

# Censorship in translations of children's literature in the former Yugoslavia (1945-1991)

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SVEUČILIŠTE U ZAGREBU  
UČITELJSKI FAKULTET  
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Nina Čvek

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LITERATURE IN THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA (1945-1991)

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Zagreb, rujan 2021.

## Sažetak

Uspostavom Federativne Narodne Republike Jugoslavije (kasnije Socijalističke Federativne Republike Jugoslavije) na čelu s Josipom Brozom Titom nakon drugog Svjetskog rata, države Južnih Slavena (Hrvatska, Srbija, Bosna i Hercegovina, Crna Gora, Slovenija i Makedonija) postale su ujedinjene. Komunistička partija Jugoslavije koja je bila na čelu države, provodila je mnoge reforme pod utjecajem Sovjetskog saveza te su stvoreni razni odjeli u sklopu Centralnog komiteta Komunističke partije, kasnije Saveza komunista Jugoslavije. Odjel za agitaciju i propagandu (Agitprop) nadzirao je sva politička, kulturna i obrazovna tijela u Jugoslaviji promovirajući socrealizam i njegovu ideologiju. Izdavačka djelatnost bila je tako pod nadzorom Agitpropa, koji je odlučivao što i kako će biti napisano i objavljeno te koja će se strana djela prevesti ili ne.

Cilj ovog rada je prikazati analize prijevoda stranih dječjih književnih djela na hrvatski – kako su se prevodila, zašto su se prevodila tako i što se cenzuriralo za vrijeme Titove Jugoslavije.

Može se zaključiti da su se strana djela na hrvatski prevodila tako da se promovirala ideologija države, a religijski motivi su bili cenzurirani. Likovi jakog karaktera sa svojim razvijenim stavovima bili su također cenzurirani kako bi se spriječilo preispitivanje socijalističkog režima.

Ključne riječi: cenzura, SFR Jugoslavija, prijevodi dječje književnosti, socrealizam

## Abstract

After the establishment of The Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia (later renamed into Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) with Josip Broz Tito as its leader after World War II, the South-Slavic countries (Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Slovenia, Macedonia) were united. The Communist Party had the main role in reforms and departments within The Central Committee of the Communist Party, later renamed into League of Communists of Yugoslavia, under the influence of the Soviet Union. The Department for Agitation and Propaganda (Agitprop) controlled the entire political, cultural and educational life in the spirit of socialist realism and ideology. The publishing business, including literature, was strongly controlled and supervised. Agitprop's role was to decide what could be written and published and which foreign literature could be translated.

The aim of this thesis is to present analyses of translations by choosing several titles of foreign children's literary works which were translated into Croatian – how they were translated and what was censored during Tito's Yugoslavia.

An analysis of the children's books, the contexts in which they appeared and their translations has shown that the socialist regime did not support anything that was related to religion. Besides, strong characters who developed their own opinions were also censored in order to prevent children questioning the socialist regime.

Key words: censorship, communist Yugoslavia, translations of children's literature, socialist realism

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## 1 Introduction

It can be said that children's literature is of great importance since children, through literature, learn, develop, they form their attitudes, and at the same time, they have fun. Through literature, children can experience a wide range of emotions; from happiness, joy, love, to sadness and bitterness. Literary works usually have more interesting contents than we can encounter in our everyday lives.

However, literature has always been consciously or unconsciously controlled by adults. Different historical periods brought different societal norms in all segments of life, including literature. Literature would sometimes have entertainment purposes, but sometimes it would only have an educational role.

When it comes to children, our society seeks for every possible protection measure. Therefore, throughout history, there were topics which were considered "good" or "bad" for children, and they would usually raise from ideologies. Consequently, children's literature was highly regulated by making various decisions, instructions, and orders given by the authorities (Hameršak & Zima, 2015).

This graduation thesis will present a short history of censorship, discuss the term in translations of children's literature, the impact of socialist realism on children's literature in the former Yugoslavia<sup>1</sup>, and topics which were forbidden or censored during that time. Certain censored books will be discussed and explained as well as how they were treated in the socialist realism in Yugoslavia, which was, among other, under the influence of the USSR. In the end, an overview of the whole paper will be given.

### 1.1 Censorship

George Anastaplo says that:

Censorship, as a term in English, goes back to the office of censor established in Rome in 443 BCE. That officer, who conducted the census, regulated the morals of the citizens counted and classified. But, however honourable the origins of its name, censorship itself is today generally regarded as a relic of an unenlightened and much more oppressive age (Anastaplo, 2020; p.2).

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<sup>1</sup> The name refers to the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, created after the Second World War and known under several names, existing from 1945 to 1992, and will be used further in the text.

In other words, censorship today is a prohibition that affects every cultural aspect, and which is seen as politically unacceptable or threatening.

The history of censorship goes back to the ancient ages. In Ancient Greece and Rome, their citizens were formed according to the regime. Religion was of great importance in that period, and those who refused to conform to the community could have difficulties backed up by legal sanctions (Anastaplo, 2020).

As already said, today's contemporary understanding of censorship is the control over people within a society. The censorship itself is not necessarily related only to societies or communities (such as church) which are governed by influential authorities. What is more, censorship occurs in all social or state arrangements (Paraščić, 2007) although acts of censorships are not always recognized or publicly admitted.

## 1.2 Types of censorship

Censorship can happen for various reasons: religious, political, moral, military, etc. In the Middle Ages, there was a list of banned books made by Roman Catholic Church, the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*, and its influence continues to the present day. Due to its long history, censorship can be divided into three types: preventive, punitive and self-censorship. The three types of censorship are going to be explained in the following text.

