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**Two Translations of Jaan Kross' *Keisri hull*: Comparison of Markers
Pertaining to the Creation of a Fictional World**

BA thesis

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the present thesis is to analyze and compare Anselm Hollo's and George Kurman's translational choices of culture-specific markers pertaining to the 19th century Livonia in Jaan Kross' historical-fictional novel *Keisri hull*, published in 1978. The two English translations of *Keisri hull*, called *The Czar's Madman*, by Hollo and Kurman were published respectively in 1993 and 1992. Under observation will be culture-specific vocabulary that pertains to the 19th century Estonia. The thesis is divided into sections and subsections. An introduction will be provided with an overview of the novel, the structure of the thesis, as well as the main objective of this thesis. In addition, a brief overview of Jaan Kross as a writer will be presented. Moreover, a chapter will be dedicated to discussing translating Jaan Kross' novels and what his main characteristics are as a writer of historical novels. The translation analysis will include examples from the first 20 pages, as well as one example from page 37 of *Keisri hull* which will be compared and then analyzed and further discussed. Finally, the comparisons and findings of the analysis will be discussed in the conclusion.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis consists of the analysis of culture-specific and historical markers pertaining to the fictional world creation in Jaan Kross' *Keisri hull* (1978). Under observation will be vocabulary, including culture-specific and historic items used to create a fictional historical setting in *Keisri hull* and the translational choices of those words in Anselm Hollo's and George Kurman's *The Czar's Madman*. George Kurman translated *Keisri hull* in 1992, published by Harvill Press and Anselm Hollo in 1993, published by Pantheon Books. The vocabulary under observation in *Keisri hull* can be subcategorized into Peter Newmark's cultural categories in his *A Textbook of Translation* (1998): material culture (food), social culture (work and leisure), organizations, customs, activities (administrative units) and miscellanea, as well as a category that I have added to my thesis – archaic measurement units.

The thesis will analyze the first 20 pages of the novel, as well as one example from page 37 of *Keisri hull* and will chiefly include comparisons and thoughts on Kurman's and Hollo's translational choices of the culture-specific vocabulary under observation in the source text. Furthermore, the thesis will illustrate the historical period that Kross is trying to re-create in his novel. I will discuss the historical image that is portrayed in both translations via the translational choices of culture-specific words in *Keisri hull*. The main objective is to observe how both translators have translated culture-specific items and other markers pertaining to a 19th century historical setting and what image they render to the reader.

Jaan Kross and his works of literature are widely known in Estonia and he is considered one of the most renowned Estonian authors in the world. *Keisri hull* is one of the world's best-known Estonian novels and Kross is one of the only Estonian authors whose literature is known to an international audience outside of Estonia. His novels have been translated into Finnish, English, Russian, Latvian and German among other languages. Jaan

Kross, a writer from the small Estonia was nominated for the Nobel Prize in Literature during the early 1990s.

Jüri Osvald Kurman (1942-1994) (known as George Kurman in his publications in English) was a literary scholar and translator born in Tallinn and who emigrated to the United States during World War II (Kruus, Puhvel 2000: 244). Although his translation of *Keisri hull* has been published by Harvill Press in London, a copy of the translation itself proved difficult to find in Estonia as the only copy of it was found as a manuscript at the Tallinn University Academic Library. Thus, due to the scarcity of his translations in Estonia, we could assume that his English translation, having been published outside of Estonia, is chiefly directed at an English-speaking readership, such as among Americans, who have or had some or close connections with Estonia.

Anselm Hollo (1934-2013) was a Finnish poet and translator who also lived in the United States for the second half of his life. Hollo translated *Keisri hull* by taking into account the Finnish, German and French versions of the original novel, according to the publisher's note in the beginning of his translation. We can thus argue that Hollo used intermediary languages to translate *The Czar's Madman* into English meaning that Hollo's translation may include or exclude different nuances that exist in the original text. Besides having written over forty books of poetry, Hollo has also translated one of Kross' other historical novels – *Professor Martens' Departure*, published by The New Press in 1995.

The first chapter of the thesis will be based on Kross' *Keisri hull*, based on Rein Veidemann and other scholars. Kross' writing style plays a big role in the creation of a historical fictional world and image as his novels are characterized by depicting some real historical events and thus we can argue that he deliberately uses words pertaining to the era of the novel, the 19th century to create a fictional and historical setting and ambience. I will discuss how and why *Keisri hull* is considered a historical novel and what elements it

includes in making it one.

The second chapter will include empirical analyses of Hollo's (TH hereinafter) and Kurman's (TK hereinafter) translational choices of words used to create a historic setting in *Keisri hull*. Culture-specific words in the context of this thesis will illustrate examples of words that translators have domesticated or foreignized into the English language (hereinafter target language). I will thus be observing how both translators' translational choices of culture-specific markers vary from *Keisri hull* and how they are presented differently to an English-speaking readership.

1 *Keisri hull*

The novel *Keisri hull* is considered a historical and political novel depicting some non-fictional events at times. The novel is based on the narrator Jakob Mättik's diary where he writes personal and secret thoughts based on his experiences and opinions. The novel revolves around the first half of the 19th century and centers around the lives of a Baltic German nobleman Timotheus von Bock and his wife Eeva along with her brother Jakob Mättik. Throughout the novel, the main question raised by the author is whether the seemingly sincere von Bock should be declared mad or not due to his actions; he betrays the Russian Czar Alexander I. Von Bock and Alexander I are long-time friends and he has thus vowed to the Czar that he will, without exception, tell him the truth about everything in all honesty. Sustained by the promise of being loyal and honest to his Czar, von Bock harshly criticizes the Czar's ways of ruling the country after which he is sent to prison for 9 years and is thus declared mad.

