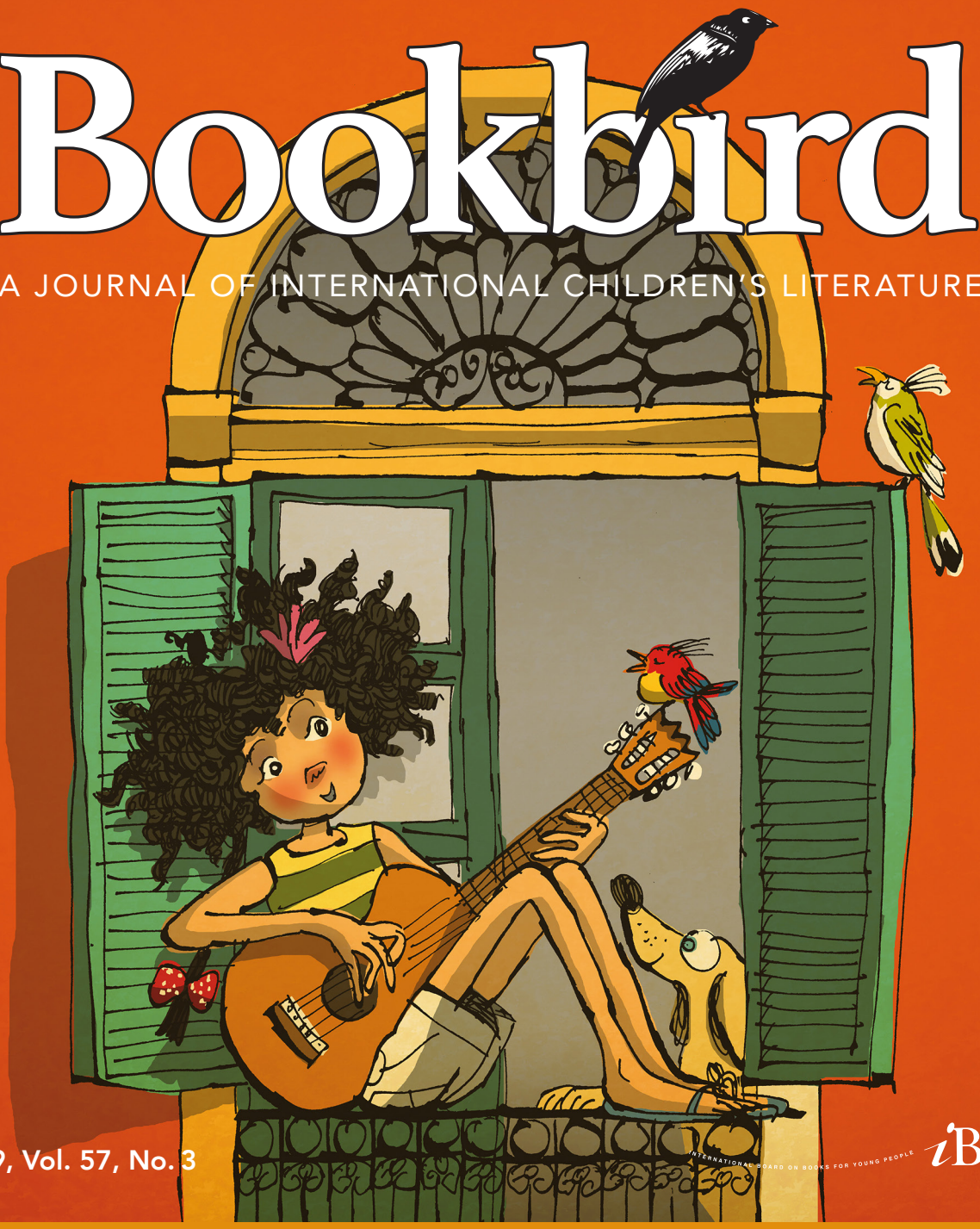
Bookbird

A JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S LITERATURE



2019, Vol. 57, No. 3

INTERNATIONAL BOARD ON BOOKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IBBY

SPECIAL ISSUE ON CHILDREN'S LITERATURE ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN A LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH.

