

# TRANSLATORS' TOOLS: LATVIAN AND LITHUANIAN BILINGUAL LEXICOGRAPHICAL TRADITION COMPARED

ANDREJS VEISBERGS

*University of Latvia  
Latvia  
anveis@lanet.lv*

Translation needs tools, the oldest and most widespread of which are (bilingual) dictionaries. In the absence of the necessary language pair dictionary, translators seek advice in foreign language dictionaries. Translators have frequently been the authors of dictionaries themselves. Latvian and Lithuanian nations and languages, though kindred, have had a rather different history. Both historically and politically, developments in Latvian have been more parallel to Estonian than Lithuanian as both fell under German and Lutheran influence while Lithuanian had a Polish-bound Catholic history. Yet the development of their writing, translation and lexicography has followed a remarkably similar process and testifies to the common space of knowledge (*Wissensraum*). As with their *lexicography*, their bilingual dictionaries grew out of a connection between *translation* and religion. Both countries underwent a national awakening/awareness in the 19th century that led to a greater variety of translations and dictionaries. Notably, monolingual Latvian and Lithuanian dictionaries appeared only in the 20th century, testifying to the importance of bilingual lexicography in ensuring language contact. Bilingual dictionaries have dominated the lexicography scene of Latvia and Lithuania from the start until the present day. The twentieth century, with its expanding translation needs, produced an even greater variety of translations and bilingual dictionaries in both countries.

## 1. TRANSLATION AND LEXICOGRAPHY

Language is the most distinctive feature of culture (Nida 2001, 13). Language, apart from its daily use (which in Saussurian terms is in fact speech) can be seen in its pure form in dictionaries, grammars and corpora. Dictionaries are linguistic tools, but also 'cultural objects, integrated as such into a culture: they bear witness to a civilization' (Dubois 1971, 8). They reflect language and culture, but they also form the current framework for language norms, use and possibilities. In a multilingual environment (both Latvian and Lithuanian environments have been such) translators are to a large extent the main developers of the language, translation being the medium through which new notions and words enter the language, both expanding its potential and ensuring

its development. As can be seen further, in the early stages translators/writers were often also lexicographers, e.g. Sirvydas in Lithuania, and Stender in Latvia. Translation and lexicography thus have two aspects in common (apart from languages). Translation is the process by which lexical equivalents are codified in bilingual dictionaries. And in the process of translation reference needs (factual and linguistic) arise which the translator attempts to meet *inter alia* by consulting dictionaries (Hartmann 1998, 146). Besides, as Baltic translation started with religious texts, the appropriate method was a close, literal, formal transposition of God's Word. This meant that equivalents (which dictionaries tend to offer) were sought and maintained. The tradition of faithful rendition (Nida's (1964) formal equivalence, Newmark's (1981) semantic translation), however, survived for centuries and was the main strategy in 'serious translations' as distinct from localizations.

## 2. LATVIAN DICTIONARIES AND TRANSLATION SCENE

### *2.1. Early translations and dictionaries*

It is usual to date Latvian lexicography from 1638 when the country's first dictionary was published. Latvians at that time were a peasant people and the official cultural sphere was fully in the hands of non-Latvian governors, the German clergy and landowners. This state of affairs had lasted for about 400 years, starting from when the territory came under the German crusaders and bishops in the 12th century. The dominant powers changed (and would continue to change) in periodic upheavals—Danes, Poles, Swedes, Russians came and went, although their rule hardly affected the Latvian language as their sole interest in the country was material and geopolitical. The German nobility retained its position of power until the end of the 19th century.

The first dictionary was preceded by the first books—*Catholic Catechism*, published in Vilnius in 1585 and Luther's *Small Catechism*, published in Königsberg in 1587. These were followed a century later by the *New Testament* in 1685 and the *Old Testament* in 1689, testifying to the ideology and ideas of the Reformation (in competition with Catholic ideology). The first translations into Latvian were very literal/word-for-word translations retaining German, Latin or Polish constructions. This seems partly because of the amateur character of the translators, partly because of the genre (God's words are to be taken literally), and partly because of the poor lexicographical resources.

The translation of the Bible (1689), which was carried out by Glueck (with one assistant), is viewed today as remarkable, taking into account the shortage of notions and words, scarcity of previous translation samples and the fact that Glueck's knowledge of Latvian (as a foreign language) was far from perfect.

Thus the first dictionary came before the translation of the Bible. In the beginning the quality of Latvian used by the German clergy was not high—Mancelius tells a story

that after a sermon a Latvian commented, 'Who knows what that German cat is saying' (a wordplay on *kaķis* ('cat') and *katķisms* ('catechism')). Therefore it was with the aim of improving the link between the church and the peasant nation, between the German-speaking clergy and the Latvian-speaking people, that the first dictionaries were created. They were used by the clergy to acquire a more or less decent Latvian that the peasants could understand, as well as to improve the quality of religious translations. One can see elements of colonial or missionary language field work in the early dictionaries.

The first dictionary<sup>1</sup> (Mancelius 1638) had three parts—a German-Latvian book, containing about 6,000–7,000 words, often with several Latvian synonyms provided for the German word. The second part was a thematic lexicon containing about 4,000 somewhat random items of 51 topics (German-Latvian). Though this part seems to be hastily put together, many of these words and expressions are not in the first part. The third part—*Phraseologica Lettica*—consisted of 10 parallel conversation pattern chapters (Mancelius 1638). This division of the macrostructure is noteworthy because it tended to be repeated in some later dictionaries. It is also notable that the dictionary preceded grammars.