1.1 Kross in *Keisri hull*

Estonian literary scholar Rein Veidemann claims that Kross' literature has not yet reached to be significantly revolutionary outside of Estonia because of the limitations of the Estonian language and the youth of Estonian literary culture (2010: 107). We could assume that TH and TK are not only translations of a fictional novel but also a translated source of Estonian history which offers the English-speaking readership an insight into the Estonian 19th century history and culture. Veidemann continues to argue that Kross' cultural historical heroes, such as von Bock, are the symbols of Estonians' fate, thus Kross' novels, primarily *Keisri hull*, could be considered a symbol of Estonia's soul and spirit. *Keisri hull* is a great epic representing Estonian history which is why it is necessary to deliver its importance and sublimity into other languages, especially into English. According to Veidemann (2000: para. 9), it is controversial to translate a text and not include in it its historical significance that it has for the people who speak and are natives of the source language.

Estonian theatre theoretician Mardi Valgemäe (1993: 37) has referred to Kross' *Keisri hull* as a political allegory which depicts the most repulsive custom of the communist regime – to label those as mad who are against the regime. In Kross' novel analyses, Estonian literary critic Elo Lindsalu (n.d.: para. 3) has similar views as Valgemäe: she finds that Kross' writing style is characteristic of being able to draw parallels between historical events and the present. Furthermore, she argues (n.d.: para. 5) that “most of Kross' texts are composed rationally, yet characteristic for a poet, his style does include significant imagery.”

Estonian literary scholar Rein Undusk (2015: 108) has mentioned that Jaan Kross himself has spoken of the reasonings behind him writing historical novels – Kross wished to make parallels of events happening in Estonia, which was forbidden and subject to censorship during the Soviet era in Estonia. Kross has unraveled some important self-

consciousness rudiments of the Estonian cultural history in his *Keisri hull*. Ultimately, the image that *Keisri hull* creates is a historical-fictional representation of the 19th century Estonia.

1.2 Translating Kross into English

In an interview, Antoine Chalvin, the translator of Kross' novel *Paigallend* (in French *Le Vol Immobile*), states that reading Kross' novels require close attention as his complex way of wording may be difficult to comprehend, let alone to translate (Kressa 2010: para. 1). Chalvin has mentioned that it is severely demanding to translate Kross' minute nuances and details, such as "linguistic forms, wordplays, undecipherable cultural hints" which are very characteristic of his writing style and Kross uses the boundaries and nuances of the Estonian language to the full maximum, making it elaborate, yet complex. He further argues that translating Kross entails making significant changes in rewording from the source text to the target text.

Estonian musicologist Evi Arujärv (2008: para. 2) says in her article on the writing style of Jaan Kross where she highlights the main characteristics of Kross as a historical writer that translating Kross into English can be demanding, considering his language full of cultural references and containing archaic elements. The language in his novels constitutes of his use of long, complex, developed language, as well as "rich historical sentences in a historical language register which generally is not forwarded by a poetic metaphor but rather a thought process." She argues that Kross' strength lies within his use of language which is his tool to make references to the past and present. We can thus infer that Kross' writing style is unique and distinct and illustrates the skill to create a historical fictional world via language. In the following thesis I will observe how both translators have

pertained to the original historical setting or whether they have created a different one via their translation choices of words that create a historic setting in *Keisri hull*.

2 Translation analysis

2.1 Methodology

The translation analysis will consist of an analysis of culture-specific markers in *Keisri hull* and the translational choices of TH and TK in *The Czar's Madman*. I will use Peter Newmark's *A Textbook of Translation* (1998) as the main source for the categorization and discussion of culture-specific items as well as how to translate them by maintaining the authenticity of the historical context of the source text in the target text. Newmark (1988: 94) defines culture as "the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means for expression" and translation as "rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way that the author intended the text" (1988: 5). He also states (1988: 94) that the main problem in translation of cultural words may occur "unless there is cultural overlap between the source and the target language and its readership" Thus, the main problem which TH and TK may face is a cultural distance between Estonian (source language) and English (target language) and thereby the image created to the English readerships of TH and TK are relatively different than for the Estonian readership.

As previously mentioned, Newmark's textbook includes cultural categories of social culture, food, gestures and other miscellanea that may be difficult to translate or portray in the target text as they might pertain solely to the source language and culture and might be unheard of in the target language. I will use his categories to present culture-specific items and other markers in *Keisri hull*. Moreover, I will analyze the image that TH and TK create on the basis of their translational choices of the culture-specific vocabulary under

observation in *Keisri hull*. I will observe and discuss TH's and TK's translational choices and comment on possible translation concepts and/or strategies that could possibly apply to their translational choices. The purpose is to observe the historical image that Kross establishes with the use of certain historical words and how it is different or similar in TH and TK.

I will also use Lawrence Venuti's *The Translator's Invisibility* (1995) to discuss different translation concepts and strategies such as domestication and foreignization. According to Venuti (1995: 18), the concept of foreignization is a "theory of translation that resists dominant target-language cultural values to as to signify the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text". In other words, the concept of foreignization gives a "foreign" impression to the reader in the sense that the reader knows that they are reading a text from a foreign culture. On the contrary, domestication is a concept which highlights the translator's invisibility, fluency and transparency (1995: 18). In the light of my thesis, domestication will be viewed as a method used to translate source culture-specific words into more familiar words in the target language, as well as to make such words more comprehensible for the target text readership. I have used this source to highlight whether translators have translated certain words into a domesticated or foreignized version. My findings should demonstrate whether and how TH and TK have either domesticated or foreignized Kross' historical and culture-specific vocabulary in their translations and what image might they form to the reader.

2.2 Culture-specific items

2.2.1 Food

Example of *nastoika-schnapps-brandy*

<i>Keisri hull</i>	TH	TK
Sel ajal kui feldjäger köögis <i>nastoikat</i> peale jõi ja hapukapsasupile algul vilet laskis ja siis tukkus ja lõpuks norises, jõudis neli või viis ülestõstetud kraega isandat Lehrbergi võõrastetoas ära käia ja Timole tere ütlemas ja emfaatiliselt sosistamas ja taskurätikusse nina nuuskamas. (1978: 8)	While the guard lounged in the kitchen, ate borscht and drank schnapps , whistled a tune, nodded off and finally started snoring, four or five gentlemen, their faces hidden by the turned-up collars of their coats, entered the Lehrberg drawing room, greeted Timo with emphatic whispers, blew their notes. (1993: 16)	While the chasseur in the kitchen topped off his sauerkraut soup with the brandy – at first whistling, then falling asleep, and finally snorting – four or five noblemen, their coat collars turned up high, had time to greet Timo in the Lehrberg’s drawing room, whispering emphatically into their raised handkerchiefs. (1992: 18)

The novel takes place in the 19th century Livonia. This example is from the beginning of the book where military couriers, a *Feldjäger* who was in charge of keeping an eye on the main characters Eeva and Jakob, as well as von Bock, is eating sauerkraut soup and drinking *nastoika* – a Russian alcoholic drink.

