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Bookbird

A JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Anthony Browne and Binette Schroeder

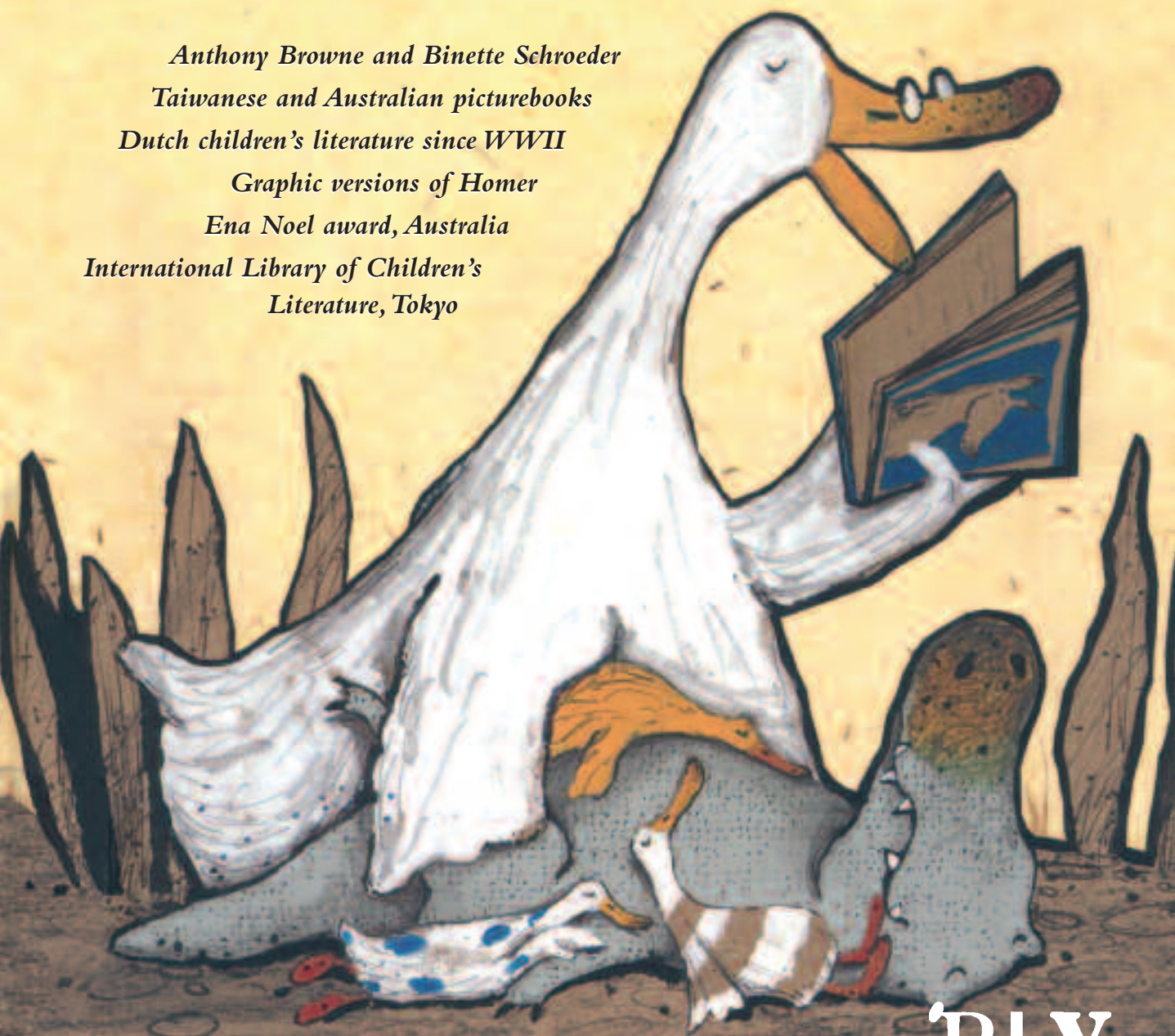
Taiwanese and Australian picturebooks

Dutch children's literature since WWII

Graphic versions of Homer

Ena Noel award, Australia

*International Library of Children's
Literature, Tokyo*



INTERNATIONAL BOARD ON BOOKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

iBbY

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*I said it in Hebrew – I said it in Dutch –
I said it in German and Greek:
But I wholly forgot (and it vexes me much)
That English is what you speak!*

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Editorial

Every year, we visit the Bologna International Children's Book Fair in Italy, and we are constantly amazed at what we see there. Publishers from all over the world display their books, and we can think of no place else on earth where one can get such a sense of what is going on in publishing for children internationally. Unfortunately, it is almost exclusively other publishers who get to see all this – though a few lucky *Bookbird* people do so too!

One cannot help noticing the effects of globalisation in a situation like that. We all know that Harry Potter and other current characters and authors/illustrators, mostly from the English-speaking world, are widely recognised across the globe. This is nothing new, of course: much earlier characters, right back to Alice, have had worldwide recognition too, and as *Bookbird* editors, we see the influence of the teaching of, in particular, classic British children's literature in universities around the globe.

Though globalisation may not be new, it has certainly picked up pace recently, and there does seem to be a more orchestrated effort by big publishing conglomerates nowadays, whose business it is to sell books, to dominate international markets. It would be ridiculous to suggest that children (and

adults) shouldn't be enabled to read books originating in the Anglophone world, either in English or in translation, but the pity is that the traffic is almost all one way. An article in this issue, for example, discusses the work of two of the world's leading picturebook artists: Anthony Browne (UK) and Binette Schroeder (Germany). Most people with a modicum of interest in children's books will know the name of Anthony Browne, but how many in the English-speaking world are familiar with the magnificent publications of Binette Schroeder?

Anyone visiting the Bologna Fair, never mind Taiwan, cannot help but be bowled over by the quality of the picturebooks coming from that country (some of them are discussed in this issue also), and the same can be said of other Asian countries. Korea comes to mind at once, but are there many in the west who are familiar with the fantastic output of picturebooks from Korea? Or Japan? But for those of you unable to get to Bologna as often as you might like, *Bookbird* makes valiant attempts to bring international children's literature to your attention.

On the other hand, the Bologna experience reminds us that there are also non-Anglo-American international successes. Pippi Longstocking, for example, was especially celebrated at Bologna in this her author's centenary year. And Miffy seems to be celebrated always and everywhere. Which brings us to the heartening story of Dutch children's literature, related here by Helma van Lierop-Debrauwer. We are struck by the good sense of the postwar Dutch government, which set out quite deliberately to develop and encourage a national Dutch children's literature. The Netherlands is not a poor country, but it is a small one, and it has a fairly small language – and yet it seems to have made quite an impact on the world stage. It is encouraging for other countries to know that a small country can do that, given a strategic approach and a supportive environment. And in the end, it is only through countries taking an active interest in encouraging and supporting their own children's literature that we can hope to combat the most homogenising effects of globalisation.

Bookbird editors

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Exclusions and Inclusions

Multiculturalism in Contemporary Taiwanese and Australian Picturebooks

... *Taiwan and Australia, though vastly different,*
... *have in common a history of colonisation*
... *and ethnic diversity and troubled ideas about*
... *national and cultural identity. Can such*
... *contentious political issues really make their*
... *mark in picturebooks for young children?*

The term 'multiculturalism' might on the surface appear to refer to a readily identifiable set of meanings around policies, ideals and practices which ensure that citizens of diverse ethnic backgrounds enjoy harmony and mutual respect. However, concepts of multiculturalism are inflected by historical and cultural contexts and by shifts and tensions within national settings. Our aims in this essay are to consider recent picturebooks from Australia and Taiwan, both of which claim to be multicultural nations, and to identify the ideologies and values implied and promoted in these texts. Children's texts respond to ideologies and values promoted in political and educational institutions, both because textual production is motivated, at least implicitly, by socialising agendas, and also because texts are very often mediated and received within institutional settings such as schools and libraries and are incorporated into processes of teaching and learning.

Australia and Taiwan have in common histories of colonisation and immigration. Australia was claimed as a British colony in 1788, and its population has been substantially diversified by waves of migrants since the end of World War II. Taiwan has experienced

by CLARE BRADFORD
and HUI-LING HUANG



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	AUSTRALIA	TAIWAN
History	<p>Claimed as a British colony 1788</p> <p>Now an independent nation</p>	<p>Colonised by Dutch, Spanish, Japanese (1895-1945)</p> <p>When communists took control of mainland China, Chiang Kai-shek and his forces occupied Taiwan; martial law under the Nationalists until 1987</p> <p>Still claimed as part of People's Republic of China</p>
Ethnic groups	<p>Indigenous population of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders</p> <p>Waves of migrants since WWII</p>	<p>Hakka and Fulo peoples (descendants of earlier immigrants from China)</p> <p>Austronesian-speaking Aborigines (13 tribes)</p> <p>Chinese mainlanders post-1948</p> <p>Increased immigration from SE Asia (brides, workers) since 1990s – eg 350,000 foreign brides arrived in 2005</p>
Multiculturalism	<p>Multicultural policies introduced in 1973 (Whitlam government)</p> <p>Recent backlash against this policy, emergence of far-right nationalism, Howard government promotes idea of essentialised Australian identity</p>	<p>Multicultural policies introduced in the 1990s</p> <p>Aboriginal council (1996) Hakka council (2001)</p> <p>But more recent immigrants are not generally covered by multicultural policies</p>

colonisation at the hands of the Dutch, the Spanish and the Japanese, and its population is of mixed ancestry: Hakka, Fulo, Austronesian-speaking Aborigines and Chinese mainlanders who moved to Taiwan after 1948. In both Australia and Taiwan, indigenous populations were dominated by colonising powers; in both, questions of identity and independence have dominated popular and political life. The principal contrast between the two nations is that while Australia is a sovereign and independent nation (though not yet a republic), the political status of Taiwan is shadowed by the fact that the People's Republic of China claims Taiwan as part of China, despite the social, political

**Concepts of
multiculturalism are
inflected by historical and
cultural contexts**

and cultural tensions which have developed during more than four decades of military standoff between the two countries.

In Australia, policies of multiculturalism were introduced in 1973, replacing the assimilationist models which had dominated political discourses until then. In recent years, however, a backlash against multiculturalism has taken various forms: the popularity of the anti-migrant politician Pauline Hanson during the late 1990s; a resurgence of racism and anti-Muslim sentiment in the wake of September 11; and an increasing tendency, both from the right and from the intellectual left, to blame multiculturalism for any perceived problems in social and cultural relations.

***Views of cultures other
than Anglo-Celtic are
filtered through the
perspectives of Anglo-Celtic,
middle-class characters*** :

In Taiwan, state policies of multiculturalism were introduced with a proposal, 'Ethnicity and Cultural Policies', advocated in 1992 by the then opposition Democratic Progressive Party, which is now in government (Wang 2004). Councils of Aboriginal peoples and Hakka were established to replace the previous Nationalists' assimilation policies with principles of cultural diversity. Unlike the indigenous people of Canada or Australia, who as the original inhabitants of these nations do not regard themselves as belonging to the immigrant populations to whom the term 'multiculturalism' refers, multiculturalism in Taiwan evolved from Aboriginal cultures. However, the sharply increasing number of immigrants from South East Asia through marriage or work contracts since the 1990s exposes the exclusiveness and discrimination of policies directed at heteroge-

neous incomers (Hsia 2004). Current multicultural policies and programmes are centred on legitimating the political, social and cultural rights of previously oppressed ethnic and minority groups. As for newcomers such as brides and foreign workers, they remain mostly unheard and unrepresented.

In a 1990 essay on multiculturalism and Australian children's literature, John Stephens points out that in texts of the 1970s and 1980s, examinations of multicultural issues are conducted within a relatively conservative set of paradigms where views of cultures other than Anglo-Celtic are filtered through the perspectives of Anglo-Celtic, middle-class characters, and multiculturalism is valued only in so far as it is seen to contribute to the wellbeing (economic and psychological) of the dominant culture. In an essay published a decade later, Stephens (2000) argues that by the mid-1990s, following the emergence of far-right nationalism and the government's promotion of an essentialised Australian identity based on Britishness, there was evidence that a 'more skeptical view' of a multicultural Australia was beginning to inform children's literature. Recent Australian picturebooks take this tendency further, engaging more directly in contemporary debates around questions of ethnicity and race.

Just as Anglo-Celtic perspectives dominated picturebooks up to the 1980s in Australia, so in Taiwan during the regime of Chinese Nationalism between 1949 and 1989 the content of most children's books mirrored the Chinese communists' political priority of regaining sovereignty over China. Thus, Chinese culture permeated children's reading materials with only a few scattered works on Taiwan and its local culture. It was not until the 1990s, as the development of multicultural Taiwan started to take shape, that Taiwanese culture reasserted its

position and cultural diversity was celebrated. Taiwanese and traditional Aboriginal genres such as folktales, myths, idioms, or nostalgic old-time childhood stories started to emerge. Commissioned picturebooks funded by the government also highlighted local traditional cultures and festive customs. However, stories that depict contemporary Aboriginal life are scarce.

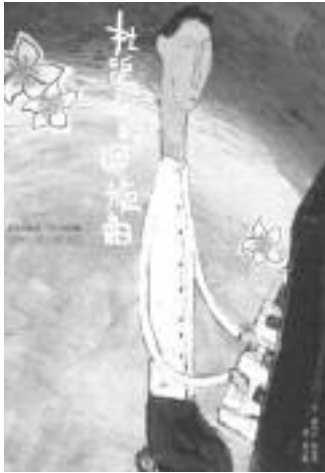
The transformation of a multicultural Taiwan forged from migration has not so far been represented in children's stories; and narratives thematising conflict or cooperation among different ethnic groups are also rare,

Children's writers may lack the cross-cultural experience to voice different social realities

with some notable exceptions such as Bor-Leh Liu's *Black Village and White Village* (1994). Many children's writers in Taiwan, like their Anglo-Australian peers, may lack the cross-cultural experience to voice different social realities. Moreover, under the influence of globalisation, the picturebook market in Taiwan

has long been dominated by foreign picturebooks, mainly award winners from the US, UK and Japan (Bradbury and Liu 2003; Lin 2005). Although local talents have recently begun to emerge, texts which address life in multicultural Taiwan are yet to emerge.

In Taiwan, as social groups previously marginalised seek justice through the practices and policies of multiculturalism, long-standing resentment at the authoritarian conduct of the Nationalists has manifested in texts which examine the political conflicts and cultural clashes of the past: the silenced truth is uncovered and the stigmatisation of certain ethnic groups is gradually removed. For instance, the picturebook *Rondo of Lalakusu* (Lu et al 2003) is a government-commissioned biographical work which outlines the life of Yi-Sheng Gou, the revered educator and composer who became a county magistrate of the Tso people (an indigenous tribe) during the latter stage of Japanese colonisation. Gou continued these duties after Japan handed Taiwan over to China following the end of World War II. However, he was later persecuted as a rebel and murdered in jail. His musical legacy and contribution to his tribe had been silenced because of the incident. In the story, the implied narrator, Gou's son, attends a memorial concert for those persecuted, recalling the days when his father's music filled the family and the tribe



Rondo of Lalakusu

The silenced truth is uncovered and the stigmatisation of certain ethnic groups is gradually removed

with love and spiritual meaning. He also remembers the days when his father was arrested and the family survived the discrimination by listening to his father's music and by reading his letters from jail (appendixed in the book). After 40 years of waiting, the time of justice finally arrives and Gou's sons are able to inscribe Gou's name on his tomb, play his favourite

music (Beethoven's Fifth Symphony), enjoy his favourite drink, beer, and cry out to the valley, 'Amo (father), we are all safe and well!' The unsung hero is finally recognised. For indigenous people, this story also helps eradicate stereotypical images that represent them negatively as primitive and savage. Gou's expertise in music and scholarship represents not only his individual achievements but also the capacity of Aboriginal people to take on and enjoy new cultural forms, symbolised in the illustrations of this. The bold use of colour characteristic of fauvism highlights both the characters and their moods. For instance, the strong crimson of the narrator's clothing reflects his emotional agitation and anger about the colonial past, while the bright colours (yellow and red) and the surrealistic and disproportional human figures create a floating sensation which suggests the hovering memories and reminiscences that keep Gou's spirit alive.