The other two published dictionaries from the 17th century were multilingual, namely, Polish-Latin-Latvian (Elger 1683) and German-Latin-Polish-Latvian (supposedly, Dressel 1688). Elger's dictionary is worth noting mainly because it created an early link between Latvian and Lithuanian lexicography—it was in fact based on the third edition of Sirvydas' (1642) supplemented by the Latvian part—with 14,000 entries, and much larger than that of Mancelius. This does not seem to be a case of early plagiarism (or copying (Cormier 2010, 133) or piracy, which was rife until the 20th century (Landau 2001, 43)), but most likely a concerted attempt by the Catholic Church or Polish rulers to spread their influence. Published in Vilnius and representative of the Eastern (Polish dominated) variety of Latvian, it introduced the Latin script into Latvian. (It must be mentioned that Elger was also a prolific translator.) Parallel to this there were several Latvian grammars made in Latin.

The 18th and 19th centuries saw more dictionaries, including several unpublished manuscripts, made by non-Latvians, and gradually improved in scope and depth. Lange's (1777) dictionary had 15,000 entries in its German-Latvian part and 10,000 entries in the reverse part, also providing information on regional use, borrowings, Biblicisms and toponyms.

Stender's (1789) dictionary, though smaller in size, uses Latin script for Latvian words for the first time in the Germanic tradition. It also pursues the tradition of appendices containing toponyms, personal names, names of birds, fish, insects, plants, trees, fungi (which Latvians traditionally like and are knowledgeable about). Both

<sup>1</sup> Mancelius, the author of the first dictionary, who worked in Tartu University, wrote much in German and Latin as well as compiled a book of Latvian sermons.

dictionaries often retained the mistaken words of previous dictionaries: there were still many German elements in their Latvian grammar, collocation patterns and phrases that are not characteristic of Latvian—and that must have already existed in the language (Zemzare 1961).

Stender was a rationalist, enlightener and educator as well as the greatest authority of the time on issues of the Latvian language. Apart from the dictionary, Stender was the author of numerous translations, localizations and original writings. He translated German poetry (1753), religious stories (1756) (from Huebner 1714), wrote Latvian grammars in the 1760s, translated fairytales and stories (1766/1789) (these were later retranslated into Estonian), songs 1774; 1785, wrote ABCs, localized Aesop's, Phaedrus' and La Fontain's fables, the German enlightener's C. F. Gellert's writings, many of which actually entered Latvian folklore. Stender also wrote/localized a huge and impressive popular, 'peasants' encyclopedia' *Augsta gudrības grāmata* ['High Knowledge Book'] (Stender 1774; second edition 1796, last 1988), which was perhaps a creative localization of J. K. Gottsched's *Erste Gruende der gesammten Weltsweisheit* (1734). 1774 saw another localization of Stender's *Svētās gudrības grāmata* ['The Book of Sacred Knowledge'] that was based on the Swiss theologian J. K. Lavater's, *Aussichten in der Ewigkeit* (1768). Thus his activities can be viewed as symbiotic—translating enlightening information in a rationalist and didactic ideology and in parallel expanding the Latvian lexis. The variety of nature of Stender's work can be viewed as an early example of the gradual cline between the 'translation language' and the 'real' authentic language (Veisbergs 2009). A similar cline can also be seen as regards the text/contents—it is almost impossible to state whether many of these works are translations, localizations or original texts (see Chesterman 1996) on the borders of the notion of translation). Moreover, the author/translator is to some extent the creator not only of the concrete translation text, but also of the Latvian language as such.

The early dictionaries attracted some interest outside Latvia. K. F. Temler (1772) in Denmark produced a first comparative multilingual dictionary (Latvian-Lithuanian-German-English-Latin-Greek-Slavic) testifying to the early interest in Baltic roots.

The end of the 18th century saw a few journal type publications (e.g. *Latviska Gadda Grahmata* 1797, 1798) as well as various localized translations of morality tales and plays (e.g. Stender's translation/localization in 1790 of the Danish-Norwegian writer Ludwig Holberg's *Jeppe pa bjerget*, which under the name of 'Žūpu Bērtulis' became a hit for many decades) as well as short tales or stories. There was a spread of secular information concerning agriculture, gardening, medicine, and cooking. Most of these were translations, adaptations and compilations. Translators often found that there was no word in the target language (Latvian) for a notion expressed in the source language—the linguistic lacunae (Schroeder 1995, 10) had to be filled in with either a loan word or neologism. While in the religious texts this mainly concerned specific

religious items or occasional unknown cultural items (*lion, olive, camel*), as the scope of translation increased, so did the size of the lexis being created or borrowed.

Until the mid-19th century, Latvian translation was dominated by religious texts, calendars (since 1757), practical advice on economic aspects of peasant life, occasional medical (periodical *Latviešu ārste* ['The Latvian Doctor'] (1768–69) and educational texts on geography, history, etc. The fiction of the period was mostly comprised of local sentimental stories, songs and simple poetry aimed at common people. Practically all texts had German sources, even when the original was in a different language. Thus 1824 saw the publication of *Robinsons Krūziņš*, a translation by Girgensons of the extremely popular German adaptation of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) by Joachim Campe, *Robinson der Juengere* (1779). The translation was actually done earlier, as Girgensons died in 1814 (Cf. Robinson in Lithuanian).