The first word under observation is *nastoika*, which originates from the Russian word *nastoyka* and possibly dates to the 19th century, when this sort of beverage was starting to be distilled, according to the *Great Soviet Encyclopaedia*. One can speculate that Kross’ use of culture-specific items, such as *nastoika*, create authenticity regarding the historic context of the novel. Furthermore, *nastoika* can be regarded as a word that creates a historic setting because it highlights the Russian influence on the Estonian culture, involving the adaptation of food and drinks, such as *nastoika* (*настойка*) and *hapukapsasupp* (*кислые щи*) into the Estonian culture.

Helen Glanville and Murtha Beca (2019: para. 6) state that if a translation shifts away from the tone of the original text, it may provide a very different experience for the reader than was at first intended. They believe that the main challenge is to convey to the reader “the culture and context of the time in which the original text was written by retaining as much of the original “flavor” of the era while making it intelligible to a reader who may know little either of the times, the subject matter, or the cultural context.” The challenge that Glanville and Beca point out could refer to maintaining the historical nuances of the original text yet simultaneously translating it by using vocabulary that is not entirely unfamiliar to the target text readership.

Following on the ideas of Beca and Glanville, we can talk about Venuti’s foreignization and how it is significant in this example. TH translates *nastoika* into *Schnapps* and *hapukapsasupp* into *borscht*. We could argue that *Schnapps* is foreignized and *borscht*, on the other hand, a Russian-influenced word. *Schnapps* is an English loanword derived from the German *Schnaps* referring to a strong alcoholic beverage being drunk quickly in a single sip. TH uses a German-originated word; however, we can argue that it creates a similar image as *nastoika* – a foreign image. In the context of the source text, *nastoika* gives the impression of it being drunk during the process of eating, and *Schnapps* could similarly be referred to as a type of liquor drunk during a meal.

TK uses the word *brandy* as a translational choice for *nastoika* and *sauerkraut soup* for *hapukapsasupp*. We can argue that brandy is not the exact same drink as *nastoika*, however given the target culture into which TK has been translated, which is presumably the cultural space of USA or Canada, the word *brandy* might be more known of by the TK readership. Given the context, *nastoika* seems to be a drink that is drunk during a meal whereas it can be argued that brandy is generally drunk alongside coffee or tea after having a meal whereas in the given example brandy is being drunk during the eating process. TK

has used *sauerkraut soup* which is a German word although the origin of the food is not German. The distinct difference between the source text and TK is that Kross' *nastoika* presumes that the reader knows what it is without having to search for its meaning. Knowing it to be a Russian word, the image created in *Keisri hull* is primarily related to a Russian influence. TH's foreignization of the word *Schnapps* creates a setting that could be related to a German influence whereas we could argue that this word is better known of among the English-speaking audience as opposed to *nastoika*. Finally, TK uses *brandy*, perhaps a domesticated version of *nastoyka*. He has used a more neutral word that creates a different image as the two drinks might have a different meaning.

Based on Glanville's and Beca's statement on translating historical texts we could say that TH and TK both create a different "flavor" of *nastoika* by translating it into a word (*brandy* and *Schnapps*) that, in essence, has nothing to do with the Russian influence, such as *nastoika* has. Thus, TH's translational choice of *nastoika* possibly highlights the difference between two different cultural spaces to which the original and the translation are directed. The word *Schnapps* in this example may suggest that it is directed at an American or German cultural space and *brandy* suggests it being directed at an American readership.

Venuti's (1995: 18) idea of domestication highlights the need for transparency and fluent style in translating, as well as decreasing the "strangeness" of the foreign text for target language readers. Thus, we can argue that *nastoika* is a foreign word which both translators have domesticated for its meaning to be better understood among the target texts' readerships.

Newmark (1988: 94) has illustrates the cultural "gap" in his textbook which is prominent in this example, highlighting that a language which includes specific cultural features can cause translational problems. In this case, *nastoika* could be considered a

culture-specific word in the context of *Keisri hull* and TH and TK have translated it into a word that conforms better to the target culture.

2.2.2 Names of workers and administrative units

In this section I will be observing names of workers and ranks of which some may be archaic in Estonian and not used very widely today, however, they might be used in *Keisri hull* for the purpose of establishing a historic setting of the 19th century – a time when such names of workers were used but which have become obsolete with time. I will use Newmark’s category of work and leisure for which I have created a subcategorization that conforms better to my thesis – names of workers and administrative units.

Example of *chasseur-feldjäger-guard*

The word *feldjäger*, a German loanword derived from the word *Jäger*, is arguably a historic word that applies to the historical society of the 19th century Estonia – a historical word used describe a military or government courier. Kross possibly uses this word to create a historical setting and a fictional world in *Keisri hull*. In this example I will be observing the same table as for the previous example.

TH has used the word *guard* as the translational choice for *feldjäger*. We could argue that *guard* is a word with a broader definition and is neutral in the context of the historical society of *Keisri hull*. Comparing this to the original, we could argue that Kross has used *feldjäger* to specifically refer to a German military courier in the context of the novel. *Guard* gives the impression of it being a word with a wider sphere of meaning and leaves the reader with more opportunities for different interpretations whereas *feldjäger* is a more concrete word pertaining specifically to the historical setting of *Keisri hull*.