Featured Articles: Gabriela Mistral's Poetic Retellings of Four Classic Fairy Tales • Thinking and Caring Boys Go Vegan: Two European Books That Introduce Vegan Identity to Children • Big Nose, New Emile, and China's Revolutionary Children's Literature • Tooran Mirhadi and Jella Lepman: Two Women, Two Continents, One Aspiration • Manuela Bacelar and Her Groundbreaking Work in the Field of Portuguese Picturebooks

Bookbird

The Journal of IBBY, the International Board on Books for Young People
Copyright © 2019 by Bookbird, Inc.
Reproduction of articles in *Bookbird* requires permission in writing from the editor.

Editors: Petros Panaou, University of Georgia, USA, ppanaou@uga.edu.
Janelle Mathis, University of North Texas, USA, janelle.mathis@unt.edu.

Editorial Review Board: Tami Craft Al-Hazza, Old Dominion University (USA); Peter E. Cumming, York University (Canada); Nicola Daly, University of Waikato (New Zealand); Debra Dudek, Edith Cowan University (Australia); Gargi Gangopadhyay, Ramakrishna Sarada Mission Vivekananda Vidyabhavan (India); Roxanne Harde, University of Alberta (Canada); Judith Inggs, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (South Africa); Holly Johnson, University of Cincinnati (USA); Ingrid Johnston, University of Alberta (Canada); Anna Kérchy, University of Szeged, Institute of English and American Studies (Hungary); Yasmine Motawy, The American University in Cairo (Egypt); Beatriz Alcubierre Moya, Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Morelos (México); Jamie Campbell Naidoo, University of Alabama (USA); Lissa Paul, Brock University (Canada); Farideh Pourgiv, Shiraz University Center for Children's Literature Studies (Iran); Junko Sakoi, Tucson Unified School District (USA); Björn Sundmark, Malmö University (Sweden); Sylvia M. Vardell, Texas Woman's University (USA); Andrea Mei-Ying Wu, National Cheng Kung University (Taiwan).

Board of Bookbird, Inc. (an Indiana not-for-profit corporation): Valerie Coghlan, President; Ellis Vance, Treasurer; Evelyn B. Freeman, Secretary; Hasmig Chahinian; Sylvia Vardell.

Advertising Manager: Ellis Vance (vev40@comcast.net)
Production: Design and layout by Bill Benson
Printed by: The Sheridan Press, Hanover, Pennsylvania, USA

Bookbird: A Journal of International Children's Literature (ISSN 0006-7377) issue July 2019 is a refereed journal published quarterly in January, April, July, and October by IBBY, the International Board on Books for Young People, and distributed by Johns Hopkins University Press, 2715 N. Charles Street, Baltimore, MD 21218-4363 USA. Periodicals postage paid at Baltimore, Maryland, 21233-9651 and at additional mailing offices.
Postmaster: Send address changes to *Bookbird*, 2715 N. Charles Street, Baltimore, MD 21218-4363 USA.
Canada Postmaster: *Bookbird*, Publications Mail Registration Number 40600510. Send address corrections to Johns Hopkins University Press, 2715 N. Charles Street, Baltimore, MD 21218-4363 USA.
Subscriptions to *Bookbird*: See last page.

IBBY Executive Committee 2018–2020: Mingzhou Zhang (China), President; Anastasia Arkhipova (Russia), Vice President; Carole Bloch (South Africa), Vice President; Hasmig Chahinian (France); Zohreh Ghaeni (Iran); Sophie Hallam (UK); Basarat Midhat Kazim (Pakistan); Shereen Kreidieh (Lebanon); Ahmad Redza Ahmad Khairuddin (Malaysia); Nora Lía Sormani (Argentina); Sylvia Vardell (USA). Non-voting Members: Junko Yokota (USA), Hans Christian Andersen Jury President; Elizabeth Page (Switzerland), Executive Director; Ellis Vance (USA), Treasurer; Janelle Mathis (USA), Petros Panaou (USA), *Bookbird* Editors.

IBBY may be contacted at Nonnenweg 12 Postfach, CH-4009 Basel, Switzerland, tel: +4161 272 29 17, fax: +4161 272 27 57, email: ibby@ibby.org.

Bookbird is indexed in SCOPUS, Library Literature, Library and Information Abstracts (LISA), Children's Book Review Index, Web of Science and the MLA International Bibliography.

The front cover illustration is by David Pintor, from the Brazilian book "*A menina alta*" text by Fabrício Carpinejar and published by Mercuryo Jovem, and is reproduced by the artist's permission.