The abolition of serfdom in the Baltic provinces in the first decades of the 19th century (earlier than in other parts of the Russian empire (1861)) provided the impetus for rapid economic and social development, which, however, did not touch Lithuania or the Eastern part of Latvia known as Latgale. The 1820s saw the first appearance of regular newspapers and magazines—in 1822 the first Latvian newspaper, *Latviešu avīzes* ['The Latvian Newspaper'], in 1828 *Magazin*, a German Latvian periodical of papers on literature and language were published. In the 19th century Latvian newspapers and magazines played an important role in the development of a national literature, and there were frequent discussions of linguistic issues and practical advice for the translation or composition of texts (Scholz 1990). More sophisticated literature, mostly poetry appeared: Schiller's *Ode to Joy* (1804), *The Robbers* (1818), which were followed by translations of Heine, Goethe, Lessing, Sudermann, and Krilov's fables (1847). Many song texts were adapted from German as the practice of choir singing spread.

Early translations from Latvian mainly focused on *dainas* (folksongs): J. G. Herder *Volkslieder* (1779), *Stimmen den Voelker in Liedern* (1807), and the *Foreign Quarterly* carried *dainas* translations (including a review of them in August 1807). Herder, who resided in Riga from 1764–1769, is notable not only for his translations, but also for the deep impact on Neolatvians, who adhered to his idea of the recovery of national individuality and political identity through the rediscovery of folklore. Another German enlightener worthy of mention is Merkel, whose *Latvians* (1797) described in detail the position of the semi-serf Latvian population, their character traits and elements of their culture. Another of his contributions, *Wannem Ymanta* (Merkel 1802), a semi reworked Latvian tale of the glorious past, was also published for the German audience.

Thus the historical pattern of Latvian lexicography is explicitly bilingual/multilingual (Veisbergs 2000). As such it lasted for more than 300 years. Moreover, for the first 200 years the dictionaries were written by German speakers and mainly aimed at German speakers. Numerous notions, relevant to the clergy but unknown to

Latvians, were introduced. Some of these translation loans look strange today, yet many were assimilated and have become part and parcel of modern Latvian even though they retain traditional German structures (e.g. compounds can hardly be found in traditional folk Latvian texts—most are German loans). Nevertheless, this gradually led to two variants of Latvian. Peasants spoke one language at home and another when communicating with the non-Latvian governors in official spheres, such as the court, the church, administrative spheres, and the manor. Only the second variant of the language was written. This was why two parallel languages or two variants of one language coexisted—the so-called Old Written Latvian and the spoken folk language. The dictionaries predominantly reflected the first.

## ***2.2. National Awakening and Neo-Latvians***

The situation began to change in the middle of the 19th century when the so-called Latvian national awakening started, led by Neo-Latvians (nationally aware Latvians who refused to be Germanized, as former well-to-do and educated people tended to do). In parallel with the standard stock of sentimental popular German stories, the Neo-Latvians glorified the national past through its folklore. This sparked an interest in other national folklores and led to the translation of Russian, German, and Estonian folktales. Inspired by Macpherson's *Ossian's songs* (a forged ancient Scottish epic) and simultaneously by the Estonian epic *Kalevipoeg*, Pumpurs compiled/wrote the Latvian epic, *Lāčplēsis* ['Bearslayer'] on the basis of various Latvian folksongs and myths.

The other trend focused on the future of the nation and the language that should service it—much scientific and educative literature had to be created. A huge growth in translation started, and the new writers-cum-translators turned to serious literature in order to prove that anything could be expressed in Latvian. Neo-Latvians also borrowed ideas from Romanticism and put them into their own original practice (Pumpurs national epic *Lāčplēsis*) as well as translated Romantic and classical works, e.g. fragments of *Nibelungenlied* (1888) and *Odissey* in the 1890s. After Romanticism came Realism (mainly German-influenced) with much of the original literature describing rural Latvian life, such as Kaudzītes' renowned realist novel, *Mērnieku laiki* ['Surveyor's Times'].

Gradually the scope of translations widened and the quality improved, so that in the last two decades of the 19th century satisfactory translations of long prose texts were widespread. One could say that around the turn of the 20th century, the Latvian literary scene had reached the level of contemporary European literature as it now followed and was part of Western trends. Although no organized groups of symbolist, expressionist or modernist writers were established, individual authors were in tune with contemporary ideas. Translations were naturally the source of these ideas and leanings. The greatest Latvian poet and playwright, Rainis, translated major works

by Goethe—*Faustus* (1897/8) (done in prison!), *Prometheus* and *Iphigenia auf Tauris*, Schiller's *Maria Stuart*, *Wilhelm Tell*, *Robbers*, Byron's *Cain*, and Shakespeare's *King Lear* and *Anthony and Cleopatra*. His literary career actually started in the late 80s with translations of Pushkin, Ibsen, Ovid, Burns, etc. He wrote various descriptions of foreign writers, published these and other translations of Maupassant, Dostoyevski, Chekhov, Sudermann in the progressive newspaper *Dienas lapa* where he was editor from 1891–1895. The paper also wrote widely on various trends in Western literature. *Faustus* was hailed as a remarkable sample of Modern Latvian. The beginning of the 20th century saw more translations from French. The influence of the original language pattern facilitated a further break from the stranglehold of Germanic influence. Thus when Rainis translated Alexandre Dumas' *The Count of Monte Cristo*, he Latvianized it in a very liberal way by cutting out less interesting passages in keeping with the French practice. This could be viewed as a major transition from fidelity and literalness to 'target orientation', with a freer and more dynamic use of language. (Unless one views the early localizations as such.)

Translations of the new Latvian literature into other languages started mainly with German and Russian (Blaumanis; Kaudzītes), and Estonian (Blaumanis 1890, 1892).