TK has used *chasseur* as a translational choice for *feldjäger* which derives from the French word *chasser* – to chase or hunt. TK’s translational choice differs from the original

in the sense that it uses a French-originated word which creates a different cultural setting to the reader. *Feldjäger* and *chasseur* are both considered historic terms and thus TK has in itself created a historic image to the reader by using this translational choice.

We could argue that TH domesticates the word *feldjäger* into a word that might be better understood by the English-speaking readership, according to Lawrence Venuti's domestication translation practice (1995: 18). On the contrary, TK's *chasseur* could be considered a historic word that creates a historic image to the reader, the only difference of it being that *chasseur* is a French-originated and *feldjäger* German-originated. Thus, TH's *guard* highlights domestication from Estonian to English, whereas TK uses a foreign word in his translation, such as Kross has used in *Keisri hull*, which creates a foreign image, just as is created in *Keisri hull* with the German word *feldjäger*.

Example of *podrätšik/foremen/contractors* etc.

<i>Keisri hull</i>	TH	TK
Sest podrätšikutega ja kümnikutega ja ehitusmeestega ülepea olevat vaigse asjaajamisega võimatu toime tulla. Kas kupjad ja kiltrid , aidamehed ja töövanemad ja teomehed vaigse hääle peale viksivad jooksmas on, selles kahtlen ma küll väga. (1978: 17)	...because he found himself unable to deal with foremen, construction workers, and suppliers . Yet I doubt that overseers, grain storekeepers, workers and peasants are any more likely to give of their best when they receive their orders so quietly. (1992: 12)	... in general, it is not possible for a mild-mannered person to deal effectively with contractors, foremen, and laborers . I myself also doubt very much that overseers and foremen, storekeepers, workers and peasants all would hop to it more quickly when told to do so quietly. (1993: 17)

The jobs listed in *Keisri hull* give the impression that they are characteristic of 19th century Estonia and might possibly be unheard of by some Estonian readers yet we can assume that those jobs pertain to the 19th century society. In this sequence of jobs, *podrätšik* (*подрядчик*) is an archaic Russian loanword meaning a general contractor; someone, who manages work. *Kümnik* was a person whose role was to be an intermediary between the manor and peasant families in the Livonian governorate. Its historical and quite specific

definition may possibly mean that it belongs specifically to the 19th century era and might not have a translational match because the reasons for which the words *kümnik*, *kubjas*, and *kilter* were invented were possibly related to historical events that happened in Livonia (for example, these jobs were related to different manor jobs in the 19th century which practically have no use nowadays). It may therefore be complex to find a translational choice for a word that is possibly unknown outside of the historical and cultural sphere of 19th century Estonia.

In TH, the word *kiltrid* is translated into *overseers*, someone that supervises work being done. *Aidamehed* is translated into *grain storekeepers* which is a direct translation from Estonian. As mentioned, the jobs listed in the example are archaic, according to the Institute of Estonian Language. They are presumably used to fit into the historical context of the novel and portray a historical setting of the 19th century. Furthermore, TH has translated *kümnik* into *supplier*. *Kümnik* could in this case be translational ethnographic realia because of its culture-specific meaning in the context of *Keisri hull*. Translating *realia* can be connected to the present example because *kümnik* could be considered a cultural word in the 19th century Estonia.

In TK, the sequence of the jobs listed follows the same sequence, possibly listed in the hierarchy of the jobs' importance and role. TK has used the same translational choices for these jobs as TH except for the word *contractor* and *laborers*. These words could be regarded as neutral and as words that do not create the same historic setting as is created in the original. They are words that are common and possibly widely known among the English-speaking readership.

Nonetheless, this example offers an overview of one of the main challenges in translation: the translation of semantically complex words in the source text, meaning that they could carry several meanings according to the context and setting in which they are used, as well as the different distinction in meaning of the source and target languages

(Chahrour 2018: para. 10). TK and TH both translate the specific manor job names into words that have a wider meaning in the English language and are subject to various interpretations; interpretations that could be vague and do not pertain to the 19th century setting.

Estonian semiotician Peeter Torop's view on the translation of culture-specific words in the source text can be discussed in the light of this example. According to Torop (2011: 33), "translating a text from one culture to the other culture leaves us facing uncertainty". Torop (2011: 34) further argues that "a translation from a source language to the target language presents itself as a complete text whereas a translation from a source culture to a target culture offers many opportunities of interpretations for the reader". We can infer from this that the image that translators create of the history and culture depicted in the source text is dependent on how they translate culture-specific words such as in this case. That is, culture-bound words such as these job names are culture-specific because they might not have an equivalent translational match in the target language and instead offer various interpretations to the reader, depending on the reader's cultural background and knowledge of other cultures.

Newmark (1998: 83) points out the method of neutralization (or functional equivalent) when translating which is "a kind of paraphrase at the level of word". He refers to it as a common procedure that is applied to cultural words and requires the use of a culture-free word i.e. the translator must deculturalize a word to translate it (1998: 83). If we observe the words *kümnik*, *kiltrid*, *kubjas* etc., we can see that TH and TK have neutralized or generalized them. They have deculturalized those words, which could be regarded as cultural words in the context of *Keisri hull*, and translated them into *foremen*, *suppliers*, *contractors* etc. which are possibly more known to the English-speaking readership and cease to be culture-specific words in the target language. Thus, the neutralization in this example shows

that TK and TH have translated Estonian culture-specific words such as *kupjad*, *kiltrid* and *kümnik* not by literal translation but by the function and role of the named workers.

Example of *polkovnik-Major-Colonel* and *kubermang-province-province*

<i>Keisri hull</i>	TH	TK
Muuseas ka sellesinase polkovnik Tenneri suus, kelle trianguleerijaterühmaga mina kahekümne teisest kahekümne kuuendani mööda Kuramaad ja Grodno kubermangu pahmasin. (1978: 26)	From, among others, Major (then Colonel) Tenner with whose surveying detail I trudged all over Courland and Grodno province , between '22 and '26. (1993: 22)	Among others, these words were used by Colonel Tenner, with whose land surveying crew I tramped the country through Courland out to Grodno province between '22 and '26. (1993: 28)

In this example, the narrator talks about noble young men who wished to turn the world upside down. It is passage with an emotional and personal tone, considering that the whole novel is based on the personal thoughts of Jakob Mättik which he writes in his diary. Kross uses the Russian word *polkovnik* (*полковник*), a military rank used mostly in Slavic-speaking countries and which corresponds to a colonel in English-speaking countries (Kulacz 2012: 27). We could argue that although Estonia is not a Slavic country linguistically, its vocabulary has been influenced by Russian terminology due to Estonia having been a part of the Russian Empire.