Bookbird
A JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

EDITORIAL

Providing a Forum for Authors, Illustrators, and Scholars Who Work in Languages Other Than English . . . . . *by Petros Panaou and Janelle Mathis* | iii

FEATURED ARTICLES

Gabriela Mistral's Poetic Retellings of Four Classic Fairy Tales. . . . . *by Andrea Casals Hill* | 1

Thinking and Caring Boys Go Vegan: Two European Books That Introduce Vegan Identity to Children . . . . . *by Marianna Koljonen* | 13

Big Nose, New Emile, and China's Revolutionary Children's Literature . . . . . *by Lijun Bi and Xiangshu Fang* | 24

Tooran Mirhadi and Jella Lepman: Two Women, Two Continents, One Aspiration . . . . . *by Leila (Roya) Maktabi Fard* | 34

Manuela Bacelar and Her Groundbreaking Work in the Field of Portuguese Picturebooks . . . . . *by Carina Rodrigues* | 42

CHILDREN AND THEIR BOOKS

Let's Tell a Tale: Storytelling Events in English L2 . . . . . *by Elisa Bertoldi* | 51

The Birth of the Little Critic . . . . . *by Fatemeh Farshchi, Fatemeh Jafari, and Seyedeh Mahsa Mahdavian* | 56

AUTHORS AND THEIR BOOKS

Labyrinths, Threads, Aeolus's Bag, and Other Connected Vessels: An Interview with Maria Papayanni . . . . . *by Angela Yannicopoulou* | 61

LETTERS

Chinese-Greek Collaborative Ventures around Children's Books . . . . . *by Panagiotis Kapos* | 65

FOCUS IBBY . . . . . *by Liz Page* | 67

BOOKS ON BOOKS . . . . . *edited by Jutta Reusch —International Youth Library (IYL)* | 74

POSTCARDS . . . . . *edited by Barbara Lehman* | 12, 23, 73, 83, 84, 85

Call for *Bookbird* Issue 58.2 (April 2020)

Congress Issue on Russian Children's Literature

***Bookbird* seeks contributions for the 2020 IBBY Congress issue that focuses on children's and YA literature published in Russia, including texts published in Russian as well as texts in other regional official languages in the country and the over 100 minority languages spoken in Russia today. We are inviting submissions in all categories (academic articles; letters; postcards; children and their books; authors/illustrators/translators and their books).**

Academic Articles, ca. 4,000 words

We invite manuscripts on Russian children's and young adult literature, focusing on specific genres, themes, issues, authors, illustrators, translators, and contemporary or historical periods. Comparative studies that examine both Russian and international literature are also welcome. In any case, it is important that articles are of interest to an international audience. Academic articles should not exceed 4,000 words and should include an abstract of 150-200 words. Please also submit separately an author bio (50 words). For in-text citations and bibliography, please use MLA style. Please do not use endnotes or footnotes. Material submitted to *Bookbird* must be original and must not be under submission elsewhere.

Children and Their Books, ca. 2,500 words

Bookbird also provides a forum where those working with children and their literature can write about their experiences. Teachers, librarians, researchers, publishers, authors, and parents, short articles discussing ways in which you or others have worked in Russia with children and their literatures or have watched children respond to literature are welcomed.

Authors/ Illustrators/ Translators and their Books, ca. 2,500 words

We also seek *to* publish interviews with Russian authors, illustrators, or translators of children's books. The interview needs to not have been published elsewhere and to provide some background information before and after the main part that features questions and answers.

Postcards and Letters, ca. 150 or 1,000 words

Bookbird publishes reviews of both primary and secondary sources. Brief "postcards" (ca. 300 words) on individual Russian works of children's literature or extended "letters" (ca. 1,000 words) introducing the work of a particular Russian author or illustrator are welcomed. Postcard manuscripts should be submitted to the Postcards editor, Barbara Lehman (lehman.1@osu.edu).

Full papers should be submitted to the editors, Petros Panaou (ppanaou@uga.edu) and Janelle Mathis (janelle.mathis@unt.edu), by **October 1, 2019**. For further information, please visit the *Bookbird* website at http://www.ibby.org/bookbird.

