

## Eighty Years of *The Paul Street Boys* in Croatian Children's Literature\*

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(Received: 21 October 2016; accepted: 28 November 2016)

**Abstract:** Recently, we marked 80 years since the first appearance of Molnár's novel in Croatia (the translation by L. Matijević was published by Minerva in 1933). The novel was first published in 1906. Like other classical works of children's literature that entered Croatian children's literature, *The Paul Street Boys* had to be adapted to the literary and socio-historical context. Turbulent relations between Croatia and Hungary in the early 20th century, on one hand, and the changes in the social context, in particular after 1945, on the other hand, had a considerable impact on Croatian editions of the novel. This study focuses on censorship and adaptation of the text to the circumstances in which it was published. Interventions introduced by the translators and editors that very often went deep into the content of the novel did not have an adverse effect on the popularity of the book with the children's audience. However, they certainly testify about the times when ideological correctness of the published book was paramount to all other considerations, even esthetical and ethical ones.

**Keywords:** Croatian literature, children's literature, censorship, Ferenc Molnár, translation

### The initial stage of research: interpretations of the novel in Croatia and abroad

*Junaci Pavlove ulice* [The Paul Street Boys] by Ferenc Molnár has been present in Croatian translated literature for over eighty years. During this period, three different translations of the novel<sup>1</sup> have been published in over 20 editions<sup>2</sup> and the novel has been listed as required reading in elementary schools since the 1960s at least.<sup>3</sup>

Having this in mind, it seems even more surprising that literature on Molnár's novel in the Croatian language is rather scarce. In the few analyses that address

\* This work has been fully supported by the Croatian Science Foundation under the project BIBRICH (UIP-2014-09-9823).

<sup>1</sup> We refer to the translations by L. Matijević (referred to as L. Matijević because we could not trace down the translator's first name), Zlatko Glik and Neven Ušumović.

<sup>2</sup> Eighteen editions of the translation by L. Matijević (1933, 1962, 1964, 1967, 1969, 1971, 1972, 1974, 1975, 1977, 1978, 1980, 1983, 1985, 1986, 1988, 1989, 1991), five editions of the translation by Zlatko Glik (1996, 1998, 2001, 2002, 2003), and four editions of the translation by Neven Ušumović (2002, 2006, 2010, 2014) make up the total of 27 Croatian editions of the novel.

<sup>3</sup> In the 1960 syllabus for elementary schools, *Junaci Pavlove ulice* is listed as required reading in the 5th and 6th grades (Osnovna škola 1960b).

*Junaci Pavlove ulice*, the authors do not go beyond pointing out to universal characteristics of childhood and general human values.<sup>4</sup>

To them [children], the names of authors are not important. Very often they do not even remember their names. Nor is it important to which nation or country the author belongs. Children do not care whether their little heroes come from the banks of the Mississippi or the Sava, whether they play the game of their childhood at the outskirts of Budapest or Zagreb. Huck Finn, little Nemeček, or Emil Tischbein are no less close to them than *Hlapić*, *Pero Kvržica*, or *Koko*, a protagonist of Ivan Kušan's novels. All of them belong to the broad and numerous "children's nation" (DIKLIĆ-ZALAR 1980: 5).

A large number of analyses by foreign authors that also approach the novel from the perspective of universal values offer distorted interpretations. For example, while the thematic gist of the entire novel is a war between two children's gangs for *grund*, i.e. a piece of playground, for some authors the key theme in the book is a conflict of good and evil and general rejection of violence (GOLLER 2001, GOLLER 2005). A. Halmesvirta points out that these interpretations stem from the later imposed interpretations that appeared after World War I, in a period marked with disillusionment and a loss of trust in military authorities (HALMESVIRTA 2006: 19–29). Such opinions and attitudes were afterwards read into the novel that had been created before the horrors of World War I. Halmesvirta points out that the reader in the 1920s read the novel as a tragedy of "a little man" and of genuine sacrifice for common well-being (HALMESVIRTA 2006: 19–29). The placement of the novel in the historical context of its creation shows that the idealization of war used to be a well-established patriotic theme in literary texts for children and the youth of the period because authors used it to build national identity.

In a Croatian context, the novel has not been interpreted as a literary response to World War I but regarded solely from a historical perspective and stripped of its local specificity. The Croatian readers are, therefore, suggested that Molnár's novel could have been written virtually anywhere in the world since the impression is created that the novel's historical framework has no close historical and geographical links with Croatia.

However, it is difficult for us to accept that since its first appearance until today this novel has found its way to the Croatian readership following the same, smooth path, untouched by historical changes, in particular the changes occurring in Croatia over the last hundred years. It is even more difficult to agree with this since the textual evidence speaks in favour of the opposite view: Croatian translations of the novel abound in the traces of historically conditioned modifications waiting to be revealed and analyzed. It is exactly the aim of this study to trace down and analyze the discrepancies between various translations of the novel that have appeared in Croatia since its first translation in 1933 up to now. As for the major part of this period Croatia was part of the Yugoslav state, we will also take

<sup>4</sup> One of few exceptions is a paper by Marija Turk-Sakač, where the role of adult outsiders (i.e. Slovaks and halva sellers) in children's stories is analyzed (TURK-SAKAČ 2011).

into account translations into Serbian, Bosnian and Slovenian that were available to the Croatian readership. The analysis of a set of translations published from the 1950s to 2010 will show how differing political and socio-cultural circumstances affected the textual presentation of the novel in Croatia.

Ferenc Molnár (1878–1952) published the children's novel *Junaci Pavlove ulice* [Pál utcai fiúk] in instalments from 1905 to 1906.<sup>5</sup> The novel's action takes place in Budapest in 1889, when Molnár was an eleven-year-old boy. Therefore, Molnár describes the settings, events and protagonists on the basis of his own first-hand experience, relying on the memories of his own childhood (VOIT 1982). Such a position of the narrator is clearly signalled at the beginning of the novel:

A sada već na grundu Pavlove ulice tuguje velika, četverokutna kuća, puna stanara, među kojima možda nijedan ne zna da je taj komadić zemlje nekolicini sirotih peštanskih đaćića značio mladost. [...]