• ***Certain individuals seek to***
 • ***gain power by appealing to***
 • ***notions of a Taiwanese***
 • ***national culture that***
 • ***excludes ethnic minorities***

Lingering resentment against the authoritarian regime of the Nationalists sometimes transmutes into tensions between ethnic groups as politicians and others assert that cultural difference produces social instability. That is, certain individuals seek to gain power by appealing to notions of a Taiwanese national culture that excludes ethnic minorities. Bor-Leh Liu's *Black Village and White Village* (1994) expresses concern at this trend and demonstrates how ethnic differences are manipulated to produce social segregation and conflict. In the story, White Village is white because people produce cassava starch that is scattered over the village and causes it to look white, while Black Village relies on the mining of coal, which stains everything. Although they are neighbours, both villages identify only with their own colours, which are deliberately carried over to the food that they eat and even the gods that they worship. They show distaste for each other's colour and fear that inter-marriage between the two villages will produce zebra-like offspring. As the two villages unite to pray for rain during a drought, the rain washes away these colours and reveals the sameness of the villagers. The story ridicules race-based divisions that produce distinctions between self and others, and exposes the ignorant and stereotypical conceptions that obstruct cross-cultural communication. Drawing in pen and ink, the illustrator includes fine lines and strokes to convey the characters' facial expressions and to underline the similarities between the two groups of villagers, despite their insistence on maintaining their connections with the colours that divide them.

As Taiwan is establishing a new national identity built on multiculturalism as its main strategy, its historical ties and social and economic



Black Village and White Village

relationships with China complicate the issue and create a dilemma that all Taiwanese people have to face when choosing their identity: whether Taiwanese or Chinese. *Guji Guji* (Chen 2004), a Taiwanese picturebook that enjoys international success, is a story that reflects this national identity crisis. The story is about a crocodile called Guji Guji, who is hatched by a preoccupied mother duck as her own egg and treated like a duck until, one day, three crocodiles encounter him and convince him that he is a crocodile. They persuade him to help them catch the fat juicy ducks because now he belongs to their group. As Guji Guji realises that he does not and will not fit his new identity, he decides to call himself a crocodile and to align himself with the ducks.



In his illustrations, the author/illustrator uses two different colours to distinguish the two conflicting groups, ducks and crocodiles, particularly in their beaks and snouts. The warm yellow colour represents the appealing and vulnerable ducks while the cold greyish blue colour depicts the cruelty of the hostile crocodiles. The protagonist, with his yellow snout, is located in the yellow group, and this strategy demonstrates his hybrid identity even at the very beginning of the story.

The story ends when the three mean crocodiles are driven away by the crocodile's clever trick. Like Guji Guji who resolves his identity crisis by claiming a new, hybrid identity, that of the crocodile, Taiwanese people in fact recognise the transforming and hybrid nature of their national identity. However, unlike Guji Guji whose hybridity is legitimated as a new identity, Taiwan's new identity is still without a voice in the international arena because it lacks independent sovereignty.

In Australia, too, debates about national identity are prone to test ideals of multiculturalism. These debates occur within the context of the 'war on terrorism' conducted by the United States and strongly supported by the Australian government. The rhetorics of 'border control' and 'national security' draw upon racialised distinctions between white and non-white citizens, and between Islam and Christianity, and multiculturalism is seen by its opponents as affording a context within which non-white Australians are encouraged to maintain allegiance to cultures and nations outside Australia instead of adhering to a set of core 'Australian' values identified with the nation's Anglo-Celtic origins.

The rhetorics of 'border control' and 'national security' draw upon racialised distinctions between white and non-white citizens :

Picturebooks of the 1990s tended to locate depictions of multiculturalism within the domain of everyday life, showing how growing individuals are gradually introduced to a wider world of social and cultural interaction, with potential for conflict as well as personal growth. Mem Fox and Leslie Staub's *Whoever You Are* (1997) emphasises 'universal' human



values, showing children of different ethnicities and cultures who are said to experience the same emotions: 'Pain is the same, and blood is the same'. Sally Rippin's *Fang Fang's Chinese New Year* (1996) examines the effects of migration, resettlement and cultural negotiation on an individual, Fang Fang, who was born in China but came to Australia as a baby. The narrative says 'Now she is Australian', but then goes on to show that Fang Fang is uneasy about exposing her 'Chineseness' to her Anglo friend Lisa, who is invited to celebrate Chinese New Year with Fang Fang and her family. When Lisa shows her pleasure in the food she is offered, in learning to use chopsticks and in watching the dragon parade, Fang Fang is reassured as to the value of the cultural practices of her family.

Australian picturebooks published in the last few years reflect a climate in which cultural diversity is a cause of unease rather than of celebration. Rather than emphasising what people of different cultures have in common, like *Whoever You Are*, or showing children developing cross-cultural friendships, like *Fang Fang's Chinese New Year*, recent Australian picturebooks draw readers' attention to processes and rhetorics which marginalise those regarded as different. But these texts typically address ideas of cultural difference obliquely and by way of analogies, rather than through the realist representations of *Whoever You Are* and *Fang Fang's Chinese New Year*.

Australian picturebooks published in the last few years reflect a climate in which cultural diversity is a cause of unease rather than of celebration :

In line with this tendency, Shaun Tan's *The Lost Thing* (2000) and Narelle Oliver's *Dancing the Boom Cha Cha Boogie* (2005) draw on metaphor and allegory to comment on neo-liberal tendencies toward uniformity and intolerance. In *The Lost Thing*, a young boy finds the eponymous 'lost thing' at the beach and realises that this 'thing' does not fit within his ordered, rigid world. Debra Dudek's essay on *The Lost Thing* and other Australian texts reads the lost thing as 'a racialised subject, who challenges and makes visible some of the ways in which people and institutions cannot embody the racialised other into the unified (read homogenised) body politic'.

Just as the 'lost thing' defines itself as alien to the ordered and bureaucratic setting in which it finds itself, so in *Dancing the Boom Cha Cha Boogie*, Oliver establishes a contrast between the murmels, who 'did not have a worry in the world, except for the whirligigs, and the snigs, who survive under a repressive and regimented regime. Three young murmels are caught up in a whirligig and are marooned on the shore of the

Children's books

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Grand Snigdom. Here they are at once consigned to a prison whose isolated position in a desert landscape alludes to the detention centres in which refugees to Australia have been imprisoned as they wait to see if they will be granted refugee status. But a young snig befriends the murmels, who introduce her to new foods, teach her how to play hopsplotch and leap-murmel, show her how to dance 'the jitter-murmel and the boom-cha-cha boogie'. When the Boss Snig threatens to banish the murmels, their dancing of the boom-cha-cha-boogie demonstrates a mode of being in the world which privileges joy and spontaneity over the uniformity and rigidity of the Grand Snigdom. The utopian closure of the narrative, in which the prison is transformed into a children's playground, promotes a vision of new world orders in which difference is welcomed rather than regarded as a cause of anxiety and alarm.

Picturebooks, like children's literature in general, are peculiarly responsive to shifts and tensions in social and political life. In Taiwan, the adoption of policies of multiculturalism is a relatively recent development, despite the nation's long history of cultural and ethnic diversity, and picturebooks are only now beginning to address national politics. In Australia, where multiculturalism has been enshrined in national policies since the 1970s, debates on national identity continue to hinge upon notions of belonging, affiliation and loyalty.

Many of the recent picturebooks we have discussed lean toward allegorical rather than realistic treatments of cross-cultural relations. Perhaps this is an indication that in Australia and Taiwan, questions about who is included and excluded in the nation remain contentious.

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Already overflowing with excitement about her upcoming birthday, Jamela is captivated by a pair of glittery princess shoes. Disappointment sets in when Mama looks at the price and determines that a more practical pair of sturdy school shoes is necessary. Mama is furious when irrepresible Jamela decorates the new shoes by gluing on 'beads and sparkly and glittery bits'. However, a local artist declares that such shoes will sell like hotcakes, which indeed they do as Jamela industriously channels her energy into decorating more 'Jamela Shoes'. She is rewarded with a birthday present of a replacement pair of school shoes as well as the originally coveted princess shoes.

The illustrations sparkle with the energy of life in a modern, urban Cape Town setting. A pronunciation guide is provided for the phrases from the Xhosa language, including the words to the Happy Birthday song. Readers will not only cheer for Jamela's clever and satisfying solution to a universal dilemma, they will long for princess shoes of their own.

Micki Nevett



Niki Daly

Happy Birthday, Jamela!

New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux 2006 (also available from Frances Lincoln, London, and The Inkman, Cape Town) 26pp

ISBN-13: 9780374328429

ISBN-10: 0374328420

(picturebook fiction, 5–8)

Here is non-fiction for the very young at its best. In a well-designed book about the Barbour sea horse, meticulously researched information is provided in accessible, rhythmic, often lyrical text arranged for maximum visual interest through variation in font size and placement. Illustrations of blues, greens and coral made from vinyl engravings, watercolour washes and printed wood textures evoke the sea and impart a sense of mystery, entirely suited to the book's mysterious subjects. Sophisticated concepts are presented through understandable comparisons and vivid imagery: 'He has tiny prickles down his back, like a dragon.'

Appendices are noteworthy. An index invites readers to look up the pages that explain selected facts about the sea horse. Endpapers show pictures of the Barbour and eleven other types of sea horse. Butterworth wanted to write about sea horses because 'they look so strange and wonderful'. She and the artist manage to both convey and evoke a sense of wonder as they inform about these amazing tiny creatures.

Glenna Sloan



Chris Butterworth and John Lawrence (illus)

SEA HORSE: THE SHYEST FISH IN THE SEA

Cambridge, MA, USA: Candlewick Press 2006
28pp

ISBN: 0763629898

(non-fiction picturebook, 5–8)

A Time of Changes

Dutch Children's Literature after 1945

by HELMA
VAN LIEROP-DEBRAUWER



Helma van Lierop-Debrauwer is professor of children's literature at Tilburg University and Leiden University. Her main fields of interest are young adult novels and dual audience authors



• *Soon after the war, writes Helma van Lierop-Debrauwer, the Netherlands made a conscious effort to encourage children's literature. As a result, not only is Dutch children's literature in good shape, but several Dutch writers and illustrators have achieved remarkable international acclaim*

Immediately after the end of World War II in 1945, Dutch society made every effort to recover economically. At the beginning of this period of postwar reconstruction there was no time to pay attention to the reading behaviour of children and young adults. But towards the end of the 1940s adults became more and more concerned about what they called 'the decay of the reading culture'. In particular, the growing number of comics was a tremendous worry to them. They were convinced that comics

***Dutch writers for children
began taking children
seriously*** :

would spoil good taste and would cause reading laziness and superficiality (De Vries 1989). In 1949, the Minister of Education and Science set up an advisory committee concerning the supply of reading matter with the intention of turning the tide. The production of good children's books was considered the best weapon in the struggle against the fading reading culture. He encouraged parents, teachers, librarians and youth workers to promote the reading of good books (Van den Hoven 2004). A period of great activity followed. The most important events were a congress on 'Book and Youth' and the founding of a Dutch centre for children's books with the same name (both in 1951), the setting up (in 1954) of *Kris Kras*, a literary magazine for children that functioned as a stepping stone for many authors and illustrators, and the launching of an annual children's book week in 1955. All these efforts were aimed at bringing good children's books to the attention of children and their 'upbringers'. But what was considered worth reading?

A change in mentality

In the 1950s and 1960s a new generation of writers appeared. Authors like Annie MG Schmidt, Han G Hoekstra, Miep Diekmann, An Rutgers-van der Loeff, Mies Bouhuys, Paul Biegel, Hans Andreus and Tonke Dragt, to name some of them, showed a change in mentality. They no longer took the position of the authoritarian adult, but they began taking children seriously, their emotions as well as the world in which they lived. And they wanted children to take responsibility for themselves.

With her poems for children, Annie MG Schmidt broke away from the respectability that had dominated Dutch children's literature for so long. Her debut, *Het fluitketeltje* [The little whistling kettle], was published in 1950. (Some of the poems in this volume have been translated into English and published, along with some other poems, in *Pink Lemonade*.) The first thing that strikes the reader is the content of her poems. Schmidt writes in a humorous way about fanciful, nonsensical events. Her moral often is that of 'a world turned upside down'. She is subversive and ironic and shows solidarity with children, with the oppressed and the defenceless. Her aversion to big words has the effect of continuous understatement. The form of her poems is also innovative. Her literary skill, her feeling for metre, rhythm and rhyme attracted the attention even of critics who normally only read adult poetry.

***Annie MG Schmidt is
subversive and ironic and
shows solidarity with
children*** :

Schmidt was not only a good poet. She is an author with a voluminous *oeuvre*. She wrote poems and stories for children and for adults, songs for cabaret and other texts for theatre, radio and television. Her work is still read today by children and their parents. In 2003, probably the most famous duo in Dutch children's literature, Jip and Janneke (in English Bobby and Jill), celebrated their 50th anniversary. Annie MG Schmidt died in 1995. She was the first author to receive the Dutch State Prize for literature for children and young adults (now called the Theo Thijssen Prize). She received this award in 1964. Schmidt was also the first Dutch writer to be awarded the Andersen Prize (in 1988).



The realistic novel for young adults

Miep Diekmann’s significance lies not only in her books, but also in her involvement in the field of children’s literature. Although Diekmann was an all-round author who practised many genres, critics find her realistic novels for young adults most innovative. She was the first to dare to write about difficult subjects like racism, slavery, sexual intimidation and suicide. But, as with Schmidt, the literary form of her work was also remarkable. The depth of her characterisation was new at the time.

Thanks to Diekmann’s involvement in the field, children’s literature has been brought to the attention of a broader public. That is why the jury of the Dutch State Prize for literature for children and young adults, in 1970, not only awarded Diekmann for her talked-about books, but also for her efforts to promote children’s literature. Her role in the emancipation of children’s literature, in the Netherlands and abroad, must not be underestimated. For her important contribution to children’s literature Miep Diekmann was made an honorary member of IBBY in 2006.

Taking children seriously was not only the motto of Miep Diekmann, but also of An Rutgers-van der Loeff. She debuted as a children’s writer in 1949 with *De kinderkaravaan* (*Children on the Oregon Trail*). Another book, *Avalanche!* (originally published in 1954), was awarded the first Children’s Book of the Year prize, introduced by the Foundation for Collective Propaganda for Dutch Literature (CPNB) in 1955.

Although she was less radical, her work and her efforts to promote good children’s books are comparable with the books and activities of Miep Diekmann. Just like her, Rutgers-van der Loeff wrote realistic novels for adolescents, in which she confronted children with reality. With her stories she wanted to stimulate children to think for themselves and to nourish children’s sense of solidarity with other people.

Miep Diekmann was the first to write about difficult subjects like racism, slavery, sexual intimidation and suicide :

Rutgers-van der Loeff :
wanted to stimulate children :
to think for themselves :

The work of Paul Biegel and Tonke Dragt seems to be timeless. During the 40 years they have been writing books their success has hardly changed. They are both remarkable storytellers and creators of fantastic worlds. Critics admire Biegel's playful style and the way he challenges children and adults to participate in his fairy-tale world. Biegel died in 2006. He was one of the most productive and prize-winning Dutch authors.

For Tonke Dragt, writing is a voyage of discovery. In her books she likes to explore the frontiers of time and space. In some of her novels she takes the reader to a vague past; in others she travels to the future. She is not only an outstanding writer, but also a very good illustrator. In fact, her writing is inextricably bound up with illustration.