### 1.2.1 Preventive censorship

Preventive censorship is a type of censorship in which there is control in the production before its release to the public. This type of censorship is, if it is successfully implemented, the most effective method of suppressing undesirable information (Paraščić, 2007). Its goal is to prevent the publication of any information that is regarded as harmful or undesirable. Preventive censorship does not allow for the unwanted information to appear, and it is not even printed in some other form. Generally, in history, there were various ways how preventive censorship was accomplished. By issuing permits for printing, as well as work permits to the publishers, the censors were secure that the undesirable and unsuitable printers and publishers could not work (ibid.). Another very successful method was having a supervision of what is printed, published, etc. In that way, there were plans made for a certain period in which something could be published, which allowed censors to either approve or disapprove the publication.



However, preventive censorship was sometimes not entirely successful. The banned works sometimes managed to find some illegal way to reach the public but was then suppressed by punitive censorship. An example is the famous *Hrvatski pravopis* which was banned in 1971, but was then published in London in 1971.

### 1.2.2 Punitive censorship

Punitive censorship is a type of censorship in which the incriminated work had already appeared in the public, it had been printed out, sometimes even published by the publisher, and already distributed to the bookstores. The methods in which punitive censorship was executed included the destruction of entire editions, bans on selling, distributing, in order to modify undesirable contents. Another method, when the lapse in judgment was made and something that should not be in the public appeared in the public, was to purchase the entire bookstores in order to control further publishing and unwanted contents. Moreover, the lists of banned books would often be published. The American Library Association, a nonprofit organization in the United States, compiled a list of banned books, such as *The Great Gatsby*, *The Catcher in the Rye*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Lolita*, *Animal Farm*, etc. The purpose of the lists was to inform the public about the books which are harmful for their morals, religion, and state interests. Something that was unintended was the human curiosity and the urge to reach for those forbidden books. To avoid that, people were aware of the consequences.

### 1.2.3 Self-censorship

Self-censorship is a form of censorship encouraged by the author himself who is influenced by the repressive environment in which the author creates. The author, knowing the consequences of publishing something that should not be published, omits the problematic parts aiming the simple and quick publishing of their work. Self-censorship was common in the countries where there were taboos, as well as forbidden topics. In totalitarian regimes in which there is no official censorship, this form of censorship is the most desirable.

## 1.3 Censorship in Croatia in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

During World War II, Croatia was a part of the Independent State of Croatia (Croatian: *Nezavisna Država Hrvatska, NDH*). In that period, official censorship was present. There were several government bodies: The State Secretariat for Propaganda (Croatian: *Državno tajništvo za propagandu*), The State Office for Reporting and Promotion (Croatian: *Državni izvještajni promidžbeni ured*), and The General Directorate for Promotion (Croatian: *Glavno ravnateljstvo*

*za promidžbu*) which supervised writing, printing, publishing books, newspapers, and flyers. Those who did not obey those bodies were threatened with the death penalty. In NDH, they also used a strategy of rewriting passages- “*ispravljanje*” which were politically not acceptable.

After the end of World War II, Croatia was a part of The Federal People’s Republic of Yugoslavia (Croatian: *Federativna Narodna Republika Jugoslavija*, FNRJ), later renamed into Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Croatian: *Socijalistička Federativna Republika Jugoslavija*, SFRJ). In Yugoslavia, there was no official censorship. However, after the establishment of the Republic, the authors, publishers and journalists who were active in the NDH were punished and banned. In fact, preventive censorship was present in Yugoslavia. After the establishment of Yugoslavia, every private printer and publisher was nationalized and made financially dependent on authorities. Self-censorship was also present in Tito’s<sup>2</sup> Yugoslavia. For better control, the police would collect hostile press along with the domestic publications which were then analyzed and put on the lists and files of undesirable authors. There were 150 authors from Yugoslavia and abroad (especially USA) who were banned in the newly created Yugoslavia. Among the banned authors and works, the list included those who wrote about hypnosis and occultism, love, horoscope, card games, legends, kidnappings, Jack the Ripper, great travels and adventures, etc. (Grbelja, 1998).

For example, one of the banned books in the former Yugoslavia was Jack London’s novel *The Call of the Wild*. The book was on the list of undesirable books due to its radical content. Another example is *Animal Farm* by George Orwell because it was promoting anti-Stalinism (Driscoll, 2011).

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<sup>2</sup> Josip Broz Tito was both the prime minister of Yugoslavia (1944-1963), and the president of Yugoslavia (1953-1980).

## 2 The impact of socialist realism on children's literature

After World War II, a new era for the South-Slavic countries (Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Slovenia, and Macedonia) began in which many reforms were made along with the laws, and in which censorship was also introduced. The new socialist society was radically different from the previous societies in history (Majhut & Lovrić Kralj, 2017).

### 2.1 Socialist realism in Yugoslavia

The Communist Party had the main role in the newly created post-war Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia and it directed and controlled all social processes through its executive political body, the Politburo. Politburo or Political Bureau made decisions about political and social life in Yugoslavia, from economy and culture to science and education. In the new system, "dictatorship of the proletariat", any possible opposition was undesirable and, therefore, impossible (Šarić, 2010). The National Front of Yugoslavia won the elections and in 1945 declared Yugoslavia a republic (full name: Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia). The new Constitution of the Republic was made under the influence of the Soviet Union which was the leading country of socialism until the Informbiro period in 1948, resulting in the Tito-Stalin<sup>3</sup> split in which the USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) condemned the leadership and politics of Yugoslavia (ibid.). The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia as well as the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Croatia carried out programs and political tasks which were associated with the military, school, culture, etc. The Central Committee of Yugoslavia consisted of several departments such as the Department for Agitation and Propaganda, and also nine commissions.

