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THE PROTAGONISTS OF JAAN KROSS AND THEIR PROTOTYPES (as exemplified in the Novella "The Third Range of Hills" and the Play "A Hard Night for Dr. Karell")*

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Jaan Kross was excited about people associated with one of the most sensational actions of the period of Estonian national revival: the building of the Kaarli church in Tallinn. Two of them — Johann Köler, father of professional Estonian painting, and Philipp Karell, an esteemed doctor whose treatment methods are used to this day — were simultaneously members of the circle of "friends of the people" or "Petersburg patriots"[1] and prominent individuals in the Russian imperial court.

The basis for Jaan Kross's historical novella (or short historical novel) "The Third Range of Hills" ("Kolmandad mäed"), published in 1975[2], was the documented history of the construction of the alter frescos in Kaarli church in 1879. The main character is the frescos' author, Johann (in Russian, Ivan Petrovich) Köler, professor of the Imperial Academy of Art. The text encompasses many episodes from the life of this artist, a wonderful social activist and fighter for the rights of the Estonian people. The court doctor Philipp Karell, also depicted in "The Third Range of Hills" and mentioned several times in the novel "Professor Martens' Departure" (1984), is the main protagonist in Kross's historical play "A Hard Night for Dr. Karell" ("Doktor Karelli raske öö. Ajalooline näidend", see: [Kross: 239–293]). The play was commissioned by the Finnish

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1 Regarding the activities of this circle, see: [Karjahärm, Sirk: 26–29], and regarding Estonians in Petersburg in the 1850s: [Ibid: 20–22].

2 Olga Samma's Russian translation was released in 1976, in the year of Köler's 150th birthday.

National Theater, and was first performed under the direction of Estonian director Mikk Mikiver on the Finnish National Theater stage in Helsinki in 1991. Three years later, in 1994, under the same director, the production was transferred to the stage of the Estonian Dramatic Theater (starring Ain Lutsepp), but was published only in 2000 in the series "The Looming Journal Library". Although they were written by Kross at different times, the plot-canvases of these two texts are closely intertwined.

When an author writes a novel or a play, in other words, a fictional narrative, how significant is the text's correlation to reality outside of art? This question inevitably arises when analyzing any artistic text, and is particularly relevant when the text in question has a historical plot. The freedom of the *historical* author or dramaturge is, by definition, conditional[3], and is even more so when the author's setting is based on the restoration of the cultural and historical landscape of Estonia, about which Jaan Kross writes directly in the foreword to "The Third Range of Hills". However, Kross purposefully stipulates that the cultural-historical map of Estonia lacks not only objects, but colors. In "The Third Range of Hills" he is interested in just such "colors", in service of which he occasionally and fully consciously sacrifices historical details[4]. One of the goals of this article is to give practical commentary to several interesting episodes in the compositions of Kross. "Discrepancies" between fiction and fact do not decrease the artistic merits of a text as a fictional narrative, and imagery does not lose its persuasiveness and depth. Practical commentary elucidates the poetics of historical narrative and the goals of the author. Thus, the ultimate goal of this research is the study of the poetics of Jaan Kross's creative works.

Strictly speaking, the action in the historical novella takes place over the course of two days, during which Köler's fresco showing "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden…" is sanctified on July 29, 1879; however, a significant part of the protagonist's life passes before the reader. "The Third Range

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[3] Academic Ea Jansen wrote wonderfully about this problem as it applies to Kross: [Jansen: 136].

[4] We must consider that some details, apparently, simply remained unknown to him, while others he considered necessary to specify. For example, the protagonist opens the latest issue of "Revalsche Zeitung" containing articles about the trial of Vera Zasulich — but the trial had occurred a year and a half earlier! We propose that this is a deliberate anachronism that can be explained as a subtle move by the author, calculated on the attentive and knowledgeable reader. Vera Zasulich shot the governor of Petersburg, chief of police and adjutant-general F. F. Trepov. In "The Third Range of Hills" there is a scene (with a documented basis) in which Köler appeals to Trepov after he is searched. Here, Kross needs an internal "rhythm" to the scenes, even if it isn't noticeable to all readers. In the structures of artistic works such "rhythms" play a significant role.

of Hills" is written as Köler's internal monologue, which immediately makes a real historical figure into a fictional character — Kross's Köler. Kross has created not just a historical novel, but a modernist text about the artist and about the nature of art. Rarely does the direct speech of other characters invade this internal monologue. The most significant interpolation is a letter, received by Kross's Köler at the moment he finishes his work on the fresco, from an old acquaintance, the landowner from Hiiumaa (Dagö) Rudolph von Gernet (the real name of the owner of the Vaemla estate, which the real Köler indeed visited in 1863 — but the character is constructed[5]). The letter is the primary complication of the novella and the source of the artist's internal strife. It identifies the central nerve of the narrative — the struggle of two powers in the Baltic region: its landowners, the Baltic Germans, and the resurgent Estonian nation, of which Köler is one of the leaders and symbols.