Social changes: the 1970s

In response to societal changes in the 1960s – resistance to authority, feminism and the sexual revolution – children's literature also changed. In the 1970s, so-called anti-authoritarian movements made a plea for more realism, more social engagement and social criticism in children's books. Children's books, so the argument went, should reflect the social changes of their time and should be more open to the new division of roles between men and women, (homo)sexuality, divorce, and matters of life and death. In response, writers began to emphasise social problems. In these hyper-realistic books, the discussion of themes and the breaking of taboos were often put first, and a good story and credible characters were of secondary importance. From a literary perspective, these

so-called problem novels were far from original. Criticism was inevitable. The most important objection to the problem novel was that the message of the author was too obvious. There was no room for the imaginative or deductive powers of readers.

Of course, there were also writers who had the same ideological principles but who did succeed in combining their ideals with literary quality. The Writers' Collective, whose most important members were Willem Wilmink, Karel Eykman and Hans Dorrestijn, is a good example. In their books these authors paid attention to social developments without forgetting the emotions of the child. Their language is the language of children.

In the 1970s, it was :
thought that children's :
books should be more open :
to the new division of roles :
between men and women, :
(homo)sexuality, divorce, :
and matters of life and death :

Another author that should be mentioned here is Guus Kuijer. His career as a children's writer started in 1975 with *Met de poppen gooien* (*Daisy's New Head*). The anti-authoritarian movement praised his work because it represented a good reflection of societal changes. However, Kuijer himself broke with the didacticism of the social reformers, and, in a series of essays, *Het geminachte kind* [The child disdained] (1980), he made a plea for children to be taken seriously. A writer should empathise with readers. There should be room for the child's world of imagination. These essays marked the beginning of a new discussion about the features of good children's literature.

Kuijer's own books are an example of how writers can put his ideas into practice. He is still

***The literary emancipation
of children's literature has
led to a blurring of the
boundaries between adult
and children's fiction*** :

writing and his five books about Polleke (published since 1999) are appreciated by children and adults. The mentality of Kuijser's work shows a strong affinity with that of Annie MG Schmidt which he acknowledges himself by explicitly referring to her work in *Het boek van alle dingen* (*The Book of Everything*) (2004).

1980s and onwards: literary emancipation

The hyper-realistic books of the 1970s became more and more criticised in the 1980s. Authors like Imme Dros, Annemarie and Margriet Heymans, Wim Hofman, Els Pelgrom, Toon Tellegen, Peter van Gestel, Edward van de Vendel, Ted van Lieshout and Joke van Leeuwen, to name the most important, were first and foremost interested in art and in writing literature. To them, children's literature is a literary genre in its own right. In their stories and poems, there is a perfect ensemble between form and content. The ready-made answers of the children's books of the 1970s have been replaced by choices. The books of these authors ask for an active involvement of the reader. Traditional compositions have been traded in for more experimental ones. The use of intertextuality and experiments with perspective and chronology mean that the texts can be read on more than one level. To summarise this development one can say that in the 1980s and 1990s Dutch children's literature has grown up. The above-mentioned writers are read and appreciated by adults as well as children. To underline this, their books are often specified as 'literature without age'.

Els Pelgrom's *Kleine Sofie en Lange Wapper* (*Little Sophie and Lanky Flop*) (1985) is often considered as the turning-point, because it forms the beginning of a series of children's books that are all written from the same literary perspective. *Kleine Sofie en Lange Wapper* can be characterised as a story which takes place on the borders of reality and imagination. The narrative technique of this novel is remarkable.

As a consequence of this literary emancipation of children's literature, there is an ongoing discussion about the blurring of the boundaries between adult and children's fiction. Moreover, a growing number of writers are crossing the border. Authors like Willem van Toorn and Mensje van Keulen, well known as authors of adult novels, are now also successful writers of children's and young adult books. And, the other way around, authors like Joke van Leeuwen, who is best known as a children's writer, also publishes novels and poems for adults.

***Educators today are
concerned about the
disappearance of children's
books and the rise of
children's books for adults*** :

Not everyone is happy with this development. Educators and librarians especially are concerned that the literary emancipation of children's books will happen at the expense of the reading pleasure of children. They see the changes as the disappearance of children's books and the rise of children's books for adults.

The art of illustration

Kleine Sofie en Lange Wapper, written by Els Pelgrom, was illustrated by Thé Tjong-Khing. It is a wonderful example of partnership in writing and illustration. If there is one thing

Some recommended titles

Paul Biegel (1969) *De tuinen van Dorr* Haarlem: Holland 1969
(published in English as *The Gardens of Dorr* London: Dent 1975)

Miep Diekmann (1956) *De boten van de brakkeput* Den Haag: Leopold
(published in English as *The Haunted Island* London: Methuen 1959)

Tonke Dragt (1962) *De brief voor de koning* [The letter for the king] Den Haag: Leopold

Guus Kuijer (1975) *Met de poppen gooien* Amsterdam: Querido
(published in English as *Daisy's New Head* Harmondsworth: Kestrel 1980)

Guus Kuijer (2004) *Het boek van alle dingen* Amsterdam: Querido
(published in English as *The Book of Everything. A Novel* New York: Arthur A Levine 2006)

Els Pelgrom (1985) *Kleine Sofie en Lange Wapper* Amsterdam: Querido
(published in English as *Little Sophie and Lanky Flop* Farrar, Straus and Giroux 1988)

An Rutgers-van der Loeff (1949) *De kinderkaravaan*
(published in English as *Children on the Oregon Trail* Penguin 1983)

An Rutgers-van der Loeff (1954) *Lawinens razen*
(published in English as *Avalanche!* Puffin 1970)

Annie MG Schmidt (1950) *Het fluitketeltje* [The little whistling kettle] Amsterdam: Arbeiderspers

Annie MG Schmidt (1981) *Pink Lemonade* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans

Max Velthuijs (1990) *Trompet voor een olifant* Amsterdam: Leopold, 1990
(published in English as *Too Much Noise* London: Andersen 1990)

Max Velthuijs (1998) *Kikker en de horizon* Amsterdam: Leopold
(published in English as *Frog and the Wide World* London: Andersen 1998)

that is characteristic of children's books, then it is the combination of writing and art, and an overview of the postwar history of Dutch children's book illustrations reveals that there have been quite a few duos who wrote and illustrated with perfect mutual understanding. Annie MG Schmidt and Fiep Westendorp together created Jip and Janneke (Bobby and Jill); other duos include Imme Dros with Harrie Geelen, and Guus Kuijer with Mance Post, Thé Tjong-Khing and, more recently, Alice Hoogstad. All these partners support, complement and stimulate each other with fascinating results.

In the Netherlands, there are also a lot of talented writers who illustrate their own work and, vice versa, a lot of good illustrators who are also skilled writers. Tonke Dragt has already been mentioned, but we can add such double talents as Jean Dulieu, Dick Bruna, Max Velthuijs, Wim Hofman, Ingrid and Dieter Schubert, Annemarie and Margriet Heymans, Harrie Geelen, Ted van Lieshout and Joke van Leeuwen.

Seen from an international perspective, the most well-known illustrator/writer is Dick Bruna. His work has been translated worldwide and



his work is so popular in Japan that there are special Bruna shops in Tokyo and Nagasaki. In the Netherlands, millions of children have grown up and still are growing up with the little square books about Nijntje. Bruna is famous for his use of simple forms and predominantly primary colours. He started his career in the 1950s but had to wait till 1989 before he was honoured in the Netherlands. In that year he was awarded a Golden Brush and there was an exhibition of his work.

Harrie Geelen is not only a writer and illustrator but also a composer and musician and a film maker. He is often called an artistic jack-of-all-trades. In his work he uses various techniques. His style is expressive. His use of computer drawings is especially recognised as innovative, abroad as well as in the Netherlands.

Besides these double talents there are a great many illustrators who have, each in their own way, influenced the face of Dutch children's literature since the 1950s and have contributed to its development as a form of art. To name a few: Wim Bijmoer, Jenny Dalenoord, Babs van Wely, Carl Hollander, Sylvia Weve, Lidia Postma, Annemarie van Haeringen, Jan Jutte, Philip Hopman and Harmen van Straaten.

And of course we must not forget Max Velthuis, the winner of the Hans Christian Andersen Award for illustrators in 2004. The jury of the Andersen Award explained their choice as follows:

Velthuis has proven many times over that he understands children: their doubts, fears and exhilarations. His books are little jewels of image and text that come together to comfort children and reassure them as they venture out into the world around them.

To conclude

This brief sketch of the changes after 1945 makes clear that the attention paid to children's reading and reading matters has resulted in a children's literature that can be described as a literary form of art. The many translations of Dutch children's books into other languages show that its quality is recognised internationally.

References

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- Kuijter, Guus (1980) *Het geminachte kind* [The child disdained] Amsterdam: Arbeiderspers
- van den Hoven, Peter (2004) *Het goede en het mooie. De geschiedenis van Kris-Kras* [The good and the beautiful: the history of Kris-Kras] Den Haag: Biblion

A friendship develops between two British teenagers, a devout Muslim girl and a Christian boy, when both are survivors of a terrorist bomb. Their friendship leads to a reevaluation of their values and attitudes while challenging those of their families and wider communities.

MIXING IT is a topical book which explores the complexities of life in today's multicultural Britain. The idea for the book came from news stories about young non-radical British Muslims who want their voices heard. It is an engaging story of moral courage which demonstrates the need for individuals to make a stand against extremist elements in their own communities. While respect for difference is promoted, what is emphasised is the common humanity we all share.

Ciara Ni Bhroin



Rosemary Hayes

Mixing It

*London: Frances Lincoln 2007
184pp ISBN: 9781845074951
(fiction, 12+)*

Can a train ride from Milan to Rome change the lives of four very different (Arab-Italian, white American, Jewish-Italian, Native American) individuals? This book argues that it could.

Alternating among the protagonists' thoughts, the novel follows four journeys that become one. Hayat, a political idealist, sets off to join peace workers headed for Afghanistan. Daniel hopes an ex-girlfriend will give him a second chance. Ruth, whose Israeli grandfather recently died in a suicide attack, travels to bring her grandmother home. Ishi is moving to Rome to give his deaf-mute son better opportunities.

In the train, attractions are obvious, but debate soon erupts over war, the Middle East and America. But when they tread other ground – grandparents, children, even make-up – they begin to understand each other. By the time they reach Rome, friendships have formed, romance is budding, and each finds inner peace.

Written by the Egyptian Italian author whose first book, DREAMING OF PALESTINE, was written when she was 15 and sparked discussion worldwide, this novel renders the intensity, idealism, and questions of the young with authenticity and hope.

Michelle Kuhonta



Randa Ghazy

Prova a Sanguinare

[Try bleeding]

*Milan: Fabbri Editori/RCS Libri 2005
340p
ISBN: 8845113248
(fiction, 12+)*

A Voice from the Margins

Homeric Myth in Two Contemporary Greek Comics

by IOANNA KALIAKATSOU



Ioanna Kaliakatsou is a PhD student at the University of the Aegean, Greece

••• *The most ancient stories of European culture, the Iliad and the Odyssey, provide the content for modern graphic novels that show little respect for the iconic status of their source material and instead disrupt and distort these stories to comic and carnivalesque effect*

HOMERIC myth, as expressed by its ancient creator through the two epics, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, contains all the elements required to entrance a young reader from the very first lines. The *Iliad* contains a short episode that lasts for only a few days during the tenth year of the siege of Troy. Commencing with the wrath of Achilles against Agamemnon, there unfolds a narrative of a major war with vivid action, battle scenes, private combat, espionage and death rituals. Similarly, in the *Odyssey* a reader will encounter the travels of Odysseus through strange worlds until he returns to his home on Ithaca (Easterling and Knox 1985).

Since ancient times Homeric myth has been utilised by educators in order to teach writing and to educate young members of society (Nesselrath 1997). The myth was adapted and parodied (Hight 1978), became part of the literary canon (Anderson 2000), and, as a part of the general cultural capital, is recognised and guaranteed by educational institutions connected to social identity that lay the foundations for the distinctions separating the upper classes from the rest (Bourdieu 1979).

Taking Bourdieu's rationale to its conclusion, adaptations of the Homeric myths in comics, in our day, may constitute a form of substitute for cultural heritage which informs the taste and aesthetics of the working classes, but may also constitute an expression of daring and a form of contesting cultural legitimacy.

This paper focuses on two typical instances of narratives adapted from Homeric myth in comics that contaminate, as Jack Zipes (2002) puts it, and enrich the epic world with the anarchic vitality of the carnival spirit, break up the narrow seriousness dictated by the ruling classes and simulate folk rebellion. The comic books examined here feature marginal characters who are introduced into the Homeric world to become a general laughing-stock, breaking the norms of official speech, with their concerns about bodily functions and their steady opposition to epic values and ideals. These figures enjoy, as Bakhtin (1984) puts it, 'a symbolic victory over death, over all that is held sacred, over all that oppresses and restricts'.

The commercially successful ‘Klassika Eikonografimena’ [Illustrated classics] series, which commenced in 1951, was produced in Greece by Atlantis Publications. Initially many of the issues were translations of an American series called ‘Classics Illustrated’, published by Gilberton.

***• A substitute for cultural
• heritage which informs the
• taste and aesthetics of the
• working classes***

The immense commercial success of these translations of the Gilberton series had led the Greek company, Atlantis, to later collaborate with Greek authors and illustrators, publishing comics ranging from Ancient Greek mythology to the history of the Greek War of Independence in 1821 (Kassis 1998).

Adaptations of the Homeric epics by Vasilis Rotas and illustrated by Akis Vayianos were produced in 1966 for this series, but these were not published at the time, probably (according to the current publisher Vasilis Pehlivanidis) because the series had already started to falter in circulation, an event that eventually led to its cancellation in 1970. Even though Rotas – an author who also wrote for the theatre and translated Shakespeare – was a well-known presence in the literary events of his age, we can assume that his left-leaning stance at a time of political instability and intense censorship contributed to the publisher’s decision not to take on the risk of publishing his text. In any case, a year later, in April 1967, political instability in Greek public life was to lead to a seven-year dictatorship (‘Helleniki Anoixi’ 1966). The adaptation was finally brought to press for the first time with all its initial contributors in 2003, and circulated initially alongside the Saturday edition of the *Kathimerini* newspaper from February to May of that year.

***• We can assume that Rotas’
• left-leaning stance at a
• time of political instability
• and intense censorship
• contributed to the decision
• not to publish his text***

Thersites is the only Greek of humble descent fighting the Trojans who is mentioned by name in Homer. The name Thersites means ‘daring’. His attempt to expose the views of the lower military orders, as these appear in the second book of the *Iliad*, was considered to be impertinent and was punished by Odysseus (Howatson 1989; Grimal 1951). Alexandra Zervou (2003) notes that, as well as being a caricature and a demagogue, Thersites is also ‘an antihero, a slanderer, the soldier/jester, or even the incarnation of that spirit of mutiny and rebellion’. Rotas, in placing Thersites next to the heroic figures of the epic, is not attempting to show that Thersites in reality was the opposite of what our conception of him is, but is instead starting to strip the myth of the Trojan

***• With his ugly mug and
• hunched back, Thersites is
• a crafty rascal who
• becomes a commentator
• breaking up the
• myth of the Iliad***

from *Omiron Iliada*
by Vasilis Rotas

Odysseus: Leaders and warriors, I have one word to say and that is SHAME.

Thersites: Go on, gov'nor let 'em have it!

Odysseus: I can't even recognise you any more! Are we Greeks? Are we men? Are we warriors?

Thersites: As we play the bones and scratch our lice?

Odysseus: Are we fighters? What has happened to the courage and the hopes we started out with?

Thersites: How did we become scarecrows rather than men?

Odysseus: How did we navigate our way over so much sea and run aground on this piece of land?