Meanwhile the Germanic element (mainly direct loans) in the language was viewed as alien and as something to be resisted. Most dictionaries from the second half of the 19th century were produced by Latvian speakers (e.g. Valdemars 1872, a *Russian-Latvian-German dictionary* with 50,000 entries) and accordingly tended to reflect the spoken folk language more. These dictionaries were specifically aimed at Latvians. The national, social and professional discord between the German (Ulmann 1872) and Latvian editors (Valdemars using the Latin script) and their dictionaries was generally beneficial, bringing together Old Latvian and New Latvian and improving the end product. The last serious work of Old Latvian, Ulmann's *Lettsches Woerterbuch* (1872) (Latvian-German, 20,000 words), was aimed at German readers and had an exhaustive number of entries. It used Latin script for Latvian, included many dialect words, with some etymological elements, phrasal examples, avoided some Germanisms (the letters *f*, *h*) and all in all was a rather descriptive and traditional dictionary (though some Latvians were among its compilers, such as Neikens). Valdemārs was innovative in many ways. His dictionary had a team of compilers who coined and introduced many neologisms, not only for new notions but also to substitute many German loans. German was used mainly to explain these Latvian neologisms. In the 2nd edition (1890), the German part was dropped as many neologisms had taken root. The dictionary had two appendices dedicated to proper names. In 1879 a reversed dictionary—Latvian-Russian-German was produced with 13,000 Latvian entries.

Other types of dictionaries started to appear, testifying to the growth of language contacts. The development of the national language, together with the spread of

newspapers and international contacts created a need for books of foreign words (Mekons 1878 (2,000 entries), Dravnieks 1886 (5,000 entries)). The opening of the wider world and the wish to demonstrate the national intellectual and linguistic potential of Latvia, as well as the Russification of schools, spelled a need for encyclopedias. Encyclopedias (according to the German pattern called *Konversation* dictionaries) became popular at the end of the 19th century, e.g. *Dravnieka Konversācijas vārdnīca* (1891–1898, unfinished), and another in 1906–1921, both in the Gothic script. This culminated in the monumental *Latviešu Konversācijas vārdnīca* (17 vol., 1927–1938, in Latin script) still unsurpassed, though the last 2–3 volumes were not published due to Soviet occupation in 1940. In all of these, despite the political anti-German drive, one can see the influence and pattern of German lexicographic ideas of the time, namely Brockhaus dictionaries with their strong emphasis on personalities (differing from *Encyclopedia Britannica* with its more subject-oriented approach).

The beginning of the 20th century saw extensive activity by the most prolific Latvian lexicographer, Dravnieks, who created the modern desktop German-Latvian, Russian-Latvian, English-Latvian and Latvian-Russian bilingual desktop dictionaries used by learners and translators with the Latvian public as their target audience.

Towards the end of the 19th century, the two language variants merged and one could speak of Standard Modern Latvian. However, the struggle against German, and later Russian dominance, and their influence over the language also transferred linguistic purism into the making of these dictionaries (excluding existing words and including as yet non-existent ones). The historical emphasis on bilingual dictionaries, which is characteristic of the Latvian lexicographic tradition, has led to a situation where the term *dictionary*, for the average Latvian, is mostly associated with a bilingual dictionary. This is typical of small nations where the main purpose of a dictionary is as an aid to facilitating contact with other cultures. For purely functional reasons, the dictionaries with the main contact languages were the first to be compiled and have remained the most-used. For example, a decent Latvian-Estonian dictionary had to wait until 1967 to be written, despite the geographical and historical proximity of the two nations. Similarly, a Latvian-Swedish dictionary only appeared in Latvia in the 1990s.

The other tradition was more of an intralinguistic character—that of purifying, improving and standardizing the language only really started in the mid-19th century. Paradoxically, the German-compiled dictionaries were in some way (registering and recording) more descriptive than prescriptive (inventing new terms for non-existent notions and purging existing words). This tradition affected mostly monolingual explanatory dictionaries, spelling dictionaries (though spelling is so close to pronunciation that there seems to be little sense in them) and of course dictionaries of foreign words where Latvian with its transcription principle (foreign words are respelled in Latvian according to their supposed pronunciation in the original) offers a great playfield for regular linguistic change, innovation and restructuring.



### 2.3. *The iconic dictionary*

The bilingual emphasis finds its expression even in the iconic *Latvian Dictionary*. The Latvian project was started by Muehlenbach (1853–1916), a notable and well-known linguist of the time in the early 1880s. Incidentally, Muehlenbach had tried his hand at translating Homer's *Odyssey* and had attacked Rainis' translation of *Faustus* for being too free in the use of language material and of deviating from the standard norms for the sake of euphony.

In the beginning he focused on supplementing Ulmann's 1872 *Latvian-German Dictionary* (20,000 words, with some etymological elements). As a result, the dictionary was designed as a bilingual translation book with explanations in German and examples in Latvian. The First World War broke out and Muehlenbach died in 1916. On returning to Latvia after the war, Endzelīns, who was by then the undisputed number one in Latvian linguistics, was entrusted with finishing the dictionary and received the manuscripts. The public was involved—a rather novel phenomenon, never to be repeated in Latvian lexicography. Both Muehlenbach and Endzelīns (to an even larger extent) had a negative attitude toward borrowings (*rife* in Latvian). Older ones were included, but the more modern ones (as well as most neologisms) were purged. As early as 1911, Endzelīns had advised Muehlenbach that the dictionary should have only real Latvian *goods* (*'īsta latviešu manta'*). As a result, the language of Latvian *dainas* (folk songs), fairy tales and proverbs (etc.) form the backbone of the dictionary. Although the early texts are represented, there is a multitude of local and dialect words. However, there are also many citations from literature, rare local words and neologisms coined by writers. Translations were avoided in the corpus. Doubtful neologisms considered worthy of including were supplied with an asterisk.

