

# How to find Paula D.? In quest of translators' identities in early 20th century Croatia

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*Anthony Pym suggests that translation history should focus on translators as people (1998: 160) rather than the abstract “translator.” My research focuses on various modalities of presenting translators' identities in the peritext of “Zabavna biblioteka” (the “Entertaining Library”), a series focused on translated literature in early 20th century Croatia (1913-1941). In addition, three translators are selected for closer analysis in order to reconstruct a picture of various and fluid professional profiles of a heterogenous group of people translating for the “Library.” In order to do this, the data from the peritext are complemented with available biographical data.*

*Keywords: peritext, presentation of translators, translators' identities, professional profiles*

## Introduction

Anthony Pym (1998, 2000, 2009) has consistently argued that research into translation history would be more productive if the focus shifted from studying texts to studying translators as individuals. Discussing methodological challenges in translation history research and possible directions to pursue, Pym titles one chapter “Translators” and explains: “I am consciously using the term ‘translators’ in the plural, so as not to paint myself into the far more abstract term ‘the translator’ in the singular” (1998: 160). According to Pym, historical research into translation should pay at least some attention to “translators as people with flesh and blood bodies” (ibid.), rather

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than to “the translator” in the singular, as an abstract anonymous entity. Unlike “the translator”, which often refers either to “the discursive figure that has produced a translation” (ibid.) or to a professional designation, a member of the profession (ibid.), “translators” refers to people who were active participants in translation events, but also lived their lives and were likely engaged in other forms of “multidiscursive mediation” (Pym 2009: 33).

Pym’s suggestion to use translators rather than texts as a starting point should be seen within his broader and consistent effort to “humanise translation history” (2009). The focus on translators, in his view, does not simply involve accumulating extensive bibliographic data on the translations produced by a particular translator or collecting dry biographical information. If the task of translation history is “to make narrative sense of those same relations between cultures, we require more than just raw data about texts, dates, places, and names. We must also be able to portray active people in the picture [...]” (Pym 2009: 24).

However, the task of uncovering translators from the past as “real people” with “flesh and blood bodies” is not easy, and sometimes not entirely feasible. The availability of richer data that enables us to portray translators in past periods largely depends on the range of social and professional roles they held in addition to their involvement in translation. As Pym (2009) and Paloposki (2016) note, translators in the past were usually not “monoprosessionals” in the modern sense. Thus, I am not the only one whose previous research into the history of translation has shown that lives of the people whose main or exclusive activity was translation tend to remain obscured (cf., Pym 2009, Paloposki 2016). Commenting on the situation in the Hispanic field, Pym (2009: 32) points out:

First, you discover that it is rarely easy to find out about translators as people, with their own life stories and evolving ideologies. [...] the long lists tend to be limited to bibliographical titles, dates of birth, and the occasional geographical reference. Apart from that, the cases most fleshed out tend to be translators who found fame wearing a different hat, as authors, political figures, polemicists, and so on.

The main aim of this article is to examine the modes of presenting literary translators in the peritext of translated texts from one series of translated fiction into Croatian in the early 20th century and to correlate these with their professional paths, in which translation played either a major or minor role. Beginning with their presentation in the peritext, I will proceed to uncover details about the “real life” existence of three translators, which may help build a more nuanced picture of how translatorship was practiced before the shift towards viewing translators as “monoprosessionals.” Given space limitations, the focus is on a particular publishing series that primarily published translations of literary works into Croatian (1913-1941). While researching this series, I was particularly intrigued by the variety of modes in

which translators' identities were presented in the peritext and sought to unravel the motivations behind the strategies used to conceal translators' identities.

The first part of the article presents a brief overview of the broader social and cultural context in which the selected series was published. This is followed by an outline of the profile and aims of the series and its founder, who was at the same time publisher, editor and, occasionally, translator of the titles published in the series. The second part discusses the modes of presenting translators' identities, with particular attention to the use of pseudonyms and initials as strategies for concealing translators' identities. Finally, three translators' professional profiles are selected for more detailed analysis, to demonstrate that, in terms of their professional backgrounds, translators of the period constituted a highly heterogeneous group.