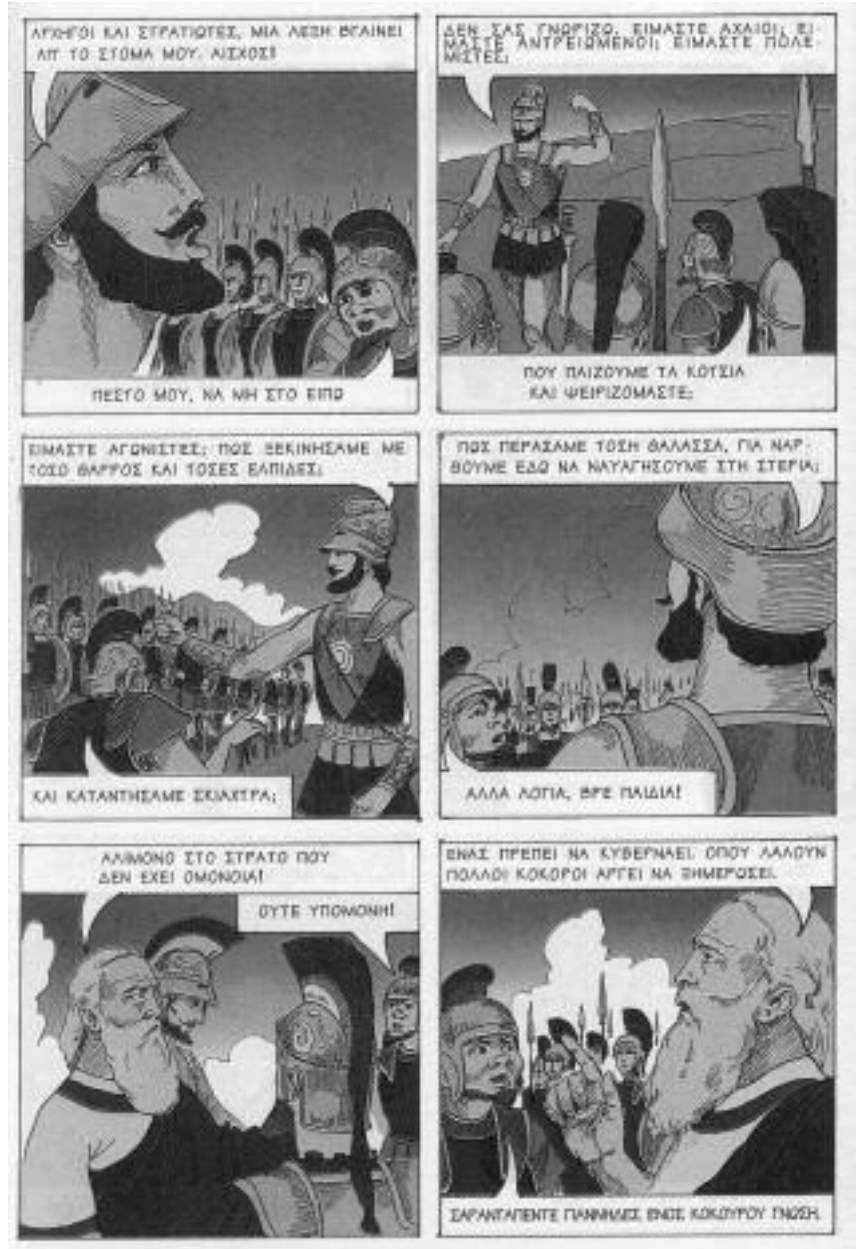
Thersites: He knows how to tell it, lads!

Nestoras: The gods help the army that isn't at peace with itself!

Thersites: And has no patience either!

Nestoras: One man must rule. You can't have two roosters in one henhouse.

Thersites: It's not how often you open your mouth that counts, it's what comes out of it!



expedition, bringing the Trojan War and its central figures to a more earth-bound and human dimension. In Rotas' *Omiron Iliada* [Homer's Iliad], Thersites, with his ugly mug and hunched back, is a crafty rascal who becomes a commentator breaking up the myth of the *Iliad*.

The excerpt quoted below is an account of one of many examples of when this figure enters – or one could say intrudes – into the image, solely to express a practically imperceptible umbrage against authority and the individuals who represent it. The excerpt displays a jocular criticism of authority:

- *Listen up, herald, and I, Thersites, whom everybody calls a fool, will tell you that it's not the shoes, nor the crown, the arms or the ribs, not even the armour makes a king.*
- *So what does?*
- *It's the brains, herald, and not one of them has any.*

As a caricature of a leader he philosophises and with his trenchant talk is a vociferous critic, uncovering the deceit of authority. At another point, addressing the leaders of the expedition he criticises them:

We're the ones fighting, but you have the benefits, living the high life with food and wine, while our life is eating garlic and lice.

As a caricature of a soldier and a fighter, Thersites forgets the grandiose speeches, turns coward, deserts in the face of the enemy and runs for his life: 'I only trust my feet now, so run, feet, save me and I'll sacrifice a bull to you.' His deformity – his hunchbacked body – corresponds to this rationale about the war that concentrates on surviving and looting. This marginal figure allows Rotas to challenge the reader's perception of the traditional heroic images of the Trojan War. War is separated from the weight of Homeric ideals and reveals the primitive instincts of man. When he sees the Trojans' peril, he talks to himself: 'Thersites, stop the looting and take the high road.'

Similar characters, strongly reminiscent of the figures in the Athenian shadow theatre – for

***The companions of
Odysseus are stooges,
cowardly, slothful, but
sympathetic and human,
constantly put upon*** :

which Rotas had written texts that were caustically sarcastic about events of his day – are also encountered in the next adaptation by Rotas, *Omiron Odysseia* [Homer's *Odyssey*]. All these insertions by Rotas into the text of the *Odyssey* do not in any sense seem foreign, and indeed Rotas (1984) added new characters to his works for the shadow theatre, including Viovodas, Patisah, Sousbess and others, exactly as he did in his adaptation of the *Odyssey*.

Odysseus' companions include the figures of Faganas [Guzzler], Mariolis [Cunning Rake] and Kokkinogenis [Red Beard]. These are representative figures of everyday Greek life, and their names are indicative of their traits, while at the same time presenting a caricature of these. The companions of Odysseus appear to be stooges, cowardly, somewhat slothful, but quite sympathetic and human, as they are constantly put upon. Before they set off for the Cyclops' cave, Odysseus accuses them:

- *I picked you twelve, because you are the best, and you try to drink my wine!*
- *We're not drinking it, we swear by Dionysus.*

Taking an oath, however, to Dionysus, the god of wine, while Odysseus is accusing them of devotion to wine, constitutes a challenge to young readers to reveal the contradiction that lies at the root of the sentence and implies, according to Booth (1974) that 'the ironist has ranged himself with those of his readers who share his superior values, intelligence and literary sensibility; together they look down on the benighted mob'.

In every instance the companions will calculate how good a time they are likely to have. They love food above all else, because they are gluttons, but also because they are chronically hungry. There is nothing conventionally heroic about the character types encountered in this

from *Omiron Odysseia*
by Vasilis Rotas

Circe: Are you enjoying the wine, young man?
Odysseus' companion: Great, fill her up, why don't you?
Circe: Here we go, song and dance and more song.
Odysseus' companion: Way to go!
Dancers: Drink up, drink up and become animals.
Odysseus' companion: I'm not moving an inch.
Another one: Ease up there, it'll go to your head.
Circe: And first of all you drink, you drink, be a pig, bright and pink.
Odysseus' companion: Oink, oink, oink...
Circe: Here you go. Off to the pigsty with you too!
Odysseus' companion: Oink, oink, oink...



graphic novel. When attacked by the Laistrygones, they flee, saying, ‘Oh dear, more Cyclops have found us here. Oh dear feet! Help me escape!’

The marginal figure of the greedy companion also casts doubt on the central motif of the Homeric myth, in confirming that he would be satisfied wherever he found himself, so long as he had enough to eat. As Kanatsouli (1996) notes, emphasising the requirements for survival like this, an element also encountered in folktales, underlines the dual nature of the grotesque comedian: ‘it exorcises fear of the duo life/death by worshipping life, expressed through its most material, “bodily”

manifestations'. The scene of the return to Circe's island, after their visit to the land of Hades, is embellished by two narrative squares highlighting Odysseus' companions' existential philosophy; an affirmation of life itself:

- *Oh dear Himeria, is there no way for me to stay here?*
- *Wouldn't you miss your home?*
- *I don't think so. Wherever I have my bread, something to eat and a bit of wine, that's my home.*

In the original epic Odysseus is the one who focuses on the pleasures of Circe's company, while his companions long for home. In this adaptation the companions wish to reap the pleasures of life on this island. The reader finds the above changeover enjoyably unseemly.

The reader can view these comics both as a simplified representation of the Trojan myth, and as a narrative that attempts in every way to resist a stereotypical view of the world and figures in the epic poems.

• ***The marginal figure of the greedy companion casts doubt on the central motif of the Homeric myth***

The four-volume paperback comics series, *I Odysseia tou Odyssea me sintrofo ton Karagiozi*, [The Odyssey of Odysseus accompanied by Karagiozis] by Panagiotis Giokas freely improvises, blending techniques from comics and the storyline from the epic poem with Karagiozis, the main hero of shadow theatre in Greece, and a traditional folk hero. In this comic version, Homer's epic poem is adapted and narrated by Karagiozis, a typical grotesque. The observations by Puchner (1999), concerning the comic

from *I Odysseia tou Odyssea me sintrofo ton Karagiozi*
by Panagiotis Giokas



Odysseus: Hold steady on the rudder!

Karagiozis: I'm holding the rudder! Who'll hold on to me?

features of shadow theatre, are also appropriate for this adaptation by Giokas in the form of a graphic novel:

The comical nature of the shadow theatre, on the one hand is the comic nature of deviant behaviour with satirical distortion, a hyperbole of historical and social reality, on the other hand, is comic transcendence and a destruction of the meaning of reality in general.

Karagiozis tells his children the story of the *Odyssey*, through his very limited perspective. This bald, barefoot, cunning rogue, the ever-hungry Karagiozis, becomes a companion of the long-suffering voyager, as well as a narrator/commentator who wreaks havoc on the myth of Odysseus.

Comics discussed

Giokas, Panagiotis (1999) *I Odysseia tou Odyssea me sintrofo ton Karagiozi* [The Odyssey of Odysseus accompanied by Karagiozis] Athens: Dardanos Christos, vols 1–4

Rotas, Vasilis (2003) *Omirou Iliada* [Homer’s Iliad] Akis Vagianos (illus) Athens: Atlantis-M Pehlivanidis & Co, vol 28, nos 1271–6

Rotas, Vasilis (2003) *Omirou Odysseia* [Homer’s Odyssey] Akis Vagianos (illus) Athens: Atlantis-M Pehlivanidis & Co, vol 29, nos 1277–82

This bald, barefoot, cunning rogue, the ever-hungry Karagiozis wreaks havoc on the myth of Odysseus

The social differences and inequities that shadow both the past, when the Odyssey was written, as well as the present, when the narrative is being told, are uncovered and revealed to the reader. ‘I long for my palace,’ says Odysseus. And Karagiozis responds: ‘What do I have to long for? My shack?’ How the secondary characters, Odysseus’ companions, experi-

enced the Odyssey was an unknown facet of the story, and as Giokas leaves us to suspect, the tale was warped in the telling. The marginal figure of Karagiozis casts doubt on the very definite and culturally defined person of Odysseus, even while remaining under his influence. He is a follower, the ‘manikin’ who is sarcastic about one of the most popular figures of Greek mythology, the brash and clever individual. Before reaching the island of the Laistrygones, Odysseus tells his companion: ‘Seven days and seven nights we’ve fought the sea and have yet to see land...’ and Karagiozis responds ‘When we reach Ithaca you should see an eye doctor.’

The reader may possibly react, be taken aback or bothered by the narrative, but also perceives and is frequently satisfied by the criticism, sharp and to the point, levelled by Karagiozis at Odysseus. When they reach the island of Ithaca, even though they are both unaware they have finally reached their goal, Odysseus wonders about the Phaeacians ‘Have they left us all the gifts? ... we should count them and see whether anything is missing!’, while Karagiozis attempts to drag him back to the main purpose ‘Forget about the junk metal and let’s see what we’re going to do.’ The excerpts denounce Odysseus’ greed, in a

perhaps simplistic manner. Giokas utilised figures from the past to validate the epic world with their presence, while at the same time attempting to connect them to the contemporary world, prodding the reader to wonder about the image of the hero, and how the reader has perceived him through

This carnival revives the narrative voices and perspectives that were previously silent

successive readings of the *Odyssey*.

As John Stephens (1992) suggests, carnival in children's literature,

... expresses opposition to authoritarianism and seriousness, and is often manifested as parody of prevailing literary forms and genres, or as literature in non-canonical forms. Its discourse is often idiomatic, and rich in a play of signifiers which foregrounds the relativity of sign-thing relationships, and hence the relativity of prevailing 'truths' and ideologies.

The adaptors have utilised character types who are warped imitations of warriors, in order to proceed with a pointed and derisive critique of the disposition of the characters in the epic and to entertain the reader with their conduct. From its very nature this carnival revives the narrative voices and perspectives that were previously silent, and in general functions to subvert accepted meanings and to affect the reader's perception and expectation of Homeric poetry. The carnival spirit undermines and ruptures the resilient shell of the heroic epic and helps the young reader to proceed with a critical reading and re-interpretation of the poem.

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We would like to thank Mr Vasilis Pehlivanidis, the publisher, for the useful information he provided during our telephone communication, which took place on 19 February 2006.

Very young readers or listeners with a tendency to worry unduly will identify with Melanie Watt's endearing character, Scaredy Squirrel. In this book, the timorous beastie, after anguishing over the probable dangers sure to beset him if he leaves the safety of his tree, finally takes the plunge and discovers he can handle adventure. Now the little worrywart wants to make a friend, but only if he can find 'someone perfectly safe', that is, one who won't bite him. Armed with *The Perfect Plan* and a test on biting behaviour to administer to any likely candidate, he emerges from his tree with all the items he thinks he needs to make the *Perfect First Impression*, including a prominent name tag.

Each page of this good-natured book contains plenty for lap readers to look at and talk about. Brief text succinctly illuminates the lively cartoon-style drawings rendered in charcoal pencil and bright acrylic.

Glenna Sloan



MELANIE WATT

SCAREDY SQUIRREL MAKES A FRIEND

Toronto, Canada: Kids Can Press
32pp

ISBN: 1554531810
(picturebook, 4–8)

The work of nearly 100 writers and artists is collected in this anthology of stories, folktales, proverbs, memories of the writers, articles, letters, a play and a monologue. Turkish children's book writers, illustrators and other artists came together to voice their concerns with regard to children's exposure to violence and the effects it may have on their behavioural and psychological development.

Stories, legends, poems, illustrations, photographs and other visual material, most of it newly generated for this project, are assembled and arranged to appeal to young readers and to convey concepts and ideas, among them feelings of empathy for and understanding of others, as well as respect for civil rights, the ideals of peace and of non-violent ways to settle difficulties. As children read the book, they will realise that they have personal roles through choice and exercise of will in making the world a less violent place. The goal of the creators of this project, which is currently being realised, is to distribute copies of the anthology to schools throughout Turkey.

Aytul Akal



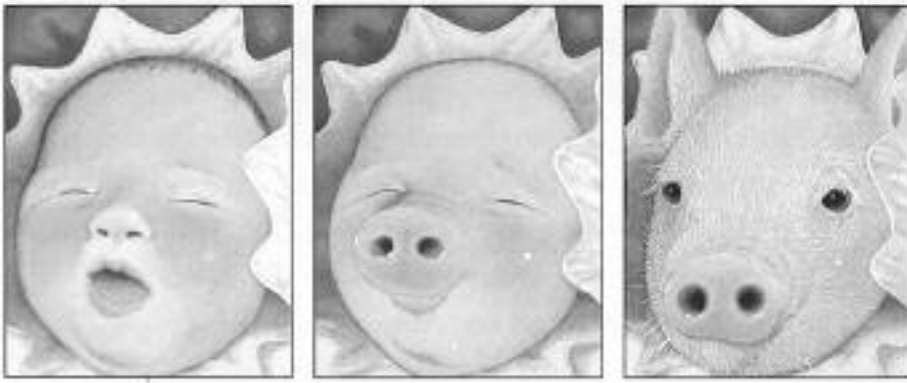
Cocukyazini yahoo grubu/Children's Writers Yahoo Group

HANI HER SEY OYUNDU

[Well, it wasn't all just a game.]