The dictionary *Muehlenbacha Latviešu valodas vārdnīca* was published between 1923 and 1932 (Muehlenbacha 1923–1932) in folios, then in four big volumes (77,175 entries). The corpus was extended through the addition of new items and texts. Together with E. Hauzenberga, Endzelīns compiled two extra volumes of supplements and corrections, published from 1934 to 1946 (55,543 entries) (Endzelīns 1934–1946). Thus altogether the dictionary contained 132,718 entries and covered 5,480 pages (the figure was certified only after it was digitalized (A.V.)). Sixty years were spent on this dictionary which fortunately escaped the Soviet ideological influence, unlike the iconic Lithuanian dictionary (see below). Begun as a one-man work, it turned into a three-person work with some public support. The dictionary was published in the new spelling (as Latvia underwent an extended orthography reform from Gothic script to Latin (1908–1937). Translations though mostly kept the Gothic script until the 1920s; newspapers only changed their script at the very end of the transition.

The purpose of the dictionary can partly be seen in its double title: in Latvian it says 'Dictionary of the Latvian language'; in German, 'Lettisch-Deutsches Woerterbuch'.

It seems that the authors were actually killing three birds with one dictionary. They compiled the most comprehensive stock of Latvian of the time, they used German for explanations, so one could use it as a bilingual dictionary (mostly for non-Latvians), and they put Latvian in the framework of comparative linguistics internationally. As such it was reviewed and acclaimed by A. Meillet, M. Niedermann, R. Trautmann, K. Būga and other celebrities of Indo-European comparative studies and lexicographers. It had certainly achieved its external goal. At home it became and remains a monument of ‘correct/good’ (normative) Latvian. Of course, one can see a certain irony in the fact that this iconic Latvian work is mostly composed in German, including the Germanized Latvian place-names in citations.

The Dictionary mostly reflected the spoken language of the end of the 19th century, carefully purged of undesirable elements, internationalisms, and various borrowings. It has a wealth of dialect variants and does not shun rude words, yet on the issue of borrowings it is clearly prescriptive in the sense that loans are mostly omitted (not a single word containing *f* or *h*), despite such frequently used and irreplaceable everyday words as *ha*, *fui*, *fakts*, *filma*, *forma*, *hallo*, *hanza*. Older and essential loans (e.g. *un* from German *und*, *jā* from German *Ja*) are included. The purpose of this defensive stand is clear as it reflects the traditional *Weltanschauung* of the Latvians. Even in independent Latvia, the linguistic pressure from the two major contact languages (both with considerable minorities) was seen as dangerous and polluting. In a way it worked against the dominating trend of the time—innovations in language via translations.

The normative and purifying aims of dictionary compilation outlived Endzelīns. So did the general idea that a dictionary is a bilingual dictionary. Even as late as the 1970s when the first fully monolingual Latvian dictionaries were compiled—the *Latviešu literārās valodas vārdnīca* (1972–1997) in 8 volumes (80,000 entries) and a desktop *Latviešu valodas vārdnīca* (1987) (25,000 entries)—their necessity was explained by laying emphasis on the normative and prescriptive function of such dictionaries. Both had large editorial boards, and in keeping with the general trend (Béjoint 2010, 221) carried no associations with particular lexicographers or linguists.

The 20s of the 20th century saw an enormous growth in translations and a great interest in Lithuanian (belated, because of the ban), Estonian and Scandinavian literatures. Pan-Baltic cooperation, partly supported by the respective governments, created a large turnover of these translations. The 20s also saw new translations from Eastern languages—Chinese, Arabic, Persian, Japanese, and Indian. Though there were no dictionaries of these language pairs, translations were done by individual experts such as P. Šmits, who translated Chinese tales.

As the scope of translation grew, many translations were done not by translators but by distinguished Latvian writers: Rainis translated Byron’s *Cain* and *Calderone*, Virza translated French and Russian symbolist poetry as well as Victor Hugo’s *Les Misérables*

and *Notre-Dame de Paris*, Andrejs Upīts translated Gogol, Krilov and Tolstoy from Russian as well as Flaubert, France, Heine, Wilde, Heinrich Mann, and others. Aspazija translated Sienkewicz's *Quo Vadis?* (1899), Jaunsudrabiņš did Hamsun, Plūdons did Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1909), Akuraters did Ibsen's *Brand*, *Peer Gynt*, O. Wilde's *Salome* (1912), etc. It seems they used translation to hone their literary skills, borrow ideas and, of course, earn a little extra money.

During the interwar period Latvian literature was frequently translated—folktales were published in Kaunas, Prague, Paris, Chicago, Germany, and Russia. In the 1920s Rainis' works were translated into many languages, including Russian, German, English, and Czech.

The soviet period, especially after Stalin's death, saw many quality translations of various classics, as well as extensive translations from many hitherto lesser known languages, although Russian was frequently used as an intermediary language. Latvian literature was in turn extensively translated into Russian, while many translations were made into the other languages of the USSR.

At the same time bilingual dictionaries spread in volume and variety. Thus between 1900 and 1966, 106 bilingual dictionaries were published (20 Latvian-German, 18 Latvian-Russian, 17 Latvian-English, 28 spelling and 19 dictionaries of Foreign words. It was the bilingual dictionaries that broke the prescriptive tradition in the 90s of the 20th century (e.g. the most frequent Latvian greeting form since the mid-20th century, *čau*, appeared in a dictionary (*Latvian-English Dictionary*) first in 1997). The postmodern mix of styles, freedom of internet chats, impact of English (Veisbergs 2007), and general blurring of linguistic barriers has in many ways sharpened the feeling that language is out of hand. Even the Latvian corpus issue (there is an initial corpus of a few million words) has been delayed to some extent by the unwillingness of many linguists to see the real state of the language. The second half of the 20th century saw the production of bilingual dictionaries that gradually reached beyond the standard Latvian combinations—German, Russian and English. Since the collapse of the Soviet system, bilingual dictionaries have retained their dominant position, although rarer languages like Danish, Norwegian, Japanese, Chinese, etc. have been added.