In the period from 1945 to 1950, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia used culture for both political and ideological goals, prescribing the appropriate content and form of writing in order for art to be in the spirit of socialist realism. The writers who supported such forms and whose literature was also supporting the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, were highly accepted. There was no literature without the communist ideology (Majhut, 2016). On the other hand, non-supporters and writers from the NDH period were forbidden to create and were proclaimed Ustashas. Due to dissatisfaction with the writers' works, the government demanded active participation of writers in mass public works. Since one of the main priorities after the war was the reconstruction of the country, working brigades were established. Every cultural and

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<sup>3</sup> Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin was the leader of the Soviet Union from 1924 until 1953

educational worker was asked to participate in such reconstructions. What is more, the CPY wanted to encourage writers to create contents based on community and public works. Publishers were also limited due to lack of paper, ink, experts, translators, editors, printers, etc. (Šarić, 2010).

## 2.2 Department for Agitation and Propaganda (Agitprop)

Agitprop or the Department for Agitation and Propaganda was the part of the Central Committee and its role was to reorganize and instruct masses in the right direction in accordance with the new policy. The League of Communists of Yugoslavia controlled every aspect of Yugoslavia, nothing could arise and exist without the will and control of the Party (Vukelić, 2012). The Party center supervised the entire political, cultural, educational and scientific life. The artists were asked to be propagators of new ideas and the arts were dependent on the Party. It was of great importance to accept the new political order as well as the new regime. “Ideological single-mindedness” was achieved through prohibitions, rejections and through the impact of Agitprop which banished works without social content, works of priests and works on religious topics, medieval literature, dialect literature and “decadent” works of modernism, expressionism and surrealism (ibid.).

Film, as well as literature, was strongly controlled and supervised. Agitprop supervised film advertisings, they controlled the use of film materials and cinemas by approving the themes, scripts, directors and the whole cast because “free choice of topics of artistic expression and experimentation could be considered harmful” (Vukelić, 2012; p. 15).

During the first postwar years, there were about a hundred people working in Agitprop, and by the end of 1950, there was six times as many (Šarić, 2010). The task of the head of the Agitprop was to supervise the press deciding what could be written and printed out. The Agitprop commission consisted of nine departments: Theoretical lecturing Department, Department of ideological work in the Party and youth organizations, the Department of ideological work in mass organizations, the Department of Press and agitation, Department of cultural mass work, the Department of Cultural educational work, Department for artwork, Sector for party schools, administration and other sectors, and there was even the Commission for Architecture (Šarić, 2010). All departments were controlled and there were written reports based on their work. At the same time, the heads of Agitprop made plans for their work in the future. Once a

year, at the Agitprop department sessions, reports of each department were introduced to the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (ibid.).

At the end of 1946, the first Writers' Congress in Yugoslavia was held in which Radovan Zogović, a Montenegrin poet, introduced *O našoj književnosti, njenom položaju i njenim zadacima danas*. Zogović supported the idea of socialist realism and criticized non-supporters calling them ideological rivals. Tito, the most influential person of the FPRY, stressed out the importance of “progressive writing” Zogović was supporting in which socialist realism is the right direction and in which society and culture are subordinated to its ideals as well as the Marxist ones (Šarić, 2010).

### 2.3 The Information Bureau of the Communist and Workers' Parties 1948

After the establishment of Yugoslavia in 1945, the relationship between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia became closer. The two countries cooperated and exchanged books which were then translated. There was also a practice in which the Soviet Union would be the first to translate and publish works from World literature, and then forward them to Yugoslavia (Vukelić, 2012).

In 1948, the relationship changed due to cultural differences (Vukelić, 2012). Both Soviet and Western books were not translated in such quantities in Yugoslavia, Soviet books were criticized and called harmful. Along with the literature, Soviet movies were also banned. Until 1948, the cinematography was controlled by a special commission in which prevailed Soviet cinema prohibiting American, English and French movies which were considered harmful. “Since 1945 to 1949 Yugoslavia imported from the Soviet Union 192 art movies, 189 short movies, 31 feature-length documentary movies and 145 journals. In total 557 movies” (Vukelić, 2012; p.40). After the Cominform<sup>4</sup>, a new era in the cultural politics in Yugoslavia began. The import of Soviet movies was stopped and the influence of the Soviet dramaturgy was reduced. The Stalinist cultural influence in Yugoslavia was removed from the cultural consciousness of the people (Majhut & Lovrić Kralj, 2020).

Agitprop introduced the Plan against Cominform on cultural and education sector saying that writers should from now on reveal Cominform plans, criticize works of Cominform countries, unveil attacks of Cominform, and organize literary evenings where there will be presentations

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<sup>4</sup> Cominform- Informbiro

on Cominform. The Fifth Congress of the Communist Party abandoned the Soviet model of social development and encouraged the development of cultural life in Yugoslavia (Šarić, 2010). One of the biggest events held in 1952 in Ljubljana was the Third Congress of Writers of Yugoslavia in which Stalinism was criticized and Miroslav Krleža, one of the greatest Croatian writers, stated that writers should be free to create, that writers should get rich with cultural heritage, and that criticism and scientific approaches should replace the ideological ones. That was the new direction which announced the rejection of the socialist realism (Vukelić, 2012).

With this, Yugoslavia became somewhat more open to the Western culture:

“It returned Western drama (works of Ibsen, Shakespeare, Sophocles, Schiller and others) in the theater. In the publishing stopped division into Soviet and Western literature. There are published Western philosophers and other authors who had until recently been strictly banned and criticized (Fromm, Kafka, Sartre, Camus...). But all these matters still are carried out with oscillations, strong dogmatic resistance and ideological deviations. This deterioration was actually an attempt to present the regime in a better light to the West, according to which Yugoslavia was pushed with its break with the East.” (Vukelić, 2012; p. 41)

### 3 Translations of children's literature in the former Yugoslavia

Yugoslavia was a federation of six republics: SR Bosnia and Herzegovina, SR Croatia, SR Macedonia, SR Montenegro, SR Serbia, and SR Slovenia. Due to its diversity, there were three official languages including Serbo- Croatian, Macedonian, and Slovene. The main focus of this work are Croatian translations of children's literature in the former Yugoslavia. All of the used titles can be found in the required reading lists for primary schools (Narančić Kovač & Milković, 2018).

