

THE ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF TRANSLATION AND CENSORSHIP

Edited by Denise Merkle and Brian James Baer

First published 2025

ISBN: 9780367711245 (hbk)

ISBN: 9780367711276 (pbk)

ISBN: 9781003149453 (ebk)

30

ON TRANSLATION AND CENSORSHIP OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE DURING THE COLD WAR IN EUROPE

Eliisa Pitkäsalo and Riitta Oittinen

CC-BY-NC-ND

DOI: 10.4324/9781003149453-37

The funder for this chapter is Tampere University.



ROUTLEDGE

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

ON TRANSLATION AND CENSORSHIP OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE DURING THE COLD WAR IN EUROPE

Eliisa Pitkäsalo and Riitta Oittinen

30.1 Introduction

Censorship is generally understood as an activity carried out by governmental organs that aim at banning unsuitable books either as originals or translations, at suppressing parts of a work to be published or adding contents that follow the government's censoring policies. This chapter, however, does not deal with political censorship as such. Rather, it deals with how the image of the child has influenced what is chosen for translation and publication within the field of children's literature during the Cold War in Europe. Naturally, this also involves what is written or not written and what is translated or not translated. This chapter examines the external censorship carried out by publishers and the internal censorship carried out by authors, illustrators and translators. Leaving out questionable contents from works for child readers or banning such works altogether involves both the verbal and the visual.

In this chapter, children's literature is defined both as literature read by children and as literature intended for children (Hunt 1990: 1, 60–4). In addition, as Nodelman points out, children's literature is a category built on restrictions. Adults tend to believe that children do not need to have as much knowledge about the world as adults do. On some level, this kind of thinking may lead to children's literature being thought of as less than literature for adults (Nodelman 2015: 33).

The chapter examines children's literature and its translations in Europe after World War II. It begins by depicting the ambience of children's literature in two contexts: Northern Europe and Eastern Europe. It then discusses the societal background of the characters portrayed in children's literature, and in its translations and retranslations, followed by a discussion of how children's literature and its translations reflect the traits and trends of the prevailing political and social systems. Examples from the works of the Swedish-speaking Finnish author Tove Jansson (1914–2001) and the Swedish author Astrid Lindgren (1907–2002) and their translations into German, Polish and Finnish will be referenced to illustrate these traits and trends. The chapter concentrates on how the social changes may be reflected in the literatures published and translated in the era of the Cold War, when the influence of the Soviet Union was great. It also looks at the shadow of Stalinism

that was cast on translation for children in Eastern Europe, as well as on the retranslations made in the post-socialist era.

30.2 Historical Perspectives

Europe after World War II was politically in turmoil. Eastern Europe largely landed under Soviet influence, which drastically altered the political situation in those countries. Towards the end of the 1940s began the period that Thomson-Wohlgemuth (2005) has named, in the East German context, *socialist construction* (1949–1961), or the period during which the ‘principles of socialism’ were introduced to East German society and were also reflected in literary works. This partly stemmed from the fact that ‘the necessary educational and theoretical background knowledge was derived from Soviet experts’, as Thomson-Wohlgemuth (2005: 19) states. The mission of literature to shape people’s minds and mould them into socialist citizens was similar throughout the Eastern Bloc, and this mission was enforced most rigorously during the period of socialist construction. According to Borodo (2006: 171), executing the mission of socialist construction in Poland and enforcing it in practice, the publishing system was reorganised, and strict censorship was initiated.

The end of Stalinism (1927–1953) laid the foundations for a new, relatively liberal period in Eastern Bloc countries such as Poland and East Germany. Thomson-Wohlgemuth (2005) names this era *the period of consolidation* (1961–1971), which began with the building of the Berlin wall. Although the border to the West was closed, authors were given the opportunity to pursue a new kind of debate (Thomson-Wohlgemuth 2005: 24). In Poland, too, even the publishers were given greater autonomy (Borodo 2006: 174). Yet, this relatively liberal phase only lasted until the mid-1960s, when censorship and the ‘monitoring of cultural and media issues’ by the state security service increased (Thomson-Wohlgemuth 2005: 25). This led to authors, artists and publishers being disciplined if they did not follow the restrictions imposed upon them (Thomson-Wohlgemuth 2005: 25).

These changes were visible in literature as well. While in the 1960s Eastern European literature—including children’s literature—was still realistic, from the mid-1960s on, mythological narrations and adaptations appeared on the literary scene (Thomson-Wohlgemuth 2005: 27). During the period of strict censorship, mythological themes in literature were a way of discussing even sensitive topics in everyday life by embedding them in the lofty realm of myth.

Thomson-Wohlgemuth (2005) calls the last period of Eastern European socialism (1971–1989) a time of liberalisation and developed industrial society. This period brought with it new critical trends and impetuses. It was a time when children’s books were seen as a platform to discuss even contentious topics. Because children’s literature was considered simply literature for children and therefore not to be taken too seriously (Thomson-Wohlgemuth 2005: 39), the censors turned a blind eye, either intentionally or unintentionally, to, for instance, underlying connotations.

However, the situation in Western Europe, especially in the Nordic countries, was different. Finland’s relationship with the Soviet Union was closer than that of the other Nordic countries such as Sweden. For instance, Finland and the Soviet Union signed the Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance of 1948, which influenced all aspects of Finnish political life. Yet, despite the close relationship, Finland was never a socialist country or under Soviet rule. By contrast, it is notable that, among the Nordic countries, only Finland was at war with the Soviet Union during WWII; however, it managed to remain independent. Due to this background, there was a need to walk a fine line with the Soviet Union. This is why the years between 1956–1982 (the era of Urho Kekkonen’s presidency) are often called the time of Finlandisation, which later became a general term that does not only concern Finland but other countries in a similar situation.