Sakarya, Turkey: Sakarya Governship 2006
272pp
ISBN: 9755856838

(mixed genres, 8–12)



'Surreal' Picturebooks

Binette Schroeder and Anthony Browne

• *Robin Morrow compares the work of two picturebook author/illustrators, from two countries, with two very different styles, but a common surrealistic vision*

The work of Binette Schroeder from Germany and Anthony Browne from the UK differs in many ways, but both have drawn on the conventions of surrealism to produce picturebooks that encourage the viewer to look with fresh eyes both at the books themselves and at the wider world. At a time when visual literacy is at last receiving attention in education systems in many places, adults and children are learning to appreciate the nuanced skills of picturebook illustrators such as Binette Schroeder and Anthony Browne.

Schroeder's books are better known in her homeland, Germany – where the magical Binette-Schroeder-Kabinett, displaying original artworks as well as models and other objects has been installed in an attic studio of the Internationale Jugendbibliothek (International Youth Library) in Munich – and in France and Japan, than in the English-speaking world. Browne is a more prolific writer/illustrator, with more than 30 books to his credit as well as the honour of having received the Hans Christian Andersen Award in 2000. Parallels between them include the fact that each has produced a body of work that is greater than the sum of its parts, an *oeuvre* in which themes and developments can be traced to make up a tantalising whole. And in the work of both there is a recurrent theme of metamorphosis.

Surrealism, the aesthetic movement that flourished between the first and second world wars, sought to explore the frontiers of experience. In the words of its foremost theorist, André Breton, it aimed 'to resolve the previously contradictory conditions of dream and reality into an absolute reality, a super-reality' (Osborne 1970). The surrealists, influenced by Sigmund Freud, saw the unconscious as a storehouse normally guarded by reason, that if unlocked could

by ROBIN MORROW



Robin Morrow is a teacher and reviewer of children's literature who established the first children's bookshop in Sydney, Australia

reveal astonishing creativity: the dreams that surfaced could be nightmares or playfully joyful ones. The irrational and the erotic could be given free rein. Surrealist paintings conveyed not just the fantastic content of dreams but their peculiar emotional quality by their reproduction of dream space. And the illogical juxtaposition of objects, developed especially by Dali and Magritte, was compounded by their use of a technique now called photorealism, resulting in a contrast between the realistic treatment and the unreal subject.

Surrealism has run its course but it has left indelible influences in many spheres of art and popular culture. In children's literature, the broadest claims of the movement may be applied to the very existence of the picture-book as an art form. Many picturebooks blend elements of the everyday with elements that, to the child viewer at least, may appear to be derived from the world of (sleeping or waking) dreams. As Nodelman (1988) has pointed out, even seemingly simple books of animal pictures, intended for the youngest children, depict farm animals that comparatively few contemporary children have actually seen except perhaps in zoos. The first books encountered by the fortunate toddlers of the developed world are usually labelled 'realistic' but may indeed to the child beholder seem 'surreal'. When picturebook art is labelled 'surreal', however, the implications are that the mundane world will have been turned upside down, that characters and objects will have developed

***Surrealist paintings
conveyed not just
the fantastic content of
dreams but their peculiar
emotional quality by their
reproduction of dream space*** :

strange powers, and that bizarre and fantastical detail will be revealed to the observant viewer.

These expectations are met in the work of Binette Schroeder and Anthony Browne. And if the expectations bring to mind Lewis Carroll's *Alice* books, then it is not surprising to note that both illustrators have been influenced by Carroll. Schroeder took the character of Humpty Dumpty and gave him a post-Carroll life as a loveable if unpredictable companion to Lupinchen and Laura in the eponymous picturebooks (1970 and 1999). And one of Browne's major achievements is an illustrated edition of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1988).

***Although there are
references to the dark and
the grotesque in their work,
images from a more playful
dream world abound in
both visual and verbal texts*** :

The conventions of surrealism provide a starting point in examining the work of these two illustrators, but both have moved beyond these conventions in varied ways. There is the art form itself: unlike a single piece of gallery art, a picturebook builds a sustained narrative, usually with the melded text of words and pictures, and thus includes an element of time passing. And although there are references to the dark and the grotesque in their work, images from a more playful dream world abound in both visual and verbal texts. In Schroeder's *Lupinchen* the girl is 'watering her flowers and trees' and the picture shows ramrod stems with yellow flowers on top, each standing separate and as tall as a tree; such scenes 'evoke images that many viewers have been carrying with them – perhaps subconsciously – for a long time' (ten Doornkaat 1995). Both illustrators include visual 'gags' – a snowcapped mountain in the



Laura

background of a hunting scene in Schroeder's *The Wonderful Travels and Adventures of Baron Münchhausen* just has to be wearing a man's hat; nearly all of Willy's dream scenarios in Browne's *Willy the Dreamer* include the banana that has gradually worked its way into becoming a code sign for Willy. There are verbal gags too: Schroeder coined the name 'Gewitterschmettervogel' (storm-butterfly-bird) for the beautiful creature that first frightens Laura but turns out to be her companion; Browne has Santa Claus as a beggar holding the sign 'wife and millions of kids to support' (*Voices in the Park*).

Although the erotic was an important element in surrealists' paintings – such as Max Ernst's 'Attirement of the Bride' (1940) – as illustrators for children, neither Browne nor Schroeder has overtly developed the erotic. Schroeder's illustrations for Mme Leprince de Beaumont's version of *Beauty and the Beast* do, however, fit well with Warner's description of de Beaumont as an intelligent governess who used the fairy tale as an instrument of social adaptation, circulated by women 'to cast themselves as civilisers in the tabooed terrain of sexuality, turning predatory men into moderate consorts'. And the potential erotic charge of many of Browne's illustrations, especially of his powerful gorilla figures, has been noted by Bradford (1998); King Kong, especially in the



The Frog Prince

images late in the book of the gorilla's virile, shackled rage, appears as a kind of Willy the Unwimp.

Both illustrators are attracted to the fairy tale. Schroeder speaks of her childhood, a time when she enjoyed having stories read aloud to her, and when she absorbed the landscape, first in northern Germany with its 'flat, windy seaside landscape with enormous clouds and large meadows

Fairy-tale characters and motifs strayed into her work from the start :

and hedges' and later in Bavaria where she recalls walking in 'glades with flowers among the dark gnarled roots', flowers she longed to pick but the adults would not stop to let her do so. Fairy-tale characters and motifs strayed into her work from the start, such

as in the early *Ra ta ta tam* where three tiny gnomes sit with fishing lines around the fountain in the otherwise formal Versailles-like garden of the Frau Direktor. Her work includes versions of *Beauty and the Beast* and *The Frog Prince*, as well as the 'tall tales' about Münchhausen.

Browne says that it is the fairy tales he remembers most from his childhood reading. He has produced a famously Freudian *Hansel and Gretel*; and has written and illustrated original fairy tales in *The Tunnel* and *Into the Forest*, his recent book that contains explicit references to 'Jack and the

Beanstalk, 'The Three Bears' and 'Hansel and Gretel', and has an overarching narrative that follows the pattern of 'Little Red Riding Hood'.

What Warner (1994) calls the 'dreaming alternatives' of metamorphosis that we find in fairy tale are of obvious appeal to children, whose own bodies are growing and changing daily in surprising ways. (This probably explains why they have embraced as one of their favourite picturebooks

Eric Carle's simple but dramatically illustrated *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, with its account of the biological metamorphosis of a caterpillar through the cocoon stage to a butterfly.) In both Browne's and Schroeder's work the imagery of metamorphosis permeates many illustrations. There are gorillas who are really fathers, eggs that are really playmates, and frequently in both artists' work, trees with sinister faces and gnarled hands ready to

**: The 'dreaming alternatives'
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reach out and entrap the traveller in the forest. More importantly, metamorphosis provides the underlying narrative structure for a number of complete books, some of them new versions of old tales and some of them original stories – for example, Browne's *Willy the Champ*, *Piggybook* and *Changes*; and Schroeder's *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Frog Prince* and *Laura*. In the latter book, Schroeder uses the real-life biological metamorphosis (that an egg will hatch into a bird) as the basis for a charming tale of friendship and overcoming fears.

Occasionally, the illustrator shows a stage-by-stage transformation in a sequence of 'stills'. A close look at such a metamorphosis sequence from each illustrator's work serves to highlight some of the similarities and also the differences in style and technique between the two.

In his *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Browne includes a strip showing the famous baby-into-pig metamorphosis. This sequence has been preceded, three pages earlier, by a full-page illustration of the scene that greeted Alice when she entered the Duchess's kitchen: the cook stirring the peppery soup and the Duchess sitting with the sneezing and howling baby in her arms. The Duchess has a plump, bland face with upturned nostrils; she wears a patterned dress of deep pink tones and a hat that incorporates pink ear-like shapes. Close examination reveals that her hands are suspiciously trotter-like. A reader unfamiliar with Carroll's text may anticipate that it is the Duchess who is about to be transformed into a pig (especially a reader familiar with Browne's *Piggybook*). Then follow two pages of unillustrated text, during which the reader learns that the Duchess has flung the baby into Alice's hands, and it 'kept doubling itself up and straightening itself out again'. In Carroll's account, this is a very active metamorphosis, which ends with the little pig trotting off into the



wood. Browne's small strip, divided into three equal frames, shows the progress from baby to pig (face only) in a neat and orderly manner. Lifelike in texture, fleshy pink in colour, the little face is brightly lit and does not change direction, remaining angled towards the viewer's left. The first frame shows a sleeping human baby with open mouth and upturned nostrils; the second has the same face but with an enlarged snout

***Browne's experience in
early life as a medical
illustrator taught him the
skills of anatomical
draughtsmanship*** :

taking over from the mouth; the third is a pig's face, complete with endearingly round open eyes and a downy covering of hair. The simple scalloped bonnet worn by the baby cleverly concealed its ears, so that the newly sprouted pig ears on top of the head do not need to compete with pre-existing human ones. Unlike some other illustrators' versions of this scene, Browne's makes the piglet's face at least as attractive as the baby's. The studied control of this metamorphosis sequence sits in ironic counterpoint to the action-filled words of the text. Browne

comments that his experience in early life as a medical illustrator taught him the skills of anatomical draughtsmanship – his work at that time required him to paint stages of an operation 'as though it was real'. This baby-into-pig sequence draws on such experience and almost convinces the viewer that it could be from a scientific textbook, so providing an unsettling contrast between technique and subject matter.

Browne's hyper-real technique and opaque figures contrast with the transparent texture of Schroeder's characters, many of whom shimmer in see-through costumes, mysteriously lit from within or nearby. The dramatic metamorphosis sequence in *The Frog Prince* is fluid, the characters constantly in motion. On the preceding spread, the princess holds the tiny frog figure at arm's length in disgust, while still dancing on dainty slippers that match her golden dress and crown. The background here is architectural grandeur: the soaring arches and receding passageways emphasise the wealth of her home, the Bridge of Sighs evokes a world where amphibians may thrive, but this spread chiefly serves as a contrast to the energetic action in the next two spreads. The space of the bedchamber scene is divided into six vertical portions that act as frames in a strip sequence. The first three show the princess, with tousled hair and now clad in the flimsiest of almost-transparent pink nightgowns, against an all-green background. At first she shrinks back as she hears the frog's demand, then she bends to pick him up, and with a dancer's movement throws him against the wall; the dramatic quality of these scenes is emphasised by the bed curtains that act as stage curtains, and the spotlighting of the frog and the princess's feet. The recto side of the spread shows the beginning of the metamorphosis, as the green and mottled creature grows in size and starts to take on human limbs and expression. Now the lighting is suffused as though the

Selected books by Anthony Browne

- Into the Forest* (2004) Walker
- Voices in the Park* (1998) Doubleday
- Willy the Dreamer* (1997) Walker
- King Kong* (1994) Julia MacRae
- Changes* (1990) Julia MacRae
- The Tunnel* (1989) Julia MacRae
- Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1988) (text by Lewis Carroll, first published 1865) Walker
- Kirsty Knows Best* (1987) (with Annalena McAfee) Julia MacRae
- Piggybook* (1986) Julia MacRae
- Willy the Champ* (1985) Julia MacRae
- Hansel and Gretel* (1981) Julia MacRae

Selected books by Binette Schroeder

- Laura* (1999) NordSüd Verlag
- The Frog Prince* (1989) (text by Brothers Grimm, Naomi Lewis trans) North-South Books
- Beauty and the Beast* (1986) (text by Mme Leprince de Beaumont) Walker
- The Wonderful Travels and Adventures of Baron Münchhausen* (1977) (with Peter Nickl) North-South Books
- Ra ta ta tam: Die seltsame Geschichte einer kleinen Lok* (1973) (with Peter Nickl) NordSüd Verlag
- Lupinchen* (1969) NordSüd Verlag (available in English as *Flora's Magic House* North-South Books)

action could be occurring underwater. A striking feature of this half-spread is that the frame dividers have become tilted away from the vertical: an angled signboard has been left teetering (it holds the words of the text) while all seems awash in a flowing liquid, the medium for magical change. The next spread completes the shape-change, with three studies of the emerging human prince, all blurred lines and movement, as he gradually straightens from a frog-leap and becomes less goggle-eyed. The following spread, formal in its architectural framing as befits a statement of happy ending, shows the handsome now-human boy in green pyjamas springing into the princess's curtained bedchamber, with a movement that betrays his recent origins. Prince and princess have both solidified, but not completely; there is a translucency in feet and hands that reminds the viewer that this is still fairy-tale country.

The skill and conviction of these scenes of metamorphosis reveal a deep engagement on the part of both illustrators with the idea of magical change. While surrealism, and especially scenes of metamorphosis, provide a lens through which to examine their work and find points of similarity, it is important not to make this lens into any kind of critical limitation. Other characteristics that Browne and Schroeder share include perfectionism to the last detail, and a rich mix of imagination and humour. But each has a distinct style, and favoured topics and devices that even quite young viewers can learn to recognise. (Children are quick to learn stylistic features of different illustrators' work. Purdon (2000) claims that children feel at

The skill and conviction of these scenes of metamorphosis reveal a deep engagement on the part of both illustrators with the idea of magical change

home with the idea that illustrators have favourite themes 'just as they themselves have'. The work of each continues to develop, providing delight and stimulation to picturebook readers the world over.

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Selznick's virtuosity has earned this distinguished artist much critical acclaim, including a Caldecott Honor for *The Dinosaurs of Waterhouse Hawkins* (Scholastic 2001). Now comes a book *Publishers Weekly* calls 'a true masterpiece'. To find out why, you must read it for yourself. No description can do the work justice except to say that it is innovative and uniquely inventive. It is a novel that is not a novel (at least not a conventional one) and, although it contains a series of 158 dramatic cross-hatched drawings in black pencil, it is not a picturebook. Nor is it a flip book or a graphic novel. What it is most like is a silent film with accompanying printed titles.

This cinematic *tour de force*, based on intriguing facts and set in an actual place, Paris of 1931, features Hugo, a plucky 12-year-old orphan who lives within the walls of the Paris train station where, when his uncle, the clock master, disappears, he tends the clocks himself. The tale is one of mystery and secrets, wonder and magic and of an underdog's survival against immense odds.

Glenna Sloan



BRIAN SELZNICK

THE INVENTION OF HUGO CABRET

New York: Scholastic Press 2007

544pp

ISBN: 0439813785
(fiction, 8–12)



Where Children Meet Books

International Library of Children's Literature, Tokyo

• *A library in Japan that is both a resource for*
• *researchers with an interest in children's*
• *literature and a place for children themselves*
• *to find books that they will enjoy is here*
• *introduced by its former director*

The International Library of Children's Literature (ILCL) was founded in 2000 as a branch of the National Diet Library (NDL), the library of Japan's legislature. The NDL in turn was set up (according to the preamble to the law that established it) as 'a result of the firm conviction that truth makes us free and with the object of contributing to international peace and the democratisation of Japan as promised in our Constitution'. It is located in Ueno Park in Tokyo, the site of a number of museums of art and science. The ILCL, which has 37 staff members including the director general, consists of the Planning and Cooperation Division, Resources and Information Division and Children's Services Division. There were 140,000 visitors to the ILCL in 2006.