#### *Zabavna biblioteka and Nikola Andrić*

“Zabavna biblioteka” (The Entertaining Library) was launched by Dr Nikola Andrić (1867–1942) in 1913, in the wake of the First World War, and consistently released two books a month, mainly translated texts, until 1941, that is, until the outbreak of the Second World War. In 1940, nothing was published and the last four volumes—an anthology of Polish poetry (1939), an anthology of Russian poetry (1939), an anthology of Italian poetry (1939) and an anthology of French poetry (1941)—were not edited by Andrić. All of this suggests that Andrić was prepared to end his publishing and editing activities. Therefore, the fact that “Zabavna biblioteka” ceased to exist in 1941 is not directly related to the outbreak of the Second World War and the political changes in Croatia, namely the establishment of the puppet state Nezavisna Država Hrvatska (The Independent State of Croatia). Simply put, it is more closely linked to the health condition of its founder, publisher and editor, the central figure of the entire enterprise, who died the following year.

The emergence of several publishing series focused on translated fiction in the early 20th century in Croatia can be attributed to changes in the broader political and social context. At the turn of the century, Austria-Hungary increasingly lagged behind rapidly developing European countries such as France, the United Kingdom and Germany, which became the European “center.” This is particularly evident in regions under Hungarian rule, such as Croatia. For example, at the beginning of the 20th century, 50% of the population in the northern parts of Croatia were illiterate, while in the south, that is, Dalmatia, the proportion of illiterate people reached 70% (Župan 2016: 273). According to Croatian historians Gross and Szabo (1992), the beginnings of modern civil society in Croatia can be observed in the 1860s and 1870s, decades marked by industrialization, urbanization and a substantial intensification of art and cultural activities. However, the full development of modern civil society in Croatia should be placed at the turn of the 20th

century. One important feature of modern civil societies is the radical transformation of reading practices, which shifted from a privileged elite activity to a mass phenomenon.

It is, therefore, not surprising that this period saw growing interest in publishing translated literature. I will mention a few other publishing series of translated fiction to illustrate this point: “Svjetska biblioteka” (World Library) (1916–1925), launched by Koprivnica-based publisher, printshop and bookshop owner Vinko Vošicki; “Nakladna knjižara M. Kelovića”, which also launched “Svjetska biblioteka” in 1916; and “Merkurova zabavna knjižnica” (Merkur’s Entertaining Library), launched by the Publishing Institute “Merkur” (1917–1919). This shows that publishers could rely on a substantial readership interested in foreign fiction in Croatian translation, as reading fiction was no longer reserved for the elite, who, at least in northern Croatia, mostly read in German.

However, the dominance of books in German remained strong long after Austria-Hungary ceased to exist, which is well-illustrated in an anonymous article published in 1936 in “15 dana” [15 Days], a journal dedicated to literature and arts:

Our bookshop windows are full of German books...Should a foreigner come to our city, he will, by the absolute number of German books in the windows of our bookshops, reasonably conclude that we do not have any original or translated literature, which is really disgraceful... (qtd. in Stipčević 2008: 97-98).

Thus, the above-mentioned publishing series aimed to provide access to world literature in Croatian. The reasons for launching “Zabavna biblioteka” are explained by its founder, publisher and editor, Nikola Andrić, in the “Catalogue of Zabavna biblioteka” compiled in 1931 to mark the publication of the 500th book in the series. In the text entitled “Instead of a Preface”, Andrić (1931: 5-6) states:

In February 1932, it will be nineteen years since “Zabavna biblioteka,” without interruption, has reached Croatian readers. [...] On the first and fifteenth of each month, readers received a new novel. In this way, *the needs of those circles who were eager to obtain foreign editions were somewhat alleviated.* [...] “Zabavna biblioteka” records three particular achievements to its credit. The first is that *it brought many of the most prominent names of world literature into our literature.* The second: *that it presented all works (except Scandinavian and Turkish) in translations from the original languages;* and the third – that attention was paid, as much as possible, to the purity of the language. (my italics)

In the post-World War I period, unfavorable economic conditions led to the impoverishment of those sections of society who were the intended buyers of books. This is best illustrated by an extract from a speech by well-known

Croatian writer Dragutin Domjanić, president of Matica hrvatska, the leading cultural institution. In his speech at the General Assembly of Matica hrvatska in 1923, Domjanić said that immediately after the war people bought books because

everything was saturated with blood and everyone longed for something higher, purer and more spiritual. Those who could hardly afford to buy books sought books in order to relax, to find a relief...*but those times are over. Those who need a book can now hardly afford one.* Salaries of the more educated classes are shamefully low, especially if they are in the civil service, and the rich no longer need to pretend to have an interest in reading books. (my italics) (qtd. in Mandić 2014: 39)

The other publishers with similar publishing policies I mentioned, such as “Merkurova zabavna knjižnica” and “Svjetska biblioteka” Vinka Vošickog, could not overcome financial difficulties and after a while ceased to publish their series of translated fiction. However, “Zabavna biblioteka” managed to survive for almost three decades, largely owing to the skillful management of its editor. Its manifesto, “the best stories from world literature”, sometimes had to be adapted to circumstances. Thus, in addition to publishing first translations of a wide range of canonical works (by Joseph Conrad, Rudyard Kipling, Jaroslav Hašek, Pearl Buck, Knut Hamsun, etc.), Andrić also published popular works (by Maurice Decobra, Elinor Glyn, Edgar Wallace, etc.) that could guarantee commercial success.