Pa, treba li krasnijeg mjesta za zabavu? Nama, gradskim dječacima, sigurno ne (UŠUMOVIĆ 2010: 21–22).

[And now on the *grund* on Paul Street stands a mournful, big square building, full of tenants, none of whom is aware that this morsel of ground once meant youth to a group of poor Budapest pupils. [...] Well, could there be a better place for entertainment? For us, city boys, definitely not.]

Throughout the novel, the narrator consistently maintains two temporal positions: the narration takes place in 1906 and the narrator recalls the events that occurred in the past, i.e. in 1889. Thus, when explaining the reasons for which redshirts started a war for the *grund* in 1889, the narrator compares this situation to an event that occurred at the time of narrating: the Russian–Japanese war that finished in 1905.

### Why did no Croatian translation appear before 1933?

Since its publication in 1906, *Junaci Pavlove ulice* has achieved a great success, both in Hungary and around the world.<sup>6</sup> Despite the fact that Croatia and Hungary were parts of the same state, the Austria–Hungary Empire, the first translation of the novel into the Croatian language appeared quite late, in 1933, when the novel had already achieved worldwide fame. In other words, the first Croatian translation appeared only when Croatia and Hungary were not in the political union any

<sup>5</sup> The novel was first published in instalments in the youth magazine *The Student Gazette*. The first instalment came out on 1 October 1905 and the last one on 25 March 1906. The novel was published in one volume in 1907 (VOIT 1982).

<sup>6</sup> The first translations include: *Die Jugend der Paulstrasse*, published in German in Berlin in 1910; *Chłopcy z Placu Broni*, a translation into Polish published in 1913 in Warsaw and Cracow; *Pál-tánava poised*, a translation into Estonian, published in 1921 in Tallinn; *Chlapci z Pavlovskej ulice*, a translation into Slovak, self-published by the author in 1925 in Komárno; *The Paul Street Boys*, a translation into English, published in 1927 in New York; *I ragazzi della via Pal*, a translation into Italian, published in 1929 in Rome; *Hoši z Pavelské ulice* a translation into Czech, published in 1930 in Prague.

longer and only after the novel had been translated into many European languages, made into a film in 1919, and published in the U.S. in 1927.

The reasons for this may be two-fold: on the one hand, the unfavourable state of Croatian–Hungarian relations and, on the other hand, the imperialistic attitude present in the novel. Centuries of difficult Croatian–Hungarian relations created multi-layered and dense sediments of events whose consequences created feelings of resistance and enmity towards Hungary. At the time of the novel’s appearance, Croatian–Hungarian relations were marked with Croats’ intense dissatisfaction with their position in the Monarchy, the imposition of Hungarian as the official language in Croatia and the administrative and financial dependence on Hungarians. Although Croatia achieved economic growth in the period when Khuen Héderváry was Croatian *ban* (1883–1903), a long time had to pass before an unbiased historical evaluation of his policy could be conducted. For example, D. Šokčević points out that “the name [of Khuen Héderváry] was perceived so negatively in the collective consciousness of Croats that for a long time even historians did not wish to address the results of the aforementioned progress” (ŠOKČEVIĆ 2002). Even though the policy of new course pursued amid the political turmoil in the period from 1903 to 1907 brought about a slight improvement in Croatian–Hungarian relations, Hungarians remained demonized enemies in literature and popular consciousness (ŠOKČEVIĆ 2006). Thus, a large number of Croatian writers, such as Antun Gustav Matoš, Vladimir Nazor, and Marija Jurić Zagorka, to mention the most prominent ones, created particularly strong negative images of Hungarians. Having this in mind, the publishing of a Hungarian children’s novel before 1918 might have seemed a pro-Hungarian political act.

### **The first edition of novel and the political and historical framework of Hungary**

The key messages that the novel conveyed to Hungarian child readers are closely connected to the period when the novel was written. Although the action is placed in 1889, there is a feeling that the author’s intention is to point out to the frustrating conditions in Hungary in the period of its writing, i.e. in 1906 and to the dissatisfaction with the Austrian dominance in the dual monarchy. This knowledge helps us to better understand a number of references. For example, it becomes clearer why “Viennese” means pompous, why *Einstand* is referred to as “an ugly Teutonic word”, why there is a reference to “something Garibaldian in that red shirt” as well as why there are references to the withdrawal of Austrian forces from Italy.

A heated debate between Austria and Hungary on the commanding language in the military that reached its climax in 1906 found its echo in the book. The boys in their games use only Hungarian military terms: “Kapitány, főhadnagy, hadnagy” (MOLNÁR 1949: 17). A feeling of the presence of a seed of something that is in the making, that has not yet seen the light of the day but is potentially present and will become real one day permeates the book.

...ali se Boka osjećao kao da nije usred velikoga grada nego negdje daleko u stranoj zemlji, na nekim prostranim poljanama gdje će sutra jedna bitka odlučiti o sudbini naroda (GLIK 1996: 88).

[...but Boka felt as if he were not at all in the heart of the city but somewhere far, far away, on foreign soil, on a vast field where tomorrow one battle would decide the destiny of a nation.]

Ferenc Molnár (whose real name was Ferenc Neumann) came from one of many Jewish families that settled in Budapest in the 19th century after anti-Semitic pogroms in Poland and Russia (CZIGÁNY 1984). Having settled down, Jews invested considerable efforts in assimilating in the new environment: they quickly adopted the Hungarian language and Hungarian names and fought together with Hungarians in the revolution of 1848. According to the 1910 census, Jews made up 25 per cent of the Budapest population (SANDERS 2002). For them, as for Molnár himself, Budapest became their homeland, their native city. In his analysis of Molnár as a Jewish writer, Sanders concludes that Molnár – and this is characteristic for the majority of Jews in Budapest – places to the foreground love towards the Hungarian homeland, which overweighs his loyalty to the Jewish origin (SANDERS 2002).<sup>7</sup> This attitude is visible in the novel, which turns into a celebration of the sanctity of the homeland. Throughout the novel, in many references to the *grund* Molnár actually refers to the homeland. At the very beginning of the novel, patriotism is equated with children's determination to love their own piece of land, their playground and fight for it:

Vidjelo se u njihovim očima da vole ovaj komadić zemlje i da će se i boriti za njega ako na to dođe red. To je bila neka vrsta domoljublja. Tako su vikali „Živio grund!“ – kao da viču „Živjela domovina!“ (UŠUMOVIĆ 2010: 33).