There was great concern in the 1990s among Diet members, libraries, schools, publishers and others involved in children's literature that Japanese children were not spending much time on reading and (maybe as a result) students' reading comprehension was in decline. One of the first moves to promote and enhance children's reading was the decision to establish the ILCL.

by TAKAO MURAYAMA

Takao Murayama is the former director general of the International Library of Children's Literature and is currently a senior specialist in education and culture, working for the Science and Technology Service of the National Diet Library of Japan

The ILCL building

The ILCL is in a building that originally housed the former Imperial Library, which is one of the origins of the NDL. It dates from 1906 and was expanded in 1929. Only one-third of the original design was finally completed, for historical reasons. It is a typical example of western Renaissance-style architecture built in the Meiji era. It was designated as a metropolitan historic building by the Tokyo metropolitan government and used as the Ueno Library (a branch of the NDL) for 50 years. In renovating the early 20th-century building to house the ILCL, the NDL sought to preserve the design and structure that is a legacy of an earlier era, while refurbishing the building using earthquake-resistant structures. Renovation was carried out under the concept ‘original for children’. The ‘Meet the World’ Room (the former VIP Room), Researchers’ Reading Room 2 and the Grand Staircase were restored and preserved as examples of historic architecture. The architecture of three different eras (Meiji, Showa and Heisei) has been united and renovated as a children’s library, which preserves its value as architectural heritage as well as developing new functions and providing a new environment for the public. The NDL celebrated the 100th anniversary of the former Imperial Library building by holding a commemorative seminar and exhibition in the year 2006.



Top: The ILCL building's facade
 Centre: The 'Meet the World' Room
 Bottom: Researchers' Reading Room 2

Heinrich Hoffmann (author of *Struwwelpeter*) said that ‘children’s books are here to be pulled to pieces’ (Hurlimann 1967). His phrase points out both the difficulty and the importance of preserving children’s books. Unless a public organisation collects, organises and preserves children’s books, future generations will not be able to refer to most of them. Nowadays the concept of preservation does not mean that libraries keep materials in the stacks; instead, they ensure their users have as much access to library materials as is possible.

***‘Children’s books are here
 to be pulled to pieces’***

An issue that was hotly debated during discussions about establishing Japan’s national library for children’s literature was whether such a library should provide services for children. In order to resolve this

issue, the librarian of the NDL established a board of inquiry (presided over by H Kurihara, chairperson of the Japanese Library Association). This board's report advised the librarian to provide services for children as people. The NDL took this advice and decided that the ILCL should be a place where children could meet books as well as a national centre for children's literature. As a result, the ILCL has the following twin roles (as set out in its own brochure):

- To work closely with local libraries of Japan and other countries which provide direct services for children and support their activities, serving as a national centre supporting research on and study of children's literature
- To offer services to children aimed at awakening them to the pleasure of reading and providing opportunities for becoming familiar with books and libraries, as well as contributing to mutual understanding among cultures

In an address at the inaugural ceremony of the ILCL on 5 May 2000, Her Majesty the Empress Michiko of Japan referred to these roles of the ILCL as follows (in Japanese): 'I believe it is most significant for the development of the library that its dual role of directly serving children as well as "serving those who serve children" be fully recognised and supported by society' (Ayumi 2005).

Modelled on the Library of Congress in the US, the NDL acquires all materials published in Japan under the legal deposit system, including, since 2000, electronic publications such as CD-ROMs and DVDs. The children's books among the publications deposited with NDL by legal deposit are catalogued in the Tokyo main library and transported to the ILCL every week. In addition to the domestic books and documents acquired via the legal deposit system in Japan, the ILCL collects a wide range of literature and related materials from other countries. As of 30 September 2006, the ILCL had 260,000 books including 52,000 from 120 countries or regions, over 1900 serials, over 36,000 items of microform, music CDs, DVDs and so on. The ILCL adds special information, such as outlines and awards won, to that fundamental bibliographic information catalogued in the NDL and uploads it to the Union Catalogue Database of Children's Literature, which is the unified bibliographic data on children's books in the holdings of major libraries in Japan.

• ***It was decided that the ILCL should be a place where children could meet books as well as a national centre for children's literature***

• ***The NDL acquires all materials published in Japan under the legal deposit system***

Among the ILCL's major collections are

- The Kanako Tanaka Collection of Russian children's books
 - A collection of *Struwwelpeter* and related books
- The Nobumasa Ikeda Collection (consisting of his works and reference materials)
- The Ingram Collection of 18th- and 19th-century British children's literature
- The Eiichi Chino Collection of Czech and Slovakian children's books
- The children's books in the Prange Collection (on colour microfilm)

The ILCL has digital archive and digital museum functions, in addition to the PR and user guide functions of the ILCL website. The digital archive is composed of the Union Catalogue Database of Children's Literature and a digital image database of children's literature. Specialised information is accumulated and provided in digital formats. The Digital Museum provides virtual exhibitions based on picturebooks and other attractive images.

The ILCL provides two researchers' reading rooms for anybody aged 18 or over. Children's literature and related materials published in Japan and other Asian countries are available on the open shelves in Researchers' Reading Room 1 (30,000 volumes). All the newly deposited children's books are also available in this room.

In Researchers' Reading Room 2 (20,000 volumes), children's literature and related materials published in foreign countries outside Asia are provided on the open shelves. There is a small exhibition of Caldecott Award winning picturebooks and International Andersen Award winning books there. Offline electronic publications and microform materials are also available there.

Programmes of the ICL Picturebook Gallery

- Children's Books: Transmission of Images
- The Picturebook as Stage: English Picturebook Classics
 - Kodomo no Kuni*: representative picturebook magazine of Japan
- Jugendstil Picturebook Artists and their Contemporaries: Notable European Picturebooks
- Edo Picturebooks and Japonisme: The Kusazoshi of Edo and Japonisme
 - Current British Picturebooks

In addition to the Picturebook Gallery, electronic publications for children including various exciting DVDs are available in the Media Corner on the third floor of the ILCL.

Recent exhibitions at the ILCL

A History of Japanese Translation of Children's Books from Abroad
(2000, under the auspices of JBBY and the ILCL)

Animals in Children's Books (2001, 2004–05)

Friends in Wonderland – From Folktale to Story (2002)

Venture into the Unknown – Various Adventures Described in Children's Literature (2003)

Children's Books in the Prange Collection (2003)

The Palette of Dream Colours – The Noma Concours for Picturebook Illustrations
from Asia, Africa and Latin America (2003, 2005, under the auspices of
the Asia/Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO and the ILCL)

Wisdom of the Lotus – Children's Literature in India (2004)

Russian Children's Literature from Folklore to Contemporary Fiction (2005)

Struwwelpeter and other German Children's Books (2005–06, took place in Germany and Japan)

Northern Gifts – Children's Books from the Nordic Countries (2006–07)

Look up at the Sky – Children's Books on the Sun, Moon and Stars
(current exhibition, an endeavour to stimulate children's interest in science)

Lectures or gallery talks are sometimes held during exhibitions to deepen understanding of the theme.

The ILCL collection also focuses on children's books translated from Japanese into foreign languages. They are available on the open shelves in both researchers' rooms. Reading, copying and reference services are available in both rooms.

The ILCL provides two reading rooms for children, the Children's Library and the 'Meet the World' Room. In the Children's Library, children's literature published inside and outside Japan is provided on the open shelves. The number of items selected by the staff of the Children's Services Division amounts to 9000 volumes. An online catalogue developed for children is available. The 'Meet the World' Room provides children with 1500 books and materials on the geography, history and folklore of 120 countries or regions of the world. These materials are selected to stimulate children's interest in other countries and to deepen their understanding of those countries. Dozens of the same books that are exhibited in the museum of the ILCL are also available there. All the books provided for children are second copies.

Storytelling and reading events, including a picture-book hour for small children, are held on weekends. A total of 200 story hours are held every year.

• ***An online catalogue
developed for children
is available***

• ***A total of 200 story hours
are held every year***

Library visit programmes are also provided. Forty groups from kindergartens, schools and schools for disabled children visit the ILCL every year. Story hour is provided during a library visit at the request of visitors.

Through exhibitions and events, the ILCL seeks to make children's books attractive and provide opportunities for children to become familiar with them.

The ILCL also holds 'Play to Commune with Science' in the summer vacation. Last summer, for example, children made musical instruments from common items such as paper cups and straws.

Since library cooperation is indispensable for users to receive fruitful services, the ILCL puts stress on library cooperation and coordination with other libraries. It provides interlibrary loan, copying and reference services to public libraries and other institutions. It also lends selected sets of books and provides reference services to school libraries. A book set comprises 50 books on a foreign country or area. There are sets on the Republic of Korea, Northern Europe, Canada and the United States of America, Asia (China and Southeast Asia) and the world right now. Sets are lent to two hundred schools every year.

The ILCL provides a lecture series on children's books for librarians involved in children's services every year.

Themes of lecture series

Fantasy: Its Birth and Development (2004)

History of Japanese Children's Literature
(2005)

The Pleasure of Picturebooks: Learning from
the Tradition of British Picturebooks (2006)

The Development of American Picturebooks
(planned for October 2007)

Children's books link the world and open up the future

The lecture series usually includes a lecture introducing participants to the ILCL collections, which helps to promote the utilisation of these collections. Transcripts of the lecture series have been published and are available on the website. The ILCL also accepts student trainees who need work experience in other institutes to graduate in the summer time.

Guided by the principle that children's books link the world and open up the future, the ILCL provides its programmes devoted to promoting children's reading and gathering information on children's books. This means that Jella Lepman's idea of international understanding through children's books has been passed on to the 'Far East'. It is not easy for the ILCL to fulfil its dual role under current severe conditions. But it steadfastly aims to provide children with opportunities to find the pleasure of reading as well as a wide range of services to everybody involved in children's literature in cooperation with other institutes or colleagues both at home and abroad to become a real symbol of children's reading and a centre of children's literature.

References

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ILCL's website: <http://www.kodomo.go.jp>

NDL's website: <http://www.ndl.go.jp>

Towards the end of World War II, with her older brother, a soldier, at the Front fighting, and her younger brother, a Hitler Youth trying to convert her to be more patriotic, Anna, 15, discovers a strange set of footprints in the snow, during a strictly enforced blackout period in Mellersdorf. Like a curious sleuth, she follows them through the woods to the Moserwald Bunker where she hears feverish breathing. Upon returning home, her grandmother, mother and brother talk of the police and dogs tracking an escaped prisoner of war.

Pausewang's sensitive narrative of Anna's innocent care of and friendship with Maxim, a wounded Russian soldier, against the panorama of fierce German patriotism during World War II, takes on a human and suspenseful tone. The author examines the complexity of family loyalty and dimensions of patriotism, and, in the end, we are shocked when all does not end well.

Listed in the 2007 list of Outstanding International Children's Books sponsored annually by the Children's Book Council and USBBY, see the entire list at <http://www.slj.com/2007internationalbooklist>

Jinx Watson



Gudrun Pausewang (trans Rachel Ward)

TRAITOR

Minneapolis, MN: Carolhoda Books 2006

Originally published in Germany as *DIE VERRÄTERIN* by Ravensburger Buchverlag 1995

220pp

ISBN-13: 9780822561958
(fiction, 12+)

'Anyone who reads this book will be perfectly happy,' declares Ursula K Le Guin on the dust jacket and only the surliest reader would disagree. To the delight of his older brother's children, the eccentric Younguncle, comes to visit. In episodic style featuring language appropriate for middle age readers, the book chronicles the exploits and antics of this fine example of the wise jester/clever trickster character type found throughout literature. Creative, inventive and effective, *Younguncle*, among other successes, spoils an unwanted arranged marriage, tricks pickpockets at the train station and arranges a comeuppance for the rich and haughty.

Hindi words are scattered through a text rich with local colour as the author introduces young readers to traditional Indian lore and legend as well as contemporary Indian culture and daily life. All is achieved with humour in lively but understated prose.

Glenna Sloan



Vandana Singh

YOUNGUNCLE COMES TO TOWN

New York: Penguin Young Readers Group 2006

Published in India by Young Zubaan, 2004

153pp

ISBN: 0670060518

(fiction, 8-12)

The Ena Noel Award for Encouragement (Australia)

by JOHN FOSTER



John Foster is a senior lecturer in children's literature at the University of South Australia, Adelaide

••• *The ENA is open only to authors under the age of 35 whom the judges consider to be worthy of encouragement. And have they usually been proven right? John Foster thinks so*

As a nation, Australia is awash with children's literature awards of different kinds and of different perceived statuses. For many people – but not necessarily for the successful authors and illustrators – the least prestigious are the children's choice awards found in nearly every state and territory. Blessed with such animal-related acronyms as KOALA (Kids' Own Australian Literature Award) and BILBY (Books I Love Best Yearly), as well as the unpronounceable WAYRBA (Western Australian Young Readers Book Awards), these awards help promote reading and, of course, give young readers their own voices as to their favourites.

At the next level up are the awards chosen by adults, some 'expert' and others not, and given by organisations, the interests of which are not primarily children's literature but are pleased to give accolades to children's titles which reflect their interests and concerns. These include the Children's Peace Literature Awards, sponsored by Psychologists for Peace, and the Wilderness Society's Environment Award for Children's Literature. It is known that the former is judged by those who work in the children's literature field, but in neither case is it stated on the website who the judges are and what their knowledge of the field might be.

At the top of the tree are the highly publicised awards with worthwhile prizes. The most important national awards, and the only ones in which the judges represent every state and territory, are the Children's Book Council of Australia's (CBCA) set of five annual awards, which are given in categories that include picturebooks, books for older readers and information books. The quasi-national Festival Award, which is associated with the biennial Adelaide Festival of Arts and judged by those in the field, is equally prestigious – it is presented with several awards for adult literature, and the prize is the same – although it is not as well known as those of the CBCA. There are a number of highly regarded premiers' awards, as well, which are state awards similar in approach to the Festival Award.

Then there is the Ena Noel Award for Encouragement. This award (hereafter referred to as the 'ENA') is unusual in that it is made by a

***For many people the least prestigious :
are the children's choice awards :***

national section of IBBY and was named after the person who initiated it. (This, however, is not the self-aggrandisement that it seems, and the reasons that lie behind the decision are explained below.) As the Australian section of IBBY comes under the umbrella of the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA), it is not surprising that the ENA is presented to the winner at the biennial ALIA conference, which is held in one of the state and territory capitals around the country.

Ena Noel herself was president of the Australian national section of IBBY for some quarter of a century, and, during that period, saw her Australian friends, the author Patricia Wrightson and illustrator Robert Ingpen, win Hans Christian Andersen medals in the same year, the first time that both awards had gone to the same country in the same year. She was a member of IBBY's executive committee for two terms, also. Perhaps her greatest initiative, though, was her setting up of the award that bears her name: the Ena Noel Award for Encouragement. The name was chosen, not so that Ena's name would live on, but so that it was apparent to all concerned that she – someone highly regarded in the field – was trying to assist up-and-coming young Australian authors and illustrators for children, a most important task. Ena died in 2003, but her award – and it is always considered as being just that – does, indeed, live on. The first trophy was handed to its winner in 1994, and the most recent in 2006.

Perhaps, given its unusual nature, a few of the rules of the ENA should be listed. Firstly, books by Australian creators published in the two years prior to the particular closing date can be nominated by the publishers. Secondly, the nominated creator must be under the age of 35 at the time the title (or titles) for which they are nominated was published.