### 3. LITHUANIAN DICTIONARIES AND TRANSLATION SCENE

#### ***3.1. Early translations and dictionaries***

The early history of Lithuanian differs from that of Latvian. Most of the Lithuanian territory never came under full German dominance, but after the early (12th and 14–15th century) adoption of Christianity it was part of a powerful union with Poland that lasted until the end of the 18th century when it was absorbed by Russia. Though Lithuania did not come under the dominance of German like Latvia (one can see a

similar dominance of Polish in Lithuania), German speakers in East Prussia had a considerable impact on Lithuanian publishing. Lithuania Minor (East Prussia) had many Lithuanian speakers and it was here that Protestant-minded people published many of the initial religious texts. The first book in Lithuanian was Luther's *Small Catechism* (*Catechismus a Prasty Szadei*), published in Königsberg (1547)—likely a translation from Polish by Mažvydas, as it contains a multitude of Slavisms, albeit amazingly done by a Protestant-leaning pastor.<sup>2</sup>

*The Bible* was translated by Bretkūnas/Bretke between 1579 and 1590 but was not published. *The New Testament* was published in 1701 and the whole of *the Bible* in 1735 in Gothic script in Königsberg again. In 1706 the translation of Aesop's *Fables*, under the German title *Die Fabeln Aesopi* in Lithuania Minor, was accomplished.

Within this period there are other translations of religious literature, Catholic religious texts, hymns, and gospels, such as *Postilė* (1591) by Bretkūnas (sermons, partially original work), and *Postilla Catholicka* (1599) by Daukša (632 pages of translation from Polish with an introduction in Polish). Because the first Old Lithuanian texts were translated/composed by Lithuanians, the linguistic quality of these texts is better than that of Old Latvian texts.

As was the case with Latvian, early Lithuanian dictionaries were compiled for the practical needs of the German protestant pastors in Lithuania Minor to enable them to communicate with the Lithuanian peasant population of the region. In Lithuania proper they were needed by Catholic priests working in Jesuit schools who did not know the Lithuanian language. Yet these were compiled by native Lithuanians, so they tended to reflect the language better than the German authors in East Prussia (or Germans in Latvia). Thus 1620 or 1629 saw the first edition of the Polish-Latin-Lithuanian *Dictionarium Trium Linguarum* by Sirvydas. A single copy has survived with the initial pages missing, which is why the exact date of its first publication is not clear. The compiler used Polish, Latin and Greek dictionaries as sources and coined Lithuanian neologisms for the missing items. The dictionary saw five editions between 1629 and 1713. The first edition has about 8,000 entries and the third, published after Sirvydas's death, 14,000. Its material was extensively copied in later lexicographical works, so it must have been considered good and useful. It also seems to have served as a prototype for Elger's Latvian dictionary (Elger 1683).

In 1653 the first Lithuanian grammar—*Grammatica Litvanica* in Latin by Daniel Klein—was published in Königsberg. The following year a shorter variant in German followed. Again it should be noted that dictionaries preceded grammars. Like Latvians were bound to German (nobility) as the main contact language, Lithuanians were in close contact with Polish; educated Lithuanians tended to use Polish as the language

<sup>2</sup> Translation of *Catechism* into other neighbouring languages took place in following sequence: Estonian 1535, Finnish 1543, Prussian 1545, Latvian 1585.

of culture. Russian and Latin were also used in legal and political spheres. This delayed the development of Lithuanian as a literary language. Translation was mostly done from Polish and Latin, e.g. church hymns and psalms *Giesmēs*.

The 18th century also saw secular texts, followed by the first native writing—Donelaitis *Metai* (published by Rēza (Rheza) 1818) but written in the 1760s and certainly affected by the Greek poet Hesiod and Greek bucolic poetry of Theocritus. Incidentally fragments of *Metai* were translated into Latvian by Watson from Rheza's translation and published in Calendar (*Latviešu kalendāra pielikums*) appendices in 1822/23. Rheza's collection was later translated into Polish and Czech (1825).

Haack's *Vocabularium Lithvanico-Germanicum et Germanico-Lithvanicum* (1730) is viewed as a comparatively poor work, though it boasted of having all the words of the Bible which explains its main goal. Ruhig's (Ruigys's) *Deutsch-Littauisches Lexicon* (1747) was a more systematic book and in addition to religious terms had many folk words. It is symptomatic that the Lithuanian-German part had 192 pages while the German-Lithuanian part had 424 pages. This tendency of the foreign language-Lithuanian part to be larger than the other half did not alter much after this. Ruhig's *Lexicon* was further improved by Milkus (1800) and published as the *Littauisch-Deutsches und Deutsch-Littauisches Woerterbuch*.