Providing a Forum for Authors, Illustrators, and Scholars Who Work in Languages Other Than English

by PETROS PANAOU AND JANELLE MATHIS

In spite of encouraging trends over the past few years, texts that are originally published in English continue to dominate the international exchange of stories. As a journal of international children's literature, ***Bookbird*** *strives to provide a global forum to authors, illustrators, and scholars who work and create in languages other than English. For this reason, the current special issue focuses exclusively on contemporary children's and young adult (YA) literature originally published in a language other than English, including works that have subsequently been translated into English and other languages, as well as works that have not been translated yet.*

In "Gabriela Mistral's Poetic Retellings of Four Classic Fairy Tales," Andrea Casals Hill presents and analyzes the acclaimed Chilean author's poetic retellings of *Snow White*, *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Cinderella*, and *Sleeping Beauty*, which have been recently republished as illustrated books. Gabriela Mistral was the first Latin American author to receive a Nobel Prize in Literature. Casals Hill asserts that her poetic retellings of *Caperucita Roja*, *Blanca Nieve*, *Cenicienta*, and *La Bella Durmiente* reflect Mistral's ethical commitment to enable the empowerment of her invisible, abandoned, and abused young female audience.

In "Thinking and Caring Boys Go Vegan: Two European Books That Introduce Vegan Identity to Children," Marianna Koljonen approaches veganism as a counter-discourse to cultural and societal hegemony. Based on ecofeminist and intersectional analysis of gender and family norms in vegan identity books for children, Koljonen asks questions about the audience of these texts and about the ways in which these books introduce, explain, and support veganism. Koljonen provides a detailed analysis of two illustrated vegan identity children's novels, one from Finland and the other from Germany.

For the third featured article, Lijun Bi and Xiangshu Fang examine Mao Dun's "The Story of Big Nose" (1936) and Lao She's "New Emile" (1936). They briefly explore the context

© 2019 BY BOOKBIRD, INC.

of revolutionary children's literature that flourished in China during the 1930s, before they proceed to compare and analyze these dramatically different stories by two of the most important Chinese authors of that era.

The fourth article, "Tooran Mirhadi and Jella Lepman: Two Women, Two Continents, One Aspiration," is a printed version of Leila (Roya) Maktabi Fard's 36th IBBY Congress keynote speech. An Iranian children's literature researcher, critic, and librarian based in Munich, Maktabi Fard compares and draws parallels between these two exceptional, perseverant, hardworking, and pioneering women who established influential organizations for children's literature, one in the East and the other in the West.

In the fifth and final featured article, Carina Rodrigues discusses and introduces to an international audience Manuela Bacelar and her groundbreaking work. Bacelar was a trailblazer and eventually became a most esteemed figure in the field of Portuguese picturebook production.

The beautiful front cover illustration is by David Pintor, from the Brazilian book *A menina alta* (*The Tall Girl*; 2014), text by Fabrício Carpinejar and published by Mercuryo Jovem. Even more countries, languages, and cultures are represented in this internationally diverse special issue through the increased number of "Postcards" and the wonderful texts included in the rest of the journal sections. We hope that you find this rich and vibrant diversity as inspiring and encouraging as we do. Enjoy.



Petros Panaou is a clinical associate professor at the University of Georgia, Department of Language and Literacy Education, where he teaches children's literature and literacy courses. He chairs the annual Georgia Conference on Children's Literature and has also chaired the academic committee for the 36th IBBY Congress. Petros currently serves on the Newbery Awards committee and has served on USBBY's Outstanding International Books committee. He has authored a book and several articles and book chapters on international children's literature. He has translated two academic volumes and led multiple international grants. His unpublished novel for children and teens *To Kinito* (*The Cellphone*) was awarded a CYBBY honor in 2017.



Janelle Mathis is a professor of literacy and children's literature at the University of North Texas, where she teaches both graduate and undergraduate courses centered on international children's literature and its applications in research and instruction. She presents regularly at international children's literature conferences, including IBBY Congresses and IRSCL, and has served on award committees, including the Outstanding International Books Award of USBBY. Janelle publishes on children's literature studies, and recently co-edited with Holly Johnson and Kathy Short a book titled *Critical Content Analysis of Children's and Young Adult Literature* (2017).