The construction of the Kaarli church in Reval was also a result of this struggle. Kross does not pause on the details of the church's construction, expecting that they are known, at least in broad strokes, to the Estonian reader, and so those details recede into the subtext and the background. We will recall a few facts. For a long time, the only Estonian Lutheran church in Reval that gave services in Estonian was Pühavaimu (Church of the Holy Spirit); as a result, by the middle of the 19th century its membership reached 14,000 people. Then a large national movement to collect money to build a new temple began, and in 1870 the first divine service was held in the not-yet-completed church. In the understanding of Kross's Köler (which correlates to J. Köler's position), the guarantee of the resurgence of the Estonian nation is the ability to combine forces, thus the construction of the church becomes a symbol of the national revival. However, the novella does not underscore the fact that representatives of several nations and different layers of society all cooperated in this campaign. In fact, the group of largest donors included Germans: Petersburg architect and Köler's colleague at the Academy of Art, Otto Pius Hippius (1826–1883), who designed the temple gratis, and Reval architect Rudolf Otto Knüpfer (1831–1900), who supervised the construction gratis. Alongside them stood Estonians: entrepreneur Hans Heinrich Falck, the court doctor Philipp Karell (who not only contributed money himself, but also mediated a large donation of 15,000 rubles from the imperial family), and court artist Johann Köler. His fresco "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden…" was a gift to the Estonian nation. In Kross's novella the cost of the gift runs throughout the text —

[5] Some details are true (for example, that Gernet is the president of a yacht club), but relate to a later period in the life of the real Gernet, the son of Köler's acquaintance, also Rudolph.

not only the material cost (the work was valued at 10 and even 15,000 rubles), but its moral price. Kross's hero constantly reflects; it seems to him that with his work he only "bribes" his nation for his "treachery": he broke into society while his brothers suffered under the whips of the landlords, and his example only serves to strengthen the social system (as if to underscore that the system does not hinder a talented Estonian from making a career!). Practically, the central theme of the novella is the price of compromise. From the author's point of view, Köler also pays his price in his art — as a court artist, he is required to idealize his models.

Kross's Köler has two counterparts in the text — two activists in the Estonian revival: the radical Carl Robert Jakobson (who at one point served at court as German teacher), and the moderate Karell. The artist is torn between their two models of behavior, and constantly judges himself for compromises. Doctor Karell, according to Kross, acts very slowly and cautiously, is quiet and agreeable, in order to at least sometimes achieve from the powers-that-be even a small result in favor of the Estonians. This irritates Kross's Köler. The doctor is justified in the eyes of the protagonist when he decides on a "protest" act: he refuses to perform an abortion for Emperor Alexander II's mistress, Ekaterina Dolgorukova. Note that this scene (repeated in "A Hard Night for Dr. Karell", see below), while piquant, is also apocryphal. By 1879 the princess Dolgorukova (who becomes, a year later, the morganatic wife of the emperor) already lived in the Winter Palace (which the historical Köler knew perfectly well) and had borne four children to Alexander[6]. In addition, the court had an entire staff of obstetricians for such gynecological operations. It was not necessary to involve the 73-year-old court physician and Privy Councillor Philipp Yakovlevich Karell in such a procedure (should the need for it arise!). However, here Kross relied on a source: a book by Estonian pastor and genealogist Martin Lipp[7],

[6] Princess Ekaterina Mikhailovna Dolgorukova (1847–1922) became Alexander II's mistress in July 1866; on July 6, 1880 she was married to the widowed emperor in Tsarskoye Selo. On December 5, 1880 she received by decree the title of Princess Yurevskaya. Their children Georgy (1872–1913), Olga (1873–1925), and Ekaterina (1878–1959) were legitimized and received the surname Yurevsky (Boris, born in 1876, died as in infancy). The last daughter, Ekaterina, was born September 9, 1878 (September 21 on the old calendar). It is well-known that Alexander II adored his children. The emperor also had children from other mistresses.

[7] See: [Lipp]. The book was written in 1919, and from its manuscript an extract was made and published as article (with relevant citations) by A. Lüüs, editor of the published version, who also studied Karell's activities: [Lüüs: 545–555]. Lüüs also repeated the fragment about Karell's resignation. Characteristically, Martin Lipp is the same pastor who gave the sermon at the sanctification ceremony of Köler's fresco in Kaarli church on July 29, 1879 (see: http://www.Kaarlikogudus.eu/ajalugu.php?leht=Ajalugu&alamleht=Fresko, although Lipp was not pastor of that parish),

which records oral histories that quite frequently do not trace back to Karell himself.