From the end of the 18th century Lithuania was incorporated into the Russian Empire (in Prussia Lithuanian schools were closed and the population became increasingly Germanized). Contrary to the situation in Latvia, newspapers played little role in the 19th century. In the first half of the century this was because cultured Lithuanians were bilingual and could make use of the Polish newspapers; in the second half of the century the czarist prohibition against Lithuanian publications in the Latin alphabet kept newspapers from being published there. Furthermore, the level of education of the general population was lower than in Estonia and Latvia at the turn of the century (Scholz 1990, 215). The Prussian Lithuanian newspapers of this period had a purely provincial character and could not further Lithuanian culture (Scholz 1990, 326; 327). The newspapers published in foreign countries, such as the monthly *Aušra* (1883), could only partially fill this need, since their importation was illegal. As in Latvia, calendars with various literary works became popular. It was only at the turn of the century that a monthly *Varpas* (under Kudirka) started the Lithuanian national awakening.

Books that were printed abroad and illegally brought into the country mainly focused on preserving the Lithuanian language; songs and translations were neither numerous nor very important. However, there are interesting exceptions—in 1846 a localization of Campe's *Robinson Crusoe* was made (though only published in 1984) in which the main hero not only obtained a Lithuanian name and origin—Rubinaitis Peliūzė—but also uttered patriotic Lithuanian sentiments.

More and better bilingual dictionaries were produced, reflecting the changing importance of the big contact languages. The 19th century saw an external interest in Lithuanian because of its archaic character and place within Indo-European studies. This is reflected in Nesselmann's (1851) *Lithuanian-German Dictionary*, which seriously expanded its folk language component. Nesselmann also translated *Litauische Volkslieder* into German in 1853.

The living Lithuanian folk language appeared first in a trilingual explanatory dictionary by Juška (1897) which, however, partly remained in a manuscript form (Juška died in 1880). The manuscript of the dictionary contained about 30,000 words and is a mirror of the Lithuanian spoken language of the second half of the 19th century, containing not only 'nice' words, but also vulgarisms and borrowings. The chief deficiency in the dictionary is the sometimes erroneous indication of the position of stress and the failure to establish vowel length. Juška had prepared several other manuscripts, as well as collecting Lithuanian songs for their translation into Polish, Russian and German.

### ***3.2. The National Awakening after the language ban***

The ban of Lithuanian (Latin script) in education and publishing from 1864 to 1904 seriously delayed the development of Modern Lithuanian in comparison with that of Latvian. Nationalism was maintained mainly by the church (Pistohlkors 1990, 24).

Lithuania did not have strong political aesthetic movements like Latvia, although the poets F. Kirša and B. Sruoga were typical representatives of symbolism. Books in Lithuanian were printed across the border in East Prussia and even the USA and brought into the country by book smugglers (3,320 books were published in the period). After the ban was lifted in 1904, printing moved mainly to Kaunas and Vilnius. Yet the ban meant that many necessary projects in Lithuanian were delayed. Thus an attempt to begin work on an encyclopedia in 1883 never received permission and could only be started after the First World War. The first volumes of the Lithuanian encyclopedia didn't appear until 1933 (*Lietuviškoji Enciklopedija*) and, as in Latvia, it was not finished due to the Soviet occupation (it only reached *J*). Yet Lithuanian emigres in the US accomplished a monumental 36-volume encyclopedia (LE 1953–1969) and a six-volume one in English (Encyclopedia 1970–1978).

The beginning of the 20th century saw a flourishing translation industry which was heavily influenced by European literature trends, among them also translations from Latvian of many plays by Blaumanis, Aspazija, and Ā. Alunāns. As Latvian literature was by this time quite developed, translations into Lithuanian from Latvian seriously exceeded the translations into Latvian from Lithuanian. The interwar period saw much publishing by various publishing houses. Like Latvian, Lithuanian also underwent a campaign of language purism, mostly directed against Polish, though also against Russian and German.

### 3.3. *The iconic dictionary—from multilingual to monolingual*

As a result of these historical conditions, the iconic work of Lithuanian lexicography could start only with Lithuanian independence after World War I, when Lithuanian became the official language of the country. It was clear that a major dictionary was needed to show the vitality and functionality of the native language. Unlike Latvian, this was (naturally) a monolingual project. It was started by Kazimieras Būga, a renowned Lithuanian linguist of the time. Besides literary vocabulary, Būga's dictionary comprised dialectal words, Old Lithuanian text words, proper nouns and borrowings. The latter were criticized as this was not in line with the purification of the Lithuanian language. Būga protested, insisting that a dictionary should be a mirror of the language and nobody is at fault if the image is not exactly what one wishes to see. Būga often provided definitions not only in Lithuanian, but also Polish, Russian, German, Latvian, Latin and Greek. He justified this by saying that he had no time to translate all the explanations and used the language of his source—thus it would have been a multilingual book.

After Būga's death in 1924 Juozas Balčikonis was appointed editor of the dictionary in 1930 (an amazing parallel with the Latvian project). Similarly to Muehlenbach, Balčikonis had tried his hand at translating a broad selection of authors—Aesop, Guy de Maupassant, Oscar Wilde, Hans Christian Andersen, Jules Verne. Together with Jonas Jablonskis, Balčikonis also became embroiled in the biggest controversy of the Lithuanian language (1924–1928) over the translation language of Kraševski's *Vytolio Rauda*. This had been done by Faustas Kirša and Jurgis Talmantas, who took the position that no serious deviations from the norm should be tolerated.