Gabriela Mistral's Poetic Retellings of Four Classic Fairy Tales

by ANDREA CASALS HILL

Andrea Casals Hill presents and analyzes the acclaimed Chilean author's poetic retellings of Snow White, Little Red Riding Hood, Cinderella, *and* Sleeping Beauty, *which have been recently republished as illustrated books. Gabriela Mistral was the first Latin American author to receive a Nobel Prize in Literature. Casals Hill asserts that her poetic retellings of* Caperucita Roja, Blanca Nieve, Cenicienta, *and* La Bella Durmiente *reflect Mistral's ethical commitment to enable the empowerment of her invisible, abandoned, and abused young female audience.*

Gabriela Mistral: Nobelist, Activist, Feminist

Gabriela Mistral (1889-1957) was the first Latin American author to receive a Nobel Prize in Literature, in 1945; six years later, in 1951, she was named National Literature Laureate of Chile. Some recurrent themes in her poetry are nature, Latin American *mestizo* identity, and motherhood. Her best-known contributions to young people's literature are her poetry collections *Ternura: canciones para niños* (*Tenderness: Children's Songs*)[1] and *Rondas* (*Rounds*), both published in 1924. *Ternura* is aimed at entertaining and educating young readers, while also denouncing the neglect of children living in poverty, as in the poem "Piececitos" ("Tiny Feet"), where the poet addresses a barefoot child in the cold whose feet are turning blue, exclaiming: "Piececitos de niño, / azulosos de frío, ¡cómo os ven y no os cubren, / Dios mío!" ("Tiny child's feet, / blueish chill, / how can they see you and not cover them up, / my Lord!"; 177).

Gabriela Mistral (1889-1957) was the first Latin American author to receive a Nobel Prize in Literature, in 1945.

At the time Mistral was working on such poems, the ideal nuclear family—mother, father, and children—was merely a myth in Chile. In the essay "Madres y huachos" ("Mothers and Orphans"), Chilean anthropologist Sonia Montecino states that the father's abandonment of the home was—and still is—a national practice, leaving parenting and the household burden solely on the mother (Sepúlveda following Montecino 63).

© 2019 BY BOOKBIRD, INC.

Therefore, child welfare became part of the public agenda as early as the first decades of the twentieth century (Sepúlveda 63). Besides her poetic contribution, Mistral's legacy includes an enormous amount of prose, with her pedagogical essays being centered on child development and protection. In the 1927 book *Magisterio y niño* (*Teaching and the Child*), Mistral elaborates a declaration of children's rights long before the United Nations' "Declaration of the Rights of the Child."[2]

Mistral postulated that schools privileged books that tended to reach out to male readers but did not appeal to girls.

A few years earlier, Mistral had been invited to Mexico by José Vasconcellos to contribute to an educational project that came about after years of civil war. This project relied on artists, poets, and educators to foster the idea of a nation that valued Mexican indigenous peoples (Sepúlveda 65). While living in Mexico, Mistral assembled a collection of texts that were targeted to young, working, female readers who attended evening classes at a school that had been named after her. Published in 1924, the compilation was called *Lecturas para mujeres* (*Readings for Women*), and it features fiction, poetry, and nonfiction from a wide range of authors, including Mistral's own retelling of *Little Red Riding Hood*.

The fact that in the 1920s she could envision a book that would explicitly be of female interest foregrounded female needs at a time when Latin American women were hardly schooled and had not even won the right to vote yet.

In the introduction of *Lecturas*, Mistral postulated that schools privileged books that tended to reach out to male readers but did not appeal to girls (8). Her rewriting and subverting of four tales with female protagonists aligned with this critique. Even though Mistral may seem conservative if read with today's feminist eyes—or read superficially—her pedagogical and feminist compositions were liberating and empowering. The fact that in the 1920s she could envision a book that would explicitly be of female interest foregrounded female needs at a time when Latin American women were hardly schooled and had not even won the right to vote yet.[3]

Mistral envisioned a book that young, working female readers could relate to and identify with, hoping that they would be empowered and dignified.

The revolutionary aspect of Mistral's assemblage of texts for women, however, lies in the implied reader that Mistral constructs through the collection and especially through the poetic retellings we will be examining. Mistral envisioned a book that young, working female readers could relate to and identify with, hoping that they would be empowered and dignified. Thus, the texts that Mistral selected revolve around poverty, dispossessed single mothers, and the value of Latin American traditional foods, which are a means of subsistence for poor farmers and indigenous communities (Sepúlveda 66).