It was the time of self-censorship of public debate and cultural life. Gradually, the end of the era signified freedom from the obligation to insert propaganda and patriotic messages into children's literature, which is especially typical of texts written during wartime.

30.3 Core Issues and Topics

30.3.1 The Image of the Child and Writing for Children

Over time, societies change, which may cause changes in what is considered appropriate literature for children. Whatever we write, illustrate or translate for children is influenced by our image of the child. How adults see children and how children see themselves are dependent on the do's and don'ts of the surrounding adult social and cultural contexts. The image of the child strongly influences which books publishers choose to include or not to include in their catalogues. These images are not set in stone but evolve over time and change in society, for example, during war time.

The child and being a child have been seen from many different angles over time (Ariès 1962: 41–4; Haynes and Murris 2012: 125–41). In the Eastern Bloc countries children were seen as small adults, a view largely shaped by the socialist *Weltanschauung*. While this kind of adultification of children prevailed in the Soviet Union before World War II, in Nordic countries such as Finland, the understanding of children as miniature adults was mainly the heritage of the agricultural lifestyle (for illustrated children's literature under Lenin and Stalin, see Swift 2020). This way of thinking had an impact on the child's position as an extra pair of hands in the family or as a working citizen in society. In other words, in socialist countries, children were seen as having an equal status as that of their elders (Thomson-Wohlgemuth 2003: 242). Over the years, however, it has become more common to understand the child as a 'homo ludens', a playing human being (Huizinga 1984: 10), who needs to be neither useful nor a true socialist hero, i.e., a model child with optimism, energy, courage and a self-sacrificing attitude (Thomson-Wohlgemuth 2003: 242).

Censorship is often a protective response motivated by ideological views. However, censorship can result in misleading or even twisted information. Censored content is typically considered harmful or frightening to children, and the aim of censorship is therefore to edit content that could shape the child's outlook on life in a dangerous or improper way (Tervaharju, Nordling and Ihonen 2017: 2–3). Such censorship is always involved in writing and translating literature. Translation, which is a complex cultural artefact and has been defined in innumerable ways, also involves ideology and power. If translation is rereading and rewriting words and images for different audiences and purposes, in the case of translating for children, the translator translates for an audience that is multilayered and can be depicted as a spectrum of readers (Alvstad 2018: 161).

While translation may be seen as retelling, rewording, and interpretation of words and images, there is another, more authoritarian kind of discourse, transcreation, where the translators use their power by editing and transmuting texts for commercial or other purposes (see Pedersen 2019: 44). We consider this as part of Translation Studies, even though some scholars (Frank 1989; Lal 1996; Pedersen 2014) draw a clear line between the terms. Additionally, at the very core of transcreation are issues such as text design, in the sense of branding. There is not much research on designing texts for ideological purposes in fiction written, illustrated and translated for children, because transcreation seems to be understood as mainly concerning marketing texts. It is both interesting and important, however, to consider the extent to which a story for children might be seen as a conveyor of ideas and ideologies with the intent of educating the child about how to be a good citizen. This kind of branding may be seen as an operative tool, a way of producing texts, for instance, with a persuasive or dictatorial purpose.

Moreover, the branding of a text is not far removed from the idea of the *skopos* of a text (Reiss and Vermeer 1984). Both involve the image of the receiver and the surrounding society and culture, which leads to adapting texts for different audiences with different ideologies. The idea of a branded translation or transcreation is about modifying the meanings of texts, with the aim of reaching a desirable persuasive or dictatorial effect wished for by the commissioner of the text (Pedersen 2014: 69).

As for the commissioned translations of children's literature in Eastern Europe after World War II, the main focus was reinforcing the *brand's voice*, that is, the ideology behind transcreations of that time. In other words, it was considered important to present texts in the way desired by those who commissioned the translations. In the socialist countries of the era, stories for children were adapted to fit in the socialist agenda. Children's literature was branded verbally and visually to suit the political purposes of the texts, i.e., to modify children's attitudes and support socialist ideas and values. In this case, a good translation faithfully conformed to the ideals of the socialist agenda, rather than to the concept of a faithful translation, as it is understood in translation studies today. On the contrary, adapting source texts was considered acceptable and suitable for the audiences of children's literature in the socialist countries. In other words, this kind of branding of children's literature meant domesticating the texts to 'conform to dominant cultural values' (Venuti 1995: 18–22). While foreignising texts celebrates the source language and culture, adaptations tend to delete the foreignness of the originals. Yet, when it comes to children's literature, the truth lies somewhere in between: in Liseling-Nilsson's (2006: 212) words, children's 'ability to take in a text that differs from the culture they know is relatively low'. All in all, although translation certainly adds to our ways of understanding the world and the people within it, it is never an 'innocent act' (Oittinen 2006: 34–45; Haynes and Murris 2012: 40–54).

30.3.2 Mechanisms of Censorship

In modern times, while adults are responsible for taking care of children, their responsibility may also give them authority over the child, and the often positive power of caregiving may turn negative. This is often seen in repressive pedagogical environments. Miller (1990: 4, 96–102) labels this kind of adult attitude toward children 'black pedagogy' (*schwarze Pädagogik*), which may be harmful, even poisonous for children, who are especially vulnerable due to their affection for and dependence on their parents. In black pedagogy, adults use corporal punishment or emotional manipulation to force their children to submit to order and discipline. In the Bakhtinian sense, this would be authoritative or absolute discourse (see Bakhtin 1990: 227 and the Glossary edited by Holquist in Bakhtin 1990: 424). In authoritarian societies controlled by means of censorship, rewriting and textual manipulation have been used as tools for those in power to discipline what is published, for whom, how and why.

