well as Oras' first serious try in the simple *Volklied* meter of the original, the favorite form of the Romantics, is a mature work indeed. As Oras has exposed himself as a temperamental Romantic (Akadeemia kirjades 1997: 43), the convincing ease and simplicity of this translation (like his translations of Fröding) make one agree that he knew himself well enough: the waltz beat of "Germany" suits the translator revealing his familiarity with popular forms, the newer layer of Estonian folk songs included. The translation of a text with close content correspondence and brilliant rhymes is a masterpiece in itself, the more when it is of topical significance for a wide audience.

The above-said is valid for translations from German in general irrespective of the presence of new post-war tries by other translators. These, initiated first for political reasons, emphasise just the fact that with Oras in exile, his lyric high style was banished likewise for a longer period. The impressive final lines of "Faust" lend themselves easily for illustration:

*Alles Vergängliche
ist nur ein Gleichnis;
das Unzulängliche,
hier wird's Ereignis;
das Unbeschreibliche,
hier ist's getan;
das Ewig-Weibliche
zieht uns hinan.*

Oras:
*Elu on viirgavad
võrdkujud Vaimus;
siit ent saab kiirgavat
õigustust aimus,
tung üle maise, pikk
iha ja ind –
võim iginaiselik
ülendab sind.*

Sang:
*Kõik muinasloomik on,
võrdpilt kõik ajalik.
Kobav ja poolik on
täiuseks vajalik.
Saab kord, ehk tee küll pikk,
otsingust leid.
Kõik iginaiselik
ligi veab meid.*

Alongside with “radiant lexis” – *viirgavad, kiirgavad* – so characteristic of Oras and seemingly related to his notion of the poetic frame of mind (*silm saab kiirgust taeva selgelt säralt*; Goethe 1962: 40), the differences in the final line are telling: Oras is definitely close to the lofty ideas of the original, Sang to his mundane reader. Another illustration to the similar effect:

FAUST: Nun gut, wer bist du denn?

FAUST: Kes oled?

*MEPHISTOPHELES: Ein Teil von jener Kraft,
Die stets das Böse will und stets das Gute schafft.*

*MEPHISTOPHELES: Osa jõust, kes kuulab igisäädust:
vaid kurja kavatseb, kuid valmis saab vaid hädust.*

Faust I. Studierzimmer.

Goethe 1955: 51

The latter translation is typical also in another sense: by translating *jener Kraft* (that power) as *igisäädus* (eternal law) Oras has resorted to his familiar device and includes a comment (cf. Rohult 2002: 425 where the frequency of the device has been observed in his translations of Rilke). Like in the address of Megaera the Fury in Part Two (where the comment erases the gibe of the original):

Die Sonne flieht er, will den Frost erwarmen.

Sa kardad päikest – pakast püüdes pettu!

Goethe 1962: 30

or in Faust's address in *Wald und Höhle* of Part One (where it just specifies):

Du hast mir nicht umsonst

Ei ilmaaegu pöördund

Dein Angesicht im Feuer zugewendet.

mu poole leekides su palg: sa andsid

Gabst mir die herrliche Natur zum Königreich,

mu riigiks härrandliku looduse

Kraft, sie zu fühlen, zu genießen.

ning jõudu teda tunda, nautida ta võimu

Goethe 1955: 119

The formally necessitated additions make overt that is latent in the original without aiming at figurative alterations. The latter have been avoided with ingenious care:

Will keiner trinken? keiner lachen?

Kas ükski ei naera, ei purjuta?

Ich will euch lehren Gesichter machen!

Näod hädised kõik, nii et hurjuta!

Ihr seid ja heut wie nasses Stroh,

Teil tuju muidu kui tuli põles,

Und brennt sonst immer lichterloh.

nüüd äkki kui visisev vesi õles.

Faust I. Auerbachs Keller in Leipzig

Goethe 1955: 75

*Margretlein zog ein schiefes Maul,
Ist halt, dacht sie, ein geschenkter Gaul*

Suu tüdrukul oli küll viltu veet.

Faust I. Spaziergang

See kingitud hobune, mõtles me Reet.
Goethe 1955: 104*

The translator's principle is bare in its misuse where the literal reproduction of the original violates the Estonian usage: Mephisto's *Kann man dem Herrn nie an der Nase spüren* (*Wald und Höhle* in Part One) has been translated as *ei ialgi näe ninast sul, mis tuleb võtta, mida jätta* (Goethe 1955: 121).

The additions, if no other option has occurred, represent, on the contrary, mostly hackneyed phrases, passing this way hopefully unnoticed:

Stand sie bei ihrem Buhlen süß;

kui temal poisiga läks priskelt iga viiv,

Auf der Türbank und im dunkeln Gang

kus eales leidus pink ja koda küllalt pime –

Ward ihnen keine Stunde zu lang.

ei märgandki, kuus kellast jooksis liiv.

Faust I. Am Brunnen

Goethe 1955: 132

Das ist noch lange nicht vorüber

Sest raamatust on hullematki leit.

Ich kenn es wohl, so klingt das ganze Buch;

See tulvil veidrust – uut ja aina uut;

Ich habe manche Zeit damit verloren,

mul tihti mõistus ses kui laev läind karri,

Denn ein vollkommner Widerspruch

sest salapärane absurdi absoluut

Bleibt gleich geheimnisvoll für Kluge wie für Toren.

veab ninast tarka kui ka narri.

Faust I. Hexenküche

Goethe 1955: 94

* Oras has replaced also Goethe's *Lieschen* (in *Am Brunnen*-scene of Part I) by *Liisa* (Goethe 1955: 131), and *Kathrinchen* by *Kadri* (*ibid*: 136).

*Man braucht nicht erst zu markten, noch zu tauschen,
Kann sich nach Lust in Lieb' und Wein berauschen.*
Faust II. Akt 1. Lustgarten

*Ei tingi ega kauple enam juut,
täis veini klaas, täis õrnu tundeid pruut.*
Goethe 1962: 53

*MEPHISTOPHELES (zu Blondine):
Schade! so ein leuchtend Schätzchen
Im Mai getupft wie eure Pantherkätzchen.*
Faust II. Akt 1. Hell erleuchtete Säle

*Vaene valge tuvi,
või tedretähni tipib teisse suvi?*
Goethe 1962: 60

Absurdi absoluut in the *Hexenküche* example above with its grotesqueness is Oras at his best (like Mephisto's *manövreeerin* in Goethe 1955: 137; or *riigikassat ähvardab ruiin* in Goethe 1962: 13; or *rahvas /---/ saab haridust – ja revolteerib, ibid: 189*), and too good to regret the deviation. Ironically, in one instance the intended stylistic exaggeration – to imitate the French of Mephisto – has become half a century later a commonplace:

*MEPHISTOPHELES: Nein, ein Discours wie dieser da
Ist grade der, den ich am liebsten führe!*
Faust I. Hexenküche

*Just sellises diskursis
ma tunnen ennast kõige rohkem kursis.*
Goethe 1955: 87

In general, the translator's decision to shape Mephistopheles using, unlike Goethe, language teeming with *ad hoc* foreign loans, makes its point convincingly enough:

*Ich sage Frau; denn ein für allemal
Denk' ich die Schönen im Plural.*
Faust II. Akt 4. Hochgebirg

*Ma naistest räägin mitmuses,
sest neis ma naudin vaid pluraali.*
Goethe 1962: 189