Mistral's Poetic Retellings

Mistral authored her poetic versions of four central European classic fairy tales between 1924 and 1928. They were published in different Latin

American media. According to Chilean expert in children's literature Manuel Peña, Mistral's retellings are based on the Brothers Grimm's 1812 version of *Snow White* and Charles Perrault's *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Cinderella*, and *Sleeping Beauty* (Peña, "La Bella Durmiente del Bosque: entre sueño y realidad" 32).[4]

Between 2012 and 2014, these retellings were published as illustrated books by the Chilean publisher Amanuta. Each one of the fairy tales was illustrated by a different artist. Commenting on Amanuta's edition of Mistral's poetic retellings, Peña highlights the lyrical quality of Mistral's octosyllabic verses in three of the four poems, asserting that these verses make for particularly fluid storytelling as they are reminiscent of previous layers of oral tradition. In my reading of Mistral's retellings, I bring forth Mistral's ethical commitment to write for an invisible, abandoned, and abused young female audience in early twentieth-century Latin America. Mistral's female protagonists enact agency, in spite of abandonment or abusive circumstances that resemble the real-life ones she is fighting against. By prompting identification with the protagonists, Mistral dignifies and invites empowerment of her female readers.

In my reading of Mistral's retellings, I bring forth Mistral's ethical commitment to write for an invisible, abandoned, and abused young female audience in early twentieth-century Latin America. Mistral's female protagonists enact agency, in spite of abandonment or abusive circumstances that resemble the real-life ones she is fighting against.

Retelling *Little Red Riding Hood*

Mistral's *Caperucita Roja* (*Little Red Riding Hood*) was first published in 1924 in the poetry collection *Ternura*. Differing from her other three poetic retellings, this tale is composed in alexandrines. Mistral's retelling of *Caperucita* is consistent with Perrault's plot; there is no sugarcoating in her poetic appropriation. The illustrator for Amanuta's publication is Paloma Valdivia, a well-known Chilean designer and illustrator who often works with Amanuta. Valdivia works with saturated colors and geometric lines. Her modern style appears to simplify the story, yet the abstraction leaves room for further interpretation.

Mistral's Caperucita is a girl with agency, who also stands out because of her kind heart. While Perrault introduces Little Red as the most beautiful country girl, Mistral asserts that her heart was as tender as a baby blanket (6). Though Mistral does refer to the girl's golden curls and red hood, her focus is on the girl's character rather than on her looks. As we will see, omitting the female protagonist's ostensible beauty is a consistent element in all four retellings.

Mistral's Caperucita is a girl with agency, who also stands out because of her kind heart.

It is noticeable, however, that through Caperucita's golden curls, Mistral establishes an intertext with Robert Southey's *Goldilocks*. While Perrault explains that the girl's mother asked her to visit Grandma, Mistral's heroine takes off on her own, with no maternal mandate mediating her

journey. However, Valdivia illustrates the mother waving good-bye, as if trying to mend Mistral's omission (see figure 1).

Similar to Perrault's story, Caperucita immediately encounters the wolf. In Mistral's poem, the wolf has devilish eyes that stand in stark contrast to the girl's naïve spirit (6), which Mistral compares to white lilies (8). In Mistral's poetry, as in the Catholic tradition, white lilies are associated with the Virgin Mary's purity; this association emphasizes even more the contrast between the wolf and the girl. As in Perrault's version, Mistral's Caperucita tells the wolf where she is headed (8). Immediately after their encounter, the girl is blissfully gathering berries and flowers in the forest, fully forgetting the "Traidor" ("Traitor"; 10), as Mistral calls the wolf. Again, there is an opposition between the image of an innocent girl playing with butterflies, and the wolf as a traitor. Nonetheless, that the girl is portrayed as innocent does not reduce her agency; she began her journey autonomously and she appropriates the road to a playground, rather than as just a means to get from one place to another. Mistral tells the reader that she is "discurriendo encantada" ("fascinatedly thinking"; 10) as she strolls along the forest.[5]

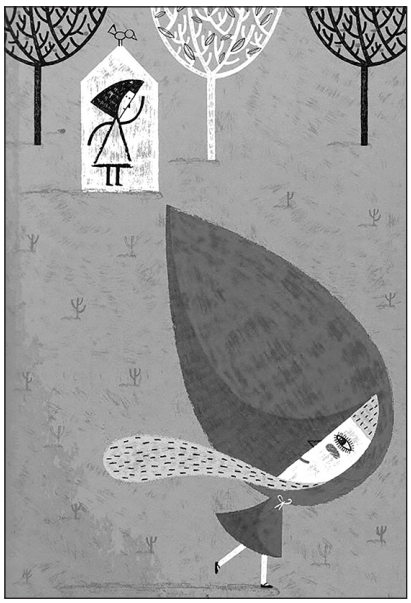


Figure 1.