Thirdly, any nominated author or illustrator has to be deemed by the judges to be worthy of encouragement. This last rule is not always easy to put into practice: for example, should a young writer or illustrator who has already received a major award, or even been shortlisted for one, be eligible to win an ENA? Fortunately, the judges have always been an experienced, professional group, featuring a well-known critic, the top echelon of the IBBY Australia executive and, until the last two awards, Ena herself, who was both well read and perceptive.

It may seem odd to write an article about an award which has only been given eight times (coincidentally, four times each to illustrators and writers). This, of course, is no ordinary award, and the variety within it, as well as some prophetic choices by the judges, are worthy of consideration. It must be borne in mind, however, that many of Australia's best-known and most highly regarded creators of books for children and adolescents –



Ena Noel

***This is no ordinary award,
and the variety within it,
as well as some prophetic
choices by the judges, are
worthy of consideration***

***The first winner, Arona
Raymond Meeks, never
followed up his success*** :

amongst them John Marsden, Bob Graham, Gillian Rubinstein and Gary Crew – were never able to win an ENA, simply because of its recency and their (comparatively!) advanced age.

The first winner, the indigenous illustrator Arone Raymond Meeks, won in 1994 for his third picturebook, *Enora and the Black Crane* (1991), which was also the first he had written himself. Although this is not a retelling of a traditional tale (note that ‘Enora’ is ‘Arone’ spelled backwards), its artistic style is traditionally based, as indicated by Meeks’s use of ochres, clay and berries – though there are brighter colours later in the work, as it is a story of transformation. This book also won UNICEF’s Ezra Jack Keats Prize for Excellence in Illustration and was shortlisted for CBCA’s Picture Book of the Year Award but, as it happens, Meeks never followed up his success with *Enora and the Black Crane* and, despite his undoubted talent, has seldom been heard from again.

***Sonya Hartnett was a
particular ‘success story’
for the ENA judges*** :

The reverse is true of three of the next winners, Sonya Hartnett, nominated for *Wilful Blue* (1994), the 1996 winner; the late Steve Woolman, for his body of work (a special award in 1997); and Catherine Jinks for *Piggy in the Middle* (1998), the winner in 2000. All three won CBCA awards, with Hartnett and Jinks snaring two each and Woolman one.

Hartnett, though, was a particular ‘success story’ for the ENA judges. Although her first book was published when she was only 15,

Wilful Blue appeared when she was in her mid-20s, and the ENA was her first award. She went on to win the CBCA Book of the Year for Older Readers for *Forest* (2001) in 2002, and also the award for Younger Readers in 2005 for *The Silver Donkey* (2004). *Thursday’s Child* (2000) won the Guardian Children’s Fiction Prize as well as for the Best Young Adult Novel in the Aurealis Award. Moreover, she has also been successful with a cross-over novel, *Of a Boy* (2002), which was successful for the Commonwealth Writers Prize Best Book for the Southeast Asia and South Pacific Region – and was shortlisted for Australia’s premier (adult) fiction award, the Miles Franklin.

So, what did those prescient ENA judges see in Sonya Hartnett’s early work to consider that this young writer deserved encouragement? Firstly, it must be said, a lack of fear. *Wilful Blue*, like so many of her other novels, is gothic in its atmosphere and intensity, and tragic in its plot: it is, also, strikingly well written, for Hartnett’s turn of phrase is second to none. On the first page, for example, one finds the following easy-to-visualise passage:

He saw the black and white cows in the front paddock, noses to the ground, murmuring secrets to the grass; they had leathery soft ears shaped like row-boats. Harriet Finch was there, standing on the veranda with her hands behind her back and her chin making one of its rare appearances under her silky lower lip...

Catherine Jinks is an excellent writer, too, in genres ranging from science fiction to historical fiction set during the Crusades, but lacks Hartnett’s power in both expression and mood.

While the illustrators Tohby Riddle, the winner in 1998 for *The Great Escape from City Zoo* (1997), and Beth Norling, who won in 2002 for *Cherryblossom and the Golden Bear* (2000), are talented and worthy of their awards, it is Steven

***If all the national sections
ran their own versions of
the ENA, IBBY could have
its Young Hans Awards*** :

readers with *The Girl in the Cave* (2004), the second book for which he was nominated.

It is to be hoped that winning the ENA really does encourage young writers and illustrators to continue with their work, even if they had been starting to wonder if they were ever going to meet with success. Certainly, at one level the award is for the best book or books submitted in a particular year but, equally, the judges must be convinced that the winner has more, and perhaps better, in them. Possibly Arone Raymond Meeks had already peaked with *Enora and the Black Crane* but, fortunately, for every Meeks there has

been a Sonya Hartnett, someone whose first taste of real success is winning this award – and then who just makes it the first of a large collection of them. That, indeed, is encouragement.

The Ena Noel Award for Encouragement is valuable because, on the one hand, it assists young Australian writers and illustrators for children to find national recognition and, on the other, it is run by a national section of a highly esteemed international organisation, IBBY. It is drawing rather a long bow but, perhaps, if all the national sections ran their own versions of the ENA, IBBY could have its Young Hans Awards selected from the national sections' winners in order to further highlight the wonderful young talent in the field coming out of not only Australia but countries right around the world. After all, for a young illustrator or author to be recognised internationally would be *real* encouragement.

A family of four receives a special delivery on New Year's Day, a penguin from an undisclosed sender. As the year proceeds, another penguin is delivered each day. As the number of penguins increases, so do the family's problems. How can they house hundreds of penguins? How can they afford the fish to feed them? How can they keep them cool in the summer?

The story combines a lesson on global warming with numerous maths problems. For example, Daddy has just figured out how he can store 216 penguins in a cube when penguin 217 is delivered. The story also becomes a game of 'I Spy' when a blue-footed chilly penguin arrives.

The large format (37x29cm), the cartoon-style illustrations in blue, orange and black and the large font all work well together for a read-aloud. Teachers value the book for its science and maths concepts, while children like the humour and enjoy predicting what will happen as the family acquires more and more penguins.

Carol Sibley



Jean-Luc Fromental (illus Joëlle Jolivet)

365 Penguins

Paris, France: Naïve Livres 2006

*New York: Abrams Books for Young Readers 2006
42pp*

ISBN-10: 081094460X US edition

ISBN-13: 9780810944602 US edition

(picturebook, 4–9)



Books on Books

• *Biographical and illustrative riches abound, not only Lewis Carroll but also Carroll's famous illustrator, Tenniel, are subjects of books reviewed; as is the famous Dutch illustrator Dick Bruna; along with a voluminous catalogue of award-winning illustrated books from Israel and an extensive work on Japanese picturebook artists; all these complemented by a book on violence in youth media, one on the tricky problems of translation, and a book on representations of childhood*

edited and compiled by

BARBARA SCHARIOTH

(translations by Nikola von Merveldt)



Barbara Scharioth was until recently director of the Internationale Jugendbibliothek (International Youth Library) in Munich. Bookbird thanks her for her support and assistance over many years, and wishes her the very best in the future

FRANCE

MARIE-HÉLÈNE INGLIN-ROUTISSEAU
Lewis Carroll dans l'imaginaire français.

La nouvelle Alice [Lewis Carroll in the
French imaginary. The new Alice]

Paris [et al]: Harmattan 2006 359pp

ISBN 9782296000322 €31



What influence did Lewis Carroll have on French literature? How was *Alice*, originally published in 1865, read and adapted in France? This book, based on a doctoral dissertation, traces Alice's footsteps in France. It opens with a chapter on 'Alice in her dream'. Following an introduction to the story's origins, Inglin-Routisseau looks at the function of the dream-topos in the *Alice* books within the larger context of English literary traditions, fairy tales and Freudian dream analysis.

The second part focuses on French adaptations of *Alice* and on the way the mythic character that revolutionised the literary image of children was used by the Surrealists. It was not until 1931 that Louis Aragon discovered *Alice* as a source of poetic inspiration. Alice became a symbol of liberty and creative imagination, free from the constraints of consciousness, and found her way into the works of Jean Cocteau, Paul Éluard, André Breton, Raymond Queneau, Jacques Prévert, Claude Roy and Marguerite Duras. Inglin-Routisseau convincingly demonstrates how these authors reinvented the 'new Alice' in 20th-century France as a symbol of innocence, seduction, subversion and inspiration.

Elena Kilian

GERMANY

BERND DOLLE-WEINKAUFF, HANS-
HEINO EWERS AND REGINA JAEKEL
(EDS)

*Gewalt in aktuellen Kinder- und
Jugendmedien. Von der Verherrlichung bis
zur Ächtung eines gesellschaftlichen
Phänomens* [Violence in contemporary media

for children and young adults. From the glorification to the condemnation of a social
phenomenon]

(Series: Jugendliteratur – Theorie und Praxis)

Weinheim [et al]: Juventa-Verlag 2007 200pp

ISBN 9783779904526 €19.50



Current public debate about the pros and cons of violence in the media focuses mainly on the easily accessible electronic media, notably computer games that market violence as entertainment without offering critical reflection. Much less attention, however, is paid to contemporary young adult literature, which openly condemns violence. The contributions in this volume take a closer look at this genre and present recent scholarship on the topic. They also analyse the radically changing attitudes to and representations of violence in media for children and young adults over the course of history. Comic-books, computer games and pop music are also considered, but literature is the main focus of attention.

Hans-Heino Ewers surveys 'issue-driven' (or what is sometimes called 'problem') literature about juvenile right-wing extremism up to the 1990s. He shows how, on the one hand, this kind of literature was both in demand and

supported, while on the other, it was denigrated for being of poor literary quality. Sybille Nagel brings the bibliography of primary titles up to 2004. Other contributions explore Morton Rhue's *Give a Boy a Gun*, two recent German novels by Frederik Hetmann and Jana Frey, and a Swedish title by Johanna Nilsson.

The volume is a good reflection of present scholarly concerns and offers an extensive overview of recent young adult titles on the topic.

Christa Stegemann

ISRAEL

NURIT SHILO-COHEN (ED)

MICHAL BONANO (INTERVIEWS)

Sefer ha-meayerim ha-gadol: Zokhe Peras Muzeon Yisrael le-Iyur Sefer Yeladim al-shem Ben-Yitshak ba-shanim 1978–2004 = The Big Book of Illustrators: Recipients of the Israel Museum Ben-Yitshak Award for the Illustration of a Children's Book, 1978–2004

(Series: Israel Museum catalog; 497)

Jerusalem: The Israel Museum 2005 xii+340 pp ISBN 9652783145 ILS139

About three decades ago, in 1978, the Israel Museum of Jerusalem created a library for illustrated children's books and launched the Israel Museum Ben-Yitshak Award. The collection, housed in the Ruth Youth Wing of the museum, now holds more than 7500 illustrated children's books from Israel and around the world. Every two years, the award recognises outstanding achievements of Israeli artists by awarding one medal and making up to five honourable mentions. This voluminous catalogue was prepared in collaboration with the Israel Museum and published by Nurit Shilo-Cohen, chief curator of the Ruth Youth Wing. It showcases all 35 award-winning artists from 1978 until 2004 with detailed portraits, interviews, handwritten letters in which the artists present themselves, childhood photographs, a drawing from their childhood years and a list of their most important publications. A generous selection of illustrations convey a vivid impression of the state of picturebook art in Israel and will have everybody who does not master Hebrew longing for editions in other languages. (A small portion of this book is also in English, but it is mostly in Hebrew.)

Barbara Scharioth



JAPAN



KOZUE SHIBATA AND KAYO MINAMIYA (INTERVIEWS)
TOSHIHIKO KŌNO (PHOTOGRAPHS)

Ehon no sakkatachi. 4: Kako Satoshi, Segawa Yasuo, Kajiyama Toshio, Watanabe Yūichi, Nishimura Shigeo, Taniuchi Kŷta, Kitayama Yōko, Itō Hiroshi

[Picturebook artists. Volume 4: Satoshi Kako, Yasuo Segawa, Toshio Kajiyama, Yūichi Watanabe, Shigeo Nishimura, Kōta Taniuchi, Yōko Kitayama, Hiroshi Itō]

(Series: Bessatsu Taiyō)

Tōkyō: Heibonsha 2006 155pp ISBN 4582944973 ¥2200

Since the 1980s, there has been a growing trend in Japan towards unconventional picturebooks. It is to this art that book designer Akira Ono dedicated a four-part series in collaboration with two journalists who themselves worked as picturebook editors.

This is the last of four large-format volumes. It features 30 portraits of important picturebook artists in interview form as well as essays by renowned critics, authors, editors, jazz musicians and others. Photographs of the artists' studios and reproductions of their non-picturebook work set the picturebook art within a wider context.

The picturebook artists come from various professional backgrounds such as graphic design for magazines or the advertising industry, stage and costume design or even jewellery design. They do not consider picturebooks primarily as part of children's literature but as an independent artistic medium not limited to a specific target group. Their pictures are often sensuous and carefree, but do not shy away from deeply serious topics. Comic-strip style easily coexists with abstract drawings and traditional Japanese techniques. This series offers a vast panorama of contemporary Japanese picturebook art.

Fumiko Ganzenmüller

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 • Submissions of recent books and book announcements for inclusion in this section are welcome. Please cite titles in the original language as well as in English, and give ISBN, price and other ordering information if available. Brief annotations may also be sent, but please no extensive reviews.
 • Send submissions to Barbara Scharioth, Internationale Jugendbibliothek, Schloss Blumenburg, D-81247 München, Germany.
 •

THE NETHERLANDS

JOKE LINDERS, KOOSJE SIERMAN, IVO DE WIJS AND TRUUSJE VROOLAND-LÖB
Dick Bruna

Zwolle: Waanders / Amsterdam: Mercis Publishing 2006
550pp ISBN 9789040091063 €29.95



Dick Bruna (born 1927), creator of Miffy, the hugely popular picture-book bunny, is one of the most famous Dutch illustrators of children's literature. On 550 richly documented and illustrated pages, this book presents many different aspects of the life and work of the artist, illustrator and designer Dick Bruna. Joke Linders describes Bruna's development as a picturebook illustrator and writer in the light of biographical details. Following this more general chapter, Koosje Sierman portrays Bruna as a designer of book covers (not only for children's books). In a shorter chapter, Dutch songwriter and poet Ivo de Wijs writes about his musicals based on Bruna's Miffy books and set to music by Joop Stokkermans. In the last part, Truusje Vrooland-Löb describes the enormously successful merchandising of Bruna's book characters, ranging from soft toys and mobiles to travel accessories and toothbrushes. The book also features an interview with Bruna about his views on illustrating and writing for children.

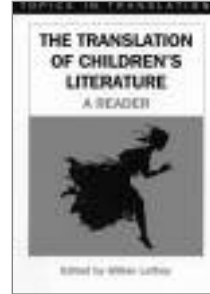
This well-designed book offers a wonderful compendium of Bruna's work and sheds light on some of the lesser known facets, such as Bruna's book cover designs. It is sure to provide fans of Dick Bruna's work with many hours of reading and viewing pleasure.

Toin Duijx

UNITED KINGDOM

GILLIAN LATHEY (ED)
*The Translation of Children's Literature:
A Reader* (Series: Topics in translation; 31)

Clevedon: Multilingual Matters 2006 vii+259pp
ISBN 9781853599057 £39.95



This volume brings together seminal articles that were published during the last thirty years on the topic of children's literature in translation. Since it is limited to essays originally published in English, the perspective is somewhat restricted. Nevertheless, the collection still offers a good overview of the history and concerns of and trends in scholarship in children's literature translation studies.

The authors comprise scholars of children's literature, comparative literature and translations studies, as well as translators (including Zohar Shavit, Riitta Oittinen, Emer O'Sullivan and Anthea Bell) from various countries. They explore various facets of this complex field of research. Issues include the address of children's and young adult literature, the dangers of censorship and pedagogical translations, the problem of cultural differences between source and target languages, and the challenges of translating dialects and sociolects.

The seventeen contributions are divided into five sections: theory of children's literature translation; narrative communication between translator and (real and implicit) reader; translation of visual elements (illustrations); cultural transfer through translation; practical questions of translating. This reader will offer valuable information and inspiration to scholars familiar with the field and newcomers alike.