The only possibility for poetry translation, as prescribed by Roman Jakobson, is creative transposition, and this is what Ivar Ivask, the first critic of Oras's "Faust" has appreciated in the work (Ivask 2003). Admitting the translator's need for "the handwriting of his own", Oras is, according to expectations, present in the translation with his linguistic self and even life-philosophy: he translates *Atemkraft* as *eluhuog* (Goethe 1962: 65), and remembers his cherished *hoog* (= *élan*, see Lange 2004: 124) also when in need of an extension:

*Nur mit Entsetzen wach ich morgens auf,
Ich möchte bittere Tränen weinen,
Den Tag zu sehn, der mir in seinem Lauf
Nicht einen Wunsch erfüllen wird, nicht einen,
Der selbst die Ahnung jeder Lust
Mit eigensinnigem Kritteln mindert,
Die Schöpfung meiner regen Brust
Mit tausend Lebensfratzen hindert.*
Faust I. Studierzimmer

*Kui tungib koidukiir alkoovi,
ma ärkan hirmunult vaid uueks valuhooks,
vaid nutaks, nutaks taas uut päeva, mille jooks
ei täida ainsat – mitte ainsat soovi,
mis tõrksalt pilgates viib jõu
mul õnneaimumingi tõusta,
toob tõkkeks tuhat elulõusta,
et loovast hoost jääb tühjaks põu.*
Goethe 1955: 58

On the content plane "Faust" violates the diagnosis of Alo Raun: Oras is concerned rather with *licentia poetica* than with *licentia translatoris* (Raun 1965: 74). What Oras had thought possible in his early and short lyric translations he has abandoned when translating dramatic poetry. As the innovative vocabulary is also sparse (shortened suffixes like *pimestet*, *i*-plurals (*nooris aastais*), a few cut nouns, adjectives or adverbials like *tine pro tinane*; *vehk pro vehkimine*; *ülev pro üleval*), the "Faust" is a trustworthy reading alongside the original:

*MEPHISTOPHELES:
Hier lieg, Unseliger! verführt
Zu schwergelöstem Liebesbande!
Wen Helena paralyisiert,
Der kommt so leicht nicht zu Verstande.
Blick' ich hinauf, hierher, hinüber,
Allunverändert ist es, unversehrt;
Die bunten Scheiben sind, so dünkt mich, trüber,
Die Spinnewebe haben sich vermehrt;
Faust II. Akt 2. Hochgewölbtes enges gotisches Zimmer*

*Sääl, vaeseke, nüüd virele –
kui armetumalt arm sind salvas!
Ei see, kel Helena kord aru halvas,
saa lõppu hullund kirele.
Kus ma ka vaatan, kõik jäänd samaks,
kõik endine, ei kuski uut:
vaid pisut tuhmund aknaruut,
võrk ämblikel läänd tihedamaks.*
Goethe 1962: 69.

These are this time the rhythms of the translation that can deviate from their source most, though not because Goethe's metrical variety has been a stumbling block. It is either that the translator's punctuation makes difference:

Sie schmunzelt uns und blickt nach solcher Schedel
Faust II. Akt 1. Lustgarten

ning, nähes rahamärki, muigab, "Tule!"
Goethe 1962: 52

or, he has been emphatic:

FAUST: Was sucht ihr, mächtig und gelind,
Ihr Himmelstöne, mich am Staube?

Faust I. Nacht

Miks, võimsalt helisev, miks, mahe taevakeel,
nii otsib põrmust mind su kõla?

Goethe 1955: 32

MEPHISTO: Nur fort, es ist ein großer Jammer!
Ihr sollt in Eures Liebchens Kammer,
Nicht etwa in den Tod.

Faust I. Wald und Höhle

Miks vaevled, väänled nii, kui pitsitaks sind klamber?
Sind ootab ju vaid kalli kamber
ei ähvarda sind surm.

Goethe 1955: 123

or – and this is the dominant difference – uses idiosyncratic run-on lines:

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Strich drauf ein Spange, Kett und Ring',
Als wären's eben Pfifferling',
Dankt' nicht weniger und nicht mehr,
Als ob's ein Korb voll Nüsse wär
Versprach ihnen allen himmlischen Lohn –
Und sie waren sehr erbaut davon.

Faust I. Spaziergang

Ei pilgutand silmigi, pistis kee
ja sõled ja rõngad kõik suurde punga
kui torbiku pähkleid – **ning ainuke munga**
soe tänu oli naistele see,
et lubas hüvitust teises maailmas –
neil olid sest hädusepisarad silmas.

Goethe 1955: 105

GRETCHEN: Ach neige,
Du Schmerzenreiche,

Faust I. Zwinger

Ah, **palun**
sind, näe, mis talun

Goethe 1955: 133

SCHATZMEISTER:

Obschon dein Name längst die Welt beglückt,
Man hat ihn nie so freundlich angeblickt.

Faust II. Akt 1. Lustgarten

Su nime rahvas armastas, **kuid vaevalt**
nii nagu nüüd – see kink näis saadud taevalt.

Goethe 1962: 52

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Unmündiges Volk, du hast mich überrascht,
Sind mit der Beute himmelwärts entfliegen;

Faust II. Akt 5. Grablegung

Need noorukesed-narrikesed **võtsid**
mul saagi käest – kõik taeva poole tõtsid –

Goethe 1962: 245

or, the verse speeds itself with added repetitions:

FAUST: Da sprühen Funken in der Nähe
Wie ausgestreuter goldner Sand

Faust I. Walpurgisnacht

Sääl sära sähvab sädemeina
kui puistat liiv, kui hüplev kuld.

Goethe 1955: 145

PANTHALIS:

Nun eilig, Mädchen! Sind wir doch den Zauber los,
Der alt-thessalischen Vettel wüsten Geisteszwang,
So des Geklimpers vielverworrner Töne Rausch,
Das Ohr verwirrend, schlimmer noch den Innern Sinn.

Faust II. Akt 3. Innerer Burghof

Nüüd, piigad, ruttu! Saime lahti lummusest,
Thessalia eide jabur tondijamps on **läind**,
läind klimberdustes sasistunud hääle **samps**,
samps, millest kõrv jääb segaseks, veel enam meel.

Goethe 1962: 181

The latter device, though, is frequent in the original, too, and duly repeated:

Und Übel sich in Übeln überbrütet

Faust II. Akt 1. Kaiserliche Pfalz

et aina kurjusele kuhjub kurja

Goethe 1962: 11

It is just that the Estonian terminological practice to name translations that observe the meter of the original *homorütmiline* is most unrealistic: being the instrument of the subject, the rhythm cannot be but individual, the more with Oras putting at stake his very “self (not selflessness)”:

FAUST: Bin ich der Flüchtling nicht? der Unbehauste?
Der Unmensch ohne Zweck und Ruh /---/?

Faust I. Wald und Höhle

Mind ebainimest! Mind igipõgenikku!
Mind igikodutumat igalpool!

Goethe 1955: 124

The meter, in principle, has been imitated, be it accentual-syllabic:

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Wer die Terrassen einsam abspaziert,
Gewahrt die Schönste, herrlich aufgeziert,
Ein Aug' verdeckt vom stolzen Pfauenwedel,
Sie schmunzelt uns und blickt nach solcher Schedel

Faust II. Akt 1. Lustgarten

Nüüd üksikäija õhtusel alleel
näeb uhkelt ehiti kaunitari teel,
kes piilub läbi paabulinnusule
ning, nähes, rahamärki, muigab, “Tule!”