[It could be seen in their eyes that they loved this strip of land and that they were determined to fight for it if need be. It was a form of patriotism. They cried “Hurrah for the *grund!*” as if they meant “Long live our homeland!”]

At the end of the novel, this determination leaves the sphere of children's game and turns into real life with real consequences, when Nemeček really dies for the “homeland”:

Ako već siroti Nemeček nije mogao dočekati da može primiti poslanstvo kit-udruge što je tražilo od njega oprost, barem ni ovo nije dočekao: da mu oduzmu domovinu, za koju je umro (UŠUMOVIĆ 2010: 190).

[If poor Nemeček could not live long enough to receive the delegation of the Putty Club asking for his forgiveness, at least he did not live long enough to see that his homeland, for which he had given his life, was taken away from him.]

<sup>7</sup> Nemeček, a despised, belittled, not completely integrated member of the Putty Club and the boys' army from the Paul's Street is particularly suitable for the stereotypical role of a Jew. However, his path to heaven makes him a perfectly masked Jew or a dejudized Jew, as is pointed out by I. Sanders, who makes a distinction between Ferenc Molnár, a Jew integrated into Hungarian society and Arthur Shnitzler, an Austrian Jew considerably more aware of his Jewishness (SANDERS 2004).

Children's game is understood as a general rehearsal, as a foreboding, preparation for the future and some more serious "games".

Mislilo je na velikog Napoleona... odlutao u budućnost. Što će i kako će biti? Što će postati od njega? Hoće li biti vojnik, pravi, i hoće li voditi vojsku u odorama nekad, negdje daleko, na pravo bojno polje – ne za jedan mali komad zemlje, nego za veliki komad slatke zemlje, koju nazivamo domovinom? (UŠUMOVIĆ 2010: 103).

[He thought of the great Napoleon... And his mind strayed into the future. What and how would it be? What would become of him? Would he be a soldier, a real soldier, and would he command uniformed troops somewhere far away, onto a real battlefield – to fight not for a piece of land but for that vast, dear territory known as homeland?]

In his lively child imagination, Boka sees himself as Napoleon, the greatest conqueror, who, without a second thought, conquered the territory for his homeland. In six or seven years, the fourteen-year-old Boka will be an adult. How could have such aspirations of Hungarian boys be understood by their fourteen-year-old Croatian contemporaries? How could they have looked on their Hungarian peers' war games, the games which, in the words of Molnár, might become reality one day?

The games of Croatian children readers in the 1910s were a far cry away from Boka's dreams of conquests. They were exactly the opposite: their games were defensive, and their *grund* was defended from, metaphorically speaking, Boka and the boys from the Paul Street. At that time, Hungarians represented centuries-old enemies and aspirants to the Croatian territory. Such perception of Hungarians was passed down from generation to generation through oral and written literary tradition, but also through "lived culture". Therefore, the delayed appearance of the first translation of the novel in 1933 may be accounted for by extra-literary reasons, i.e. potential interpretations of the novel in the Croatian political circumstances of the period.

### **The reception of *Junaci Pavlove ulice* within a series of socially engaged children's novels**

The first Croatian translation of *Junaci Pavlove ulice* was published in 1933 by the Zagreb-based *Minerva* publishing house. The reviews, though scarce, were positive. However, the novel itself was regarded within the framework of other works for children that were published at this time. In the same year, the novel *The Voyages of Doctor Dolittle* by Hugh Lofting and *The Cruise of the Dazzler* by Jack London were published within the same series. We should add that in the very same year, two most famous novels by Mato Lovrak, *Vlak u snijegu* [Train in Snow] and *Družba Pere Kvržice* [The Gang of Pero Kvržica] appeared on the children's literature market. Some other children's novels were also published at this time: *Mali križari* [Little Crusaders] in 1931 by Dragoslav Heiligstein, *Emil und die Detektive* [Emil and the Detectives] in 1931, *Pünktchen und Anton* [Anna

Louise and Anton] in 1933 and *Das fliegende Klassenzimmer* [The Flying Classroom] in 1934 by Erich Kästner and *Das Licht der Berge* in 1934 by Franz Weiser. All of them were welcomed as a beginning of a positive, new trend in children's literature: "Jack London, Hugh Lofting, Erich Kästner, and Ferenc Molnár infused a fresh life into anaemic children's and youth literature, giving it a stamp of modernity (PEROŠ 1937: 197).

All of these novels were really contemporaneous (the earliest published source text among them is *The Voyages of Doctor Dolittle*, first published in 1920). Molnár's novel was the only one in the series whose Croatian translation was published with an almost thirty-year delay. Did antagonistic feelings towards Hungary lose its intensity, did the centuries-old animosity abate? Or was the publication of the Croatian translation caused by some other factors?

On the one hand, the relations with Hungary did not become friendly but historical and political circumstances in Croatia in the 1930s brought about the need for protection from new opponents. Thus, the old opponents, and highly tensed relations with Hungarians, were pushed to the margins. The Kingdom of Yugoslavia functioning as a dictatorship of King Aleksandar Karađorđević, coupled with a severe world-wide economic depression, did not bring anything better for Croatia. Moreover, in the 1930s the voices remembering the Austria-Hungary period with a feeling of nostalgia, as a time when Croatia enjoyed a relative autonomy and economic progress (BAGARIĆ 2011), could already be heard. However, pursuing its own aims, the official Yugoslav policy continued to demonize Hungarians as centuries-old enemies in history schoolbooks and literature.