Upon the wolf's arrival at Grandma's house, Mistral insists on negative descriptive adjectives for him: "El Lobo fabuloso de blanqueados dientes...el Traidor" ("The fabulous Wolf with whitewashed teeth...the Traitor"; 12). Notice that the word *fabulous* implies something fantastic, but it is also related to fantasy; in Spanish, *fabuloso* may also refer to someone who has the ability of making up stories, meaning that he is a deceiver. This is emphasized with the image of the whitewashed teeth, meaning that the wolf's teeth are not truly white, conveying the idea of masking one's true self. Like in Perrault's tale, when Caperucita arrives at Grandma's place, the wolf has already devoured the old lady. Mistral tells us that after knocking at the door and hearing the wolf's hoarse voice, the innocent girl explains to herself that Granny must have such a husky voice because she is sick (16), showing agency inasmuch as the girl is capable of coming up with her own conclusions. Deceptively, Mistral's wolf asks the girl to warm up his bed; Caperucita, says Mistral, "cede al reclamo de amor" ("gives in to the love plea"; 18). In the popular dialogue between the candid girl and the wolf, again, Mistral introduces adjectives that emphasize the wolf's evil intentions: "orejas montruosas" ("monstrous ears"; 20) and "el velludo engañoso" ("the hairy deceiver"; 20).

The second to the last stanza begins with: "El cuerpecito tierno le dilate los ojos. / El terror en la niña los dilata también" ("The little tender body dilates [the wolf's] eyes. / Terror in her, dilates them as well"; 22). The contrast of these two verses signals the climactic moment in the poem; the wolf's lust is opposed to his victim's fear. When Mistral's wolf laughs, his whitewashed teeth glow, with a "terrible fulgor" ("terrible flare"; 24), figuring an archetypical Don Juan.

The ending stanza describes the brutal crime:

> Ha arrollado la bestia, bajo sus pelos ásperos,
> el cuerpecito trémulo, suave como un vellón;
> y ha molido las carnes, y ha molido los huesos,
> y ha exprimido como una cereza el corazón...
>
> Under his rough hairs, the beast has crushed
> the trembling little body, soft as fleece
> and has grinded the flesh, and has grinded the bones,
> and like a cherry, [he] has squeezed out the heart... (26)



Figure 2.

Notice that in the previous stanza the little body was tender; now it is trembling.

In his retelling, Perrault simply writes that the beast devours the girl; however, Mistral's detailed description figures a crime that is both brutal and sensual: a beast enjoying his meal. Though Mistral never reports that the girl undressed (as in Perrault's retelling), or that her clothes were ripped off, Valdivia's image figures the wolf like a huge serpent that surrounds the remains of the girl's red dress and hood, tiny shoes, and basket. Valdivia's wolf is smiling, eyes closed, licking his upper lip, savoring the meal; he is delighted (see figure 2). The carnal image, both in Mistral's text and Valdivia's illustration, brings forward the power imbalance, leaving no room for ambiguous judgment: the wolf—or adult—is a seducer, a deceiver, an abuser. Mistral's verse denounces the adult's lust and his explicit intention to take advantage of the girl.

Taking up minimal space and consuming minimal provisions foregrounds the marginalization, silencing, and neglect of children, women, and the elderly.

Retelling *Snow White*

As Peña explains, Mistral's *Blanca Nieve en la casa de los enanos* (*Snow White in the Dwarfs' House*) focuses on just part of the Brothers Grimm's 1812 version, depicting the girl's arrival at the dwarfs' cottage (Peña, "Blanca Nieve en la casa de los enanos: una versión original" 30). Mistral's poetic story was first published in 1925 in the journal *El Espectador*, in Bogotá, Colombia. Mistral's *Blanca* is written in rhythmic patterns, following the rule of three, which echoes *Goldilocks*.