Goethe 1962: 52

or syllabic:

ERICHTHO:

*Zum Schauderfeste dieser Nacht, wie öfter schon,
Tret' ich einher, Erichtho, ich, die düstere;
Nicht so abscheulich, wie die leidigen Dichter mich
Im übermaß verlästern... Endigen sie doch nie
In Lob und Tadel... überbleicht erscheint mir schon
Von grauer Zelten Woge weit das Tal dahin,
Als Nachgesicht der sorg- und grauenvollsten Nacht.
Faust II. Akt 2. Klassische Walpurgisnacht.*

*Seks öiste jubeduste peoks kui varemgi
ma, sünk, Enrichtho, astun siia – öudne küll,
ent ei nii koledusi täis kui luules end
nüüd kuulen laimatavat ... Mõõtu ju ei pea
poeedid kiidus ega laidus ... Laialt ees
näen piki orgu telke hahkjalt voogavat
kui järellaineid võikast, murerohkest ööst.*

Goethe 1962: 84

or any of the ancient patterns used in Act 3 of Part Two:

HELENA:

*Bewundert viel und viel gescholten, Helena,
Vom Strande komm' ich, wo wir erst gelandet sind,
Noch immer trunken von des Gewoges regsamem
Geschaukel, das vom phrygischen Blachgefild uns her
Auf sträubig-hohem Rücken, durch Poseidons Gunst
Und Euros' Kraft, in vaterländische Buchten trug.*

*Ma, kõrgelt kiidet, laialt laidet, Helena,
nüüd saabun rannalt, kus meil äsja maabus laev,
pää joobunult veel pöörlev kärmelt kiikiva
vee lainetusest, mille turris tõusev selg
tõi früügiialaste lausikmailt Poseidoni
hää tuulega meid siia: Euros saatis teel.*

Goethe 1962: 132

CHOR:

*Vieles erlebt' ich, obgleich die Locke
Jugendlich waltet mir um die Schläfe!
Schreckliches hab' ich vieles gesehen,
Kriegrischen Jammer, Ilios' Nacht,
Als es fiel.*

*Mõndki ma kogend, kuigi veel keerdub
oimudel kuldne, nooruslik kihar!
Näind ma nii mõndki kohtu ja õudu.
sõdade häda, langeva Trooja
hävingu ööd.*

Goethe 1962: 138

permitting, though, irregularities not met in the original:

*Wie sich Verdienst und Glück verketten,
Das fällt den Toren niemals ein;
Wenn sie den Stein der Weisen hätten,
Der Weise mangelte dem Stein.
Faust II. Akt 1. Kaiserliche Pfalz*

*Mis narrid – otse turjast nabi!
Vaid enda tööst saab toe, kõik muu on pettev kark.
Neil tarkadegi kivist poleks abi,
sest kahjuks kivil puuduks tark.*

Goethe 1962: 19

or affording sound concord of his own:

*doch ziehn sie ihren Weg dahin,
Er geht den seinen; also wird's mit uns geschehn.
Faust II. Akt 3. Vor dem Palaste des Menelas zu Sparta*

*kummatigi kummalgi
tee jätkub omasoodu – nii ka teil ja mul*

Goethe 1962: 140

The rhyme-schemes, too, have been observed without splitting the hair: so the *Weitläufiger Saal* of Part Two begins in the original with the Herald, rhyming his 23-line part *aabcc(c)(b) dede fgffg hhijji*, while the translation goes as *aabcccb ddii fgffg hhijji*, dropping a line in the final rhyme-group and using only perfect rhymes instead of the original partial ones (in brackets).

The translator's "very self" is present in more doubtful cases also, like when indicating at his cultivated taste when confronted with Goethe's linguistic bravado:

*Es farzt die Hexe, es stinkt der Bock
Faust I. Walpurgisnacht*

sokk haisutab, nõiamoor p.....b.

Goethe 1955: 146

Or, when replacing Goethe's portrayal of neurotic reaction by a more determined behavior of Faust in the end of Part One:

FAUST (lacht): Gretchen! Gretchen!

Faust (valjult): Margarete! Margarete!

Goethe 1955: 161

The linguistic inventiveness of Oras, when spurred by formal necessities, is ready to confront the reader with statements the meaning of which needs guessing: *Miks te eest mind öö ei kätke?* asks Fear in the mask-ball of Part Two (Goethe 1962: 25) because the night does not protect her (*Alle meine Widersacher / Drängen mich in dieser Nacht*); or, a few lines later Zoilo-Thersites wishes to be *kus õgev kõõr* (*ibid*: 33; *Das Schiefe grad, das Grade schief*), i.e. wanting the straight to be crooked and vice versa.

In a few instances Oras has blended Shelley's visual imagery – as he had described it in his 1938 study (Lange 2004: 69–78) – with that of Goethe, producing idiosyncratic intertextuality:

PLUTUS:

*Du, geräumig weite Luft,
Fülle dich mit kühlem Duft!
Zieht heran, umherzuschweifen,
Nebeldünste, schwangre Streifen,
Deckt ein flammendes Gewühl!*

Faust II. Akt 1. Kaiserliche Pfalz

*Avar tuuleala, too
udustavat kastehõngu,
rõskeid, piserdavaid lõngu
üle lõkenduse koo!*

Goethe 1962: 48

*Ein dunstiger Nebel deckt sogleich den Raum;
Er schleicht sich ein, er wogt nach Wolkenart,
Gedehnt, geballt, verschränkt, geteilt, gepaart*

Faust II. Akt 1. Rittersaal

*kui sompjaks tihenevad udukiud,
lai pilvesond, pikk vine laotub, lõimub,
siin hõreneb, sääl haruneb ja põimub.*

Goethe 1962: 64

At the same time an almost literal translation of a line in “Faust” explains well the often used *võpp/võppuma* and lexemes of close meaning in the translations of Oras (e.g. *kes iial ei nutnud, nüüd võppuma lõi* in Shelley 1998: 175; *parem naera, ära võppu* in Fröding 1990: 77; *ju lapsena lõi põues valjuks põks*, *ibid*: 22): *Das Schaudern ist der Menschheit bestes Teil* says Faust in the *Finstere Galerie* section of Part Two, with the translation as: *vaid võpatuses ilmneb inimhing* (Goethe 1962: 58). Oras had every reason to hint at the influence of Goethe and Shelley as decisive in his life (Aspel 1965: 42).

The translation of “Faust” is poetry in Estonian (Ivask 2003: 146), stemming from the peculiarities of the language. Words in the lyric riverside episode of Act 2 in Part Two like *pajuleheliblekeste* or *imeõnnetunded* (Goethe 1962: 93), occupying the whole of a line or seven-tenths of it, yield to the mellowness of the scene as well as remind us of the lyric Estonian poetry of fragile moods where the sense and the sound mingle:

*vaid vaevalt vulisevad veed;
ning sada lätet otsib teed
ja laugelt liitudes kesk luhta
loob tügi sügava ja puhta.*

Goethe the Sage of dictums is represented likewise:

*FAUST: Meil tarvis seda, mida me ei tea,
ning see, mis teame, ei too kasu. (Goethe 1955: 42)*

*MEPHISTOPHELES: Just seks, et peita mõtet nappi,
saab ikka kohe sõnad appi.*

*On kerge teha sõnadest süsteem,
vaid sõnu vajatakse sõnasõtta,
ning sõnadesse uskuda on häa –
ei sõnadelt saa ainsat silpi võtta. (ibid: 72)*

*FAUST: See ongi suurim suurmees, kes
ei iial lase kiita ennast,
vaid arvab igast väiksest vennast,
et särab võrdses suuruses (Goethe 1962: 95)*

*THALES: Koos väikestege teed vaid väikse teo,
koos suurtege saab suureks väike. (ibid: 111)*

*THALES: Tark haavub, ent kui targal süda hää,
teeb uue katse – pahuraks ei jää. (ibid: 119)*

*FAUST: see üksnes väärrib vabadust ja elu,
kes seda päevast päeva võitma peab. (ibid: 237)*

The effect of Part One of “Faust” with its only 38 comments and just a four-and-a-half-page Note at the back of the translation relies mostly on the text itself – as most of the translations of Oras. In this respect Part Two, translated seven years later, with its 99 commented pages, is an exception drawing attention to the rule: as the comments are not indicated in the text there is a danger of passing them unnoticed (like on page 93). The absence of the metatext, however, characterizes not so much the translator as his circumstances: work in the solitude of Gainesville for the publisher in Sweden.