The Croatian literary relations with Hungary gradually became warmer in the 1930s, owing, among other factors, to the influence of Miroslav Krleža:

A more differentiated picture of the neighbour on the other bank of the Drava river was introduced by Miroslav Krleža who, we should admit, drew heavily on the picture of Hungarians in 19th century Croatian literature (for example, his picture of the Hungarian elite is quite similar to the picture portrayed by Gjalski). But he also relied on his own personal experience and a really good knowledge of Hungarian circumstances. In his works, the circle of Hungarian progressives, such as Oszkár Jászi or Endre Ady, is presented in positive terms. Krleža had a high esteem for Hungarian culture and literature, which he really knew well (ŠOKČEVIĆ 2006: 290–291).

The work of Ferenc Molnár was introduced to the Croatian readership within this left-oriented perspective, which bore a considerable impact on the interpretation of his novel. Thus, *Minerva*, a publisher of *Junaci Pavlove ulice* was described as "...a mercantile company that uses the advantages that publishing of leftist literature may bring, though with caution, lest it should lose its readers from the right spectre..." (VUJNOVIĆ 1936: 61).

Further, the first reviewers of the novel (cf. KOZARČANIN 1933, PEROŠ 1937) brought the book into correlation with new tendencies in children's literature, in particular with such left-oriented writers as e.g. Erich Kästner, Jack London, and a number of Croatian authors. For example, V. Peroš points out that "...his book,

due to the thematic similarity, reminds us of Kästner, whose books young readers read most” (PEROŠ 1937: 197).

The realistic manner of narration is, indeed, the only grounds for seeing similarity between Molnár and Kästner and the other authors mentioned above. However, unlike their works, Molnár’s narration is not socially engaged. Nemeček’s social status and poor family background do not constitute the thematic gist of the novel. This aspect is used only as a sentimental addition that contributes to the drama of the death of the smallest and weakest of the boys, and not as a means of social criticism. Peroš points out to this difference: “Molnár does not attack these negative social phenomena with anger of a grim satiric, nor does he grind his teeth over injustices. He just portrays them in his brilliant style, coloured with lively tones of his splendid sentences” (PEROŠ 1937: 197).

Although the critics viewed the novel in terms of newly emerging realistic socially engaged children’s literature, Molnár’s novel points out to two important aspects: first, it shows that the realistic narration style is not a novelty inaugurated in the 1930s and second, that realistic narration in the 1930s is not necessarily socially engaged.<sup>8</sup>

Yet, the third aspect of the appearance of Molnár’s novel in the Croatian context may be the most significant. What Peroš recognizes as a “formal” similarity between Molnár and Kästner is actually a thematic focus of the novel on the accounts of children’s gangs (PEROŠ 1937). It is exactly in the 1930s that the first novels about children’s gangs appeared in Croatia. Novels about children’s gangs were a form of deviation from adventure novels and novels about orphans that had been dominant. However, *Junaci Pavlove ulice* did not completely fit into the relatively well-established patterns of novels about children’s gangs. In most cases, children’s gangs have their typical protagonists: *the leader, the deputy leader, the traitor and the weakest one*. In the decisive moment in Molnár’s novel the leader (Boka) does not become the main hero, as it may be expected. To the contrary, quite unexpectedly, Nemeček, the boy who has the role of the weakest one, turns into the main hero. Owing to this, and to its tragic end, Molnár’s novel became an untypical example of a novel about children’s gangs.

Interpretations of *Junaci Pavlove ulice* after World War II followed the pattern introduced in the 1930s: the novel was viewed as a socially engaged novel. Over time, it came to be interpreted as a novel about the poor and deprived of their rights (RADIĆ 2004), although, as we have pointed out, the motif of Nemeček’s poverty is introduced at the very end of the novel, not to be seriously developed but merely to intensify the sentimental touch.

In Communist Yugoslavia, immediately after World War II there emerged a need for children’s literature that will help to bring up young generations in a new spirit. This raised the issue of what books to offer to children. *Junaci Pavlove ulice* was one of the books for children deemed to be acceptable. Still, the translation

<sup>8</sup> Realistic narration appeared in Croatian children’s literature much earlier, more precisely, in the 19th century, with Josip Kozarac as one of its pioneers.



of the novel appeared in Croatia strikingly later than in other Yugoslav republics, almost two decades after the end of World War II and almost three decades after it had been first published in Croatian translation.

However, when the Croatian translation of *Junaci Pavlove ulice* finally appeared in 1962, it differed considerably from Serbian, Slovenian, or Macedonian translations. In comparison to other available translations, the Croatian version exhibits a considerable condensation of the text as well as ideologically motivated modifications.

The most important intervention in the translation that tackles the structure of the novel is the modification of the temporal framework of the action. As we have said above, the novel's action is set in 1889. The only places in the novel that provide clear temporal orientation to readers helping them to place the novel in the historical context are references to the label on the stamp of the Putty Club: "Udruženje skupljača kita, Budimpešta, 1889" [Putty Collectors Club, Budapest, Founded 1889] (GLIK 1996: 69), and a label on the flag of the Putty Club. In the 1962 Croatian translation by Matijević, all references to the year 1889 are omitted. With indications of the historical context erased, the novel is transposed to some universal childhood time.

In addition to this, Matijević's translation aims to minimize the local colour and construct instead a universal city where universal childhood is spent.

Although the Hungarian text contains explicit references to "alföld", which means "belonging to Alföld", i.e. "belonging to the Great Hungarian Plain", Matijević translates this part using the word "plain": "*Grund...* You handsome, robust children of plains..." (MATIJEVIĆ 1933: 21).

There seems to be no other reason to omit this colourful and lyrical reference in the text but to suppress the local marking of "a small place of arable Budapest land". Let us now compare the translations of this section by MATIJEVIĆ 1962 and UŠUMOVIĆ 2010:

Unutra još nitko nije znao, da onaj mali komad zemlje možda već i nije njihov...  
– Vidiš, – rekao je Nemeček...

[No one in there had any idea that this little strip of land was probably no longer theirs... – You see, said Nemecek...] (MATIJEVIĆ 1933: 81).