Censorship may be divided into internal and external mechanisms, as Heikkilä-Halttunen (2000: 96–7) points out. Internal censorship includes various associations of authors, illustrators and translators of children's literature and their activities. External censorship is enforced by gatekeepers regulating the status and appreciation of children's literature. These gatekeepers may be publishers, literary award committees and literary critics. Additionally, histories of literature and literary studies play an important role in attributing prestige to authors and books as well as determining their place within the literary canon, although their influence may not be immediately recognised and may only be evident on a long-term basis (Heikkilä-Halttunen 2000: 96–7).

In many socialist countries, there were censoring organs, and even writers' associations, which were regulated by the state and acted as gatekeepers controlling access to the literary

field. For example, in East Germany, most translators were members of the Writers' Association, which guaranteed financial and intellectual support in exchange for loyalty to the state and its ideology (Thomson-Wohlgemuth 2003: 24). However, as Pokorn remarks, in Slovenia, a part of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, there was no direct censorship organ. Instead, there was unofficial censorship and even self-censorship, which created an illusion of non-interference. The gatekeepers, as the owners and presidents of the publishing houses, made the final decisions on what was and was not acceptable for publication. They were all party members who scrupulously monitored the publishing business, as well as authors and translators who showed loyalty to the party and worked 'without any direct intervention being necessary' (Pokorn 2012: 155).

However, as Alvstad (2018: 171) comments, it is not only censorship that determined which books would be chosen for publication; the saleability of books was also an issue. In publishing for children, therefore, it is not only a question of morality but also one of money (Hade, Paul and Mason 2013: 137). According to Thomson-Wohlgemuth (2003: 245), other issues to be dealt with were copyright laws and royalties, in addition to the very real problem of shortages of paper and ink, which influenced the book business in the post-war East Germany.

In addition to the above-mentioned gatekeepers, the translators also have an important role to play in the book publishing business. Translators not only make linguistically-motivated decisions, but also ideologically motivated decision in order to respect the ideological agenda of the state. According to Alvstad (2018: 160), in literary cultures that emphasise education, the translators may play a strong role in steering the process of translation to comply with educational priorities at the expense of the aesthetic. All publishing processes, including authoring and translating, are subjected to issues of power. As Lefevere points out, '[p]atronage is usually more interested in the ideology of literature than in its poetics, and it could be said that the patron "delegates authority" to the professional where poetics is concerned' (Lefevere 1992: 15).

Moreover, translators often participate in the process, for example, by suggesting books to be translated; however, it is the publisher who has the last word on that matter. To some degree, this was also the situation in the post-war socialist countries of Eastern Europe, where the suggestions of trustworthy translators were taken into consideration. In the ideologically-driven socialist state, both internal and external censorship influenced what content would be cut and how the translation would be done. Although external guidance is always present when a translator translates, in highly ideological systems, publishers must modify texts according to governmental requirements. This is evident for example in the German translations of Jansson's and Lindgren's works. In the first German translations of the Moomin stories *Eine drollige Gesellschaft* (1954, orig. *Trollkarlens hatt* 1948) and *Sturm im Muminthal* (1954, orig. *Farlig midsommar* 1954), not only were the contents changed but so too were the illustrations, including the cover images, which were replaced by another illustrator's works. It is noteworthy that the link between Moomin's imaginary world and Finnish reality in the books was obliterated by leaving out the maps originally appearing in Jansson's stories (Jendis 2007: 138).

30.3.3 The Role of Children's Literature in Eastern and Nordic Europe

Publishers of children's literature do not automatically have a say as to which books are eventually sold. Rather, it is often the parents, acting as gatekeepers and echoing the customs, values and ideologies of the society, who choose the books for their children. Interestingly, the same parents who deny their children access to books with sensitive themes may present their children with folk tales with frightening or controversial content (Evans 2015: 11). In the long run, it is not clear what

children should be protected from. As Fraiberg (1959: 23) points out, human life involves risks, and adult attempts to shield children may often be counterproductive.

No matter the political ideology involved, protecting children from harmful literature was considered essential all over Europe, including the Eastern Bloc and Nordic Europe. In Finland, for instance, parents were encouraged to keep an eye on what their children read because it was understood that literature had a strong influence on its readers (Heikkilä-Halttunen 2000: 87–8). For example, the unconventional role models of Jansson's Moomin books and the independence of her characters challenged the image of the ideal nuclear family and was likely seen as harmful for children's development (see Heikkilä-Halttunen 2000: 286). This may be one of the reasons why the Moomin books were only translated into Finnish beginning in 1955, although in the 1940s the first Moomin books were already published in Finland in Swedish, one of the country's two official languages.

The role of children's literature as a mediator of values and ideologies is especially evident during political and nationalist turning points. For instance, as Lehtonen and Rajalin (1984: 21, 28) explain, as already by the end of the nineteenth century, children's literature in Finland was playing a special role as a mediator of Finnish identity and patriotism. In 1917, towards the end of World War I, Finland gained her independence from the Russian empire, and heroic adventure stories for children were produced to boost confidence in the country's bright future. For similar reasons, this kind of adventure story was also used in East Germany in the period of socialist construction, when the heroes of the stories conveyed a spirit of loyalty toward the regime and transmitted socialist and patriotic values for children. As Thomson-Wohlgemuth writes, children's literature was more progressive than literature for adults, challenging old taboos and stimulating young readers to find out about what happens in real life. In other words, children's literature played the role of social trendsetter (Thomson-Wohlgemuth 2005: 42).