Translations from Latin were published first in 1935. Alongside with the possibilities of quantitative meters in the quantitative Estonian, marginalized by the accentual syllabic tradition, the attractions of ancient literature must have been with broader cultural implications: in 1930 Oras had translated John

William Mackail's 1929 "Virgil and His Meaning to the World of Today". To justify Estonia's independence – the ever-present mission of his generation – meant also the establishment of the Estonian library of Western classics, beginning with its epics. Passing the translations of the thirties (Horace and Catullus) as incidental, it is Virgil's "Aeneid" of 1975 that is to become the *tour de force* of Ants Oras.

The meter of the translation is a compromise between the rules of ancient prosody and the structure of Estonian: in his introduction to the translations of The Eclogues, published five years before, Oras admits the power of the three-century-long accentual tradition (Oras 1970: 15), and has explained his verse to Ivar Ivask as follows: "I had to impose restrictions on my application of the quantitative principle. The verse of the translation has to be read as accentual although all the ictuses are long and in the light parts of the dactyl I avoid long syllables of sentence stress and consonant clusters. I have been very cautious in using stress shift. The result is a new kind of music resembling in a way the Latin language and Virgil – the Virgil of nostalgias" (Akadeemia kirjades 1997: 171).

The Estonian dactylic hexameter of Oras is not to be studied with the normative eye but has to be read as poetry, growing conscious of the multitude of devices used. Juxtaposing speech prosody and the meter Oras tries to avoid the successive concurrence of the feet and word divisions, using, at that, often the long final syllable of a long word in the theses: *Ent veel/ vapusta/ **vam** meid/ vaeseid/ üllatas/ äkki/ kuulmatu/ sündmus* (II: 199–200; for more examples see Lange 2004: 385). It cannot come without conscious effort for in Estonian the dactylic forms are abundant (like *siis aga/ pääsesin/ pakku – jah,/ tunnistan,/ lõhkusin/ kütked* in II: 134). However, with the primary stress on the first syllable, the discrepancy between the metrical position and the accentuation of a syllable is the more marked, syncopating the rhythm. This is what must have been important for Oras the rhythm-translator, and the device is bare is his placement of compounds: *seni/ kaua* IV: 52; *abi/ andlik* IV: 536. Even though the translations are not for scansion, the metrical expectations are on the background, and so the stress counterpointing to the duration has its share in shaping the rhythm. As to the length of a syllable, Oras relies rather on his ear than the ancient regulations e.g. when reading *puudutamata* in III: 448, 571 as *puu-du-ta/ mat-ta*, or treating *puu* as an anceps (*maasika/ puu ning/ tammepuu/ okstest* XI: 64). Indeed, when introducing The Eclogues, Oras calls the ancient verse the oral one.

This way it is but expected that the translation aims at euphony. The latter has often semantic implications like in the description of Fama (and gossip's rate of spreading) that is as sibilant as one could wish: *sama palju kui sulgi / luravaid silmi tal sulgede all – ime öelda! – ja keeli, / suid sama arv, sama hulk salakikjalt kuulavaid kõrvu. / Ööl, sisin suus, vahel taeva ja maa, üha varjude peidus / hiilides hõljub, ei eal tal piidlev pilk vaju unne* (IV: 181–185); or, the last breath of Dido, described using sounds narrowing the air passage: *Ühekorraga haihtus / soojus ta seest, elu hõng, eluõhkav ta hing hajus tuulde* (IV: 701–702).

Interpretive alike are the rhythms, like those with the verse-slowness spondee: *Sel moel / Priamusel tuli lõpp* (II: 553); *lõi nüüd/ liikmeisse/ järsk, külm/ hirm, veri/ hüübis mu soontes* (III: 30); *korraga/ vait jäi/ taevaste/ ääretu/ hoone* (X: 101). "The verse has to be slower or quicker, depending on the context," as Oras has written (to Aleksis Rannit on October 24, 1975), and the rhythms correspond to the emotions narrated.

The euphony of the translation, however sustained, has not blurred its quotability that, even though not indispensable to a translation, is an attribute of Virgil. With no fixed standards present, Cohens' 1992 very democratic *The New Penguin Dictionary of Quotations* could serve as well to calculate the "quotability rate" of Oras. The dictionary's 36 quotes from "Aeneid" and 13 from "Bucolica" give for the result 59 per cent as the corresponding lines from the translations of Oras can be cited in 20 and 9 instances.

Treating the meter with sovereign flexibility, but working still on the syllable level (e.g. contracting words as the meter requires like *varvukil pro kikivarvul* in V: 424, or *ilmasjata pro ilmaasjata* in XI: 533), Oras uses his rich vocabulary including linguistic innovations, *ad hoc* compounds, archaisms, neologisms and dialect words (listed in Lange 2004: 390–393). At that the translation is never opaque in its meaning, requiring no guesses whatsoever – it is a *chef-d'œuvre* convincing to the point of the reader's entrance into the realm of linguistic oblivion at the realization of the meaningfulness of his reading. Aeneas the forefather of all the exiled ones has truly inspired his translator who has admitted that in exile the inspiration tends to be willful (Akadeemia kirjades 1997: 32).

Translations from Swedish, represented by the poetry of Gustav Fröding and done in late 1930s and early 1940s, are those Oras himself has hesitantly (in 1957) estimated as his best (*ibid*). Fröding's poetry, presenting in its seemingly effortless diction the ironic approach of Romantic poets aware of the gap

between the words and the world, was just the one to be rendered using the traditional device of Oras, alienating loan-words, underlining the self-conscious tensions of the original:

*Två grannar jag har i min boning
- den ene är sentimental
- jag hör honom högt deklamera
om sorg och livets kval.*

*Kaks naabrit elab mu majas –
üiks **sentimentaalne** vend –
ma kuulen, kuis kaeblikult kerkib
ta **deklamatsioonide** lend.*

*Ibland är han dystert och bitter
och melankoliskt bisarr,
ibland litet svärmiskt elegisk
och sjunger ibland till gitarr.*

*Ta vahel on kibe ja sünge
ja raskemeelselt **bisarr**
ja vahel ta unistab nukralt
ja lauluga liitub gitarr.*

Gitarr och dragharmonika

Fröding 1990: 13

The achievement of these translations is the mixture of colloquial register with sophistication so that the often burlesque scenes of the everyday hint also at their guilt-conscious describer etching, at that, the narrative like in *En fattig munk från Skara* (Fröding 1990: 32–34), or *Balen* (Fröding 1990: 35–43), or *Indianer* (Fröding 1990: 14):

*Jag skall murra åt dig över maten,
jag skall grina åt varenda rätt:
"fy för katten, vidbränd är spenaten
- kvinna, säg, är detta kalvkotlett?"*

*Lauas laidan nurjunuks kõik palad,
naeran, näägutan, et küllalt saad:
"Toho tonti, kas see praht on salat?
Issand, ja mis vastik karbonaad!"*

*Då blir tid att tala, cara mia,
kvinnans rätt och annat tanteri.
Fri är skogen, låt oss vara fria
än från livets strids pedanteri!*