Tamo unutra još nitko nije znao da ovaj mali komad zemlje možda već i nije njihov. *Ovaj mali komad neplodne, grbave peštanske zemlje, ova među dvjema kućama stisnuta ravan, što je u dječjim životima značila beskonačnost, slobodu, što je prijepodne bila američka prerija, poslije podne mađarska Velika nizina, za kiše more, zimi Sjeverni pol; ukratko: bila im je prijatelj i mijenjala se u ono što su oni željeli samo da bi ih zabavila.* – Vidiš – reče Nemeček... (UŠUMOVIĆ 2010: 80).

[No one in there had any idea that this little strip of land was probably no longer theirs. *This small piece of barren, knobby Budapest land, this bit of plain sandwiched between two houses, which in their children lives meant infinity, freedom, which in the morning was their American prairie, in the afternoon their Magyar Lowlands, in rain their sea, in the winter their North Pole; in short, it was their friend and transformed into whatever they wanted for their amusement.* – You see, said Nemecek...]

As is evident from this example, in Matijević's text an entire paragraph, containing place-specific references, is omitted.

However, Matijević's interventions do not stop at merely omitting elements of the source text. At some places, a specific ideological colour is added. Thus, when the source text refers to the Russian–Japanese war, the target text is so modified as to lead the reader to infer that the conquering war was led by the expansionist Imperial Russia and not the justice loving Soviet Union.

Table 1. Examples of additions of particular ideological colour

Edition	Translated text
MATIJEVIĆ 1933: 52	<i>Carskoj Rusiji</i> trebalo je more, pa je zato ratovala s Japancima. [ <i>Imperial Russia</i> needed sea space, so it waged war against the Japanese.]
PEROVIĆ 1951: 59	<i>Rusima</i> je trebalo more, zato su ratovali s Japancima. [ <i>The Russians</i> needed sea space, so they waged war against the Japanese.]
BARBARIĆ 1952: 50	<i>Rusom</i> je bilo potrebno morje, zato so se vojskovali z Japonci. [ <i>The Russians</i> needed sea space, so they waged war against the Japanese.]
LESKOVAC 1957: 50	<i>Rusima</i> je trebalo more, zato su ratovali s Japancima. [ <i>The Russians</i> needed sea space, so they waged war against the Japanese.]
MATIJEVIĆ 1962: 47	<i>Carskoj Rusiji</i> trebalo je more, pa je zato ratovala s Japancima. [ <i>Imperial Russia</i> needed sea space, so it waged war against the Japanese.]
GLIK 1996: 43	Na primjer, <i>Rusima</i> je trebalo more, zato su se zaratili s Japancima. [For example, <i>the Russians</i> needed sea space, so they waged war against the Japanese.]
UŠUMOVIĆ 2010: 51	<i>Rusima</i> je trebalo more, pa su zbog toga ratovali s Japancima. [ <i>The Russians</i> needed sea space, so they waged war against the Japanese.]

### Croatian versions of *Junaci Pavlove ulice* (1962–1991)

In post-World War II Yugoslavia, Molnár's novel was first published in Novi Sad in 1949 in Hungarian. The first Serbian (Cyrillic) edition entitled *Dečaci Pavlove ulice*, was published in Novi Sad in 1951. It was followed by the Slovenian edition *Dečki Pavlove ulice* published in 1952. The new Serbian translation *Dečaci Pavlove ulice* in Cyrillic letters, was published in 1954 in Belgrade. The Macedonian translation *Decata od Pavlovata ulica* was published in 1955, followed in 1957

by the Bosnian (in Latin letters) version *Junaci Pavlove ulice*.<sup>9</sup> The Croatian translation was published in 1962 in the popular *Vjeverica* series.

The list of required reading for Croatian schools for 1960 contained Molnár's novel *Junaci Pavlove ulice* as required reading in the fifth and sixth grades of elementary school (Osnovna škola 1960a: 71). Which edition did the compilers of the required reading list have in mind? Which particular edition could be available to pupils in Croatian schools? The first Croatian translation was published in 1933, i.e. almost thirty years ago. Both Serbian editions published in Novi Sad and Belgrade were printed published in Cyrillic letters and, moreover, their title was different: *Dečaci Pavlove ulice*. This leads us to conclude that they could not have had Serbian editions in mind. The Sarajevo-based publishing house *Narodna prosvjeta* published the *ijekivized* version of the translation by Mladen Leskovac entitled *Junaci Pavlove ulice* in its series *Lastavica*. As the books published by *Lastavica* were easily available in Croatia, this leads us to conclude that the authors of the list must have had this edition in mind.

When the editor of the *Lastavica* series, Ahmed Hromadžić decided to publish Molnár's novel, he could choose one of the then existing translations into Serbo-Croatian: by L. Matijević, Sonja Perović, or Mladen Leskovac. His choice fell on the translation by Mladen Leskovac.

In 1962, when Grigor Vitez, the editor of the *Vjeverica* series at the time, had to decide which translation to publish, he did not choose the translation by Leskovac (even in its *ijekivized* version) but rather Matijević's translation, though it was the older one. The translation by Leskovac avoids condensation and successfully overcomes some of the other deficiencies of Matijević's translation. The obvious deficiencies of Matijević's translation, in addition to the omission of the parts of the source text, include the translator's modifications of the author's attitudes and the translator's striving to adapt the novel to the demands and expectations of his time. If it is so, we have to ask ourselves why did Vitez choose Matijević's translation, though he could have chosen the more recent translation by Leskovac.

The answer is quite simple: because Matijević's translation so perfectly corresponded with new circumstances that its weaknesses became its strengths. Matijević omitted exactly those parts of Molnár's novel that anchored the novel into the Christian system of values and those parts that could be interpreted as indicators of Hungarian imperialism. The modifications introduced by Matijević belong to the same ideological matrix. Further, the transposition of the novel's action into a kind of cosmopolitan all-time was also in line with new circumstances in Yugoslavia.