Modernist trends in literature were also visible in writing for children. For example, the line between reality and imagination became hazy, which was reflected in many works of fantasy (Heikkilä-Halttunen 2000: 55). Metaphors in fairy tales facilitated the discussion, even the critique of traditional themes, and fantastic stories provided an escape from reality. In fact, the 1950s in Finland was a rich and productive decade for fairy tales and fantasy, both originals and translations from the English language (Lehtonen and Rajalin 1984: 57–8). For Finland, the 1950s, the decade of modernism, signified opening up into new directions and the beginning of internationalisation (Koskinen and Paloposki 2015: 53). The situation was very different from that of the socialist Eastern European countries where, under the influence of socialist construction, fairy tales were regarded as a dangerous 'bourgeois' influence on good socialist citizens (Thomson-Wohlgemuth 2005: 23). Liseling-Nilsson (2006: 210) explains that in Poland, only realistic books depicting children's everyday life were considered acceptable in the publishing scene. While books served a primarily educational purpose in socialist countries, in Finland, children's literature performed the dual role of entertaining and educating.

Instead of fairy tales, in East Germany during the period of socialist construction, domestic adventure stories with a socialist agenda were offered to children. The aim of this kind of mass literature was to convey ideological values, such as 'courage, determination, stamina and honesty' (Thomson-Wohlgemuth 2005: 23). During socialist construction, in the socialist Eastern Bloc, foreign and domestic literature had the same requirement: it had to comply with the ideological criteria of the state (Thomson-Wohlgemuth 2003: 247). This was achieved by branding.

This also explains why the source texts of translated literature mostly came from other socialist countries. Out of the desire to protect children from 'western propaganda', hardly any

western children's literature was published. For instance, while Lindgren's first Pippi book, *Pippi Långstrump* (1945, in English *Pippi Longstocking* 1950), was translated and published in West Germany in 1949, it was published in East Germany only in 1975, which, according to Thomson-Wohlgemuth (2003), already belonged to the period of liberalisation. Although the adventurous main character, Pippi, represented the ideological values of 'courage, determination, stamina and honesty' (Thomson-Wohlgemuth 2005: 23) mentioned above, the rebelliousness of the western child heroine might have been seen as too dangerous. Because Pippi does not respect authorities, such as old ladies and teachers, she did not align with the ideal socialist image of a good child and a model citizen. Rather, she criticises and laughs at authoritarian social structures (Jendis 2001: 144). The same applies to Jansson's Moomin stories: contrary to real children, her characters are allowed to do whatever they feel like doing without having to obey adult norms and conventions (Heikkilä-Halttunen 2000: 275).

Not meeting the expectations of the target culture is one of the reasons why children's literature has been adapted over the years. For instance, the first Polish-language translation of *Pippi Longstocking* (*Fizia Pończoszanka*), which appeared in 1961, was an expurgated adaptation: Pippi was portrayed as more gentle, less rude, less rebellious and less critical of the adult world (Teodorowicz-Hellman 1999: 79–80). At the same time, there were changes in Pippi's manner of speaking: she became less jolly in the Polish adaptation to fit in the pedagogical ideals of this period (Teodorowicz-Hellman 1999: 78). However, the Polish critic Nicpan (in *Nowe Książki* 1986) commented that the Pippi books should have been banned altogether because of Pippi's unrestricted and dangerous freedom (Teodorowicz-Hellman 1999: 61). Adaptations are often used to impose adult values on children, especially in response to radical ideological shifts in society (Alvstad 2018: 163). Rewritings and adaptations were considered to be purifications of not only politically suspicious content and rebellious characters but also morally sensitive content and taboo subjects, such as references to religion, sexuality and adult vices (see Shavit 1986: 29, 43; for translation and adaptation see Oittinen 2000: 98–9). Omitting dubious content was often explained as modernising outdated texts (Alvstad 2018: 167). Certainly, such editorial decisions were also about acting for the good of the child.

Behind this editorial aim was the educational role attributed to children's literature. The task of children's literature was to develop a child's cognitive and emotional capacities and to give the child knowledge of various topics, such as history and sociocultural insights (Alvstad 2018: 163), and teachers acted as important gatekeepers by recommending books for children. For example, in the socialist school system, teachers played an important role by serving "proper" literature to their pupils and educating them to become good socialist citizens. Yet, in the end, it was not clear who decided which books children actually read. In East Germany, there were more abstract motivations, such as fostering a child's curiosity to learn and promoting collectivism and a positive work ethic, which were seen as desirable ideals (Alvstad 2018: 171). Importantly, these motivations also indicated general respect or disrespect for children's culture in a given society. In the context of socialist construction, censorship could, therefore, be negative, neutral or, in some cases, even positive.

30.3.4 Censoring Multimodal Texts

Censoring children's literature involves both words and images. The verbal and the visual appear in many different formats created for children, such as comics and other illustrated stories. One of the main formats of children's literature is the picturebook, which represents a combination of the

verbal and the visual. It is also a social, cultural, and historical document, which is commercially produced for the book market and, first and foremost, for the child (Bader 1976: 1). Picturebooks may be seen from different points of view: as art, as a sequence of images, as prompting the turning of pages, and as promoting the active participation of the child reader (Oittinen et al. 2018: 15–22). Picturebooks may provide mainstream reading material with no challenging style or content, or they can be controversial and break boundaries.