*Siis võid targutada, cara mia,
naiste õigusist, mu uhke daam!
Mets on vaba, vabalt matke siia
eluvõitluse pedantne kraam.*

The specifically poetic vocabulary in these translations (producing often echoing sounds) stems rather from the content of the original than the innovative drive – everyday scenes are conveyed in everyday vocabulary – and so the translations impress as inventive and mature:

*Stundom en skymt som av dagens
gryende mognstrimma
flyktigt att snart förgå
lyste sig väg genom dunklet,
tankar, som just börjat morgnas,
hörde jag tala så:*

*Aeg-ajalt kuma kui puhte
vilge, mis aralt ihmleb,
aga veel päeva ei too,
pimedas virvles ja kuulsin
mõtteilt, mis vaevalt virgund,
tasaselt kuiskava loo:*

Aningar

Fröding 1990: 101

*Över myren mörknade kvällens skugga,
tyst och töcknigt och tomt var allt.
Blygrå molnvarv upphörde ej att dugga
silregn, ljudlöst och isigt kallt.*

*Hämarikus hääletult tuskles padu,
tume, tühi ja udust hall.
Jäisena igritsedes piserdas sadu,
pilved olid kui tinast vall.*

*Ingen enslig en eller grönkädd tuva,
ingen kulle, av ljungris klädd,
störde dödens färg, som sig lagt att ruva
på den sumpiga mossans bädd.*

*Häiriks kuski kanarbik, rohetav küngas,
häiriks kadakad kuskilpool
hauduvat, hahetavat üksluisust süngas
surmas suikuval sammalsool.*

Vid myren

Fröding 1990: 23

The characteristic talent of Oras, his traditionally perfect rhymes, is in case of Fröding the immediate necessity that has to organize firmly the rhythm of often the free verse:

*Våran prost
är rund som en ost
och lärd som själva den onde,
men gemen likväl
och en vänlig själ
och skäms ej, att far hans var bonde.*

*Meie praost
päisub vägevalt maost,
ta on tark, nii et väriseb põrgu,
ise lihtne mees,
süda lahke sees,
end maameheks möönmast ei tõrgu.*

Våran prost

Fröding 1990: 16

*Och metalliskt kalla
månestrålar falla
ned i öde sal,
och från alla kanter
gnistra diamanter
i oändligt tal.*

*Ääretu näib piir, kus
teemandite kiirgus
virvleb okste all,
kuu kesk sammaskäike
heidab nukra läike,
külma kui metall.*

Vinternatt

Fröding 1990: 25

*På stenar jag vilar, i gårdar jag tigger,
i lador jag ligger
för tack, det är billigast köp,
för mynten jag fått jag i krogarne super
mig full, så jag stuper
i sömn på den fläck, där jag söp.*

Fredlös

*Külas kerjamas käin, kivi puhkuseks paras,
„aituma“ eest saras
vahel odavalt ööbida võin,
ja kui saan pääle rännakut kõrtsi, joon maha
oma viimase raha
ja vaon unne säälsamas, kus jõin.*

Fröding 1990: 78

Alongside, the syllables have been carefully counted:

6 *De kommo från ängen,*
6 *och Brunte var hästen*
6 *och Jonte var drängen,*
6 *som tjänte hos prästen,*
6 *och gammal var Jonte*
6 *och gammal var Brunte*
6 *och stocklat förresten.*

Jonte och Brunte

11 *Då frågade Pilatus: Vad är sanning?"*
10 *och eko svarade - profeten teg.*
11 *Med gätans lösning bakom slutna läppar*
10 *till underjorden Nazarenen steg.*

Vad är sanning?

6 *Koos sõitsid ruun Brunte –*
6 *ju kõssi jäänd kogu –,*
6 *ja sulane Jonte –*
6 *ju hall, pisut togu:*
6 *hall vanamees Jonte*
6 *ja hobune Brunte –*
6 *laisk, lohisev logu.*

Fröding 1990: 17

11 *Ning siis Pilatus küsis: "Mis on tõde?"*
10 *Vaid kaja vastas – prohvet oli tumm.*
11 *Ning natsareenlasega vajus hauda*
10 *see sajandite suur müsteerium.*

Fröding 1990: 21

Preserving the stylistic and poetic peculiarities, Oras is not the translator to assimilate his originals. The poems of Fröding, showing off with their variety of rhythms and meter, are conveyed with imitative beat (like *Flickan i ögat* or *Drömmar i Hades* in Fröding 1990: 70–77 and 94–99). In this metrical context some of the decisions related to the translation of proper names represent a case of thoroughly human inconsistency (as observed already with the translation of “Faust”), like when translating Fröding’s Anders:

*Den ädra stugan vid än är Hagen,
där gamle Anders i Hagen bor
– jag minns, hur Elin, den enda dottern,
gick förr och trallade hela dagen
i mon därborta med Hagens kor.*

Elin i hagen

*See perejoone on Kopli talu,
sääl elab Andres, ju nõrk ja hall –
mul meenub Elin, ta armas tütar;
ta hoidis karja, ja ühtevalu,
päev otsa, nõmmel käis laul ja trall.*

Fröding 1990: 20

As Fröding’s cultural context has its “equivalent” in Estonia, there is nothing wrong with translating *Elin i hagen* as *Kopli Elin* (or *Flaxman på Torpet* as *Popsimäe Flaxman* and *Kall-Johan i Skräddarebyn* as *Rätsepahurtsiku Jan* in *Det var dans bort i vägen / Alles laupäevaöööl* in Fröding 1990: 19) but the domestication of names could have limited itself to nicknames. The today’s reader can waver also at a few truncated words (*pett[us]*, *vaat[a]sin*), the indicators at the need of the historical perspective, but as to the *élan* of the translations – the time has been powerless.

TO SUM UP

The translations of Ants Oras have their natural context in the target culture the system of which was younger than that of his sources. So, it is but expected that he was a mimetic translator using the formal solutions of his originals. In domesticating these, Oras is treating translations as agents of cultural change, decentering Estonian culture from its former intellectual orientation on dominantly German and Russian influences towards a variety of Western cultures, including English and French, Finnish and Swedish, and ancient literatures. The cultural stretch encompassed for him also linguistic innovation, and he was a conscious and willful language reformer using the possibilities proposed by Johannes Aavik. He firmly believed that even though a language is something given, it is capable of change, and Estonian can be de-Germanized and made, when shorter, more elegant. These endeavors of Oras accord with the general realization of 1920s–30s that the Estonian literary language is still in its formative years. A difference of Ants Oras from the linguistic ideal as proposed by Aavik is his abundant use of foreign words in both prose and poetry hinting at the grotesque.

The sense of foreignness met in the translations of Ants Oras is so better understood when treated not as a will of a clumsy transport of the reader into the source text but as a work on the language and wish to modify the receiving culture. It is most obvious in the relatively scanty body of metatextual comments accompanying his translations, and of course, in his meticulous work with new metrical possibilities in Estonian. The presence of syllabic, but also of quantitative meters adjusted to the prosody of the Estonian language is largely related to his work. Although working with metrical schemes of long tradition and observing the discipline old-fashioned already in his times, his translations express the modern subtlety and awareness that every poet and poem worthy of translation is a rhythmical variation of the scheme, and this is the variation that has to be translated.