Only a couple of minor changes had to be introduced to make Matijević's translation from 1933 perfectly complying with the demands of political reality in 1962. For example, in the 1933 translation, Hungarian names of military ranks

<sup>9</sup> This translation, published in the *Lastavica* series under number 32, is an *ijekivized* version of the translation by Mladen Leskovac that was published for the first time in 1954 in Cyrillic letters under the title *Dečaci Pavlove ulice* (LESKOVAC 1954).

were translated into Croaticized versions of German, Austro-Hungarian names (*kapetan, oberlajtnant, lajtnant*). In the post-World War II editions of this translation, the names of military ranks were changed into Yugoslav versions (*kapetan, poručnik, potporučnik*).

Further, the translation had to be adapted to new orthographic conventions. For example, in the following paragraph *nećemo*, written as one word in the 1933 edition, was replaced with *ne ćemo* written as two words, in line with a new convention. This is evident when we can compare the same paragraph in 1933 and 1962 editions:

Ali ova zastava bila je crveno zelena i na njoj je bilo napisano: „Udruženje za skupljanje kita, Pešta. Zaklinjemo se da robovi više biti nećemo“. – Hm, – rekao je gospodin profesor – koja je ta fina ptica, što *nećemo* piše zajedno? (MATIJEVIĆ 1933: 70).

[But this flag was red and green and carried the words: “Putty Collectors Club, Budapest. We solemnly swear *notto* be slaves any more”. – Hm, – said the professor, – who is that bright bird that *notto* writes as one word.]

Ali ova zastava bila je crveno bijela i na njoj je bilo napisano: „Udruženje za skupljanje kita, Pešta. Zaklinjemo se da robovi više biti ne ćemo“. – Hm, – rekao je gospodin profesor – koja je ta fina ptica, što *ne ćemo* piše rastavljeno? (MATIJEVIĆ 1962: 63).

[But this flag was red and white and carried the words: “Putty Collectors Club, Budapest. We solemnly swear *not to* be slaves any more”. – Hm, – said the professor, – who is that bright bird that *not to* writes as two words.]

From 1962 to 1991, the translation by Matijević was published 16 times, with a new edition coming out on average every two years. From 1991 to 1996, no new editions were published and, in 1996, a new translation by Zlatko Glik appeared. Since 1996, Matijević’s translation has not been published as it, due to the rigidity of its ideological position, has become anachronistic.

In which respects did Matijević’s translation correspond so closely with the period following World War II? First of all, all elements related to Christianity were consistently eliminated or drastically modified, as we can see when we compare it to the other above-mentioned translations.

Table 2. Examples of the removal of phrases and interjections referring to God

Edition	Translated text
MATIJEVIĆ 1933: 156	– O! – viknula je ona. [– Oh! – she cried.]
PEROVIĆ 1951: 187	– <i>Gospode!</i> – uzviknula je. [– <i>Good Lord!</i> – she cried.]
BARBARIĆ 1952: 156	„ <i>Jezus!</i> “, je vzkliknila. [“ <i>Jesus!</i> “, she cried.]
LESKOVAC 1957: 154	– <i>Hriste bože!</i> – uzviknu. [– <i>Jesus Christ!</i> – she cried.]

MATJEVIĆ 1962: 145	– O! – viknula je ona. [– Oh! – she cried.]
GLIK 1996: 133	– <i>Isuse!</i> – poviknula je. [– <i>Jesus!</i> – she cried.]
UŠUMOVIĆ 2010: 156	– <i>Isuse!</i> – vikne. [– <i>Jesus!</i> – she cried.]

In Matijević's translation, all references to God, whether in exclamations or just habitual greetings, are omitted. The sharp censorship scissors cut out even unconscious, spontaneous exclamations along with equally unconscious every day greetings, thus changing the elements that constitute the recognizable features of the described culture, and contribute to its specific colour.

Table 3. Examples of the modifications of comparative phrases containing references to God

<b>Edition</b>	<b>Translated text</b>
MATJEVIĆ 1933: 178	Ušli su po redu, nespretni, preplašeni, <i>kao što se nekad ulazilo u crkvu.</i> [They entered one by one, clumsy, fearful, <i>as people used to enter church.</i> ]
PEROVIĆ 1951: 215	Ulazili su redom, snébivajući se pomalo, puni poštovanja, <i>kao da su ulazili na crkvena vrata.</i> [They entered one by one, somewhat astounded, full of reverence, <i>as if they were entering the church door.</i> ]
BARBARIĆ 1952: 180	Vstopili so po vrsti, v zadregi, s poštovanjem, <i>ko da so vstopili skozi cerkvena vrata.</i> [They entered one by one, somewhat astounded, full of reverence, <i>as if they were entering the church door.</i> ]
LESKOVAC 1957: 177	Uđoše redom, uzbuđeno, s poštovanjem, <i>kao da ulaze u crkvu.</i> [They entered one by one, somewhat excited, full of reverence, <i>as if they were entering church.</i> ]
MATJEVIĆ 1962: 167	Ušli su po redu, nespretni, preplašeni, <i>kao što se nekad ulazilo u crkvu.</i> [They entered one by one, clumsy, full of fear, <i>as people used to enter church.</i> ]
GLIK 1996: 152	Dječaci su ulazili jedan po jedan pomalo zbunjeni i s poštovanjem, <i>kao da prolaze kroz crkvena vrata.</i> [The boys entered one by one, somewhat confused and full of reverence, <i>as if they were entering the church door.</i> ]
UŠUMOVIĆ 2010: 181	Uđu redom, zbunjeno, s poštovanjem, <i>kao da ulaze u crkvu.</i> [They entered one by one, somewhat confused, full of reverence, <i>as if they were entering church.</i> ]

In Matijević's translation, the comparison of the manner in which the boys entered Nemeček's room with the manner of entering church differs considerably from other translations. It is also weakened by the referring to entering to church as a past habit, something that people used to do. Further, in Matijević's sentence, the whole situation has a completely different affective value. While in all the other translations emotions accompanying church entering are excitement and reverence, Matijević distorts this: the boys enter church "awkwardly" and "fearfully". One cannot avoid the impression that in this translation, a comparison with entering church is maintained only in order to be given negative connotations.