#### 3.1 Russian children's literature translations into Croatian

In the former Yugoslavia, the most translated foreign literary works were Russian, especially in the beginning of Yugoslavia when it cooperated with the USSR. After Informbiro, Russian literature was harder to be found on the lists of required reading in the schools of Yugoslavia.

In Table 1, we can see titles of translated Russian children's literature into Croatian. These titles are just examples of how children's literature was treated, how it was translated, and what was the main goal with this kind of literature.

Table 1. Russian literature translated into Croatian in Yugoslavia

THE AUTHOR	THE TITLE	THE TRANSLATION	YEAR OF THE TRANSLATION
Samuil Y. Marshak	Petrushka	Petruška	1945
Aleksey Nikolayevich Tolstoy	Buratino (The Golden Key)	Zlatni ključić	1948
Nikolai Ostrovsky	Kak zakalyalas' stal (How the Steel Was Tempered)	Kako se kalio Čelik	1946

All of the titles of Russian children's literature were made in the period of socialism and their goal was to promote its regime. The Republic of Yugoslavia, which was also promoting socialist realism, supported Russian books written in that period.

Petrushka by Marshak was first translated in Zagreb in 1945 and it was on the list of required reading only in 1948 (Narančić Kovač & Milković, 2018). The book was a huge disappointment due to the lack of socialist images, such as the image of a child-hero, nor of a child-soldier (Majhut, 2019). Instead of a child-pioneer who is side by side with adults fighting the enemies, the children in Petrushka were in a world different from the world of adults (Majhut, 2019).

One of the most interesting translations was Tolstoy's *Buratino* or *The Golden Key* was translated in Zagreb in 1948 (Narančić Kovač & Milković, 2018). The book is based on *The Adventures of Pinocchio* by Carlo Collodi and it was created in the period of Stalin's reign. The reason why it is an interesting example is because it is a modified literary work from the USSR. In Croatia, it was not on the list of required reading, but it could be found on the list of recommended reading. There were some differences between Buratino and Pinocchio, for instance Pinocchio's nose would grow when he would lie, and Buratino's would not, Pinocchio would encounter people who serve evil, and Buratino's people were the pure evil. Also, Buratino in the end remains a piece of wood (Bakirov, 2018).

Nikolai Ostrovsky's *How the Steel Was Tempered* was translated into Croatian in 1946 in Zagreb (Narančić Kovač & Milković, 2018). The book was about the October Revolution and about the main protagonist who had the characteristics of a real hero of socialist realism (Britannica, 2019).

All in all, Russian children's literature had a big impact in the beginning of the newly created Yugoslav state due to its glorification of socialism. All of these titles promoted its regime and explained the consequences of not obeying it. Even though Russian literature was important, after the Informbiro, translations of Russian children's literature were hard to be found on the lists of required reading, especially after the 1950s.

### 3.2 Translations of Anglophone children's literature into Croatian

British and American literary works for children were not as much translated as the Russian. In the table some translated American and British children's books can be seen that were translated into Croatian during Yugoslavia. More titles of translated American and British children's books can be found on the lists of required reading (Narančić Kovač & Milković, 2018).



Table 2. American and British literature translated into Croatian in Yugoslavia

THE AUTHOR	THE TITLE	THE TRANSLATION	THE YEAR OF TRANSLATION
Lewis Carroll	Alice in Wonderland	Alica u Zemlji čudesa	1944
Mark Twain	The Adventures of Tom Sawyer	Pustolovine Toma Sawyera	1947
Daniel Defoe	Robinson Crusoe	Robinson Crusoe	1953
Lyman Frank Baum	The Wonderful Wizard of Oz	Čarobnjak iz Oza	1977

The titles were chosen by the genre they belong to and the topics they deal with. Titles from Table 2. are arranged chronologically, according to the year of translation. What is more, these titles were also chosen due to their theme, and that is- adventure. The following text is going to explain how these books were treated and translated in Yugoslavia.

### 3.2.1 *Alice in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll

*Alice in Wonderland* or *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* was written by Lewis Carroll in 1865. The illustrations were made by John Tenniel. The plot follows a young girl, Alice, who falls through a rabbit hole and enters a fantasy world. The fantasy world is inhabited by a lot of interesting characters which she encounters. Moreover, the book is rich with riddles, parody and intertextuality. It also includes popular children's and folk songs that were taught in schools.

“The Queen of Hearts” is a children's folk song in which characters are playing cards. The poem first appeared anonymously in *The European Magazine* in 1778, and years later it was the foundation of Lambo song “The King and Queen of Hearts”. (Narančić Kovač & Milković, 2011). The poem served as a starting point for the plot in Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*.

The first Croatian translation of *Alice in Wonderland* was published in 1944, but a more interesting one was in 1952, in the period of FPR Yugoslavia. The latter was translated by Mira Jurkić-Šunjić and Mirko Jurkić, and published by Mladost in Zagreb keeping the original illustrations by John Tenniel. The illustrations were then replaced in 1959 by Raul Goldoni's illustrations, and in 1991 by Tomo Gusić's. In 1964, there was a translation of Croatian *Alice*

into Serbian in Cyrillic, and was considered as the second edition. Some differences in translations can be seen - the Croatian translation from the 20<sup>th</sup> century translate Alice as Alica, while the Serbian translate her as Alisa. There is also a difference in translated titles; the Serbian translation is *Alisa u Zemlji čuda*, and the Croatian one is *Alica u Zemlji čudesa* (Narančić Kovač & Milković, 2011).