TK has opted for the word *Colonel* to translate the Russian word *polkovnik*. We can once again talk about Venuti's translation concept of domestication where TK possibly translated the word into *Colonel* which is more known within the Canadian and American cultural space where Colonel is used as a rank in the armed forces of both America and Canada (1995: 15).

Based on this example we could argue that TH also uses Venuti's domestication translation practice by translating the word *polkovnik* into *Major*, a word that is possibly nearer to the culture of the target language.

The word *kubermang* in *Keisri hull* refers to a governorate which was the biggest administrative unit in the Imperial Russia. We could argue that Kross has possibly used this word because it applies to the historical context and setting of the novel, given the circumstance that Kross' objective was to always be as factual as possible in *Keisri hull*, as a way to restore Estonia's national memory (Thomson 2003: para. 22).

TH and TK have translated the word *kubermang* into *province* which creates a different image of *Keisri hull* to the English-speaking readership, however given TH's and TK's readerships, *province* is possibly a word that is closer to the cultural space of the English language. When analyzing *province*, we can assume that it is perhaps better acquainted with in the American or Canadian cultural space as opposed to a governorate or a *guberniya*¹.

Example of *saksad-talupojad/serfs-masters/peasants-landowners*

<i>Keisri hull</i>	TH	TK
Aga talupoegade priiislaskmise asjas ülepea olid Timol, niipalju kui mina olin hakanud aru saama, jällegi isemoodi vaated. Keisri poolt ei tohtunud tema meelest mingit priiislaskmist juhtuda. Sest kui nende keiser nende vabastajaks osutuks, oleks see Timo arvates kiskunud nad nende isandaist moraalselt koguni irdu.. (Lapsik arvamine muidugi: nagu oleks sakste ja talupoegade vaheline lõhe võinud millestki veel suuremaks minna, kui see juba oli!) (1978: 37)	To his mind, the serfs should not be freed by <i>imperial</i> edict. If the Czar were to act as their liberator – Timo felt – this would cause a complete moral rift between them and their overlords . . . (A childish notion, of course: as if the chasm between masters and serfs could possibly become wider than it already was!) (1993: 34)	In his [von Bock's] opinion, the Czar should not be the one to liberate the serfs. For if their liberator turned out to be the Czar, this would have morally separated them from their local lords . Of course, Timo's was a childish opinion—as though the rift between the peasants and the landowners could be made any deeper than it already was! (1992: 40)

This example discusses von Bock's opinion on liberating the serfs. He thought it unreasonable for the Czar to liberate them; instead, their own landlords should have liberated them. I have used the names of *saksad* and *talupojad* to refer to a historical setting of the

¹ Russian word for *governorate*.

19th century. *Saksad* could be considered a cultural term due to it being used in the context of serfdom. We could argue that its meaning is different in the historical context of the 19th century Estonia as opposed to the meaning of *saksad* today.

Firstly, to translate words that carry not only a cultural meaning but also a historical meaning, we must determine its meaning in the source language. In this context, *saksad* are arguably lords of the manor and *talupojad* are peasants. In *Keisri hull*, *isandad* and *saksad* appear to be synonyms as they technically have the same meaning – they are both roles which refer to being a landowner or landlord. They could also mean wealthy people who belong to a higher social class. In this example I want to unravel and analyze the differences of historic nuances between the *saksad* and *talupojad* *Keisri hull* and their translational choices in TH and TK to observe whether a different historical image might be portrayed to an English-speaking audience.

Newmark (1998: 98) states in the section of *Social Culture* of his textbook that translating cultural words belonging to a certain social culture do not create a translation problem as such because usually all these words can be transferred into the target language, or often even have a one-to-one translation or can be functionally defined. I will observe *saksad* as a word belonging to the social culture of the 19th century.

TH has translated *saksad* into *masters* and *talupojad* into *serfs*. We could argue that there is a difference between *talupojad* and *serfs* in the context of the 19th century; a landowner did not own the peasants, yet the peasants had the right to use a part of their landowner's land. If we classify *saksad* as a historical word, then TH's *masters* also create a similar historical image which offers the English-speaking reader an insight into the history of Estonia. However, we could argue that in the light of other historical events² *serfs* and

² E.g. serfs and peasants in the Middle Ages were classified as two different people – serfs were the poorest of the peasant class who were tied to the lands of their landlords on where they worked and paid rent whereas peasants could be educated and marry if they could afford it, serfs could do that only with their lord's approval.

peasants cannot be regarded as synonyms as a *serf* can also be a slave which in the context of *Keisri hull* should not be regarded as so. TH's translational choices assume that the reader knows of the Estonian history and is aware that serfdom in Estonia was different than serfdom in the medieval ages where a serf was bound to their landlord.

TK has translated *saksad* into *landowners* and *talupojad* into *peasants*. *Landowners* in this context is a more neutral translational choice which offers more opportunities for interpreting the history of the 19th century Estonia. *Peasants* is also a word that conforms to the *talupojad* of Estonia and offers less interpretation of *talupojad* being slaves, whereas TH's *serfs* may indicate a historical context of slavery to the reader which in this case is not true. Both examples offer synonyms of *saksad* and *talupojad*, however due to the wide array of meanings of *masters* and *landowners*, they might offer a different cultural and historical image to a reader who is not aware of the history of the 19th century Estonia. That is, some readers may get the impression that serfdom and peasantry were different in Estonia than is actually portrayed in *Keisri hull*. We can thus say that Newmark's translation problem of social culture words shows no problem in this example because both translators have transferred the same meaning of *saksad* and *talupojad* into English, however TH's translational choice of *serf* offers more opportunities for interpreting the Estonian history for those that have not previously acquainted themselves with Estonian 19th century history and the social culture.