### **Analysis of the presentation of the translators in the peritext of “Zabavna biblioteka”**

In this section, various modes of presenting translators' identities are analyzed. Before I move on to the examination of how translators' identities are presented in the peritext of “Zabavna biblioteka”, I should provide some methodological details. Over a period of 28 years “Zabavna biblioteka” published 603 books, of which some 20 books were not translated but written by Croatian authors. It is also important to note that 603 books do not correspond to the publication of 603 literary works. Some larger works were published in more than one volume. For example, the translation of *Jerusalem* by Selma Lagerlöf was published in 1917 as four books (74,75, 76 and 77) within two volumes.

Within my broader research into the practices of publishing translated fiction in Croatia in the first half of the 20th century, I researched the entire series using both secondary sources, such as the descriptive bibliography of “Zabavna biblioteka” (Mandić Hekman 2014) and examining all the copies of the books stored in the archival collection in the Zagreb National and

University Library (NSK). The data on the modes of presenting translators in the peritext of the series were collected examining all the available copies of books published in the collection in the NSK. In order to see how the translators were presented in the peritext it was necessary to examine the copies of the books because this type of data is updated in the online catalogue of the NSK. For example, in the example I discuss below, in the peritext the translation was attributed to “B.D.”, but in the catalogue of the NSK, on the basis of the information obtained in the meantime, the translation is attributed to Branka Dizdarević. As my broader research focused both on the peritext and epitext of this series, using clues in secondary sources (Mandić Hekman 2010, 2014) I collected the relevant epitextual material, such as a few interviews by Andrić. With regard to the Catalogue published to mark the release of the 500<sup>th</sup> book I was lucky to obtain it from a second-hand bookshop in Zagreb.

The key elements relevant to this research include the ways of presenting the author of a source text (ST), the title of a ST and the title of a target text (TT), the identity of the publisher and editor of a TT and the identity of the translator of a TT. The cover usually contains the title of a Croatian TT, which in many cases is substantially modified compared to the title of the corresponding ST, often for marketing purposes. For example, in an interview in “Savremenik,” Andrić describes how he changed the title of Pierre Loti’s novel *Les Désenchantées* to *U haremu* (In Harem) and attributes the commercial success of the book to its attractive title.

The title page is usually organized as follows: at the top, the label of the publishing series appears in bold capital letters, ZABAVNA BIBLIOTEKA. Below it, information about the editor is written in smaller capital letters, “UREDJUJE DR. NIKOLA ANDRIĆ” (EDITED BY DR. NIKOLA ANDRIĆ), with Andrić’s name and academic degree in bold letters. As editor, Andrić always included his academic degree, thus emphasizing his symbolic capital in the literary field. The title of a TT is written in bold letters in a larger typeset, while the subtitle, in smaller letters, is given a less prominent position. The use of long subtitles, which indicated a genre or provided an explanation of the theme or context of a literary work, was a widespread convention in the 19th century. In this regard, “Zabavna biblioteka” was not an exception, although its subtitles were more elaborate than those in other similar series, suggesting that Andrić was well aware of their marketing potential.

The title pages are usually followed by forewords, which are most often, though not always, written by the editor. A foreword’s title is always simply the name of the author of the ST (for example, Charles Dickens, Alexei Kuprin), accompanied by his or her photograph. In line with this, forewords – sometimes four to five pages long – provide biographical data on the authors and a literary evaluation of their *oeuvre*. Additionally, the editor often provides information on previous translations of the selected author’s works,

as well as general statements about the role of translation and evaluative judgments of previous translations. Therefore, forewords in “Zabavna biblioteka” are a rich source of data for historical research on translation. However, their analysis is beyond the scope of this paper.

Looking at the copies of the TTs published in “Zabavna Biblioteka,” a translation scholar, particularly one interested in translation history, cannot help but ask: “Where are the translators?”