The list of devices Oras recognized and rendered in his poetry translations is versatile: phonetic instrumentation (often emphasized and interpretive, i.e. with semantic implications), variety of rhyme types and schemes copying the original but preferring perfect end-rhymes, compensatory devices (e.g. added alliteration to alleviate the absence of end-rhymes), counted sentences and syllables trying to capture the rhythm of the original, observance of the syncopating possibilities of a syllable's metrical position and its accentuation, feet and word division and run-on lines. More dubious is the practice of adding explanatory comments, making overt in the translation what is only latent in the original. Translating meters of long tradition in the source text, Oras was adopting these to the prosodic means of Estonian, composing the hexameter that is a compromise between the rules of ancient prosody and the structure of Estonian, or avoiding carefully iambic monotony in the English blank verse without resorting to metrical anarchy. Believing that the formal discipline of poetry is of communicative value, he let the expression plane shape his poetic decisions believing that a poetic image can impress only together with the sound. This made him produce at the beginning of his career verse where the sound can smother the sense and syntax is subjugated to euphony. This general hazard of mimetic translations disappears in the middle of his career, leaving its traces in only some of his translations, notably in these of free verse. With the latter the general characteristic of the poetics of Ants Oras is underlined: he mistrusts the poetic potential of the colloquial and wants the language of the poetry to be different from that of the everyday. The fate of Ants Oras – to be half his life a translator in exile – only deepened his conviction in the need for politics also in poetry.

There cannot be an absolutely universal translator, Ants Oras has said, and deciding by his correspondence he himself was seldom fully satisfied by his results. Knowing that his means of expression have their peculiarities of personal character, Oras knew also that his way of looking at the world had been modified under the influence of predominantly two poets, Shelley and Goethe. His translations, indeed, reveal the impact of Shelley's kinetic imagery, and of Goethe the Sage halting "the moments of shudder" as those of illuminating significance. Considering the big translation projects (Virgil, Shakespeare, Goethe) of Oras, he chose to be a translator of the epic high style. But there is a deviation from the rule: his lyric translations of the *Volkslied* meters (besides parts in "Faust" those by Heinrich Heine or Gustaf Fröding) are equal to his "Aeneid" or Shakespeare's Roman tragedies and let him to be classified as a Romantic translator. For the 19th century Romantics the linguistic performance as a whole was ironic – what is said is never what is meant – and they were aware that a statement is overt at the cost of being covert in some other respects. The ever-present art of the formal in the translations of Ants Oras is in this way only a clue to the intricacies of the content.

ANTS ORASE TÕLKEPOEETIKA

Kokkuvõte

Ülevaade Ants Orase tõlkepoetikast täiendab monograafilist uurimust Orase elust ja tööst. Viimane lähtub arusaamisest, et Orasel kui Teise maailmasõja eelsete ja järgsete kümnendite Eesti ühel mõjusamal kirjanduskriitikul on õigus oma biograafia, mis toetub ajaloolisele arhiiviuurimusele, et diskursiivsed käsitlused oleksid kooskõlas elulooliste ja bibliograafiliste teadmistega. Seni on Oras laias laastus tuntud oma eestikeelse kirjanduskriitika ühele episoodile taandatuna kui “Arbujate” kogumiku koostaja.

Monograafia annab ülevaate Orase akadeemilistest uurimustest Shelley, Miltoni ja inglise 16.–17. sajandi prosodia kohta, juhtides tähelepanu Orase eluaegsele huvile oma olemuselt empiirilise teadustöö vastu, mis kirjeldab kirjanduse kirjanduslikkust. Uurijat kriitikuga ühes nahas nähes ütleb see üht: poleemilist kirjanduskriitikat kirjutav Oras pole loomuldasa niivõrd sotsiaalset löögijõudu hindav literaat kui kirjanduse kammermuusik, kes pole vältinud esinemist suurel areenil.

Keskendumine Orase kolmandale, tõlkija rollile teenib ka biograafiaüleseid eesmärke: eesti kirjanduse uurimine kultuuriloo kontekstis eeldab tõlgete, ja seda enam mõjukate literaatide tõlgete kaasaarvamist. Orase tõlkepoetika kirjeldamisega on selleks raamina välja pakutud poetika kui võimalus kirjeldada tõlgete kirjanduslikkust nende sotsiaalses ja ajaloolises tingituses ja sihtkultuuri kontekstis.

Oras tõlgib sihtkultuuris, mis on noorem tõlgete lähtekultuurist, ja on tõlketeoreetilisi ootusi kinnitades mimeetiline tõlkija, kes kasutab originaali vormilahendusi. Neid kodustades käsitleb ta tõlget kultuurimuutuste ja keeleuenduse võimaldajana, jagades 1930. aastatel valitsenud ettekujutust, et eesti kirjanduskeel on alles kujunemisejärgus. Aavikliku keeleuenduse foonil on Orase keelekasutuses silmatorkavad rohked võõrsõnad kui groteskile osundav võte.

Orase tõlgete võõrapärasus teenib eesti keele ja kultuuri kihistamise eesmärke. Kõige ilmsem on Orase tahe eesti keeles uute meetriliste skeemide rakendamisel: eesti keelele kohandatud süllaabiliste ja kvantiteerivate meetrumite olemasolu on suuresti seotud tema tööga. Ent ka arvestatava traditsiooniga silbilis-rõhulise meetrumi edasiandmisel teeb Oras omad korrektuurid, tõlkides inglise blankvärssi jambilist meetrumit varjundades. Tõlkides meetriliselt korrastatud luulet, on Orase traditsioonilises distsipliinis modernsus: ta annab endale aru, et iga tõlkimist väärt tekst on skeemi rütmivariatsioon, ja tõlkida tuleb just viimast.

Ennekõike luuletõlkijana mõjuka Orase võtteampluaa on lai: foneetiline instrumentatsioon (mis on tihti markeeritud ja interpretatiivne, s.o semantiliste allhoovustega), kompensatoorsed võtted (näiteks puhta lõppriimi asendamine alliteratsiooniga), originaali rütmi reprodutseerimine silpide ja lausete arvu kordamise või ülekandega ridadega kasutamise, silbi meetrilise positsiooni ja sõnarõhu või värsijala- ja sõnapiiride sünkopeerimine.

Nähes vormireeglitega arvestamises omaette sõnumit, laseb Oras väljendusplaanel domineerida sisuplaani üle, karjääri alguses sisust arusaadavuse hinnaga. Tema poetilised eelistused on reljeefsed vabavärsi tõlgetes, mis umbusaldavad kõnekeelsuse poetilisi võimalusi ka siis, kui originaal seda ei tee, ja kriipsutavad alla massi- ja kõrgkultuuri vastandlikkust.

Ja samas – Vergiliuse “Aeneise” kõrval kuuluvad Orase õnnestunud tõlgete hulka ikkagi tema rahvaregistris ja rahvalaulumeetrumis tõlked Heinrich Heinelt ja Gustaf Frödingilt. Nii et Oras, hinnanud end ise temperamendilt romantikuks, on olnud ka tõlkijana romantik.

Tunnistanud end mõjutatuks kahest luuletajast ja literaadist, Shelleyst ja Goethest, on omajagu ootuspärane Orase tõlkekeele shelley'lik ja goethelik osis: Shelley kineetilist tajuilma, mida Oras on kirjeldanud oma akadeemilises kujundikäsitluses, on aimata “Fausti” tõlkes ka seal, kus originaali tekstuuri on staatilisem; Goethe fraas “Fausti” II osa I vaatuse Sünge võlvkäigu stseenist (*das Schaudern ist der Menschheit bestes Teil* – Orase tõlkes ‘vaid võpatuses ilmneb inimhing’) aga kommenteerib Orase tõlgetes nii sagedasi ‘võpp/võppuma’ sõnu. Oras tõlgib oma maailmataju paista lastes, ei üksi originaali tähendusklotse.