Whichever way we define or describe a picturebook, writing, illustrating and translating children's literature take place in a dialogue between the verbal and the visual. As Bakhtin describes the situation, everything can be understood as an interaction, as a part of a greater whole: in every book there is the 'I' and the 'you' meeting in some kind of a context (regarding dialogue and interaction, see Morson and Emerson 1990: 49–52; regarding dialogism, see Holquist in Bakhtin 1990: 426–7; and regarding dialogue and the word, see Oittinen 2000: 29–32). In an illustrated story, words and images interact, in collaboration or opposition. As Kress and van Leeuwen (1996: 183) point out, the entity of an illustrated story depends on what we share and how similar our backgrounds are. It is important to remember that, as Lefevere points out, 'nobody is ever able to escape from the ideology and/or the poetics prevalent in the literary system of his or her time, to which his or her translation will be seen to belong' (Lefevere in Hermans 1985: 239). In other words, we are both individuals as interpreters of texts and also part of the surrounding culture and other circumstances.

Not only is the translation of illustrated texts about translating the words interlingually, from one language into another, but it is also about taking into consideration the interplay between the verbal and the visual modes within the multimodal whole. This is connected to what Jakobson (1959: 238) means by intersemiotic translation, that is, from one semiotic system into another (e.g., from the written mode into the oral). In other words, when translators translate picturebooks, they must contend with the interaction between the verbal and the visual.

Yet similar items may affect the readers, including the translators, in different ways, through congruency and deviation: the verbal and the visual may support each other or they may take different directions. The visual may or may not make the verbal message more believable. Sometimes it may be the very intention of the author, translator or illustrator to accentuate different aspects, which again constitutes the story as a whole. When even the tiniest verbal or visual detail of a text is changed as a result of censorship, and the text appears in a new societal or political environment, the new readers will see the text in new ways. Moreover, the relationship of the verbal and the visual is a construction in the reader's mind, where these differences are combined—and new meanings arise. In the translation process, the translators' understanding of the text is based on the entity combining the verbal and the visual to be translated. In practice, translators of children's literature make decisions concerning the text and the target audience on the basis of their image of the child.

The style and contents of translated children's literature are modified, even censored, in different times for different reasons: on the one hand, the structure of texts may be simplified, or, on the other hand, the style may be elevated not only for educational but also for propagandistic purposes, i.e., the manipulative indoctrination of ideologies (Alvstad 2018: 162). Translating always involves changes, such as additions and omissions, but censoring is about modifying texts intentionally in certain directions to meet the aims of those holding power.

For example, in the illustrations of the German-language translations of Moomin books produced in East Germany, the purpose was apparently to keep the idyllic depictions of everyday life and to omit any threatening or otherwise dubious content (Jendis 2007: 137). The publishing principle was similar to the ideological branding of books for children in the socialist regime: the

purpose of choosing books for publishing and translation was to align them with the ideological agenda and to avoid foreignisation. Stolt (1978) has discussed these issues in connection with Astrid Lindgren's Emil books and their different illustrated versions, which are also good examples of a heteroglossic situation: different illustrations and verbal translations open new windows to the original text and highlight their mutual relationship. They also show how texts are adapted to reflect the prevailing values of the surrounding society. For example, in the German translation of *Emil in Lönneberga* (*Michel in der Suppenschüssel* 1971, orig. *Emil i Lönneberga* 1963) the original peasant village with its inhabitants was transformed into a prettified small town, and 'the positively gripping realism into an artificially playful world of appearances' (Stolt 1978: 143–4). The aroma and taste of the Emil books has been altogether 'diluted and oversweetened' (Stolt 1978: 143–4). This is especially discernible in the illustrations.

The same happened in the Polish translations of Lindgren's books, as Liseling-Nilsson (2012: 291) points out. Through the modification of illustrations, using such methods as purification, Polishisation, exoticisation, folklorisation and neutralisation, the Swedish village depicted by the original illustrator Björn Berg was transformed by illustrator Hanna Czajkowska into a Polish town. Even the clothing of the characters was folklorised and thus domesticated (Liseling-Nilsson 2012: 298–9). The changes were also made in order to purify the texts by deleting unsuitable scenes, for instance, the rebellious behaviour of children and contempt towards authorities (Liseling-Nilsson 2012: 300).

30.3.5 Retranslating and Rewriting

The different forms of retranslation are also connected with adaptation, branding and rebranding. In its simplest form, according to the retranslation hypothesis, first translations are usually domesticated or adapted to meet with target culture expectations, whereas later translations are closer and more faithful to the source texts (see Venuti 2004). This seems to be the situation in the case of censored children's literature in the Eastern Bloc, but retranslations do not always support the hypothesis as factors different from those envisioned by Venuti (2004) may motivate and structure the translation process, such as time, place, culture and also the image of the child.

Along with time, while original texts seem to stay young forever, their translations are said to age with time and thus become culturally or linguistically outdated. This perception of the influence of time on translations may lead to 'presentism', 'a tendency to impose present-day values and expectations [...] on historical events and artefacts' (Koskinen 2018: 322). In other words, it is the audience and the ambient society and culture that have changed for ideological and ethical reasons, not the translations that have depicted the time of their own. This was the case with Lindgren's *Pippi Longstocking*, which was retranslated in Finland in 2007 by Rikman. It was felt that a retranslation into Finnish was needed due to the use of some sensitive expressions, such as the *n-word*, in earlier translations. At the same time, out-dated vocabulary and style were modernised with the idea that the target audience needed a new version that reflected the present language use as there was a gap of approximately 50 years between the first translation by Järvinen (1946) and the retranslation by Rikman (2007) (Koskinen and Paloposki 2015: 55). This kind of presentism was not required in the German-language retranslations because racism had never been tolerated in East German children's literature; for instance, stereotypical illustrations of indigenous peoples were erased (Alvstad 2018: 163; Thomson-Wohlgemuth 2009: 152).