Up to 1932, information on the translator’s identity was placed at the end of the TT, which usually concluded with the phrase “preveo XY” [translated by XY], written in small letters. According to my insights, this used to be the norm in this period. Thus, in terms of the position and size of the typeset presenting data on all the contributors to the production of a TT, the information on the translator’s identity is clearly marginalized. As mentioned, from 1932 on, in “Zabavna biblioteka” this practice changed and the name of the translator along with the information on the source language was placed on the left side of the title page, usually in the phrase “s engleskog preveo Iso Velikanović” (translated from English by Iso Velikanović).

Still, despite the marginalization of translators’ roles in the peritext, for the entire enterprise to run smoothly and to deliver two translated books a month, it was necessary to gather and manage a large number of translators.

#### *Transparently presented translators*

In most TTs, translators are presented with their full names, sometimes accompanied by their professional attributes and academic titles. It should also be noted that Andrić himself translated several books, in whose peritext this is most often indicated as follows: “preveo Nikola Andrić” (translated by Nikola Andrić). However, in the first book in the series, a translation of several stories by Dostoevsky published under the title *Krotko janje* (1913) (A Meek Lamb), Andrić is presented as a translator in the following way: “preveo dr. Andrić” (translated by Dr Andrić). The second book in the series, the translation of Knut Hamsun’s *Victoria: en kærligheds historie*, was also done by Andrić, this time presented simply as “Nikola Andrić,” without an academic title. The practice of presenting his authorship of translations without an academic title was used in the peritext of Andrić’s translations from 1917 onward.

As for other translators who signed their translations with their full names, in some cases academic titles were used. For example, at the end of the translation of *Norina* (1913), a novel by Hungarian author Renée Erdős, it is indicated that it was translated by “Dr Ivan Lulić.” Similar examples include the translation of Haggard’s novel *She* (1916), titled *Ona. Misteriozna povijest jedne pustolovine* (She. A Mysterious History of One Adventure), in whose peritext the translation is attributed to Dr Mato Lisičar and Vanda Ibler-Novosel. The translation of *Misunderstood* (1917) by Florence

Montgomery is attributed to Dr Milan Bogdanović, a well-known translator of Shakespeare's plays into Croatian directly from English.

This practice shows that translators were highly educated and had earned academic degrees, though in various disciplines, not necessarily in philology and foreign languages. For example, the above-mentioned Dr Mato Lisićar obtained his degree in law in 1906, after which he worked as a solicitor and notary public. According to the *Croatian Biographical Lexicon*, he contributed to a large number of periodicals, publishing translations, literary criticism, reviews, poems, essays and articles on cultural and political topics. Therefore, it seems that a range of his various activities, in addition to translation, may be a reason for his name, accompanied with an academic degree, to appear clearly in the peritext.

#### *Anonymous translators*

During its initial years, "Zabavna biblioteka" published one book per month. As reader interest grew, Nikola Andrić increased production to two books monthly, resulting in a total of 603 books across the entire series. The vast majority (approximately 580 books) are translated works, among which only 15 were published anonymously. Table 1 presents the bibliographic data for the TTs whose peritexts omit translator attribution.

It is immediately apparent that anonymous translations were published in the early years of the series, suggesting that it was not easy to gather enough translators to ensure the continuity of the series. Ivana Mandić Hekman (2010: 12), based on her review of Andrić's correspondence with Vatroslav Jagić, an outstanding philologist and Andrić's supervisor during his Vienna days, assumes that most of the anonymous translations were done by Andrić himself. However, the selection of the source languages for these TTs points to another aspect. In the forewords he wrote for "Zabavna biblioteka" editions, Andrić repeatedly stated that he insisted on publishing direct translations, which was a gesture of resistance –partially grounded in political animosity– against the widespread previous practice of using German translations as mediating texts. However, his foreign language skills included German, French and Russian, which strongly suggests that the anonymous translations listed above were indirect translations, most likely based on German mediating texts. This fact had to be concealed, although, as seen in the quotation from his text in the Catalogue (1931: 6), he eventually admitted that Scandinavian source texts were translated indirectly. However, he probably did not want his name openly associated with such translations.