2.2.3 Archaic measurement units

In the following examples I will be observing the translational choices of measurement units used in *Keisri hull* of which some are considered archaic, according to the Institute of the Estonian Language. I will be talking about two examples from the novel

which I will discuss separately and provide an analysis that applies to both examples because they both represent the same ideas that I wish to analyze.

Example of *ruutsüld*/square fathoms in size/twelve feet by eighteen

<i>Keisri hull</i>	TH	TK
Maja parema tiiva otsmine katusekorratuba, seesama, kuhu Timo kümne aasta eest oma väikese kirjutustoa sisse oli seadnud ja kuhu mina hiljem olin kolinud, kuus-seitse ruutsülda suur. (1978: 10)	This room is still mine to use, even though Timo has returned; it is a garret at the end of the right wing, the same one that Timo had converted into a small study ten years ago. I moved into it after his departure. The room, six or seven square fathoms in size... (1993: 5)	Though our household had now increased in number, I retained my former room on the second story, at the end of the right wing of the house. It measured about twelve feet by eighteen – the very same place where ten years ago Timo had set up a little copying room and into which I had later moved. (1992: 10,11)

In this example, Jakob Mättik talks about his room in their new mutual residence with Eeva and von Bock. Kross has used an archaic unit of length which creates a historic setting in the novel considering that *ruutsüld* is most likely not used nowadays, according to the Institute of the Estonian Language.

TH has used the word *fathom* which is a unit of length used to refer to the depth of water. TH has followed a similar pattern by creating a similar setting as in the source text. TK has converted the length unit *ruutsüld* into *feet*, a unit used most commonly in the United States. We could argue that the *feet* in this context is a subject of neutralization by TK. This common measurement unit is mostly used in the USA and due to its wide use it is most likely understood by most English-speaking readers. TH on the other hand uses *fathom*, an ancient measurement unit used to this day, however used mostly to measure the depth of water (Chisholm 1911: 201).

Example of *küünar/vaks-cubit/span-feet*

<i>Keisri hull</i>	TH	TK
Ma toppisin käe kitsast laeluugist sisse ja leidsin, et selle taga oli lihtsalt kahe küünra pikkune ja kahe või kolmevaks laiune raudkast. (1978: 11)	I put my hand into the narrow opening and discovered that it led into a wooden box, two cubits long and two or three spans wide . (1993: 5)	I pushed my hand through the narrow ceiling opening and discovered a wooden box four feet long and about two feet wide . (1992: 11)

Following from the previous example, in this example Jakob explains how his new room looks like at his new living residence. He looks for the perfect place to hide his very personal diary and he explains all aspects of the room, including the hiding place, in great detail.

In this example we can observe the use of an archaic length unit *küünar* which is the length from the elbow to the tip of one's middle finger. This word can be considered obsolete as its use is very limited or not used at all, according to the Institute of the Estonian Language. The other word under observation is *vaks*, which is also a length unit yet not archaic. It is the length between one's tip of the middle finger and tip of the thumb stretched out.

TH has maintained the archaism of the word *küünar* by translating it into *cubit* which, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, is an ancient measure length derived from the forearm; varying at different times and places but usually about 18-22 inches. Furthermore, the words *cubit* and *span* in TH possibly have the same function and purpose as they do in *Keisri hull* – they are words that create a historic setting in a novel.

In the case of TK, he has once again used *feet* as a translational choice which is more universal and more common for the English-speaking audience. TK remains neutral in terms of the use of culture-specific vocabulary, such as *cubit* or *span*, and uses a word that conveys the idea quicker and easier to the audience.

The example emphasizes historic words that Kross has used in *Keisri hull* and consequently creates a historic setting. The words *küüinar* and *vaks* and *ruutsüld* are arguably archaic words that Kross has used to create a historic setting in the novel. TH has translated them into a cultural space where the words under observation are perhaps archaic but may not be completely foreign to the audience. Furthermore, these words cannot be regarded as cultural words because Newmark (1998: 95) argues that cultural words cannot be literally translated whereas in this case, TH has translated them literally without the need of finding a descriptive-functional equivalent. Thus, in this context we can simply refer to them as words that create a historic setting to the reader.

In conclusion, TH's translational choices follow the same pattern as in *Keisri hull*, because he translated the archaic and historic Estonian words into English words that are also arguably historic and not so commonly used. TK is different from *Keisri hull* in the sense that he translates the Estonian words into neutral and more commonly known words in English. The historical imagery portrayed by the use of different markers varies in TK compared to *Keisri hull*.

2.2.4 Miscellanea

In this final subcategory I will be discussing miscellaneous elements in the texts that could be associated with the creation of a historical setting of the 19th century and what sort of image they render to the reader. I will be discussing the main challenges that translators may face in translating not only words but a recurring idea and its significant and historic background in the context of the novel.

Example of *päevaraamat/journal/diary*

<i>Keisri hull</i>	TH	TK
Kõigepealt tahan ma siia põhjuse kirja panna. Selle, mis paneb mind seda päevaraamatut alustama . Näe, ma kirjutangi alustama. Sest kas tema <i>pidamisest</i> midagi välja tuleb, on võimatu ette näha.(1978: 7)	First, let me record the occasion that impelled me to begin this journal . “To begin”, I say, because I have no way of knowing if I’ll go on with it. (1993: 1)	First of all, I’d like to set down the reason the cause, for my starting this diary. Note that I write “starting”, because it’s impossible to foretell if anything will come of my keeping the diary . (1992: 5)

Kross starts the novel with simple sentences with a clear idea as opposed to his usual long sentences. The reason for this could be that he wished to connect to the reader right from the start and gain their attention with simple and concrete sentences. The diary in this context is said to play a historical role in many ways, according to Finnish writer Juhani Salokannel (2009: 225). He refers to it as a literary source, which at times is humorous and personal but before anything else is an honor to the historical novel tradition.