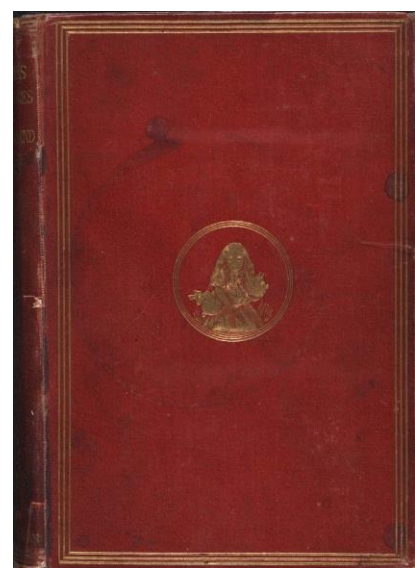
The translations of the main part of the book, the children's folk song "The Queen of Hearts" varied from translator to translator. Almost all translations kept the original playing card names translated into Croatian (*Herc, Pik, Kara, Tref*). However, one translation left out the original names leaving just *Momak* and *Kraljica* (English: Knave and Queen) (Narančić Kovač & Milković, 2011).

Moreover, the analysis of the illustrations of the original book and the translated ones showed that Croatian editions left out the nonsensical and absurd situation in which the wrong person is accused of stealing cookies (Narančić Kovač & Milković, 2011).

Figure 1. A comparison of the front cover of the Croatian edition *Alica u Zemlji čudesa* from 1964 (translator Mira Jurkić-Šunjić, illustrator Tomo Gusić) and the original *Alice in Wonderland* from 1865 (written by Lewis Carroll, illustrated by John Tenniel). The images are in the public domain.



1964



1865

The difference in the book covers between the Croatian edition from 1964 and the original book from 1865 can be seen. The cover illustrated by Tomo Gusić is black and somehow intimidating. It is also full of animals and creatures from the book in a very sketchy and unattractive way (Narančić Kovač, 2019). On the other hand, the cover of the original book from 1865 and illustrated by John Tenniel is red and plain with just an illustration of Alice in the middle of the cover.

One possible reason why changes were made in the illustrations of the cover of the Croatian translation of *Alice* from the period of Yugoslavia was that the new illustrations depicted the situation in the state at that time-- people being intimidated by the authorities and obeying its rules in order to follow the ideology and avoid possible consequences. Or, since it was a policy of the *Vjeverica* edition to use details from the book to illustrate the cover, it might have represented an attempt to make the story more appealing and interesting to young readers.

### 3.2.2 The Adventures of Tom Sawyer by Mark Twain

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer is a novel written by Mark Twain published in 1876. The first Croatian translation was performed in 1947 by Tatjana Blažeković in Zagreb (Narančić Kovač & Milković, 2018). The story follows the life of a young boy, Tom Sawyer, who is growing up along the Mississippi River and describes adventures he is experiencing with his friends.

Ever since the book was published, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* has been facing censorship. Tom Sawyer was seen as a “questionable protagonist” due to its morals (Driscoll, 2018). The book was censored in the USA, and was even banned from the USSR in 1930, and also Brazil in 1937. Furthermore, the recent censorship in the USA replaced all words which were not considered politically correct with more appropriate ones. “Injun” was replaced by “Indian”, and “nigger” was replaced by “slave” (Messent, 2011).

The first translation in Croatia during Yugoslavia was in 1947. The translator was Tatjana Blaženković and it was translated as *Pustolovine Toma Sawyera*. After the establishment of the socialist system in Yugoslavia, the translations of the book had changed. The book was considered racist and was condemned as capitalist and religious. The first translations contained racist words, which were eventually softened and replaced with more appropriate ones (these subsequent translations were influenced by American censorship; the word “nigger” was replaced and translated as “*rob*” (slave). (Trupej, 2019).

### 3.2.3 *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe

*Robinson Crusoe* is a novel written by Daniel Defoe in 1719. The first Croatian translation in the former Yugoslavia was in 1953 when it was translated by Branka Horvat in Zagreb (Narančić Kovač & Milković, 2018).

*Robinson Crusoe* is a novel about a young boy Robinson Crusoe (birth name Kreutznaer) in which the life of the main character is described while he spends twenty-eight years on a remote island. The story describes his encounters with cannibals, mutineers, etc. The plot of the story is based on a true story of a sailor who was found in a semi-savage state when rescued (Pokorn, 2012).

The success of the book produced the term Robinsonade, denoting “any novel written in imitation of Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* that deals with the problem of the castaway’s survival on a desert island” (Britannica, 2007).

*Robinson Crusoe* is a book of religious themes in which religious salvation is of a great importance. Robinson paves the way for a realistic and modern English novel based on the understanding and aspirations of the English people, the Puritan faith and experiential philosophy (Žeko, 2008).

As already mentioned, the first Croatian translation in the former Yugoslavia was in 1953. *Robinson Crusoe* was translated without ideological interventions; however, it was translated from a Russian adaptation (USSR), and all the religious elements were banned from the book. Later, all translations in Yugoslavia continued omitting religious elements from the text (Pokorn, 2012).

In the book, Robinson’s thinking about God contributed to his religious conversion. In his journal, Robinson writes down thoughts about religion and salvation. Those chapters were banned from the translations in Yugoslavia. For instance, the chapter when Robinson finds corn husks from the ship and starts thanking God believing this corn is a result of God’s wish to save him, was omitted in the translation (Veselica Majhut, 2019).

### 3.2.4 *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* by Lyman Frank Baum

*The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* is a novel written by Lyman Frank Baum in 1900. The story follows the adventures of a young girl Dorothy who ends up in the Land of Oz.

