

Literature and Independent Estonia

Interwar period



Siuru movement (1917)

This movement brought emotions and an erotic sincerity into poetry.

The central poets of *Siuru* were:

- Henrik Visnapuu (1890-1951)
- Marie Under (1883-1980), who is known in society as the 'Princess', was later in life nominated for the Nobel Prize of Literature on several occasions.
- August Gailit (1891-1960), was the incurable romantic

Group Siuru



Writers Union's

- The Estonian Writers' Union was set up in 1922
- The literary monthly *Looming* (Creation) first appeared in 1923 and is still, at the beginning of the 21st century, the main periodical of its sort in Estonia.
- The Cultural Endowment Fund started work in 1925, and is again the major provider of subsidies and bursaries in the arts in the present Republic of Estonia.



Literary work created in the interwar Republic of Estonia

- Anton Hansen Tammsaare's (1878-1940) 5-volume epic novel *Tõde ja Õigus* (Truth and Justice; 1926-1933).
 - This psychological Realist masterpiece depicts the development of Estonian society from the last quarter of 19th century until the 1920s. Each volume offers an in-depth analysis of one aspect of relations: with the land, God, society, the people. The last part of the series describes resignation and a return to rural values.
- In Tammsaare's last novel, *Põrgupõhja uus Vanapagan* (The New Devil of Põrgupõhja, 1939), an allegorical story based on folkloristic material, ordinary relationships are turned upside down.



A.H. TAMMSAARE

Literary work created in the interwar Republic of Estonia

- The prevailing tendency in prose writing was Realism.
- August Mälk (1900-1987) was another prominent prose writer, who described the life of coastal people.
- Karl Ristikivi (1912-1977) became Tammsaare's literary heir.
 - His first published novel *Tuli ja raud* (Fire and Iron, 1938)
 - his so-called Tallinn trilogy, *Õige mehe koda* (The Abode of a Just Man) in 1940
 - *Rohtaed*(The Garden) in 1942.



AUGUST MÄLK



KARL RISTIKIVI

Arbujad

- Literary scholar Ants Oras, brought together a number of poets in his anthology *Arbujad* (Soothsayers, 1938).
- “Our duty is to force the blind fury of elements into a slender stanza” - this image of poetry, written by the legendary Heiti Talvik (1904-1947) who was later arrested and died in Siberia, splendidly characterises the aspirations of form and content of all the six poets belonging to the anthology mentioned above.
- The *Arbujad* group, however, was not uniform and lacked a specific programme.
- It consisted of poets:
 - Betti Alver’s (1906-1989)
 - Uku Masing (1909-1985)
 - Bernard Kangro (1910-1994)



GROUP
ARBUJAD

Reference

- http://www.estonica.org/en/Culture/Literature/Literature_and_an_independent_Estonia/#%20
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THANK YOU!