Let's return to Kross's Köler. The idea of integration with the people and the impossibility of such integration follow him constantly. Accordingly, in his internal monologue the hero sometimes uses the aloof and distancing pronoun "they" when referring to the Estonian people. Creating the fresco is one of the possible ways to overcome the separating barrier. Kross's Köler is not a religious person, and he writes his Christ because that is what "they" need; that is, his less-advanced brethren. At the same time his main intention is to draw a *national* Christ[8]. So Kross is interested in the fact that the model for the face of the Savior, by the artist's own admission, was the Estonian peasant William. The real Köler, in point of fact, met him at the Hiiumaa estate in 1863 and used him as a model for his painting "Peasant with an Axe" (artistically this was an obvious pastiche of John the Baptist from Alexander Ivanov's canvas "The Appearance of Christ to the People"). Precisely here Kross ties a foundational narrative knot — the hero's antagonist, Rudolph Gernet, having mysteriously learned of the plan for a national Christ (this mystical moment is also reflected by the artist), mockingly exposes the truth about his model to Köler, which should, he believes, lead the national project to collapse.

First, William is not totally Estonian (he has "foreign blood"), and second, his moral character makes him unsuitable as a model for Christ. The former Stakelberg coachman (as Köler knew him) became a vicious manager and a sadist who took pleasure in subjecting his fellow tribesmen to flogging. Here Kross inserts a totally modernist complex into the action: it appears to the artist that he has drawn a devil instead of Christ, and that the Estonians will bow to a false Christ. Only the devil could have revealed the secret idea of a national Christ to Gernet, an idea of which Köler himself had not spoken to anyone. All this throws the artist into such a depression that he even considers destroying his work or fleeing the sanctification ceremony. Moreover, the hero himself (not to mention the author!) at the moment of illumination perfectly understands that *in art* the question of the model's moral qualities cannot have any meaning — but a national project is another matter.

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and this fact is played up in the novella. Kross, who gives nothing by accident, thus seems to point to one of his sources.

[8] Regarding the importance of the plot of "The Third Range of Hills" from the point of view of "the national project" (the lesson of the "Petersburg patriots"), its allusions to the Soviet situation of the 1970s, Kross's autobiographical projects, and his reflections on the mission of the artist under conditions of confinement and foreign power, see: [Salokannel: 324–327].

If we look once again at the facts, one thing is clear — the real Köler suspected nothing bad about William. Until 1972, when a note about the unchristian conduct of Köler's Christ model appeared in the journal "Kultuur ja elu" (see: [Kruus: 304]), the Estonian literature, which contained not a word about the coachman William[9], contained no references to his cruelties. It's possible that Jaan Kross heard oral legends of some sort on the island of Kassari (near Hiiumaa), where the Stakelberg estate is located and where, in 1970, the author acquired a farm.

However, it is not so important whether or not the real William Tamm was a sadist[10]; much more essential is how and why Kross uses this motif. The function of such a "shift" in the artistic world of the novel is connected, it seems, to Kross's interpretation of fundamental religious and philosophical problems — in the ambivalent nature of art and religion (the interplay of good and evil, divine and satanic beginnings) Nietzchean motives are clearly heard. The writer refers also to the Estonian literary tradition[11]. As Oscar Kruus correctly noted, the real Köler was not concerned with the problem of Christ and the devil[12], while Kross's Köler is very much so. For a long time the hero is tempted by power, but in the end defeats it[13]. Moreover, with the encouragement of his friend, Ella Schultz, he strives to find the true faith. Ella is an ideal feminine image[14], who bears a real name but is a construct of the author's imagination. We believe that at the same time Kross is inspired by her portrait, painted by J. Köler in 1868 (probably at the request of her father).

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9 See a summary of the material: [Reidna: 89].

10 A. Kõvamees underscored the connection between Kross's character of William and the Estonian literary tradition via E. Vilde's steward in "War in Makhtra" [Kõvamees: 115–128]. On the other hand, we note in parentheses, Kross's "The Third Range of Hills" itself is occasionally perceived as a documentary source. On the website of the Kaarli church in Tallinn the story of "beautiful William", model for the image of Christ, follows Kross's outline, with an extensive corresponding quote from the text (see: http://www.kaarlikogudus.eu/ajalugu.php?leht=Ajalugu). Thus the historical novella finds its neomythological potential and becomes a myth-making device.

11 O. Kruus writes about this set of problems somewhat differently [Kruus: 305]. He notes the following of Estonian national tradition and points out a conciliatory interpretation of the relationship between God and Satan in Estonian folklore and literature. The traditional Estonian devil Vanapagan in A. H. Tammsaare becomes the mouthpiece for positive ideas. However, it is no less important to speak of the Nietzchean threads also found in Tammsaare (see the works of L. Pild).

12 O. Kruus expresses a fair supposition that the real Köler was not concerned with the problem of Christ and the devil [Kruus: 304–305].

13 Regarding the interpretation of the title, we believe this is the "third range of hills" (obstacle) that Kross's hero overcomes.