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APPENDIX. Poetry Translations by Ants Oras

1924	Published in:
Koskenniemi Pikk ja pime ja külm, Eleegia kevadele, Lotos	Looming 10
1925	
Koskenniemi Hippokreene allikal, Kevadlaul, Olid valuvärinal virgunud, hing; Vesiroos	Agu 7; 12
Poe Kellad	Looming 4
Poe Zante, Eulaalia	Agu 8
Rainis Una barca, Piiga küsitlused	Looming 9
Brjussov Lauikule	Odamees 6
Balmont Püüdis unelev pilk päeva pelguvaid varje	Looming 10
Thomas Hood Laul särgist	Agu 10
Lenau Kolm mustlast	Agu 5
Byron Saar (fragment)	Agu 4
Münchhausen Ballaad Nõgesmäest	Looming 3
Petöfi Küüdimees	Agu 1
1926	
Poe Unimaa, Linn meres	Looming 6
Balmont Kõrkjastik	Looming 4
1927	
Henley Invictus	Odamees 1
English Christmas carols	Odamees 1
1928	
Poe Helenile	Looming 1
Yeats Metshaldjate avatluslaul, Armastaja jutustab roosist oma südames	Mõtteid võitlevast vabariigist. Dünamis I. Tartu: EÜS „Veljesto“ Kirjastus
1929	
Shakespeare Macbeth	Tartu: Eesti Kirjanduse Selts
Byron Pimedus, Sonett Chillonile, Stroofid Augustale	Looming 3
T.S. Eliot Prelüüde 1-4, Ühe daami portree 1-3, Jõehobu, Õõnsad mehed 1-5	Looming 5
Poe Kaaren	Looming 10
Shelley Pilv 1-6, Ood läänetuulele	Looming 8
Torrence Lind ja puu, Laul lintšimisest	Kirjanduslik Orbiit 1
1930	
Longfellow Sandalphon	Kevadik 5
Vachel Lindsay Simon Legree, Neegrijutus, Pühvlite vaimud	Looming 3
Keats Ood ööbikule	Olion 7
Sandburg	Rünnak 4
Mordvinian folk song	Eesti Hõim
John Freeman Tõugud, James Elroy Flecker Saratseenide sõjalaul	Olion 2
1931	
Kailas Tänavapilt, Laanehaldja surm	Looming 5
Leino Maanteehulguse laul	Looming 5
Manninen Jäljetu	Looming 5
Mustapää Tivoli	Looming 5
Poe Valik luuletisi	Tartu: Eesti Kirjanduse Selts
Baudelaire Vastavusi	Eesti Kirjandus 7

1932	
Goethe Rooma elegeiaid	Looming 3
1933	
Browning Kaotet juht, Kuidas rõõmusõnum viidi Ghantist Aixi, Abt Vogler, Prospice	Looming 8
Manninen Rahumees, Möödud päev; Sõetuli, Luiged, Kuu sirp, Palju, Ita pludite	Looming 2
Heine Saksamaa (1, 2, 7-10)	Looming 5
1934	
Puškin Sügis, Tondid, Laviin, Kaukasus	Looming 1
Byron Don Juan I; XI	Looming 5; 7
Pope Lokirööv II, III	Looming 9
Shakespeare 's sonnets	Looming 10
Oksanen Soome laul, Jännes Ärka, Soome, Kramsu Õnnetu, Ilkka, Leino Maanteehulguse laul, Kyösti Taat ja taadi kell, Kallas Soojärv Liivimaal, Tähtede lugeja, Koskenniemi Olid valuvärinal virgund, mu hing, Hippokreeni allikal, Eelegia iludusele, Eelegia kevadele, Kevadlaul, Tolm, Pikka ja... , Manninen Sõetuli, Luiged, Kuu sirp, Palju, Ita paludite, Rahumees, Mööduv päev, Siljo Excelsior, Kolgatal, Siin- ja säälpool aeda, Vabasse vette, Loits, Kailas Tänavapilt, Laanehaldja surm, Viiul, Viljanen Evoël, Vaara Laul surematuses, Hommik, Mustapäa Tivoli	Soome laule ja ballaade. Soome antoloogia 3. Tartu: Eesti Kirjanduse Selts
1935	
Shakespeare Romeo ja Julia. Torm	Tartu: Noor-Eesti (both)
Koskenniemi Kirjatargad, Viimne Lusignan	Looming 7
Horatius Pompejus Grosphusele, Maecenasele, Manilius Torquatusele	Looming 10
Housman (extracts in essay)	Looming 10
Heine Saksamaa: talvemuistend	Tartu: Noor-Eesti
1936	
Mordvinian folk poetry	Eesti Noorus
Kipling Viimne madrustelaul, Bandžo laul, Lahkumiskoraal	Looming 1
Baudelaire Ülenemine, Sügislaul, Spliin, Rahunemine, Tuletornid	Looming 3
Shelley Stroofe, Jane'ile, Paani hümn	Looming 6
Catullus 12 poems	Looming 9
Keats Sügisele, Ood kreeka urnile, Ood nukrusele, Rohutirts ja kilk, Päev kadus ja kõik päeva hörkus kaob, Kui virgub hirm, Miks naersin täna ööl?, Sonett	Looming 10
Pope Lokirööv	Tartu: Noor-Eesti
Puškin Valik luulet: lüürika-epika-draama (with Alver, Talvik, Viiding)	Tartu: Eesti Kirjanduse Selts
Molière Misanatroop (Ebahaige by Aspel)	Tartu: Eesti Kirjanduse Selts
1937	
Shakespeare Valik sonette. Sonette. Suveöö unenägu. Othello.	Tartu: Eesti Kirjanduse Selts (both)
Swinburne Guernsey lahes, Mahajäetud rohtaed, Ujuja unel 1-3	Looming 1
Puškin Oo kauge sõber kadund muinasloost	Looming 2
1938	

1939	
Fröding Ball, Sangarpoeem; Kõrgeaulik Växjö piiskop, Luuletaja Wennerbom, Dolores di Colibrados; Meie praost, Lindprii	Looming 1; 2; 10;
Yeats Lihavõtted 1916, Mees, kes nägi und haldjate maast, Müts ja kuljus	Looming 5
Burns Tom O'Shanter	Looming 7
Leconte de Lisle Keskpäev, Kondori uinak, Lõvi surm, Elevandid	Looming 8
1940	
Moliere Tartuffe ja Õpetatud naised	Tartu: Eesti Kirjanduse Selts
Fröding Korasanist käis Issanda samm, Alles laupäevaõöl	Looming 3
1941	
Majakovski Kõnelus luulest finantsinspektoriga	Looming 1
Orbeliani ***	Viisnurk 1
Tšavtšavadze Kaukasus, Armastus	Viisnurk1
Leonidze Poedile	Viisnurk 1
Lermontov Kohtamine, Leht rebenes tammepuuoksalt, Ei, ma ei armasta nii kuumalt sind, Mereprintsess, Prohvet	Viisnurk 5/6
Byron Inezile (from Chile Harold), Kõik on tühi töö ja vaimunärimine, ütleb Koguja, Pisarail põlevail, Viimsed read (Täna ma sain kolmkümmend kuus aastat vanaks)	Looming 5/6
1942	
Shelley Valik lüürikat (46 poems)	Tallinn: Hortus Litterarum, 1998
1943	
Iphigenia Taurises, Torquato Tasso	unpublished
1944	
Kallas Eestile, Jumalagajätt Iluga, Sadu on lõppend	Eesti Looming II
1945	
Shelley Ood Läänetuulele, Mälestus, Laul, Ööle, Stroofid, Sophiale, Laul, Leinalaul	Eesti Looming III
1946	
Shakespeare Julius Caesar. Antonius ja Kleopatra. Coriolanus	Tallinn: RK Ilukirjandus ja Kunst
1947	
1948	
Goethe Proloog (from Faust)	Estonia: Eesti Üliõpilaskonna neljas väljaanne Saksamaal. Geislingen.
1949	
1950	
Goethe Faust (an extract)	Tulimuld 2
Manninen Rahumees	Sõna 2
1951	
Baro Gene Siin vaenu igi-aastajal, Lausumata legend	Tulimuld 1
1952	
Gautier Kunst	Tulimuld 1