**Table 1:** A list of TTs with no translators' identities provided

ST author	ST title and the year of first publication	ST language	TT title and the year of publishing
Wilde, Oscar	<i>The Canterville Ghost</i>	English	<i>Sablasi od Canterville: realistično-idealistična pripovijest</i> (1913)
Neera	<i>Il libro di mio figlio</i> (1891), <i>Senio</i> (1892)	Italian	<i>Senio i Knjiga moga sina</i> (1913)
Croker, Bithia Mary	<i>The company's servant: a romance of southern India</i> (1907)	English	<i>Indijska plesačica. Roman iz engleskog društva južne Indije</i> (1913)
Danilevsky, Grigory	<i>Knjažna Tarakanova</i> (1883)	Russian	<i>Kneginja Tarakanova. Historijski roman iz 18. vijeka</i> (1913)
Feuillet, Octave	<i>La morte</i> (1886)	French	<i>Jadna Alijeta Roman iz aristokratskog svijeta</i> (1913)
Af Geijerstam, Gustaf	<i>Kvinnokraft</i> (1901)	Swedish	<i>Što žene mogu. Roman iz skandinavskog života</i> (1914)
Bang, Herman	<i>Ellen Urne. Skuespil i fire Akter</i> (efter Fædra) (1885)	Danish	<i>Grofica Urna. Roman jedne nesretne žene</i> (1914)
Wells, George Herbert	<i>The Invisible Man</i> (1897)	English	<i>Nevidljivi čovjek: groteskni i fantastični roman</i> (1914)
Glyn, Elinor	<i>His Hour</i> (1910)	English	<i>Tamara. Roman iz ruskog aristokratskog svijeta</i> (1914)
Couperus, Luis	<i>Noodlot</i> (1890)	Dutch	<i>Sudbina. Roman nesretnih ljubavnika</i> (1915)
Glyn, Elinor	<i>Three Weeks</i> (1907)	English	<i>Tri nedjelje. Roman iz ruskog dvorskog svijeta</i> (1915)
Nagrodskaya, Yevdokiya	<i>Gnev Dionisa</i> (1910)	Russian	<i>Dionisijev gnjev. Roman jedne slikarice</i> (1916)
Hamsun, Knut	<i>Pan: Af Løjtnant Thomas Glahns Papirer</i> (1894)	Norwegian	<i>Pan Iz zapisaka poručnika Glahna</i> (1917)
Guglielminetti, Amalia	<i>La rivincita del maschio</i> (1923)	Italian	<i>Muškarčeva osveta. Roman iz talijanskog života</i> (1925)

### *Translators presented with pseudonyms, codes and initials*

Of the 580 translated works, 22 were attributed via initials or pseudonyms. Table 2 presents the bibliographic data for the TTs that utilize these pseudonyms and initials within their peritexts.

**Table 2:** A list of TTs with translators' identities provided as pseudonyms and initials with their real identities added in brackets

ST author	ST title and the year of first publication	ST language	TT title and the year of publishing	Translators' initials, codes and pseudonyms
Tikhonov, Aleksey	Dobej ego!	Russian	<i>Police verso Paralele</i> (1917)	Nik. N. (Nikola Nikolajević)
Glyn, Elinor	<i>Beyond the Rocks</i>	English	<i>Teodora: roman jedne mlade gospodje</i> (1917)	Š.B. (Branko Širola)
Bourget, Paul	<i>André Cornelis</i>	French	<i>André Cornelis: kriminalni roman</i> (1920)	Paula D.
Farrère, Claude	<i>Les civilisés</i>	French	<i>Civilizirani ljudi: roman sa krajnjeg istoka Azije</i> (1921)	Zlatko Tudjin (Zlatko Gorjan)
De Maupasant, Guy; Mirbeau, Octave, Daudet, Alphonse	No title is provided.	French	<i>Francuske novele</i> (1921)	Rakošev Pekarić (Pavao Rakoš)
Carco, Francis	<i>Verotchka l'étrangère</i>	French	<i>Tudjinka Vjeročka: roman iz ruskoga društva u Parizu</i> (1924)	R.M. Ivanović (Rudolf Maixner)
Michaëlis, Karin	<i>Den farlige Alder</i> (1910)	Danish	<i>Žena u opasnim godinama: listovi i dnevni zapisi jedne rastavljene žene</i> (1924)	Miloje Fruškogorac (Nikola Andrić)
Farrère, Claude	<i>Les petites alliées</i> (1910)	French	<i>Male saveznice: roman iz života francuskih pomorskih časnika</i> (1924)	Z.D. (Zvonimir Doroghy)
Maurois, André	<i>Ariel ou la Vie de Shelley</i> (1923)	French	<i>Ariel ili Život Shelley-a</i> (1925)	R.M. Ivanović (Rudolf Maixner)
Mauriac, François	<i>Le fleuve de feu</i> (1923) and <i>Le baiser au lépreux</i> (1922)	French	<i>Plamena rijeka: roman jedne grešne djevojke</i> (1925)	R.M. Ivanović (Rudolf Maixner)
Wied, Gustave	<i>Faedrene aede druer</i> (1908)	Danish	<i>Oci jedoše kiselo groždje: roman jednog vlasteoskog gnijezda</i> (1925)	Milan Zorić (Janko Ibler)
Kraigher, Alojz	<i>Mlada ljubezen</i> (1917)	Slovenian	<i>Mlada ljubav: roman iz ljubljanskog života</i> (1925)	Z.D. (Zvonimir Doroghy)
Niedźwiecki, Zygmunt	<i>Erotyki opowiadania</i> (1904)	Polish	<i>Erotika: ljubavne novele</i> (1925)	J.V. (Vatroslav Jagić)
Stanley, Henry Morton	<i>How I Found Livingstone</i> (1872)	English	<i>Kako sam našao Livingstone: izvještaj o ekspediciji po središnjoj Africi: (ilustrirano izdanje)</i> (1925)	M.L. (Martin Lovrenčević)