14 A. Kõvamees justifiably included the image of Ella in the paradigm of Kross's idealized heroines [Kõvamees: 115–128].

The real Ella Schultz was the musician and composer Elizabeth Schultz (Елизавета Георгиевна Шульц, 1846–1926), who wrote under the pseudonym Adaïewsky (Ella von Schultz-Adaïewsky). The pseudonym is based on the letter notations of timpani strikes in the overture to Glinka's opera "Ruslan and Ludmila" (A, D, A — la, re, la)[15], and is not mentioned in the novella. However, Kross uses several facts from her biography. Her father is fairly ironically described — doctor, writer, and translator Georg Julius von Schultz (1808–1975), who wrote under the pseudonym Dr. Bertram (see his new biography: [Pärnik]). By the way, he, like the author of "The Third Range of Hills", translated "The Misfortune of Being Clever" (only Schultz translated into German), and Kross mentions his other translations. "The Third Range of Hills" also refers to Elizabeth's early concerts (in 1862 F. R. Kreutzwald wrote about the success of her concerts in Dorpat) and notes that she studied under Rubinstein. Elizabeth Schultz really did study from 1862 to 1869 in the newly opened Petersburg Conservatory, studying piano under A. Rubinstein and A. Dreyschock, and composition under N. Zaremba and A. Famintsyn (P. Chaikovsky studied with them also at this time).

Anton Rubinstein became necessary in the novella for one of the most central episodes, when Kross's Köler and Ella are organizing help for the Estonian peasants from Hiiumaa, who arrived in Petersburg in the summer of 1868 in hopes of being resettled in the south of Russia, but were expelled by the police back to their island and under the power of their landlords.

This egregious act of injustice truly has a place in history, but the real Johann Köler and, more than likely, Ella Schultz did not have any connection to these events. The document that most clearly testifies about this is a letter by A. Yuryev that was published after "The Third Range of Hills" in Boris Enst's monograph about Köler (see: [Enst 1980]). Even so, this letter is preserved in the Estonian Literary Museum in Tartu. It was known to the Köler experts with whom the writer consulted, and through them, clearly, it was known to Kross — the events of the summer of 1868 as described in "The Third Range of Hills" are otherwise simply too close to the text of the letter.

These events are laid out in detail in the letter, addressed *to* Köler and saved in his archive. It was written on July 2, 1868 by a member of the circle of Petersburg patriots, official of the naval ministry Alexander Yuryev (1835–1878)

[15] E. G. Shultz herself wrote several operas in the 1870s based on Russian history — "The Boyar's Daughter", "The Dawn of Freedom", and "Solomonida Saburova". She, like her father, was interested in musical folklore (including Estonian and Greek). Kross's Ella plays for her Janny (as she calls Köler) "Greek songs"; however, the Greek sonata for clarinet (or violin) and piano was composed by the real E. Schultz in 1881.

and directed to Ryazan province, to the Semenov estate Urusovo, where Köler resided at the time.

According to the document, Russian merchants voluntarily came to the aid of the Estonian peasants in distress, feeding the hungry with bread, and good-hearted Petersburg residents, who donated money (especially after an article was published about them in the "Sankt-Petersburg Gazette" («Санкт-Петербургские ведомости») and "The Voice" («Голос»). A respectable sum was collected (472 rubles) and distributed among the peasants, who each received 3 rubles. Additionally, the collected money was used to buy provisions for the return trip. Among the participants in this campaign were the chief of police and an Orthodox priest.

In Kross's novella Ella and Köler bring 500 rubles on the boat, having borrowed the money from Rubinstein. Kross chose the renowned composer not only because of the above-mentioned biographical ties to Ella's prototype, but also due to his Jewish heritage. Kross's Ella, without hesitation, reminds her teacher that he belongs to an oppressed nation, and urges him to solidarity with another oppressed minority group[16]. Of course, such a dialogue in Petersburg at this time in history is unimaginable; it would have been a scandalous violation of both etiquette and ethics. Nevertheless, Kross is writing a *national* historical text in which mythologizing is one of his principal techniques.

In this regard the love story receives great importance in "The Third Range of Hills". Kross's Köler is a passionate lover and the object of love for several ladies. His main beloved, of course, is Ella. Understandably, there is no documented information about the love of the old bachelor Köler for the musician Ella Schultz. Researchers have established that this plot line is based on an allusion made by Ella's friend, Estonian singer Aino Tamm (see: [Soonpää: 149; Köleri sõnastik: 125]). I believe that Ella's portrait played no less a role in Köler's work.