The translations of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, during socialist Yugoslavia, were made from Russian translation by Aleksandr M. Volkov<sup>5</sup> (Narančić Kovač & Milković, 2019).

As already mentioned, during the Stalin era, publishing in Russia was controlled. The first translation by Volkov was rejected by the Soviet censors making him rewrite the story making it appropriate for Russia (Inggs, 2011). Following the Russian version, the first translations into Croatian during the period of Tito's Yugoslavia was in 1960.

Volkov's *Wizard of the Emerald City* made a great success in Russia. Russian critics even stated that Volkov's characters are more developed, they are loyal, resilient, etc (Inggs, 2011). By creating new characters and adventures, Volkov praised socialist realism.

The first Croatian translation of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* was published in 1977 (Narančić Kovač & Milković, 2019).

### 3.3 Translations from other languages (Italian, German, Swedish) into Croatian

Italian children's literature was not as much translated as the Russian one regarding the quantity of translated titles. The reason for this was the difference in the organizations of states (Narančić Kovač & Milković, 2019).

One of the most interesting translations in the former Yugoslavia is the translation of *The Adventures of Pinocchio* by Carlo Collodi. The first translation of the book into Croatian was by Vjekoslav Kaleb under the title *Pustolovine Pinokija: pripoviest o jednome lutku* in 1943, and was published by *Matica hrvatska* (Andraka, 2019). However, the translation from 1943 was published in the period of the NDH, while the first translation of *Pinocchio* in Yugoslavia was in 1952 in Zagreb (Narančić Kovač & Milković, 2018).

*Pinocchio* is a secular work and was acceptable for children to read during socialist realism, and could be found in the curriculum from the beginning of Yugoslavia. The translation is characterized by the absence of ideologically motivated interventions in the text due to the secularity of the book and probably also due to the fact that Kaleb was the editor who published it in communist Yugoslavia. Being a member of the partisan movement during the Second World War, it could be assumed that he had censored the book (Andraka, 2019).

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<sup>5</sup> *Čarobnjak smaragdne grad* by Aleksandr M. Volkov (1939).

However, after the establishment of Yugoslavia in 1945, the translation needed to be upgraded and changed in order to be more appealing to young readers. The reasons for the new translation were thus of linguistic and stylistic nature (Andraka, 2019) unlike problematic translator and ideologically unacceptable passages which were observed in some other Yugoslav translations (Pokorn, 2011).

The most translated Austrian children's literary work is *Bambi* by Felix Salten. *Bambi, a Life in the Woods* was first translated into Croatian in 1952 in Zagreb (Narančić Kovač & Milković, 2018). *Bambi* is a novel written in 1923 and is a story about a fawn named Bambi, from birth through childhood, and his later life.

During Yugoslavia, the translations of *Bambi* were also highly supervised under the control of the socialist regime. All religious elements were removed and were replaced by non-Christian items, e.g. when mentioning religious elements (Gile & Pokorn, 2010). What is more, the religious ending of *Bambi* ("final enlightenment") was also changed. Although this reference refers to the Slovene analysis of the translation of *Bambi*, it can be applicable in other countries which were also part of communist Yugoslavia.

*Pippi Longstocking* is a novel written by Swedish author Astrid Lindgren in 1945. The story follows the adventures of Pippi, a nine-year-old girl who moved to a house with her monkey and a horse.

The first edition of the Croatian translation of *Pippi Longstocking* was in 1973. Pippi's character was considered to be a too liberal individual whose behavior is a threat to other cultures (Badić, 2020). In the Vjeverica edition, nine chapters of *Pippi Longstocking* were omitted due to some of the elements of Pippi's characterization, namely that a nine-year-old girl has strong and clear attitudes and also superhuman strength (Badić, 2020).

In the chapter where Pippi saves lives, Pippi is portrayed as the only person in town who can save two little boys stuck in a burning building. What Pippi finds incomprehensible is the two little boys crying, so she turns their rescue into a game. Her independence and determination were considered unacceptable in a society. Pippi is a brave girl who does not hesitate to find out if something is poisonous (the chapter when she is eating possibly poisonous mushrooms). Furthermore, the original version contained racist words, such as "neger" (Croatian: *crnac*) which were considered inappropriate (Badić, 2020).

The book promoted inappropriate behavior, and dealt with difficulties in life, violence, racism, and religion, and that is why it was censored in Yugoslavia.

### 3.4 Censorship in Croatian children's literature (Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić)

*The Brave Adventures of Hlapitch* (Croatian: *Čudnovate zgode šegrta Hlapića*) is one of the most renowned Croatian novels written by Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić in 1913. The Hlapitch novel is known to have been translated into twenty-six languages to date. In Yugoslavia, translations of *The Brave Adventures of Hlapitch* were mainly supported by domicile culture, i.e. Croatian culture (Narančić Kovač & Lovrić Kralj, 2019). The first translation was into Czech in 1914, but it was published in 1930 due to World War I and the economic situation of the country.

The next translation appeared in 1940 in Slovak, then in 1955 in Slovene, 1959 in German, and in 1960 in Burgenland-Croatian and Macedonian. The English translation was in 1971 and it was translated as *The Brave Adventures of a Shoemaker's Boy*, and in 1972 it was translated into American-English as *The Brave Adventures of Lapitch* (Majhut & Lovrić Kralj, 2020). The last known translation was in 2014 when it was translated into Turkish.

In Yugoslavia, the novel was published outside the territory of the Socialist Republic of Croatia. In Slovenia it was in Slovene, in Macedonia in Macedonian, however, in Bosnia and Herzegovina and also Serbia it was in the Croatian language (Narančić Kovač & Lovrić Kralj, 2019). The editions of the novel in Cyrillic were a result of ideological and political decisions as well as the social practices. In that way, language achieved uniformity of the two separate languages, Croatian and Serbian. However, with the amendment from 1971, the Croatian language partially returned, and in 1974, the Croatian language was officially returned in the Croatian Constitution (Narančić Kovač & Lovrić Kralj, 2019).