Dekobra, Maurice	<i>Gondole aux chimères</i> (1926)	French	<i>Gondola krilatih nemani. Kozmopolitski roman.</i> (1926)	S.A. (not identified)
Kennedy, Margaret	<i>The Constant Nymph</i> (1924)	English	<i>Vjerna nimfa: roman jedne umjetničke porodice</i> (1928)	D.Š. (Ivo Šrepel)
Curwood, James Oliver	<i>Swift Lightning</i>	English	<i>Zečja omča - kosa djevojačka: roman iz arktičkih krajeva sjeverne Amerike</i> (1930)	D.Š. (Ivo Šrepel)
Wallace, Edgar	<i>The Strange Countess</i>	English	<i>Zagonetna grofica: roman iz londonskog života</i> (1931)	E.K. (not identified)
Curwood, James Oliver	<i>The Last Frontier</i>	English	<i>Na kraju svijeta: roman sa krajnjeg sjevera Amerike</i> (1933)	M.N. (not identified)
Grey, Zane	<i>The Mysterious Rider.</i>	English	<i>Tajanstveni jahač: ljubavni roman s američkog Divljeg zapada</i> (1934)	V.D.S. (Viktor Dragutin Sonnenfeld)
Durtain, Luc	<i>Frank et Marjorie</i>	French	<i>Frank i Marjorie: roman o propasti puritanske i materijalističke kulture u Americi</i> (1935)	B.D. (Branka Dizdarević)
London, Jack	<i>Hearts of Three</i>	English	<i>U tajanstvenom carstvu: fantazija o traženju blaga starih Maja</i> (1935)	V.D.S. (Viktor Draguin Sonnenfeld)

I must honestly admit that I was not able to determine who is behind the pseudonym Paula D., used in the title of this paper. M.N., E.K. and S.A. also remain unidentified. The main source I used is the fundamental bibliographic list of pseudonyms and codes (Vidačić 1951). Vidačić listed pseudonyms and codes and linked them to real identities when they appeared regularly in periodicals of the time. Therefore, these were probably one-time translators.

## Profiles of translators

Due to space constraints, this section focuses on outlining the professional profiles of three translators who authored multiple TTs published in “Zabavna biblioteka.” While two of them operated under concealed identities, the third not only signed the translation with his full name but also detailed his personal and professional trajectory within the peritext. These profiles offer a fragmentary yet multi-layered portrait of translation practitioners in early 20th-century Croatia, demonstrating how their translational work intersected with their other roles as cultural mediators.

*Ivo Šrepel (D.Š.)*

Ivo Šrepel (1899–1945), who signed as D.Š., produced two translations for “Zabavna biblioteka” within a short period. Both were translated from English: *The Constant Nymph* (1928), then a highly popular novel by Margaret Kennedy, published as *Vjerna nimfa: roman jedne umjetničke porodice* (The Faithful Nymph: A Novel about One Artistic Family) and *Swift Lightning* (1930) by James Oliver Curwood, published as *Zečja omča – kosa djevojačka: roman iz arktičkih krajeva sjeverne Amerike* (Rabbit’s Noose – Maiden’s Hair: A Novel from the Arctic Parts of Northern America).

According to available biographical data, Šrepel studied philosophy in Zagreb, Vienna, Prague and Paris. After earning a degree in esthetics and art history from the Sorbonne in 1921, he continued to live in Paris, where he became deeply involved in the French theatrical scene, establishing personal contacts with several French authors and translating French theater texts for staging in Zagreb. Upon returning to Zagreb, he worked as an administrative officer at the Croatian National Theatre and as a presenter at the newly-established Croatian Radio. From 1929 to 1940, he regularly contributed to “Jutarnji list” and other dailies with reports on fine arts events. From 1940 to 1944, under the regime of the Independent State of Croatia, he served as director of the Modern Gallery. Accused of using his position at the Modern Gallery to send material aid to partisan units for their promotional activities, Šrepel was dismissed and imprisoned in 1944. The circumstances of his death in 1945 have remained unclear.