The touching affair is settled by Kross in a Romantic way — as an open union between two people of art. What is more, it is Ella in particular who, despite her Estophilia and piety, rejects Köler's offer of marriage and insists on free love[17]. But Kross's Köler, in total accordance with the Romantic canon, muses

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[16] This scene in the novella takes place in a hotel on Malaya Morskaya Street, where Rubinstein supposedly lived. The real Rubinstein had no need to rent from a hotel, since he lived in the capital at 13 Troitsky Lane, No. 12 (see: [Адресная книга: 410]). The lane was renamed Rubinstein Street in 1929.

[17] It is interesting to note that the real Ella Schultz never married, spent the second half of her life (from 1882) abroad in Italy and Germany, and died alone in Bonn. She spent long years at Neuwied castle in an aristocratic and entirely female musical-literate circle. However, this decision,

constantly on his ugliness[18] and on Ella's angelic beauty, their twenty-year age difference, his spiritual disharmony and her harmony.

The other love story is the already-passed affair between Köler and Nadezhda Pavlovna Semenova, the wife of his close friend, senator and chamberlain Nikolai Petrovich Semenov[19], and also the love for him of Natalia Petrovna Grot, the wife of academic Ya. K. Grot.

Kross's history of these stories also arose from the works of Köler (who painted portraits of all of these people more than once), from his documented friendship with the Semenov and Grot families, and also, possibly, from speculations of researchers — although we will not attempt to judge whether or not Kross was aware of such speculations.

In 1976 (thus after publication of "The Third Range of Hills"), at an academic conference dedicated to the 150th birthday of Köler, B. Enst presented a paper [Enst 1983] in which he hypothesized that Köler was lover to Nadezhda Pavlovna Semenova[20] and even father to two of her children, Peter and Margarita, and also that Natalia Grot was in love with Köler. These inferences were made on the basis of a highly biased analysis of Köler's letters. The hypothesis regarding the illegitimate son is easily refuted — Köler physically could not have fathered Peter Nikolaevich Semenov, born on September 7, 1858, since he was abroad from 1857 to 1862. Kross writes nothing about the birth of children, but conjecture about the romantic relationship is played out in full[21]. The researcher's mythology combines with the writer's and produces a rich neomythology (even if they are not genetically related). Nonetheless, I personally am very grateful to B. Enst, since his mistaken conjecture (that Peter Semenov is Köler's son) was the impetus for my studies. Initially I sought the answer to the authorship of an article signed "P. Semenov", from the collection "Estonians and Latvians" (see: [Семенов]). I did not answer that riddle, but I was

in all likelihood, was made due to financial considerations. Ella received a respectable pension from the Russian imperial court (today we would call it a stipend), which she had the right to receive until marriage.

[18] Kross's verbal portraits demonstrate how attentively he examined Köler's works and photographs of him, and how very detailed his knowledge of Köler's creations is.

[19] Allusion to this story is also found in "A Hard Night for Dr. Karell".

[20] Nikolai Semenov (1823–1904) married Nadezhda Shishkina (1836–1914) on July 9, 1854 in Yaroslavl.

[21] Margarita Semenova, who died young (1880–1893), theoretically could have been Köler's daughter, although Enst has presented no real evidence [Enst 1983: 98]. In Kross's novel at this time his hero is having his affair with Ella; he speaks about his relationship with N. Semenova as ancient history.

immersed in a most interesting world, where the fates of Russian, Estonian, and German artists, academics, and writers intertwined.

However, in "The Third Range of Hills", love stories are not just another novelistic technique. For Kross they fulfill an additional role — as a sign of social victory, the approval of the Estonian in a society foreign and alien to him. For this reason the hero's objects of affection, as a rule, are socially superior to him; the barrier increases further when it comes to married ladies. The fact that Nadezhda Semenova is his closest friend's wife morally complicates the situation for the hero, but also makes her more radiant. For some reason, Kross's Köler sees peasant features in her face (they are not evident to me in Köler's portrait of her). In the case of Natalia Grot, her professor husband's status is not as significant as her ancestry (the noble family of Semenov arose in the 14th century). For Kross's concept, it is important that an Estonian, arising from a poor peasant family, proved victorious in all spheres: in art, in his career, in love. His successes in love are one more confirmation not only of his own great potential, but of the potential of the Estonian nation[22]. In "The Third Range of Hills" another Estonian — C. R. Jakobson — *jumped* higher still: he kissed the czar's daughter, his pupil the Grand Princess Maria Alexandrovna (for which he lost his post as German teacher). We will not undertake to judge to what extent this episode corresponds to historical reality, but in the artistic world of the novel this is an important characteristic of the radical Jakobson.

Kross strove to create not historical research, but fictional narrative intended to bring Estonian history to life and make it interesting, colorful, and humanized. Jaan Kross fulfilled his main task. His Köler, of course, differs from the real one, but overall his character is consistent with the real J. Köler. He represents the great potential of the Estonian people [Jansen: 138], and Kross's choice of historical figure for this goal was successful in the highest measure. Köler is presented as the talented son of his people who is victorious over every difficulty. In just such a way his Russian contemporaries wrote about Ivan Petrovich Köler-Viliandi, professor of the Imperial Academy of Art and court portraitist, comparing the Estonian painter with his Russian brethren at the guild: "Many of our artists arose, like Köler, from the peasant cottage; but do many of our well-heeled artists remember their poor families? <…> But it is as if Köler <…> remained not prodigal, but a true son of his nation" [Александров: 418].