*The Brave Adventures of Hlapitch* was translated into Serbian in Cyrillic affirming it is faithfully following the original Croatian text which indeed showed the unity of the cultures in the former Yugoslavia. The works of Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić (*The Brave Adventures of Hlapitch* and *Croatian Tales of Long Ago*) were eventually included in the national corps of Serbian literature and culture, and the Croatian language was subsumed into the Serbian language (Narančić Kovač & Lovrić Kralj, 2019).

Another very successful Croatian literary work written by Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić is *Croatian Tales of Long Ago* (Croatian: *Priče iz davnine*). It is a short story collection about the ancient Slavic mythology published in 1916 in Zagreb and is known to have been translated into sixteen languages to date. The collection was interpreted as very important for the Croatian culture since it contains Croatian myths and fairy tales (Majhut & Lovrić Kralj, 2020). As in *Hlapitch*, *Croatian Tales of Long Ago* was also shaped in order to fit into the communist ideologies. The changes were made due to the linguistic and stylistic obsolescence (e.g. excessive use of Croatism), while the linguistic unification of the Croatian and Serbian language was encouraged (Majhut & Lovrić Kralj, 2020).

However, the period from 1971 to 1980 was a turning point for Croatian literature. It was the period in which there was a significant increase of translations in new target languages, especially *The Brave Adventures of Hlapitch* (Narančić Kovač & Lovrić Kralj, 2019).

### 3.5 The *Vjeverica*, Croatian book series for children

The most famous book series in Croatia from the 20<sup>th</sup> century was *Vjeverica*, published by Mladost<sup>6</sup> and founded by Grigor Vitez in 1957 (Aščić, 2017). Grigor Vitez was the first editor of *Vjeverica*, after him the editors were Ana Kulšić and Vera Barić. *Vjeverica* lasted until 1998.

The book series *Vjeverica* contained 318 titles including more than 1000 editions of domestic and foreign authors (Aščić, 2017). The editors would receive manuscripts of domestic authors or they would choose titles from foreign literature. They would make annual plans with new titles. Every annual plan, which had a certain financial framework, brought ten new titles and at least twenty reprints (Radošević, 2016).

Foreign titles were usually chosen at book fairs (Frankfurt, Leipzig, Moskva, Pariz, etc) or through literary magazines (Radošević, 2016). Literature and translations were highly supervised publishing only what was desirable and acceptable. During Yugoslavia, *Vjeverica* was dealing with censorship due to ideological reasons. A large number of translated literary works at that time were ideologically altered without readers being aware of that (Aščić, 2017).

However, *Vjeverica* remained the central medium of children's literature, shaping generations who grew up with its titles.

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<sup>6</sup> Croatian publishing house.



#### 4 Children's literature from Croatian Spring until 1991

After decades of being under control, Croatian intellectuals started to rebel against the authorities and the regime.

##### 4.1 Croatian Spring and *Matica hrvatska*

*Hrvatsko proljeće* or the Croatian Spring was a political movement from 1967 to 1971 in which a lot of reforms were made in order to improve the economic situation in the Socialist Republic of Croatia which was part of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The Liberals within the League of Communist of Croatia (Croatian: *Savez komunista Hrvatske*, SKH) wanted to promote Croatian territorial unity, the Croatian language, history, and culture, which had been repressed for 25 years. In 1967, more than a hundred Croatian intellectuals signed a declaration demanding the reestablishment of the Republic- they wanted Croatian to become the official language and to stop the dominance of Serbian in the Serbo-Croatian language. Many people who supported the Croatian Spring wanted the increase of learning Croatian history and culture (Irvine, 2011).

The cultural institution *Matica hrvatska* sponsored celebrations which supported the Croatian Spring and also celebrated historical events and important historical figures like Count Josip Jelačić who was treated as a traitor in the communist historiography. *Matica hrvatska* is the oldest independent, non-profit national institution which promotes Croatian national and cultural identity. During the Croatian Spring, *Matica hrvatska* published many works which wanted to restore the national spirit. The year 1971 marked the collapse of the Croatian Spring and the banning of *Matica Hrvatska* (Kljajić, 2019).

##### 4.2 Children's literature after the Croatian Spring

The year 1971 marks a political, social and cultural cut in recent Croatian history following the persecution of intellectuals in Croatia. The Croatian Spring led to a more intense repression and ideological control over every artistic production. There was no free speech which resulted in "Croatian silence". Numerous newspapers and magazines, such as *Hrvatski tjednik*, *Kritika* and *Kolo* were banned (Nemec, 2003). Many authors went to trials and were imprisoned. What is more, numerous Croatian literary works were the target of ideological criticism, condemnation and censorship (Nemec, 2003).

#### 4.3 The end of Yugoslavia

The downfall of Yugoslavia started in 1980. On the 4<sup>th</sup> of May 1980, Josip Broz Tito, the leader of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia died. After his death, the economic and political crisis began throughout Yugoslavia. For the first time, certain taboo topics were discussed: Communist concentration camps, the victims of the Informbiro, show trials, the post-war executions of the members of the Home Guard, and so on (Pokorn, 2012). A more tolerant Yugoslavia with a more liberal League of Communists, was accepted by the people in Yugoslavia who could finally oppose the Communist ideology without rigorous consequences.

Throughout the 1980's, Yugoslavia dealt with a lot of attempts of suppression of the system. Finally, in 1989, the end of Yugoslavia was imminent. The fall of the Berlin Wall happening at the same time and the metaphor of the divided Europe came to an end marking the beginning of a post-ideological period (Nemec, 2003).