The same effect is visible when a habitually used proverbial expression containing a reference to God is turned into a proverbial expression referring to devil.

Table 4. Examples of distorting references to God

Edition	Translated text	
MATIJEVIĆ 1933: 38, 72	– <i>Vrag će ga znati</i> – rekao je Boka. [ <i>Only the Devil knows</i> – said Boka.]	<i>Vrag bi znao</i> , kako su to mogli da udese tako brzo... [ <i>Only Devil knows</i> how they managed to do it so quickly.]
PEROVIĆ 1951: 41, 84	– Ko će ga znati – rekao je tiho. [Who knows – he said quietly.]	Ko zna kako im je uspelo tako brzo... [Who knows how they managed to do it so quickly.]
BARBARIĆ 1952: 36, 70	„Kdo bi ga razume!” je rekel tiho. [Who knows – he said quietly.]	Kdo ve, kako so mogli to tako hitro storiti... [Who knows how they managed to do it so quickly.]
LESKOVAC 1957: 35, 70	– <i>Bog zna</i> – reče tiho [Boka]. [ <i>God knows</i> – he said quietly.]	<i>Sam bog sveti neka zna</i> kako su mogli tako brzo... [ <i>Heaven only knows</i> how they managed to do it so quickly.]
MATIJEVIĆ 1962: 34, 65	– <i>Vrag će ga znati</i> – rekao je Boka mirno. [ <i>Only the Devil knows</i> – said Boka calmly.]	<i>Vrag bi znao</i> , kako su to mogli da udese tako brzo... [ <i>Only Devil knows</i> how they managed to do it so quickly.]
GLIČ 1996: 30, 59	– <i>Bog će znati</i> – reče Boka tiho. [ <i>God knows</i> – said Boka quietly.]	<i>Bog bi znao</i> kako su mogli biti tako brzi... [ <i>Heaven only knows</i> how they managed to do it so quickly.]
UŠUMOVIĆ 2010: 37, 71	– <i>Bog zna</i> – reče Boka tiho. [ <i>God knows</i> – said Boka quietly.]	<i>Bog zna</i> kako im je to uspelo tako brzo... [ <i>Heaven only knows</i> how they managed to do it so quickly.]

To Matijević, it does not matter whether it is God or devil; he has decided that the world of *Junaci Pavlove ulice* is a contemporary and cosmopolitan atheistic world, and not the concrete world of childhood reality in Budapest in 1889, when people acted and talked in a way that corresponded to their time and setting.

A paragraph at the end of the novel that places the text within the Christian worldview framework was omitted from all translations published in Yugoslavia.

Table 5. The paragraph censored in all Yugoslav translations

Edition	Translated text
PEROVIĆ 1951: 218	<p>[...] sada više nije bilo sumnje da li vidi i čuje šta se oko njega događa. – Kasno smo došli – šapnuo je Barabaš.</p> <p>[It was quite certain now that he neither saw nor heard anything of that which was going on around him. – We came too late – whispered Barabás.]</p>
BARBARIĆ 1952: 182	<p>[...] zdaj ni bilo već dvoma, da nič ne vidi in sliši, kaj se godi okrog njega. „Prepozno smo prišli”, je šepnil Barabaš.</p> <p>[It was quite certain now that he neither saw nor heard anything of that which was going on around him. – We came too late – whispered Barabás.]</p>
LESKOVAC 1957: 179	<p>[...] sada je bilo već izvjesno da ništa ne vidi i ništa ne čuje. – Dockan smo došli, – šapnu Barabaš.</p> <p>[It was quite certain now that he neither saw nor heard anything of that which was going on around him. – We came too late – whispered Barabás.]</p>
MATIJEVIĆ 1962: 169	<p>[...] sada je već bilo jasno da ne vidi i ne čuje ništa od onoga, što se okolo događalo. – Prekasno smo došli – šaptao je Barabaš.</p> <p>[It was quite certain now that he neither saw nor heard anything of that which was going on around him. – We came too late – whispered Barabás.]</p>
GLIK 1996: 154	<p>Sada je već bilo sigurno da ništa ne vidi niti ne čuje što se oko njega događa. <i>Za vid i sluh satnika Nemečeka pobrinut će se anđeli koji su došli po njega i odnijeli ga ga onamo gdje slatku glazbu čuju i blistava prikazanja vide samo onakvi ljudi kakav bijaše satnik Nemeček.</i> – Prekasno smo došli – šaputao je Barabaš.</p> <p>[It was quite certain now that he neither saw nor heard anything of that which was going on around him. <i>Angels had come to take the sight and hearing of Captain Nemeček to the place where only such as Captain Nemeček may see divine light and hear sweet music.</i> – We came too late – whispered Barabás.]</p>

UŠUMOVIĆ 2010: 183	<p>[...] sada je bilo sigurno da ne vidi ništa i ne čuje ništa od onoga što se oko njega zbiva, <i>jer su po vid i sluh kapetana Nemecseka došli anđeli i odveli ga tamo gdje milozvučnu glazbu slušaju i svjetlosno blistavilo gledaju samo oni koji su bili poput kapetana Nemecseka.</i></p> <p>– Kasno smo došli – šapne Barabas.</p> <p>[It was quite certain now that he neither saw nor heard anything of that which was going on around him. <i>Angels had come to take the sight and hearing of Captain Nemecsek to the place where only such as Captain Nemecsek may see divine light and hear sweet music.</i></p> <p>– We came too late – whispered Barabás.]</p>
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In Matijević's translation, all references to the embarrassing fusion of Napoleon and Hungarian nationalism, i.e. references to Hungarian expansionism, are systematically omitted.

The other translations analyzed in this study contain three explicit references to Napoleon, whom Boka idealizes. In Matijević's text, two entire paragraphs containing a reference to Napoleon are omitted.