[22] Kross frequently uses this technique. He makes his general Michelson not only an Estonian, but also the lover of Empress Catherine II ("Michelson's Matriculation"); the peasant Eeva becomes the wife and ally of the Livonian nobleman and political dissident T. von Bock ("The Czar's Madman").

Doctor Philipp Karell, with whom Kross's Köler constantly argues in "The Third Range of Hills" and with whom Kross's Martens constantly compares himself in "Professor Martens' Departure", in the play "A Hard Night for Dr. Karell" literally becomes arbiter of the Russian empire. Kross's Karell gives Nicholas I poison, putting an end to his thirty-year reign and despotism[23]. It's true that he does this at the order of the emperor himself and with the knowledge of the heir to the throne, Grand Prince Alexander Nikolaevich. Andres Soosaar dedicated a special article to Kross's treatment of the issue of doctor's ethics [Soosaar]. We are interested, first of all, in the historical sources Kross may have drawn from in his treatment of events.

The central events of the play occur on the night of March 2, 1855. The author has translated the date from the Julian calendar (in use at that time throughout the Russian empire) to the Gregorian. Nicholas I died the day of February 18, 1855, accordingly his last night alive was the night of February 17, 1855. It cannot be ruled out that such a translation of the calendar acts as a sign to today's viewer and reader of the modernization of events, which Kross uses in this play. It is also possible that exact adherence to the chronology was simply not a part of the writer's task. Thus, in "A Hard Night for Dr. Karell", the third act (the epilogue) is dated the end of July 1879. Köler meets Karell on the bank of the Neva in Petersburg and anxiously relates to him the news that he has received a letter from C. R. Jakobson about the closing of the newspaper "Sakala". Actually, the publication of this weekly magazine was suspended for eight months in May of 1879 (the last issue before the suspension came out on May 5, and the next on January 5, 1880). At the end of July this could not have been news for a "Petersburg patriot" involved in its publication. Additionally, the author of "The Third Range of Hills" could not forget that in July 1879 Köler was in Tallinn working on the fresco "Come to me…". The work occupied 10 days and was completed on July 23/August 8; it was sanctified in Köler's presence on July 29/August 10, 1879. Moreover, as mentioned above, the episode regarding Karell's resignation is discussed in "The Third Range of

[23] As an extra touch to the characterization of Russia as a tyrannical government (with obvious projections onto the Soviet epoch), at symbolic moments Karell notes that during the reign of Paul I poets' tongues were cut out for epigrams [Kross: 253]. Kross's hero presents this as evidence of the emperor's insanity. Of course, in Paul's time such punishments were no longer in use. More than likely this is the author's reference to "The Czar's Madman", where (also with chronological displacement), such methods are used. Regarding this, see: [Kisseljova: 326]. Kross's poetics are very much characterized by internal intertextuality; that is, cross-references to his own texts on various levels.

Hills" specifically in Tallinn, where Kross's Köler learns the news about the paper (he plans to go to Petersburg the next day to petition on behalf of "Sakala").

Of course, the play contains inadvertent anachronisms that are unavoidable in any composition about a historical topic. For example, in the play, Johann Köler, student at the Academy of Art, pays a visit to Karell on the evening of February 17/March 1, 1855, and they discuss the artist's future. The court doctor convinces the artist to thoroughly perfect his art and promises to help his career at court in the future (for both, a court post is a means of serving the Estonian people). They discuss Köler's painting "Hercules Drags Cerberus from the Gates of Hell". Kross knew from art history literature that in 1855 Köler was working on this painting, for which he received a small gold medal, but the exact date of this work was unknown to him. Notably, the Academy Council appointed the program for medal competition only on April 9, 1855[24], so the protagonists could not have actually discussed this work on the eve of Nicholas I's death. In that same conversation Karell predicts that if Köler works hard, the Academy must make him a professor and then award him the title of academic (see: [Kross: 263]). In reality the Imperial Academy of Art had a reverse hierarchy of titles (differing from the academic hierarchy Kross knew): first one became an academic (Köler earned this title in 1861), and then professor (Köler became one in 1867, evidencing his fast and successful career).