Šrepel began translating during his early days in Paris, publishing translations of Baudelaire’s prose poems in 1920 under his full name, which brought him recognition in literary circles in Croatia. During his studies in Paris, “he translated intensively, which enabled him to become friends with several French authors whose dramas were staged in Paris” (Jirsak 2010: 13). This demonstrates that, for Šrepel, translation was a discursive practice combined with other mediating activities. This is evident from a document in Šrepel’s personal legacy (Vončina 1988:109), in which Josip Kulundžić, a Croatian playwright, “authorizes Mr. Ivo Šrepel, a writer and translator, resident in Paris, Rue Rennequin no. 63, to act on his behalf in all matters related to the staging of *Ponoć* (Midnight) on one of the stages in Paris.” As compensation for Šrepel’s translation of the play into French, Kulundžić agreed to share his authorial fees with him. In summary, for Šrepel, translation was just one of several activities he undertook as an intercultural mediator – a person who, due to his physical mobility and social skills, participated in various stages of cross-cultural transfer, both from cultural centers to Croatia and from Croatia to cultural centers. Along this path, he met Nikola Andrić and his circle, producing the two translations for “Zabavna biblioteka,” which he did not sign with his full name, as they were not considered to be prestigious.

*Viktor Dragutin Sonnenfeld (V.D.S.)*

Translations of Zane Grey's *The Mysterious Rider* (Tajanstveni jahač: ljubavni roman s američkog Divljeg zapada, 1934) and Jack London's *Hearts of Three* (U tajanstvenom carstvu: fantazija o traženju blaga starih Maja, 1935) are attributed to V.D.S., the initials used by Viktor Dragutin Sonnenfeld.

The first translation Sonnenfeld published was Schopenhauer's treatise *Über die Weiber* in 1922 in "Svjetska biblioteka" Vinka Vošickog. In the following years, he published several translations of Schopenhauer's works, as well as translations of other philosophical texts. In an article in *Hrvatska enciklopedija*, Sonnenfeld is described as "a Croatian philosophy writer and translator" who "translated fundamental philosophical works from German and English (F. Bacon, J. Locke, I. Kant, J. G. Fichte, F. W. J. Schelling, G. W. F. Hegel, A. Schopenhauer), thus making a substantial contribution to the enrichment and standardization of Croatian philosophical terminology." All his translations of philosophical works are attributed to him under his full name. However, it appears that Sonnenfeld, in addition to translating philosophical works for which he received public recognition, developed an interest in translating popular literature, but never signed such translations with his full name. A year after the translation of Jack London's *Hearts of Three*, in 1936, Sonnenfeld, who lived in Osijek and worked as an editor at the right-wing daily "Hrvatski list" (Croatian Paper), launched "Biblioteka Hrvatskog lista," a series publishing his translations of popular literature, always signed V.D.S. The motivation behind his venture into translating and publishing popular literature remains unclear: whether it was material interests or a need for relaxation from translating philosophy.

Another relevant element in understanding how he became involved with "Zabavna biblioteka" is, as in the case of Šrepel, his connection to the theatrical scene, a social circle where Andrić was well-connected.

*Joe S. Rendulić*

Of the translators whose identities are not concealed but highlighted in the peritext, special attention should be given to Joe S. Rendulić (1890–1970). He is the only translator collaborating with "Zabavna biblioteka" who was given the opportunity to present his personality in the peritext. Moreover, his foreword to *Anglosaske pustolovine: zbirka istinitih doživljaja* (*Anglosaxon Adventures: A Collection of Real Events*), published in 1926, is accompanied by his photograph. In the series, there are only a few translators' prefaces, mainly by translators who were established literary critics (Rudolf Maixner, Zdenka Marković, Bogdan Radica) and, in those cases, they comment on the ST author and evaluate the published literary work.

Rendulić's preface is notable because he uses it to present his life and explicitly position himself as an intercultural mediator. This is evident from the very beginning of the preface, where Rendulić explains his motives for translating the texts that he not only translated but also selected:

As a Slav – a conscious Croat – and a Yugoslav, I have spent a large part of my life in America, Australia, Africa, and Asia and have come into contact with these [Anglo Saxon] people and have learned to have a deep respect for them. With their energy, diligence, honesty, and ability to sacrifice, they do not possess that egotistical and cold “prone to calculation,” which is often attributed to them in Europe. (Rendulić 1926: 5)

As seen in the preface, Rendulić decided “to compile this collection of stories” (ibid.), all based on real events, which will enable “our people to come to know this race” (ibid.).