José Maria de Hérédia Säng, Taevane vapp, Korallirahu, Merikarp	Tulimuld 1
Goethe Pühendus (from Faust)	Tulimuld 5
1953	
Hermann Stock Ood Marie Underile	Tulimuld 2
1954	
Frost Kased, Tugeva suu on tumm, Peatus talveõhtuse metsa ees, Mulla poole, Kõnnumaad	Tulimuld 4
1955	
Goethe Prooemion, Epirrhema, Üks ja kõik, Testament (from Gott und Welt)	Tulimuld 3
Aiken Senlini hommikulaul, See siin on pilt tolle lehe	Tulimuld 6
Goethe Faust: tragöödia esimene osa	Lund: Eesti Kirjanike Kooperatiiv
1956	
Benn Ah, sa ju hajumas, Tähed ja valgusevöötide...	Tulimuld 4
1957	
Kailas Viiul	Mana 1
Viljanen Sadam	Tulimuld 6
Valéry Luule, Granaatõunad, Palm	Tulimuld 1
1958	
Toomas Celanost , anonymus (2), Bernard de Morlaix , Jacopone da Todi (2), Hildebert de Lavardin	Mana 2
Matthews Küünlad	Mana 4
Mustapää Relatiivsuse auks, Tuuleveskifantaasia, Legend pääsukesest Püha Stefanus märter	Tulimuld 4
Viljanen Pilved	Mana 4
Leino Venet lükkavad veed, Lemminkäise ema, Noktürn, Tore on tormata suuskadel, Tuulekannel	Tulimuld 1
Hellaakoski Ballaad murdunud puust	Tulimuld 3
Sarkia Saatuse vang, Lapse tee	Tulimuld 3
1959	
Goethe Loodus ja kunst, Tornivahi laul, Püsivus muutuses, Charlotte von Steinile, Mignoni laule ja Kandlemängija laule	Tulimuld 4
1960	
Eliot Burnt Norton; Little Gidding; Tuhapäev; Marina	Tulimuld 1; 2; Mana 1; 4
Goethe Faust II (an extract)	Mana 2-3
Leino Tumemeel Räikkö Räähkä, Ylermi	Mana 4
Rilke Rahvaviis, Panter, Sügispäev, Sonetid Orfeusele (I.9, I.19, II.1, II.10, II.12, II.29)	Mana 4
Vergilius Orpheus ja Eurydice, the 4th eclogue	Mana 4
Baudelaire Vastavusi, Ilu, Painaja, Pihtimus, Sügissonett, Mis ütled, vaene hing	Tulimuld 3
Rannit Verse an Wiiralt und das geklärte Gleichnis	Baden-Baden: Klein
Pasternak poems from Dr Zhivago	unpublished
1961	
Heine Mouche'ile, Uus israeliitlik haigla Hamburgis, Morphine, Laatsarusest	Mana 4
Mustapää Relatiivsuse auks	Vaba Eesti 2-3
Sarkia Hällilaul	Vaba Eesti 2-3

1962	
Goethe extract from Faust II	Tulimuld 2
Goethe Faust: tragöödia teine osa	Lund: Eesti Kirjanike Kooperatiiv
Vergilius Aeneas ja Dido (IV)	Tulimuld 4
Milton Valgusele	Mana 2
1963	
Schiller Rõõmule, Tants (Mariae Under dedicatur)	Mana 1
Baudelaire Kutse teekonnale, Vaeste surm, Armastajate surm	Tulimuld 2
1964	
Kailas Ränduri ood, Sõõr, Lahkunute hinged, Hing, Lapi laul	Tulimuld 1
Shakespeare: songs from plays; sonnets CXXIX, CL, CXLVI, LCII Macbeth, Hamlet, Kuningas Lear, Kolmekuningaõhtu, Mõõt mõõdu vastu, Nagu teile meeldib	Mana 4-5 unpublished the date for the last three ?
Acht estnische Dichter (Suits, Under, Alver, Talvik, Masing, Kangro, Visnapuu, Rannit)	Stockholm: Vaba Eesti
1965	
Goethe Lauliku raamatust, Hafise raamatust, Pahameele raamatust; Suleika raamatust, Paradiisi raamatust (from West-östlicher Divan)	Tulimuld 2; 3
1966	
Valéry Sõudja, Sammud, Salajane ood	Tulimuld 1
Vergilius The 6th and the 1st eclogue	Tulimuld 3
Baudelaire Somp ja sajud, La servante au Grand Coeur, Hommikuhämarik	Tulimuld 1
Verhaeren Sadu	Tulimuld 1
Kristjan Jaak Peterson Vaanelt-vaikselt läks läbi okste võre, Kord kiirgas päev mul üle kevadmaade, See ülim siht on inimsoole võõras	Tulimuld 2
1967	
Shelley Alastorist, Pilv, Kaks vaimu, Ozymandias	Tulimuld 2
Goethe Jumal ja bajadeer, Paaria palve, Legend, Paaria tänu (ballads)	Tulimuld 4
1968	
Baudelaire Elav tungal, Moesta et errabunda, Teekond 1-8	Tulimuld 2
1969	
Goethe Vaimude laul üle vete, Maailma hing, Orfilisi ürgsõnu: Daimon, Tuche, Eros, Ananke, Elpis, Ja kui päev kisub tee, Kui voolab mõõtmatusse kulgev	Tulimuld 1
Fröding Tilku ja laiike, Tüdruk silmateras	Tulimuld 3
Baudelaire Matk Kytherasse	Tulimuld 4
Nerval El Desdichado, Les Cydalises, Fantaasia, Epitaaf	Tulimuld 4
Verhaeren November	Tulimuld 4
1970	
Vergilius Bucolica. Karjaselaulud	New York: Estonian Learned Society in America

1971	
Goethe Nõiaõpilane, Kooljatants, Pulmalaul	Tulimuld 1
Fröding Mees ja naine, Sügis, Üles Saalemi, Hosianna!, See on lõpetatud; Vaid tähed oleks väärt	Tulimuld 2; 4
1972	
Shelley Lõokesele	Tulimuld 1
Baudelaire Albatross, Eelelu, Muusika, Tühjuse iha	Tulimuld 4
Pushkin in English	„The Sewanee Review“
1973	
1974	
Baudelaire Väikesed vanakesed I-IV, Tagasilangus	Tulimuld 4
1975	
Vergilius Aeneis	Lund: Eesti Kirjanike Kooperatiiv
1976	
Homer Hümni Aphroditele	Tulimuld 1
Horatius Carmina IV.7, III.9, IV.3, III.30	Tulimuld 2
Fröding Unelmaid Hadeses 1-4, Legend Graalist	Mana 43
1977	
Homer Hümni Delose Apollonile; Hümni Panile	Tulimuld 1; 2
Sappho Troonil kiirgav taevalik Aphrodite, Taevalike võrdsena tundub mulle	Tulimuld 3
1978	
Fröding Laul minust ja narrist Herkulesest, Laul Karinile, kui ta oli tantsind, Laul Karinile vanglast	Tulimuld 1
1982	
Goethe Mignonile, Kuule, Tervitus ja hüvastijätt, Õhtu	Tulimuld 1