Although racism was therefore not an issue in East German retranslations of children's literature, there were other problems. For example, texts such as the Moomin stories with a tolerant outlook on life and a broadminded conception of family and gender roles may have aroused debate at

their appearance as the first German translations of the Moomin books were adapted and marketed for children to tone down or eliminate those aspects of the stories. In response to twenty-first century changes in the general atmosphere and the image of the child in Europe, the retranslations have restored this diversity. In addition, most of the original illustrations and the map of the Moomin valley drawn by Jansson were added (Jendis 2007: 138). As Jendis (2007: 142) writes, ‘Finally, after 50 years, the Moomin books can now be read in the same way in German-speaking countries as they originally appeared in the Nordic lands.’ In other words, the Moomin books were rebranded for new times and audiences.

As Liseling-Nilsson (2006: 211) points out, a new culture with a new language always requires new versions that introduce new writings with new meanings. Interestingly, after the era of Finlandisation and the collapse of the Soviet Union, it may have been expected that new, ‘more accurate’ translations would have been published in Finland, but this was not the case. Perhaps the publishers feared that releasing this kind of literature would have been considered too risky and dangerous (Koskinen and Paloposki 2015: 214). Moreover, it is possible that the status of the translators had an impact on the publishing decisions made. Books are sometimes retranslated because the earlier translations were made by translators who have since become *personae non grata* (Koskinen and Paloposki 2015: 215; Pokorn 2012: 42–9). This was the case in Slovenia where some works were retranslated because their earlier translators had become politically dubious (Pokorn 2012: 42). By contrast, there is no evidence of a similar motivation for retranslation in Finland (Koskinen and Paloposki 2015: 215).

30.4 New Debates

Some of the most controversial debates related to the censorship of children’s literature involve comics, on the one hand, and folk tales, on the other.

30.4.1 Censorship of Comics in Europe

In addition to picturebooks, illustrated children’s literature also includes comics. Comics as such cannot be studied in the geopolitical context under the socialist regime because there were hardly any comics produced in the Eastern Bloc after World War II. In fact, comics were considered unsuitable readings for socialist citizens because comics were seen as junk literature. It is also possible that comics were considered morally dubious, even dangerous due to their visuality (Nygård 2017: 211). One way of looking at the censorship of comics would be to examine the ethical questions concerning the visual presentation in illustrated children’s literature. As Zanettin argues, in the 1950s, censorship was practised in both dictatorial and democratic governments and, until the 1960s, a general hostility prevailed towards comics. In some countries, attempts were made to enact legislation; even though no laws were ultimately passed, ‘the publishers adopted self-imposed codes of ethics’ (Zanettin 2018: 877).

In Western Europe, the Code Europress Junior (*Le code moral Europresse junior*) was adopted in 1966. Most of the European publishing houses joined the code Junior with 11 articles (Nygård 2017: 211). It was the equivalent to the Comics Code introduced in the USA. It is remarkable how much this code and the Eastern European censorship rules have in common. According to the Code Europress Junior, there were several requirements concerning social order, moral values and the dignity of human life (Nygård 2017: 212; Pierre 1976: 133–4).

For instance, the Code Europress Junior emphasised that the value of family life and marriage should be respected in comics and that themes such as sexuality, eroticism and debauchery should

not be exploited in verbal texts and illustrations (Nygård 2017: 213; Pierre 1976: 133–4). This was also evident in Francoist Spain and Fascist Italy, as Zanettin (2018: 874) points out. As an example, he mentions the case of Flash Gordon, whose lover became his sister in the Italian version. Additionally, the themes of prejudice, intolerance and disputes over political propaganda were banned. Violence and sadism too had to be avoided. Instead, comics were supposed to respect nobility, generosity and the brotherhood of human kind, and stand up for such values as honesty, loyalty, kindness and charity (Nygård 2017: 212–3; Pierre 1976: 133–4). Interestingly, the above ideological values were also shared by the socialist hero. This would certainly be a fruitful topic for further examination.

30.4.2 To censor Folk Tales or Not

As mentioned above, even though parents typically withhold from their children literature with harmful content, they may, even unintentionally, offer their children folktales, which contain controversial or even frightening scenes featuring violence, death and other taboo subjects. On the one hand, protecting the child by censoring unsuitable contents is considered an adult's responsibility. On the other hand, folk tales, especially when read to a child by a parent or guardian, may be a safe way to expose children to new and disturbing emotions, including fear (Bettelheim 1989: 28).

Because children's literature is as a rule created by adults, there is always a shadow text in the background, one that consists of not only what the author avoids saying but also what is between the lines, hidden from the child's eyes (Nodelman 2008: 8). Furthermore, as Bettelheim (1989: 19) emphasises, frightening folk tales, such as the stories of the Brothers Grimm, should not be censored but told in their original form, because of the 'true meaning and the impact' of the folk tale. Finally, the reading situation may be negative, too, as adults often wish for their children to internalise order and discipline, which makes them easier to control (Oittinen 2000: 52–3).

However, it is also important to understand that children are not helpless but rather omnipotent sorcerers in the magical world of their own, where the evil may be undone through magic and laughter. Here again the main factor is the image of the child and the different versions reflecting this image.