One of the main sources for "A Hard Night for Dr. Karell" was the abovementioned works by M. Lipp (see: [Lipp]) and A. Lüüs (see: [Lüüs]). It is more than likely that Kross drew not only the explanation for Karell's resignation (noted above), but also the name of his faithful servant, the Estonian Nigolas Tischler, specifically from these texts. Kross adds to a brief reference[25] that the doctor met him while serving in the hospital of the Horse Guards regiment [Kross: 249], and makes Nigolas a kind of double of the emperor Nicholas: on the same night they resolve to kill themselves. Karell manages to save his servant, pulled from the noose, and wrest a promise from him not to repeat the attempt. After this he is called to the Winter Palace, where Nicholas demands poison from him and threatens to hang himself if he does not receive the deadly drug.

The description of Karell's relationship with the court physician Martin Mandt can also be traced back to these source texts. Mandt at some point recommended his younger colleague for the post of court physician, later accused

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[24] See: [Сборник: 236]. The medal was presented to Köler on September 30, 1855 [Сборник: 250].

[25] Compare: "Juba noore arstina õppinud Karell üht eesti soldatit Nigolas Tischler'it tundma ja võtnud ta enesele teenriks. Nigolas jäänud peaaegu kogu eluajaks Karellile ustavaks teenijaks" [Lüüs: 554].

him of ingratitude, and other details[26]. However neither Lipp nor Lüüs support the version of the poisoning of Nicholas[27]. To the extent that this event establishes the central plot of "A Hard Night for Dr. Karell" it is necessary to consider the sources that underpin Kross's interpretation of events.

Emperor Nicholas's death following a short illness was a mystery for contemporaries, the subject of numerous rumors and speculations among his contemporaries and descendants, expounded upon in a series of memoirs, and became the subject of special investigations by both historians and physicians. Of course, Kross, knowing Russian history perfectly well, acquainted himself with many compositions on this topic. They can be divided into two groups: those that accept the official version of the emperor's death from paralysis of the lungs and those that support the version about suicide; the first hint of this in print appeared in "The Bell" («Колокол») in 1859, which traces back to court physician Martin Mandt (1800–1858). It seems that the direct source and, possibly, impetus for Kross could have been the article by Anatoly Smirnov entitled "The Mystery of the Emperor's Death", published in 1990 as an afterword to the book by well-known historian Alexander Presnyakov (1870–1929) "Russian Autocrats" [Пресняков][28].

A. F. Smirnov (1925–2009), having taken a fairly characteristic path from employee at the Academy of Social Sciences under the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to lecturer at the Sretensky Theological Seminary, having long studied the history of the revolutionary movement in Russia and then authoring a book about Karamzin (2006), supported the version of the emperor's suicide. In his article he widely used the memoirs of the Polish revolutionary Jan (Ivan) Sawicki (1831–1910), who bore the pseudonym Stella. The recollections were written in old age, published after the author's death[29], and are not to be found in Estonia's libraries. Smirnov

[26] Among the details that are important to Kross are the overwrought nerves of Karell's daughter Maria (she really did die of mental illness) and the story of how Karell and Nicholas I met (the emperor learns that he is Estonian and is pleased by this). This last fact was utterly transformed by Kross, for whom the czar was an unbounded ruler who despised his subjects. Thus his Nicholas reminds the doctor of his heritage ("pärisorjast toapoisi poeg" — [Kross: 273]), to force him to unquestioningly obey orders. Generosity and respect for others are lacking in Kross's sovereigns — not only in Nicholas I, but also in Alexander II.

[27] What is more, M. Lipp does this on the basis of the recollections of the doctor himself, which were written down and analyzed by one of the informants, A. Trumm [Lipp: 51–52]. Unfortunately, the memoirs were not published, and Karell's archive and library were not preserved.

[28] The publication is a reprinting of the historian's work that was initially published in the 1920s, including his famous short monograph "Height of Autocracy: Nicholas I" (Leningrad, 1925). A. Smirnov's afterword occupies pages 435–462 of the book.

[29] See: [Stella-Sawicki]. There are no references to this publication in Smirnov's article.

knew them through his study of the Polish uprising of 1863 and its leaders[30]. A large part of his article is a translation from these memoirs, although imprecise and with large semantic shifts and his own interpolations. In order to make Sawicki a witness to the events that, in the best case, he could have known only through hearsay, Smirnov's outline of his biography is, to put it mildly, biased, although he had at his disposal accurate biographical data compiled from archive materials (see: [Дьяков: 153–154]).