This example is the first sentence of the novel and immediately establishes a personal tone in the novel. The main function of the diary in this context is to show the characters of the novel in the perspective of the protagonist, as opposed to a narrator that narrates, however is not part of the story as a character. The purpose of a diary in this context is to write down thoughts, personal and raw thoughts and truths which are to be confidential, that is ultimately the purpose of a diary. Truths in this context can be dangerous, and Kross has used the *päevaraamat* as a tool for the retrospect of events that have happened. Salokannel further comments that the *päevaraamat* is in this context a historical object, that was meant to be inherited to the son of the late von Bock.

TH translates this passage into a past tense, thus indicating that the journal has already been written whereas in *Keisri hull* the diary is starting to be written. As mentioned, the *päevaraamat* in the context of this novel includes many thoughts that could have deemed

dangerous for any third parties to know about. Thus, these thoughts are personal and shared only with the reader, and the narrator himself. TH uses the word *journal*, a daily record of events, occurrences and experiences or simply observations.

On the other hand, TK has used the word *diary* which establishes a more personal tone since the beginning of the novel. In this context, TK's *diary* expresses a daily record consisting of personal thoughts, feelings, emotions based on the writer's (in this case the narrator's) own perspective. We could thus say that the diary/journal instantly establishes the setting of the novel as it shows that the rest of the novel will be personal and viewed only from one perspective, Jakob Mättik's.

Example of *kurgutaud/croup*/-

<i>Keisri hull</i>	TH	TK
Me sündisime, Eeva ja mina ja meie pere kaks nooremat last, õde ja vend, kes varakult ja ühekorraga kurgutaudi kätte surid, Viljandimaal kindralihärra von Bergi Holstre kroonumõisa all Tõmbi külas meie isa Peetri väikeses Kannuka talus, Eeva 1799-ndal ja mina 1790-ndal aastal. (1978: 12)	We – Eeva, myself, and our younger siblings: a sister and a brother who succumbed to the croup , while still very young, and at the same time – were born in the district of Viljandi on the modest farmstead known as Kannuka tilled by our father Peeter, in the village of Tõmb which belongs to a crown estate, Holstre manor, whose owner is General von Berg. Eeva first saw the light in 1799; I was born in 1790. (1993: 7)	We were born, Eeva in 1799 and I in 1790, before two younger children (a sister and a brother, who both died , together and early in life), in Viljandi province, on the Holstre manor lands owned by General von Berg, near Tõmbi village in Kannuka, the small farm worked by our father. (1992: 12)

This example highlights the beginning of the lives of the narrator and his sister, Eeva. Kross explains their family's background to the reader and explains that their two younger siblings died of a sickness. In this example I want to highlight the use of the word *kurgutaud* (diphtheria) which is a disease that has been mentioned in the 1897 article in newspaper *Postimees*. In this article, it was mentioned to be a new, unknown and very dangerous disease to which there is no cure. We could argue that, although unsure if this event was real or not, this word represents the 19th century historical setting, also taking into account that it was a

new disease to which many children succumbed in other Estonian fictional novel as well, such as in *Truth and Justice* (Sikk 1996: para. 1).

TH has translated this disease into *croup*, a disease that also refers to the diphtheria. It creates an image that represents the 19th century as the croup was a disease which many children succumbed to - a disease that in today's world could be easily treated. Kross' use of this word could be reasoned with the fact that in the 19th century, diseases that today could be easily diagnosed and are not very severe, are portrayed as deathly diseases due to the lack of knowledge and treatment of these diseases. TK has translated this into saying that the children have died and does not mention the disease at all.

In the light of this example, I will be talking about another translational challenge in the context of the two translations. We cannot talk about this example as a cultural word in any way, as it is not a disease that pertained only to this era. We can talk about it as a disease that was first discovered in the 19th century, or at least first mentioned as the article of the newspaper *Eesti Postimees* from 1897 highlighted. Thus, although not a cultural word, it can be regarded as a word that creates a 19th century setting in *Keisri hull*, highlighted by the severity of the condition and the deaths of the narrator's siblings.

Furthermore, the use of such words in the source text can create problems of ambiguity. In the context of this thesis, it would be called historical ambiguity – the disease *kurgutaud* which was a deathly and new disease arguably pertains to the 19th century setting whereas *croup* can be interpreted in many ways.

Example of *neh/yes, he's here/indeed he is*

<i>Keisri hull</i>	TH	TK
“Kas isa on toas?” küsis Eeva – ja mina ütlesin: “ Toas neh ,” ja panin rangid talli ukse külge rippu ja läksin neile tuppa järele.” (1978: 14)	“Is Father here?” asked Eeva, and I replied: “ Yes, he’s here. ” I hung the horse-collar on a nail beside the stable door and followed them into the house.” (1993: 8)	“Is daddy at home?” Eeva asked. “ Indeed he is, ” I answered. After hanging their horse’s bridle on our stable door, I followed them into the house.” (1992: 13)

In this example, Timotheus von Bock meets the father of his future wife Eeva. He inquires about the whereabouts of his father so that von Bock can introduce himself to him. The word *neh*, a colloquial word acting as an interjection in this case. It will be observed as a culture-specific expression due to it belonging to the jargon of the 19th century spoken language in this context.

We could argue that interjections are simple vocal units as opposed to lexical items, meaning that they generally express a sound (Cuenca 2006: 22). In the light of this example, we can refer to *neh* as a marker of orality among the spoken language of the 19th century. As they are in this case language-specific, expressing an affirmation e.g. yes, of course, indeed, the main challenge that may appear is translating it into an English interjection carrying the same meaning as *neh*.

TH has translated this into *yes, he's here*. He has emphasized the fact that the father is in the house as a substitute for the word *neh*. TH has remained neutral and has not used a similar interjection, even though *neh* highlights the jargon of the 19th century in this context.