Acknowledgements

This chapter was the result of the authors' common work. However, Eliisa Pitkäsalo was particularly responsible for sections 30.1, 30.2, 30.3.2, 30.3.3, 30.4.1 and 30.5 and Riitta Oittinen for sections 30.3.1, 30.3.4 and 30.4.2.

Further Reading

Dybiec-Gajer, Joanna, Oittinen, Riitta and Kodura, Małgorzata (eds.). 2020. *Negotiating Translation and Transcreation of Children's Literature*. New Frontiers in Translation Studies. Singapore Pte Ltd. Singapore: Springer Nature.

The book contains fresh and critical insights into translation and transcreation of children's literature. The chapters balance text-related problems and genre conventions with readers' expectations, canonical translations and publishers' demands. The book investigates phenomena where transcreation is at play in children's literature. The methodologies cover cognitive linguistics and ethnolinguistic semiotics as well as autoethnographic approaches. The book is essential reading for students and researchers of translation and transcreation for children.

Oittinen, Riitta, Ketola, Anne and Garavini, Melissa. 2018. *Translating Picturebooks. Revoicing the Verbal, the Visual, and the Aural for a Child Audience*. New York and London: Routledge.

The book offers its reader a wide overview of picturebooks and their translation. It examines the topic from several theoretical and analytical viewpoints. It discusses ideology and translator's child image, adult influences, foreignising and domesticating policies and different types of picturebooks as well as the interaction and performance of words and images. The book also contains discussions on intertextuality and intervisuality, reading strategies of the verbal and the visual and pedagogical implications.

Pokorn, Nike K. 2012. *Post-Socialist Translation Practices. Ideological Struggle in Children's Literature*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Pokorn discusses translation practices during the time of communism in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The author contemplates the hegemonic pressure on translations through purging texts to follow the guidelines regulated by the regime. The book offers perceptive insights into censorship and self-censorship and takes a look at translations and retranslations of classical fairy tales and bestsellers for children.

Thomson-Wohlgemuth, Gaby. 2009. *Translation Under State Control: Books for Young People in the German Democratic Republic*. London and New York: Routledge.

Thomson-Wohlgemuth explores the effects of ideology on children's literature under the socialist regime of the GDR. She presents ideological literary policies in Eastern German censorship machinery and the publishers' self-censoring practices. The book is genuinely interesting reading and provides a thorough survey of the historical context of children's literature in the GDR and translating processes of literature for the young under the state control.

References

Alvstad, Cecilia. 2018. 'Children's literature', in K. Washbourne and B. Van Wyke (eds.), *Routledge Handbook of Literary Translation*. London and New York: Routledge, 159–80.

Ariès, Philippe. 1962. *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*. Translated by R. Baldick. New York: Knopf.

Bader, Barbara. 1976. *American Picturebooks from Noah's Arc to the Beast Within*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co.

Bakhtin, Mikhail M. 1990. *The Dialogic Imagination. Four Essays*. Translated by C. Emerson and M. Holquist. Glossary by Holquist. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Bettelheim, Bruno. 1989. *The Uses of Enchantment. The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales*. New York: Vintage Books.

Borodo, Michal. 2006. 'Children's literature translation in Poland during the 1950s and the 1990s', in V. Joosen and K. Vloeberghs (eds.), *Changing Concepts of Childhood and Children's Literature*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press, 169–82.

Evans, Janet. 2015. 'Picturebooks as strange, challenging and controversial texts', in J. Evans (ed.), *Challenging and Controversial Picturebooks. Creative and Critical Responses to Visual Texts*. London and New York: Routledge, 3–32.

Fraiberg, Selma. 1959. *The Magic Years: Understanding and Handling the Problems of Early Childhood*. New York: Charles Scriber's Sons.

Frank, Armin Paul. 1989. 'Translation as system'. *New Comparison* 8: 85–98.

Hade, Daniel, Paul, Lissa and Mason, John. 2013. 'Are children's book publishers changing the way children read? A panel discussion', *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, 28(3): 137–43.

Haynes, Joanna and Murris, Karin. 2012. *Picturebooks, Pedagogy and Philosophy*. New York, London: Routledge.

Heikkilä-Halttunen, Päivi. 2000. *Kuokkavieraasta oman talon haltijaksi. Suomalaisen lasten- ja nuortenkirjallisuuden institutionalisoituminen ja kanonisoituminen 1940–1950-luvulla*. Helsinki: SKS.

Huizinga, Jan. 1984. *Leikkivä ihminen. Yritys kulttuurin leikkiaineeksi määrittelemiseksi*. Transl. Sirkka Salomaa. Helsinki: WSOY.

Hunt, Peter. 1990. *Children's Literature: The Development of Criticism*. London: Routledge.

Jakobson, Roman. 1959. 'On linguistic aspects of translation', in R. A. Brower (ed.), *On Translation. Harvard Studies in Comparative Literature*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 232–239.