Sawicki is a complex and contradictory character. He graduated from the General Staff Academy (1854) and served at the headquarters of the Separate Guard Corps, but he was not an adjutant to the Grand Prince Alexander Nikolaevich, nor his childhood friend (their difference in age was 13 years!), since he did not study in the Corps of Pages, etc. [Смирнов 1990: 453]. The real (not mythological!) Sawicki built a good career, rose to the rank of colonel, retired in 1863 and participated in the Polish liberation movement. Thereafter he lived outside the Russian Empire, maintaining a correspondence with Herzen. While still in Petersburg he developed a fairly close relationship with N. Dobrolyubov and N. Chernyshevsky, and was even for some time the lover of the latter's wife [ЛН: 434]. This is not the time to delve into the details of his life and his recollections. For this article it is important only that he colorfully and in detail describes the scene in which Nicholas forced Doctor Mandt to give him poison, which the former court doctor himself supposedly described to Sawicki abroad. The following quote is from the conversation between Nicholas and Mandt, which, it seems to us, was used by Kross (although he made Karell the main actor[31]):

> — You were always my faithful subject, and that's why I want to talk to you confidentially — the course of the war exposed the error of all my foreign policy, but I don't have the strength or the desire to change and take a different path that would contradict my convictions…
> — Your Majesty, I answered him, the Almighty gave you good health, and you have the strength and the time to correct matters.
> — No, I am in no condition to correct matters for the better and I must leave the stage, which is why I summoned you, to ask you to help me. Give me poison that would allow me to depart this life without excessive suffering, relatively quickly but not abruptly (to avoid arousing gossip).

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[30] See, for example, his monograph: [Смирнов 1959]. Sawicki was a member of the Sierakowski circle.

[31] Kross has both physicians prepare the poison, but Nicholas I prefers to take it from Karell, since he was his subject.

— Your Majesty, I am forbidden from fulfilling your command by my profession and my conscience.
— If you do not do this, I will find it possible to perform my intention, you know me, despite everything, at any price, but it is in your power to rid me of unnecessary suffering. That is why I command and ask you in the name of your devotion to fulfill my last wish.
— If Your Majesty's wish is unchangeable, I will fulfill it, but allow me all the same to inform the Sovereign Heir, else they will inevitably accuse me, as your personal doctor, of poisoning.
— So be it, but first give me the poison [Смирнов 1990: 454–455].

In this passage Kross may have been interested in the arguments impeding the doctor from committing such an act (profession and conscience) that, nonetheless, he discards the idea of the heir's participation in events. All these motives are developed in detail in "A Hard Night for Dr. Karell" in accordance with the play's concept.

The protagonist is one of Kross's typical reflective characters that is attempting to solve an agonizing problem: having agreed to give the czar poison, he acts as a freedom fighter and savior of his fatherland, like a slave or like a humanist[32]. In the next frontier situation Karell doubts no longer and does not give in to provocation — he firmly rejects czar Alexander II's proposal to violate physician's ethics and criminal law (abortion in the Russian Empire was a criminal offense, although the means of punishment have been exaggerated slightly by the author). Doctor Karell finds freedom — freedom from compromise[33].

The finale is very symbolic and echoes the finale of "The Third Range of Hills": Karell goes to the church[34] with his wife and Köler to listen to Bach. The

[32] Kross's hero is pulled from this state by his wife (per tradition — the good angel of the doubtful character), who amazingly steals into the Winter Palace at night, hears her husband's confession and witnesses the preparation of the poison. Of course, this is fiction, but highly effective on stage.

[33] Compare to Lipp's treatment of Karell's conduct before Alexander II [Lipp: 47]: a courageous, heroic deed, comparable to the conduct of Biblical heroes — Nathan before David and John the Baptist before Herod! Kross uses the same model of comparison here, but in a different situation. His Karell compares himself on the fatal night of Nicholas I's poisoning to the libertine Phaon [Kross: 279]. It's no wonder that Kross's Karell confuses the name of the ancient character, since he means a different libertine — Epaphroditos, who held a sword to Nero on Phaon's estate and helped the emperor kill himself in order to avoid shameful and torturous punishment. The hidden parallel between Nicholas and Nero, of course, is important to Kross.

[34] To which church precisely is not said, but the Estonian reader can guess that it is to the Estonian St. John the Baptist Church (it's no wonder the way from the palace lays along the bank of the Neva). Under Soviet conditions, when this church in Leningrad was devastated and initially turned into a warehouse, then into a residential building, this was one of the allusions with which the "secret" national history was written, so well appreciated by Kross's readers. Court physician

doctor admits that Bach helps him overcome doubt in the existence of God, and Bach's toccata sounds. The consecration of Köler's fresco in "The Third Range of Hills" occurs to the sound of a Bach prelude (Kross even includes notes!) — "those high ceremonial sounds", "a mighty thundering waterfall". If Bach's music does not make Kross's Köler into a believing Christian it does, in any case, inspire a prayerful appeal to Christ, helps him withstand the ceremony, and overcome his fear about the exposure of his secret — that he depicted in the image of Christ a vicious and cruel person, a devil even. Thus Kross returns the reader and the viewer to one of his favorite themes — the theme of art and its overwhelming power. The highest art, according to Kross, is capable of defeating its own duality, and subordinating a diabolical beginning to the divine.

Practical commentary clarifies much in the nature of Jaan Kross's historical narratives. His works are neo-mythological, allusive, require the utmost concentration from readers, and set forth many riddles, the deciphering of which is exceptionally interesting.

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