TK has used a similar technique where he translated the word *neh* into *indeed, he is*. Similarly to TH, instead of using a similar interjection or expression, he translates it into a phrase expressing affirmation. In the light of both TH and TK we could talk about Newmark’s descriptive equivalent where instead of using a similar interjection or expression, they translate into a description of what it means and ultimately convey the same

message to the reader. It may also be the case that the jargon of the 19th century Estonian peasants is utterly different to that of any English-speaking culture.

3 CONCLUSION

The historical setting and image created in Kross is unique. It highlights the 19th century life and events in the utmost authentic way using language and objects pertaining to that era. Despite the fictional and factual mixture of the novel's genre, Kross has used a historical narrative of the 19th century which makes it seem factual all throughout reading it. The main objective that I analyzed in my thesis was whether Kurman and Hollo have used similar or different historic objects, expressions and words that pertain to the 19th century compared to *Keisri hull* and subsequently observing the images that they create different from or similar to *Keisri hull*.

I found that Hollo used both foreignization and domestication, whereas Kurman used foreignization in one example and generally domesticated the words that were under observation which offers a more comprehensible image to the reader. Hollo's translational choices present more authenticity regarding the historical context of *Keisri hull* than Kurman's translation. We could argue that Kurman translated most historic and cultural words into words that conform better with the understandings and cultural knowledge of the English-speaking readership, such as seen with the example of *nastoyka – brandy*.

Both translators illustrated translational choices that generally conform better to an English-speaking culture, meaning that they used choices which deem more comprehensible and familiar to the English-speaking reader. Overall, we could argue on the basis of my analysis that both authors translated the source text into a text that is more neutral in terms of culture-specific vocabulary. The thesis thus highlights two different images created – the historical-fictional image of *Keisri hull*, in which Kross uses many words that could be

associated with the 19th century, but are, for example, considered archaic in the 21st century. The cultural and historical markers under observation could indeed be considered specific as their purpose was supposedly to make the historic setting created more authentic to the reader via culture-specific and historic markers. The second image is created by the two translators – a generally domesticated image of the 19th century which leaves the impression of it being utterly fictional; an image which at times does not portray the culture-specific and historical markers that are present in *Keisri hull*, thus excluding at times the authentic and historical ambience of the entire English-translated novel.

Some translational problems were revealed in the analysis of the two translations, based on Peter Newmark *A Textbook of Translation*. The main translation problem that occurred was Newmark's cultural 'gap' which was especially highlighted when analyzing culture-specific items such as the *nastoika*. The cultural 'gap' was prominent because it showed that the Estonian and English-speaking cultures are different in history and items that can be regarded as culture-specific in the Estonian culture could have no equivalent or sometimes even no meaning in the target language and culture. The problem was generally solved by using the descriptive or functional equivalent in translation.

Furthermore, ambiguity can also be regarded as a translational problem that was seen in the example of the translation of the *kurgutaud* disease. Ambiguity is highlighted by the fact that if the disease carries a concrete meaning in the society of 19th century of Livonia, then it is subject to many other interpretations in TH and TK. Overall, the main translational problems that were highlighted in TH and TK was the cultural distance between the source and target language. The analysis showed that culture-specific markers pertaining to the 19th century Estonian history and culture can indeed be complex to translate because those markers can possibly only be associated with the 19th century history.

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RESÜMEE

TARTU ÜLIKOOL
ANGLISTIKA OSAKOND

Helen Kahur

Two translations of Jaan Kross' *Keisri hull*: comparison of markers pertaining to the fictional world creation / Jaan Krossi "Keisri hullu" kaks ingliskeelset tõlget: fiktsionaalse maailma loomiseks kasutatud markerite võrdlus mõlemas tõlkes

Bakalaureusetöö

2019

Lehekülgede arv: 35

Annotatsioon:

Käesoleva bakalaureusetöö põhieesmärk oli uurida ning analüüsida kahe Jaan Krossi "Keisri hullus" kasutatavate kultuurispetsiifiliste sõnade, esemete, väljendite ning muude kultuuriga seonduvate markerite tõlkimine kahes ingliskeelses tõlkes, et uurida kuidas ja kas nende tõlkevalikud kultuurispetsiifilistele sõnadele loovad teistsuguse fiktsionaalse maailma kui seda on "Keisri hullus".

Töö koosneb sissejuhatausest, teoreetilisest peatükist, mis annab ülevaate Krossi kui ajalooromaanide kirjaniku kirjutamisstiilist, tema kirjutiste tõlkimisest ning "Keisri hullu" romaanist. Teine peatükk sisaldab empiirilist tõlkeanalüüsi väljavalitud sõnade kohta, mis on jagatud erinevatesse kategooriatesse, mis esindavad kultuurispetsiifilisi sõnu ning esemeid. Iga näite kohta on toodud põhjalik diskussioon ning mõlema tõlkija tõlkevalikute võrdluses, toetudes erinevatele kirjandusteadlaste, ning -teoreetikute arvamustele. Bakalaureusetöö võtab kokku kokkuvõtte, mis selgitab analüüsi käigus jõutud tulemusteni. Bakalaureusetöö empiirilisest analüüsist selgub, et mõlemad tõlkijad on enamasti tõlkinud kultuurispetsiifilisi esemeid kasutades kodustamismeetodit, kus enamus väljavalitud sõnu on tõlgitud sihtteksti keeled paremini kohanduvateks sõnadeks. Sellest omakorda jõudis autor järelduseni, et mõlema tõlkija poolt loodud kuvand Jaan Krossi "Keisri hullust" ning selle ajaloost on mõneti teise alatooniga kui originaaltekst.

Märksõnad:

Näiteks: Jaan Kross, inglise kirjandus, kultuuriajaloo spetsiifilised markerid tõlketekstis, 19. sajand, tõlkeanalüüs

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Kinnitan, et olen koostanud käesoleva bakalaureusetöö ise ning toonud korrektselt välja teiste autorite panuse. Töö on koostatud lähtudes Tartu Ülikooli maailma keelte ja kultuuride kolledži anglistika osakonna bakalaureusetöö nõuetest ning on kooskõlas heade akadeemiliste tavadega.

Helen Kahur

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Lõputöö on lubatud kaitsmisele.

Katiliina Gielen

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