## 5 The importance of children's literature

After discussing censorship, a very important question to ask is whether books which are considered “bad” (such as books which are not following ideological beliefs) affect children badly. It should be assumed that, with appropriate interpretation and guidance, books written for children cannot affect the children in that way. While reading various stories, children are introduced to something that is not familiar to them and in that way, they learn.

Books teach children that life has both positive and negative aspects. For instance, children can learn about depression and other mental and physical disorders. Besides, books teach them what it is like to be lonely, rejected or abandoned. While reading books, children can encounter problems they are dealing with in their own lives. If they have the exact same problem as described in the book they are reading, children can identify with it and see that they are not the only ones with it. On the other hand, children who read about problems they are not dealing with in their own lives, the books they are reading can show them problems others encounter. In that way, children learn how to be compassionate and empathetic.

Childhood is a special life stage with specific problems and needs, and it is important to allow children to identify themselves with characters of their own age (Širac, 2017). Besides, books introduce them to various cultures, races, ways of life, religions and beliefs, and censoring such contents will only deprive readers of developing more tolerant on one hand, and more critical on the other. Children's literature helps children with something that is abstract to them through examples. Even though those examples could be highly adventurous, fantastic, and considered dangerous outside of the fictional world (*Pippi Longstocking*), it is important for them to know the bad sides of life and how to prevent something or how to be prepared for something that might happen. In *Pippi*, children learn how to be independent through Pippi's character who often opposes authorities with her behavior. Those behaviors were not considered desirable in the period of Yugoslavia and the ideology and that is why these chapters were omitted from the book. Furthermore, banning the word “nigger” in literature (*Pippi Longstocking* and *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*) is debatable – was it banned in order to protect African Americans from discrimination, or was it just a way of embellishing racist past (Širac, 2017)?

Censors often argue that when censoring they are controlling the youngest ones claiming that children are still fragile and not developed enough, and, in order to save their innocence, they must protect them in every possible way. Moreover, literature served as a moral example emphasizing the values and ideology of the society they live in (Širac, 2017).

Unfortunately, censorship, whether performed by the government or publishers and authors themselves, will never completely stop existing. Adults have the main role in deciding what is good or bad for the children. Despite that, censorship should be supported in minimal quantities since children should not be forbidden to read books due to ideologies and beliefs of authorities.

## Conclusion

The period from 1945 until 1991 in the former Yugoslavia was a really challenging period of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It affected people and media in every possible way. As already mentioned in this thesis, every aspect of human life was under the socialist regime and its control. Unfortunately, children were not spared either.

Even though there was no official censorship, the literature and art, including children's literature, were controlled by the authorities. Although the censorship of children's literature existed to protect children from inappropriate content, it was usually a way of tailoring young people into the current ideological measures.

What is more, censorship was carried out by a particular and controlled organizations with ingrained ideological beliefs which cannot objectively determine what is good and what is not good for others. They just blindly followed instructions from the authorities. These organizations, such as Agitprop in Yugoslavia, assured that unwanted content would not reach the people. Such organizations and the authorities believed that censorship is indeed important since children could learn and adopt inappropriate behaviors by reading uncensored books which were not in the spirit of communist ideology or socialist realism. Banning unwanted books, censoring book classics which promoted religion and its beliefs or "unacceptable" behavior, forbidding some authors so they could not create, was common in Yugoslavia.

However, in the period of socialist Yugoslavia, it was just as important to create new "pure" generations in the spirit of socialism. To achieve that, censorship was inevitable.

The first years of Yugoslavia were marked by Russian literature which had a big impact in that period. Such books supported and promoted socialism in order to show the true values of the regime. Moreover, the mission behind the inclusion of Russian literature was also to show what the consequences could be if not obeying the regime.

After the establishment of the commission for censorship, the translating of foreign classics began. In the first postwar years, translated books were sometimes adaptations which entered the Croatian language through Russian, such as *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. Furthermore, censorship focused on eliminating any phrase dealing with God and religion, as well as any passages promoting ways of life which were not in line with the idea of education a socialist child.

Analyses of the books, related articles and the contexts in which they appeared show that socialist realism did not support anything that was related to both religion and the church. What is more, such contents were banned from the books and replaced with appropriate ones (Širac, 2017). Furthermore, strong characters who had developed opinions and beliefs were also controlled in the translations and censored in order to prevent children's' development of critical reasoning and questioning the socialist regime.

Many people in Yugoslavia tried to fight the regime, but unfortunately, the regime had the means to suppress their fight. Movements, such as *The Croatian Spring* tried to improve the economic situation of the country and also, to fight censorship. Finally, the end of Yugoslavia marked the end of socialist realism as well. However, after the establishment of the Republic of Croatia in 1991, a fight against Serbian books in the Croatian state began. Serbian books were removed from libraries, especially those published in the Cyrillic alphabet (Lešaja, 2012). Moreover, various books (even those on the lists of required reading) were attacked as inappropriate, as well as some gay-friendly books for children which did not even make it to the translation list.

Although censorship in some way might have its advantages (censoring inappropriate contents not suitable for the youngest ones), it can be concluded that censorship in Yugoslavia was exclusively negative. The purpose of censorship in socialist Yugoslavia was not to protect children, but to create new obedient generations. By banning books, omitting and censoring religious elements, literature was highly controlled and children were deprived of creating their own attitudes and opinions. Adults should encourage children to investigate the world through books and encourage them to prepare themselves for the future. Their guidance is necessary in choosing books and topics appropriate for their age, whereas censorship, in the form it was in the former Yugoslavia, should not be supported.

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## Izjava o izvornosti diplomskog rada

Izjavljujem da je moj diplomski rad izvorni rezultat mojeg rada te da se u izradi istoga nisam koristila drugi izvorima osim onih koji su u njemu navedeni.

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(vlastoručni potpis studenta)