Regarding the translation itself, Rendulić points out that the source texts are “written in jargons, of which less than twenty percent could be found in lexicons” (1926: 6). Because he lived in those countries, his “literary conscience” is at peace, as he did his best (ibid.). A particularly interesting part of the preface is an account of Rendulić's life, which I will summarize below. Having spent his youth as a sailor in Patagonia, at the outbreak of the First World War he was in Australia, where he ended up in internment. A list of occupations he had before temporarily returning to Croatia includes “miner, actor, boxer, teacher, fisherman, insurance agent,” until he “became what I am right now: an author looking for a publisher” (Rendulić 1926: 8).

It is worth noting that Rendulić translated another six novels for “Zabavna biblioteka” between 1926 and 1931 and, after that, no further evidence of his literary or translation activity in Croatia could be found. According to a short article in *Hrvatska enciklopedija*, he died in Uruguay. Searching for additional data on him, I found on a website “Zorrilla Subastas”, an auction house in Montevideo, pictures of several landscape oils on canvas entitled “Croatian port” signed by his name.

## Conclusion

This article presents a contribution to the efforts to humanize translation history by focusing on translators. The first step is an analysis of peritextual attribution of translations published in “Zabavna biblioteka”, a long-term publishing project that continuously published translated fiction into Croatian from 1913 to 1941. The usual practice of attributing translations in the series was to sign the translator's name in small font on the last page of the TT, which shows that, unlike other agents involved in the project, they occupied a marginal position in the peritext. While the majority of translations were

attributed to translators signed with their full names and even academic titles, 15 translations were anonymous and 22 were signed by translators' pseudonyms or initials, showing that strategies of concealing the real identities of translators were used. As for motivations lying behind concealing real identities of the translators involved, a number of reasons may be proposed. In the case of Nikola Andrić, the publisher and editor of "Zabavna biblioteka", who occasionally produced translations and often signed them with his full name, the motivation for his decision to sometimes remain anonymous may lie in the fact that his use of mediating texts was in strong contradiction with the norm of direct translation that he often proclaimed in his editorial forewords to the books published in "Zabavna biblioteka" and the collected epitextual material.

Within a heterogeneous group of people who were engaged as translators in "Zabavna biblioteka" three translators were selected for closer analysis. Biographical data on Ivo Šrepel, a prominent figure in the cultural life of the time, show that for Šrepel translation was a form of multidiscursive mediation he, owing to his physical mobility and social skills, combined with other cross-cultural mediating activities. On the other hand, the reason for using initials in the peritext of the particular translations from English in "Zabavna biblioteka" may lie in the choice of the TTs, which were not as prestigious as he would expect, since his early translation of Baudelaire was signed with his full name. Another interesting case is Viktor Dragutin Sonnenfeld, who gained public recognition as a translator of major philosophical works into Croatian, always signed by his full name. However, at the same time he translated popular fiction using initials instead of his full name. Therefore, in his case, the reason for not using the full name may lie in low prestige of such translation activity, which would not contribute to his status of "serious" translator and the symbolic capital it entailed. Unlike Andrić, Šrepel and Sonnenfeld, who chose to conceal their identities, Joe S. Rendulić signed all the translations for "Zabavna biblioteka" with his full name. In stark contrast to all the other translators engaged in the series, Rendulić's personal life is presented in the peritext of the first translation produced for the series. Prior to being engaged as a translator Rendulić changed a whole range of occupations, and for a short period stayed in Croatia, where he probably initiated the first translations of Zane Grey's works into Croatian, published in "Zabavna biblioteka."

To sum up, the patterns of concealing or revealing translators' real identities in this particular series point to a number of factors at play: for those who, along with translation, were engaged in a number of discursive mediating practices bringing public recognition (editing, journalism, publishing, intercultural mediation), the motives for concealing their real identities could be linked to not wishing to be publicly associated with translating low prestige texts (Šrepel and Sonnenfeld) or using indirect

translation, which is in contradiction with his publicly advocating the practice of direct translation as a desirable norm (Andrić).

To conclude details of the “real life” existence of three translators, selected for closer analysis, reveal, on the one hand, a more nuanced picture of how translatorship was practiced before the shift towards viewing translators as “monopersonals.” Further, focusing on translators as people reveals how they managed professional anxieties, such as the potential damage that indirect translation or low-prestige activities—like translating popular fiction—could inflict on their public image.

### Declaration of AI use

The author did not use any AI-assisted tools in the preparation of this manuscript.

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