- Jendis, Mareike. 2001. *Mumins Wundersame Deutschlandabenteuer: Zur Rezeption von Tove Janssons Muminbüchern*. Umeå: Umeå University.
- Jendis, Mareike. 2007. 'Moomin's adventures in the German-speaking countries', in K. McLoughlin and M. Lidström Brock (eds.), *Tove Jansson Rediscovered*. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 131–45.
- Koskinen, Kaisa. 2018. 'Revising and retranslating', in K. Washbourne and B. Van Wyke (eds.), *Routledge Handbook of Literary Translation*. New York and London: Routledge, 315–24.
- Koskinen, Kaisa and Paloposki, Outi. 2015. *Sata kirjaa, tuhat suomennosta. Kaunokirjallisuuden uudelleenkäänttäminen*. SKS: Helsinki.
- Kress, Gunther and van Leeuwen, Theo. 1996. *Reading Images: A Grammar of Visual Design*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Lal, Purushottama. 1996. *Transcreation*. Writers Workshop: Calcutta 1996.
- Lefevere, André. 1985. 'Why waste our time on rewrites? The trouble with interpretation and the role of rewriting in an alternative paradigm', in Hermans, Theo (ed.), *The Manipulation of Literature. Studies in Literary Translation*. London: Croom Helm, 215–44.
- Lefevere, André. 1992. *Translation, Rewriting, & the Manipulation of Literary Fame*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Lehtonen, Maija and Rajalin, Marita (eds.). 1984. *Barnboken i Finland förr och nu*. Stockholm: Rabén & Sjögren.
- Liseling-Nilsson, Sylvia. 2006. 'Translating the already seen', in V. Joosen and K. Vloeberghs (eds.), *Changing Concepts of Childhood and Children's Literature*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press, 209–19.
- Liseling-Nilsson, Sylvia. 2012. *Kod kulturowy a przekład: Na podstawie wybranych utworów Astrid Lindgren i ich polskich przekładów / The Cultural Code and Translation: The Case of Selected Works by Astrid Lindgren into Polish*. Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis. Stockholm Slavic Studies 41.
- Miller, Alice. 1990. *For Your Own Good. Hidden Cruelty in Child-Rearing and the Roots of Violence*. USA: The Noonday Press.
- Morson, Gary Saul and Emerson, Caryl. 1990. *Mikhail Bakhtin. Creation of a Prosaics*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
- Nodelman, Perry. 2008. *The Hidden Adult. Defining Children's Literature*. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.
- Nodelman, Perry. 2015. 'The scandal of the commonplace. The strangeness of best-selling picturebooks', in J. Evans (eds.), *Challenging and Controversial Picturebooks. Creative and Critical Responses to Visual Texts*. London and New York: Routledge, 33–48.
- Nygård, Severi. 2017. *Sarjakuväsensuuri*. Helsinki: Jalava.
- Oittinen, Riitta. 2000. *Translating for Children*. New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc.
- Oittinen, Riitta. 2006. 'No innocent act: On the ethics of translating for children', in J. Van Coillie and W. P. Verschueren (eds.), *Children's Literature in Translation: Challenges and Strategies*. Manchester: St Jerome Publishing, 35–45.
- Oittinen, Riitta, Ketola, Anne and Garavini, Melissa. 2018. *Translating Picturebooks. Revoicing the Verbal, the Visual, and the Aural for a Child Audience*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Pedersen, Daniel. 2014. 'Exploring the concept of transcreation – Transcreation as more than translation?' *Cultus*, 7: 57–71.
- Pedersen, Daniel. 2019. 'Managing transcreation projects: An ethnographic study', in H. Risku, R. Rogl and J. Milosevic (eds.), Special Issue: *Translation Practice in the Field. Current Research on Socio-Cognitive Processes, Translation Spaces*. 6(1): 44–61.
- Pierre, Michel. 1976. *La Bande Dessinée. Idéologies et sociétés*. Paris: Librairie Larousse.
- Pokorn, Nike K. 2012. *Post-Socialist Translation Practices. Ideological Struggle in Children's Literature*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Reiss, Katharina and Vermeer, Hans J. 1984. *Grundlegung einer allgemeinen Translationstheorie*. Tübingen: Niemeyer.
- Shavit, Zohar. 1986. *Poetics of Children's Literature*. Athens: University of Georgia Press.
- Stolt, Birgit. 1978. 'How Emil Becomes Michel – On the translation of children's books', in G. Klingberg, M. Ørvig and S. Amor (eds.), *Children's Books in Translation. The Situation and the Problems*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 130–46.
- Swift, Megan. 2020. *Picturing the Page. Illustrated Children's Literature and Reading Under Lenin and Stalin*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

- Teodorowicz-Hellman, Ewa. 1999. *Svensk – polska litterära möten. Tema: Barnlitteratur*. Stockholm: Svenska institutet.
- Tervaharju, Minttu, Nordling, Päivi and Ihonen, Maria. 2017. *Tätä en lapselleni lue! Sensuuritapauksia ja paheksuttuja lastenkirjoja*. Tampere: Lastenkirjainstituutti.
- Thomson-Wohlgemuth, Gaby. 2003. 'Children's literature and translation under the east German regime', *Meta*, 48(1–2): 241–9. <https://doi.org/10.7202/006971ar>
- Thomson-Wohlgemuth, Gaby. 2005. 'Parallels in east German adult and children's literature between 1949 and 1989', in J. Webb and M. Mürsepp (eds.), *Sunny Side of Darkness: Children's Literature in Totalitarian and Post-Totalitarian Eastern Europe*. Tallinn: TLÜ Kirjastus, 15–46.
- Thomson-Wohlgemuth, Gaby. 2009. *Translation Under State Control. Books for Young People in the German Democratic Republic*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Venuti, Lawrence. 1995. *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*. London and New York: Routledge, 1995.
- Venuti, Lawrence. 2004. 'Retranslations: The creation of value', *Bucknell Review*, XLVII(1): 25–38.
- Zanettin, Federico. 2018. 'Translation, censorship and the development of European comic cultures', *Perspectives*, 26(6): 868–84.