Jochen Weber

USA

FRANKIE MORRIS

Artist of Wonderland: The Life, Political Cartoons, and Illustrations of Tenniel

(Series: Victorian literature and culture)

Charlottesville: Univ. of Virginia Press 2005 xv+405pp

ISBN 0813923433 US\$65



The world remembers John Tenniel (1820–1914) as the first illustrator of Lewis Carroll's *Alice* books. But there is a lot more to Tenniel. This is what readers can learn in great detail from art historian Frankie Morris, who spent his life studying Tenniel's life and work.

The first quarter of the monograph offers a vast and vivid biography, which is a pleasure to read. It is followed by a description of the contemporary technique of woodcut and an explanation of Tenniel's method of sketching directly on the woodblock – extremely useful information for readers less familiar with 19th-century reproduction techniques. In the chapter 'Enchanting Alice', Morris gives a detailed account of Tenniel's illustrations of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, analysing Tenniel's intentions and references to his other works. Among other things, Morris points out that Carroll was well aware of how much he owed to Tenniel's illustrations: 'With such pictures', he once declared, 'the book will be famous at once.' The final and longest chapter explores Tenniel's contributions to the satirical magazine *Punch* for which he made 4900 drawings. Copious notes and an index round off this richly illustrated book.

Andreas Bode

RONI NATOV

The Poetics of Childhood

(Series: Children's literature and culture; 24)

New York [et al]: Routledge 2006 xii+289pp

ISBN 0415979676 (pbk) US\$29.95



In *The Poetics of Childhood*, which won the 2005 IRSCS Award, Roni Natov analyses the ways in which childhood is represented in children's and adult literature using a wide variety of texts that range from traditional tales to postmodern novels and picturebooks, including William Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, Lewis Carroll's *Alice* books, *The God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy, and JK Rowling's *Harry Potter* novels. A characteristic that they all share is that they offer a common ground where child and adult can meet.

Starting off with the Romantics' concept of the child as an innocent being, essentially good and close to nature, Natov goes on to define and investigate three poetic states of childhood: (1) the 'green pastoral', which celebrates the light emotions of childhood; (2) the 'dark pastoral' in which the child enters the space between childhood and adulthood; and (3) the 'anti-pastoral' representing loss and isolation. In the last two chapters, the author examines the representation of the contemporary child in adult and children's literature respectively. The broad scope of the study as well as the author's great skill make this an important reference work for scholars of children's literature.

Claudia Söffner

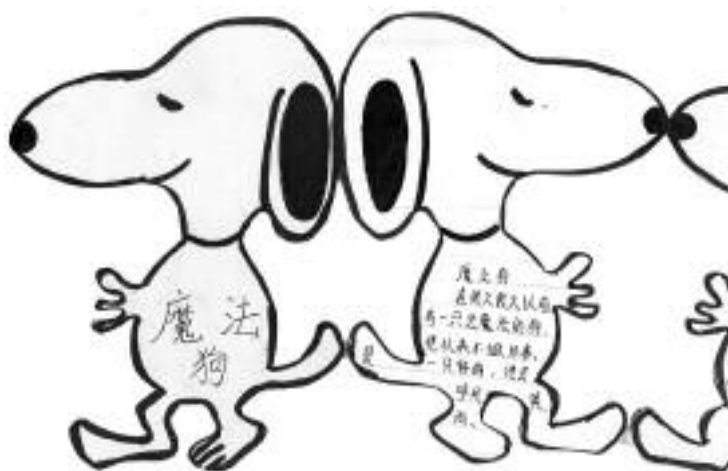
- *'Reading Paradise' in China; Finland*
- *celebrates 50 years of IBBY Finland with*
- *exhibitions, publications and a major seminar;*
- *amazing work going on in Iran in establishing*
- *children's libraries and a national resource*
- *on children's lives and culture*

Reading Promotion in China

The Chinese section of IBBY – CBBY – worked extremely hard over the past few years preparing for the 2006 IBBY congress. They succeeded in presenting a wonderful overview of children's literature around the world and, in particular, in China.

Behind the scenes, members of CBBY were also working towards building a better reading environment for the millions of children living in China. To further their endeavours, three regional branches of CBBY have been established in the major cities of Shanghai, Shenzhen and Hong Kong. In addition, two model reading centres have been identified: one in Dezhou in Shandong Province and the other in Shenzhen in Guangdong Province. These two cities could not be more different!

Dezhou is a large city in the middle of a flat agricultural area (pop. 400,000). There is little government support but a lot of enthusiasm. The Educational Department of the Decheng District of the city is very forward thinking and the director of the department is outstanding for his dedication to the children's reading programme.



Novel idea for a book review from Dezhou

compiled and edited by

ELIZABETH PAGE



*Elizabeth Page is IBBY's
member services, communications
and new projects director*

In Dezhou every child has access to the school library and they are all encouraged to share their reading experiences with others :

Every child has access to the school library and they are all encouraged to share their reading experiences with others. The standard of their handwritten book reviews is high and their handmade books are impressive. Although not all the school libraries enjoy the full shelves and brightly coloured books that we expect to be there, the enthusiasm of the teachers and officials is something to be envied.

The second model reading centre is in Shenzhen, way down south neighbouring Hong Kong. The city was nothing more than a fishing village 25 years ago when it was chosen to be the first special economic zone in China and money was poured in to expand the village to create the high-rise city it is today – with a population of six million people! The administration is just as keen on reading as in Dezhou. The district of Nanshan is promoted as a ‘Reading Paradise’ with a full programme under the name of ‘Children’s Happy Reading’. The schools are running reading programmes and the skill of the pupils is, again, impressive. The children even hold book talks via a video link with other schools across the country and every child has access to the internet via their laptop to chat about books and to exchange tips and recommendations with other students. The CBBY branch in Shenzhen was established with the full support of the education department.

Children in Shenzhen hold book talks via a video link with other schools across the country :

Even though it is sad to learn that government funding is so inconsistent, both models of reading promotion show what the effect can be on children when they are first learning to read, and indeed, throughout their school life. They want to read, they like to read and moreover they are good at it!

IBBY Finland celebrates 50 years!

Celebrations for the 50th anniversary of IBBY Finland began on 1 March 2007, when an exhibition was opened at the Annantalo, a local centre for children’s culture in Helsinki. The exhibition, which ran for the whole month of March, included original works from Hans Christian Andersen Award winner Tove Jansson, Finnish Andersen nominees and Finnish Anni Swan Award winners. The exhibition not only concentrated on illustrators’ works, but also on the Finnish author nominees for the Hans Christian Andersen award by exhibiting books and photos. Books, publications and posters were used to present other

activities of IBBY and IBBY Finland. *Helsingin Sanomat*, which is the biggest newspaper in Finland, reported extensively on the exhibition.

As part of the celebrations a special exhibition showing feelings in Finnish picturebooks will be shown at BIB'07, which opens on 6 September in Bratislava. The exhibition has been made possible with the support of the Finnish Embassy in Slovakia.

***A special exhibition
showing feelings in Finnish
picturebooks will be shown
at BIB'07*** :

Another exhibition, this time concerning the history of Finnish children's literature, will open in October in Kuopio, in northern Finland.

Finnish IBBY's jubilee is also being celebrated by different kinds of publications. The history of IBBY Finland was published in the spring as a double issue of *Virikkeitä*, the quarterly journal published by IBBY Finland. Two booklets, one promoting poetry for children and the other giving recommendations for easy-to-read books will also be published. Also during 2007, a larger book will be published containing thirteen articles depicting fairy tales and stories from different viewpoints as well as 37 articles analysing Finnish authors and their stories for children. The book is edited by Kaarina Kolu, chairperson of IBBY Finland and Siri Kolu, and will be available at the end of 2007.

Fairy tales and stories are again under the magnifying glass in November! A jubilee seminar will be held in Helsinki on 9 November. The Finnish and foreign speakers are expected to offer broad discussions on the topic.

Niklas Bengtsson

IBBY in Iran

Iranian IBBY is based at the Children's Book Council (CBC) of Iran. In 1962, a group of professionals and other people interested in the cultural development of the young generation laid the foundation of an institution devoted to the promotion of children's literature in Iran. A founding committee was formed; the constitution was written and ratified by the general assembly and by 1968 CBC was registered as a non-governmental, non-profit cultural organisation.

Since 2000, CBC has established growing bonds with the Ministry of Education with the aim of introducing basic changes in the school library system.

In December 2003, an earthquake struck the city of Bam and its surrounding villages in the province of Kerman in the southeast region of Iran. Several thousand children died and many more were left traumatised. Thanks to the prompt action of the teachers, schooling quickly resumed in various locations, using tents, containers and some of the remaining buildings. The return to school was indeed a very important step in the process of rehabilitation. The creation of a child-friendly environment can greatly enhance the quality of education.

***Thanks to the prompt
action of the teachers,
schooling quickly resumed
after the earthquake, using
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of the remaining buildings*** :

A project cooperation agreement was signed between UNICEF and CBC in February 2005 with the aim 'to establish support library services in primary and guidance schools in Bam'.

This project was a very rewarding experience involving more than 50 colleagues from CBC who helped in the establishment of 30 libraries. Two target groups were selected: primary schools and guidance schools.

The project was carried out in two phases. The first phase included selecting library materials. As CBC is the oldest and most recognised organisation in Iran to review and create lists of quality books, its huge bibliographic resource was studied to select the materials. The final selection included 800 titles for the primary school collection, and 1000 titles for the guidance school collection. In addition, 100 English titles and 100 non-book materials were chosen for both groups. Materials for disabled young people were also added, such as tactile, audio, video, simplified and large print books, as well as 100 titles for teachers and parents of the target groups, and 50 books and other resources for the librarians.

Having assessed the reading interests of the two target groups, the committee selected the materials from the available stock.

During the second phase, librarians were trained in the fields of librarianship and children's literature. The 60-hour course was spread over a period of twelve days. In advance of the actual training, each participant was given a training handbook, with the aim of creating a simple yet lasting tool to promote the role of books in an information-centred educational community. After the theoretical training, the librarians organised, registered, stamped and labelled all the selected materials.

The libraries were inaugurated in April 2006 with representatives from the Office of Education, UNICEF and CBC joining the festive celebration for the children and the school personnel.

A joint second project in Bam between CBC and UNICEF took place in September 2006,

under the name 'Library Training Programme and Library Monitoring'.

It also included an initial training programme, where a group of 40 local participants joined two workshops in which they were taught about children's literature, librarianship and related subjects. During the second part, CBC colleagues monitored the previously established libraries. In this project, the trained librarians from the first project assisted and instructed the participants.

The results of the two projects can be very clearly seen as the following achievements:

1. Establishment of 60 school libraries, with the transportation of about 100,000 books and the related equipment: a unique library experience for Iran in a joint project between the government, an international agency and a non-government organisation
2. Introduction of over 100 people to children's literature and the role of books and information in civic society
3. Introduction of more than 100 people to the concepts of information-centred education and the role of libraries and librarians
4. Exposure of more than 100 people to such activities as storytelling, book-making, creative theatre, reading circles, etc.
5. Extensive use of the student body in organising their own libraries
6. Distinct change of attitude towards the project among many of the participants, and winning their wholehearted collaboration
7. Rise of interest among students in reading and the promotion of reading at home and amongst families
8. Positive effect on the Office of Education leading to the opening of the libraries in the summer
9. Valuable experience gained by CBC during the project

Shahla Eftekhari, CBC / Iranian IBBY

Iranak-Bank: The first information centre for children's culture and literature in Iran

On 12 November 2006, The Institute for Research on the History of Children's Literature in Iran (IRHCLI) established the first children's literature databank in Iran, called the Iranak-Bank. Iranak means children's Iran.

Iranak-Bank is the link between Iranian children's culture and literature and the era of information and communication. As part of the strategy of the IRHCLI of Iran, historical research is mixed with the informational technology of the future.

What kind of bank is Iranak-Bank?

Iranak-Bank is the first databank in Iran that gives the public access to complete and extensive information on children's lives, education, health, art and literature. It is based on information gathered or prepared by IRHCLI. After a decade of extensive research on the history of Iranian children's literature, IRHCLI has gathered thousands of documents and data in different fields of Iranian children's and young adults' lives. On the basis of this data, IRHCLI has published seven volumes of a ten-volume series called *The History of Children's Literature in Iran*.

At the end of this national research project, IRHCLI has begun to make Iranak-Bank its extensive repository of data available in two languages – Persian and English – to those who are interested in the theme around the world.

Establishing Iranak-Bank is a promising new venture in the development of Iranian children's literature because of its links with the digital era making it accessible to a wide audience.

How extensive is the information?

The information included in Iranak-Bank covers an extensive range of subjects from ancient times to the modern era. It will cover childhood: from birth to the end of adolescence. Topics will include children's health, children's rights, games and entertainment, child labour as well as children's art and literature.

The information sources are categorised as primary sources for children and secondary sources about children. The art and literature section of the Iranak-Bank includes: the history of children's literature, oral literature (folktales, lullabies, fables), written literature, the knowledge of characters, children's literature of the world and Iran. The related subjects include: education, games and entertainment, printing and publishing, biographies, the information technology centres, educational centres, and children's cultural centres.

There are thousands of documents in every category. Descriptive and analytical information is stored according to the international standards of librarianship and information science and made available for public access in fourteen databases: books, periodical texts, periodicals, dissertations, documents, reports, pamphlets, illustrations, photographs, biographies, organisations and institutions, children's rights, artistic and literary prizes, publishers and a thesaurus.

Who are the target audiences?

The Iranak-Bank is especially interesting to researchers, authors, illustrators, librarians, reading promoters, educators, students and anyone who is interested in education and children's literature. Iranak-Bank is not only for Iranians all over the world, but also for all those who study the Persian language, as well as for all researchers of children's literature worldwide.

What are the uses for Iranak-Bank?

1. Access to extensive information in one place
2. Access to information, any time, any place
3. Access to authentic and reliable data
4. Easy and methodical retrieval of information for audiences with different levels of knowledge

3. Illustrated databases
4. Online ordering
5. Consistent bilateral connection between the information base and users

What are the features of Iranak-Bank?

1. Creating connections between fourteen databases for complex searches
2. Presenting categorised information

For further information visit:
<http://www.chlhistory.org/english/archive/2006-10-31-Iranak.html>

The Hans Christian Andersen Award Jury 2008

At its meeting in Bologna in April this year, the IBBY Executive Committee elected the members of the Hans Christian Andersen Award jury for 2008. The jury will meet in Basel, Switzerland in March 2008 to select the winners from the candidates nominated by the national sections of IBBY. The winners will be announced at the IBBY press conference on the first day of the Bologna International Children’s Book Fair on 31 March 2008 and later celebrated at the 31st IBBY congress in Copenhagen, Denmark.

The jury will work under the leadership of Zohreh Ghaeni who was elected Jury President by the IBBY membership. Zohreh is currently supervisor and co-writer of a research project on the History of Children’s Literature in Iran. Elda Nogueira of Brazil, vice president of IBBY, is also a member of the Jury *ex officio*.

The ten members of the 2008 Hans Christian Andersen jury are:

- Alicia Salvi, a professor of language and literature and an expert on children’s literature at the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina
- Annemie Leysen, a lecturer, reviewer, critic and publicist from Heverlee, Belgium
- Francine Sarrasin, an art historian from Quebec, Canada
- Nadia El Kholy, assistant professor for children’s literature at the Faculty of Arts at the University of Cairo, Egypt
- Isabelle Nières Chevrel, emeritus professor in general and comparative literature at the University of Rennes, France
- Bill Nagelkerke, director of children’s and young adult services at Christchurch City Library, New Zealand
- Nataliya Avgustinovich, an art critic and director of Agentstvo (art agency) at the International Confederation of Artist’s Union, Moscow, Russia
- María Jesús Gil, a publisher from Madrid, Spain
- Helene Schär, a publisher from Basel, Switzerland
- Junko Yokota, a professor of reading, language arts and children’s literature at the National Louis University, Evanston IL, USA

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