Having taken over the project, Balčikonis rejected proper names, word histories and explanations in foreign languages. Though in doubt about entering foreign words in general, those found in old texts or those that were frequently used were considered acceptable. Regionalisms and 'barbarisms' (unwelcome borrowings) were not included. Dated and inappropriate words were preceded by *x*. Being short of material, Balčikonis tried to involve the general public. This provided half a million slips, while his staff provided another half a million. Together with Būga's 600,000, this created a substantial database. It was only in 1941 that the first volume (A and B) of the *Lietuvių kalbos žodynas (Lithuanian Academic Dictionary)* was published (LKŽ 1941). However, the Soviet occupying powers did not allow its distribution, no doubt considering it too national and clerical—or in Soviet parlance *anti-Soviet*. The dictionary came into circulation under the Germans when they drove the Soviets out. Balčikonis also finished editing the second volume that appeared in 1947 (LE 1947) in two versions (the second purged by Soviet censors of the language of those Lithuanians who had fled to the West). Nevertheless, in 1949 the dictionary was criticized for its 'reactionary clerical phraseology' and after a lengthy period of discord and friction, the

third, politically correct, volume appeared in 1956 under a new editor, full of quotes from Marx, Lenin and Stalin (but without a reference to the latter, as the political climate had again changed). The first two volumes were re-edited and republished, according to new instructions (LKŽ 1968–1969). Apart from the ideological shifts, serious editorial changes were made in the 1950s as well. Balčikonis was criticized and subsequently resigned. Further editors did not profess clear personal views and editing became somewhat anonymous. In this form the dictionary dragged on under various editors, saw the collapse of the Soviet Union and was finished in 2002 (LKŽ 1941–2002) after spanning an entire century (possibly a world record). Finally there were 20 volumes (1968–2002) containing 22,000 pages, half a million headwords, and 5 million citations from 1547 to 2001. Desktop dictionaries were made in parallel with this project, the most modern being *Dabartinės lietuvių kalbos žodynas (Dictionary of Standard Lithuanian)* (DLKŽ 1973; 2002). A new *Dictionary of Standard Lithuanian* is being compiled for the general public which will be both descriptive and normative.

The soviet period, especially after Stalin's death, saw a huge development in translation and massive investment into Lithuanian language studies. Numerous specialized dictionaries were compiled. However, a typical Lithuanian dictionary is first and foremost a bilingual dictionary. English-Lithuanian dictionaries started as emigree products, but today there is a choice of bilingual Lithuanian dictionaries of traditional languages like English, German, Russian, Polish, French, Latvian, and new ones including Japanese, Italian, Spanish, and Latin. Numerous specialized dictionaries have been compiled, such as those focusing on verbal associations, curse words, nicknames, proper names, first names, place names, hydronyms, mistakes, reversal, dialects, spelling, punctuation, frequency and a multitude of terminological dictionaries. In general, the Lithuanian dictionary scene is vibrant and unexpectedly well-developed for a small (3.3 million population) nation and fully covers its translation needs.

## CONCLUSIONS

Latvian and Lithuanian lexicography are characterized by a similar early development (despite a different language contact situation). There is a clear dominance of bilingual dictionaries, a different scope and timescale of the major iconic projects and a purism of various types (xenophobic, anti-colloquial, and ideological). Bilingual dictionaries were first compiled to serve the needs of the clergy in the main contact language pairs and triples. While in Latvia this was predominantly a German-Latvian combination, in Lithuania it was Polish-Latin-Lithuanian (Catholic tradition) and German-Lithuanian (Protestant tradition) combinations. The German contribution should not be underestimated in the development of Lithuanian lexicography, although, compared to that of Latvian, it is less significant. Later, with the countries' incorporation into Russia,



Russian became the dominant language in the bilingual lexicography of both Latvian and Lithuanian. Lithuania's lexicographical development was seriously hindered by the language ban imposed by the *tsarist* authorities for 40 years.

While the Lithuanian translation scene up to the 20th century shows a greater variety of source languages (Polish, German, and Latin), the Latvian scene (predominantly German oriented) is more versatile in respect of the variety of texts and is much broader in scope—this to a large extent affected the composition of Latvian with its huge foreign element. A specific characteristic of the development of Lithuanian lexicography is the contribution of its American diaspora. As the translation scene underwent a huge explosion at the beginning of the 20th century, so did the bilingual dictionaries.

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## VERTĒJŪ ĪRANKIAI: LATVIŪ IR LIETUVIŪ KALBŪ DVIKALBĒS LEKSIKOGRAFIJOS TRADICIJA

ANDREJS VEISBERGS

Santrauka

Seniausias ir patikimiausias vertėjų darbo įrankis – dvikalbis žodynas. Ne kartą istorijoje vertėjai patys buvo ir dvikalbių žodynų kūrėjai. Straipsnyje aptariama Latvijos ir Lietuvos – dviejų kaimyninių valstybių žodynų kūrimo raida, jų skirtumai ir paralelės. Jame teigiama, kad Latvija politiniu ir religiniu požiūriu yra artimesnė Estijai (abi valstybės patyrė Vokietijos politinę įtaką ir protestantiškąją liuteronų bažnyčios tradiciją, o Lietuvos istorija neatskiriama nuo katalikiškosios Lenkijos), o kalbos raidos, ir ypač leksikografijos raidos, požiūriu yra artimesnė Lietuvai, t. y. šioje srityje latvių ir lietuvių paralelės daug ryškesnės. Atsiradusi dėl poreikio versti religinius, o vėliau ir pasaulietinės literatūros tekstus, latvių ir lietuvių kalbų leksikografija išgyveno tuos pačius istorinius etapus: pirmųjų dvikalbių žodynų XVII a., tautinio Atgimimo laikotarpį XIX a. ir Nepriklausomybės laikotarpį XX a. pradžioje. Per paskutiniuosius dvidešimt metų nepaprastai išaugus vertimo poreikiams atsirado ir labai daug naujų žodynų. Tarp jų dvikalbiai sudaro tik nedidelę dalį, bet vertėjams ir toliau jie yra svarbiausi.