Table 6. Examples of the handling of references to Hungarian expansionism

Edition	Translated text
MATIJEVIĆ 1933: 109	<p>A Boka je zastao na sredini grunda i ganuto, sretno pozdravio svoje drugove. Svi su vidjeli prizor s Gerebom i sada su već svi bili načisto s njime.</p> <p>[Boka stopped in the centre of the grund and, deeply moved, blissfully saluted his army.</p> <p>All the boys had seen the scene with Geréb, and now they had a fairly clear idea of him.]</p>
PEROVIĆ 1951: 130	<p>Boka je zastao na sredini placu i tronuto, srećno pozdravio vojnički u pravcu svoje armije. <i>Opet se setio velikog Napoleoa. Njega je toliko volela njegova stara garda...</i></p> <p>Svi su videli onu scenu i sada su već svi bili načisto s Gerebom.</p> <p>[Boka stopped in the centre of the grund and, deeply moved, blissfully saluted his army. <i>Once again he could not help thinking of the great Napoleon. He – it is said – had been so beloved by his guardsmen.</i></p> <p>All the boys had seen the scene with Geréb, and now they had a fairly clear idea of him.]</p>
BARBARIĆ 1952: 107	<p>Boka je obstal sredi placu ter ganjen in srečen po vojaško pozdravil svojo armado. <i>Spet je mislil na velikega Napoleona. Tega je tako ljubila njegova stara garda...</i></p> <p>Vsi so videli taj prizor sedaj so si bili že vsi na jasnem glede Gereba.</p>



	<p>[Boka stopped in the centre of the grund and, deeply moved, blissfully saluted his army. <i>Once again he could not help thinking of the great Napoleon. He – it is said – had been so beloved by his guardsmen.</i></p> <p>All the boys had seen the scene with Geréb, and now they had a fairly clear idea of him.]</p>
LESKOVAC 1957: 106	<p>– A Boka zastade u sredini gradilišta i, dirnut, blaženo pozdravi svoju vojsku. <i>Pa je opet pomislio na velikog Napoleona. Njega je ovoliko voljela njegova stara garda...</i></p> <p>Svi su vidjeli ono što se maločas odigralo, i sada su već svi načisto bili s Gerebom.</p> <p>[Boka stopped in the centre of the building site and, deeply moved, blissfully saluted his army. <i>Once again he could not help thinking of the great Napoleon. He – it is said – had been so beloved by his guardsmen.</i></p> <p>All the boys had seen the scene with Geréb, and now they had a fairly clear idea of him.]</p>
MATJEVIĆ 1962: 100	<p>– A Boka je zastao na sredini grunda i ganut, sretan pozdravio svoje drugove.</p> <p>Svi su vidjeli prizor s Gerebom i sada su već svi bili načisto s njime.</p> <p>[Boka stopped in the centre of the grund and, deeply moved, blissfully saluted his army.</p> <p>All the boys had seen the scene with Geréb, and now they had a fairly clear idea of him.]</p>
GLIK 1996: 92	<p>Boka je zastao na sredini grunda i sav oduševljen salutirao prema svojim vojnicima. <i>Sad je opet mislio na velikog Napoleona. Njega je tako voljela njegova stara garda...</i></p> <p>Svi su vidjeli prethodni prizor i svi su bili načistu s Gerebom.</p> <p>[Boka stopped in the centre of the grund and, deeply moved, blissfully saluted his army. <i>Once again he could not help thinking of the great Napoleon. He – it is said – had been so beloved by his guardsmen.</i></p> <p>All the boys had seen the scene with Geréb, and now they had a fairly clear idea of him.]</p>
UŠUMOVIĆ 2010: 106	<p>Boka je, pak, stao nasred grunda i tronuto, sretno salutirao ispred vojske. <i>Sad je ponovno pomislio na velikog Napoleona. Njega je jako voljela njegova stara garda...</i></p> <p>Svatko je vidio prizor i sada je svatko bio načisto s Gerebom.</p> <p>[Boka stopped in the centre of the grund and, deeply moved, blissfully saluted his army. <i>Once again he could not help thinking of the great Napoleon. He – it is said – had been so beloved by his guardsmen.</i></p> <p>[All the boys had seen the scene with Geréb, and now they had a fairly clear idea of him.]</p>

These examples show that the levels of censorship varied in different Yugoslav republics. In his research on the modifications introduced under Communist regime into texts produced in the pre-Communist era (before World War II), P. Svetina points out to “an interesting phenomenon that at the same time, in the same state, under the same regime different criteria of what is permissible and impermissible, what is politically correct and incorrect, were applied” (SVETINA 2011: 27).

## Conclusion

The paper points out that despite the attempts in Croatian critical literature to convince us that *Junaci Pavlove ulice* is an example of a universal children’s novel dealing with a general human situation, the Croatian (and Yugoslav) editors, translators, and publishers were well aware of historical and ideological elements in the novel that were unacceptable in the given circumstances and tried to eliminate or neutralize them.

For the novel to be published in the given circumstances, editors and translators often quite radically intervened in the very texture of the novel. The amount, nature, and depth of these interventions do not indicate that the source text contains aberrations asking for correction. To the contrary, they rather point out to ideological deviations in the target culture.

Having in mind different translations published in Communist Yugoslavia, we should ask ourselves why the same text was treated in so different ways in various Yugoslav republics. Were children-readers in various republics so different that the translated text had to be carefully adjusted to be suitable for the particular children’s readership? Or, was the historically determined social framework so different in various republics that radically different editing and translating strategies were necessary for the publishing of the same novel?

Maksim Gorkij’s words that hardly anything from the old bourgeois system could be introduced into the new system, which were published in Yugoslavia in 1945,<sup>10</sup> reverberated in many minds for a long time, until the collapse of the regime. Translated literature had to be thoroughly adapted in order to be in line with the values of socialist society, as the Communist regime liked to call itself.

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<sup>10</sup> “Our task is even more difficult since we can take over very little from the bourgeois heritage, remarkably less than adult literature has taken over: we can take certain classic works and works from various folk epos – and in new translations and new adaptations, and a little bit from popular science literature for adolescents (for example, ‘The Life of Plants’ by Timirjazev, ‘The Chemical History of a Candle’ by Farraday, etc.)” (GORKIJ–BELJAJEV–TAUBER 1945: 6–7).

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