Originally—if we can talk of an original piece when dealing with oral traditions—Goldilocks was an old lady breaking into the three bachelors' house. The woman in Southey's *Goldilocks* tale only eats from the smallest plate and then sleeps in the tiniest bed. Mistral's Snow White behaves in a similar manner when she arrives at the dwarfs' home.[6] Blanca tiptoes through the house and hesitates to take any food (11). Taking up minimal space and consuming minimal provisions foregrounds the marginalization,



Figure 3.

silencing, and neglect of children, women, and the elderly. In *Goldilocks*, Southey explicitly writes that no one ever thought again of the nasty old lady once she had jumped out the window, implying that if poverty is out of sight, then we can easily ignore it. Nevertheless, sight and seeing—noticing—are key in Mistral's ethics of care.

In Amanuta's "Blanca," the girl is depicted running towards the dwarfs' house through a forest, even though Mistral never mentions a journey through the forest, as in the classic story; actually, Mistral only says that Blanca runs up hill: "sube, sube, / y golpea atribulada" ("up and up she goes, and troubled she knocks"; 7), rather suggesting the hills in Northern Chile, Mistral's beloved homeland (see figure 3). Mistral's Blanca is looking for a home and she makes her way toward it, following a light that summons her uphill (4).

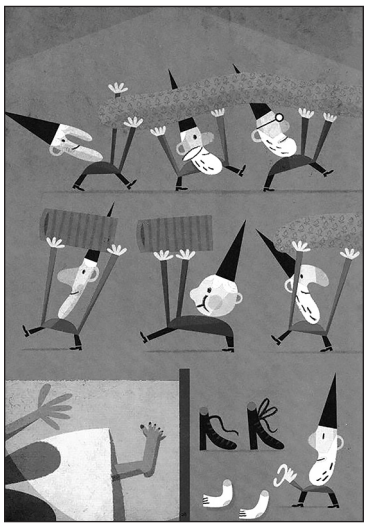


Figure 4.

In Mistral's fragment of the story, once the dwarfs arrive, they listen to the girl's story with a welcoming heart and decide to offer her a safe place; the dwarfs engage in reorganizing their home for her to be comfortable, which is imaginatively illustrated by Carles Ballestero, conveying the commotion in the house (see figure 4). Once things are settled, Mistral's poem states that the dwarfs "por fin la van durmiendo / con canción enamorada" ("finally sing her to sleep / with a loving song"; 24). The dwarfs also call Blanca loving names like "olor a salvia mojada…cuesta con almendros…vertiente de la montaña" ("smell of humid sage…slope with white almond trees…morning spring"; 23). Mistral's dwarfs do not request that the girl does housework for them like Disney's 1937 film suggests; they simply offer their protection against "los monstruos de la montaña" ("mountain monsters") and "el lagarto volador" ("the flying alligator"; 27). In Mistral's poem, listening to the girl with an open heart elicits the dwarfs' kind response to offer her a home like the one described by Mistral in her declaration of children's rights: "derecho a la casa, no solamente salubre, sino hermosa y completa; derecho al vestido y a la alimentación" ("the right not only to a healthy house, but a beautiful and complete home; the right to clothes and nutrition"; *Magisterio* 62). If listening to the girl's grief compassionately is the key in Mistral's retelling of *Cinderella*, the capacity to notice by seeing beyond the surface is also crucial.

Mistral's dwarfs do not request that the girl does housework for them like Disney's 1937 film suggests; they simply offer their protection against "los monstruos de la montaña" ("mountain monsters") and "el lagarto volador" ("the flying alligator"; 27). In Mistral's poem, listening to the girl with an open heart elicits the dwarfs' kind response to offer her a home like the one described by Mistral in her declaration of children's rights.

Retelling *Cinderella*

Mistral's *La Cenicienta* (*Cinderella*) was first published in *El Tiempo*, in Bogotá, Colombia, in 1926. For Amanuta's edition of Mistral's poem, the illustrator is Bernardita Ojeda, also a renowned Chilean illustrator. Ojeda's illustration includes some remarkable depictions of the abuse that Cenicienta experiences. Nonetheless,

the illustrations fail to portray Mistral's profound Amerindian or "Andean" appropriations of the fairy tale, which is a recurring theme in Mistral's work.



Figure 5.

In figure 5, Cenicienta is depicted behind a door, popping her head out of the white page, as if peeping in through a hole to see what is going on; the girl is almost invisible. Her stepsisters and stepmother take up all the space on the opposite page; Cenicienta's presence is conveyed only by her laborious hands waiting on them. The exaggerated size and aggressive expressions of the stepfamily echo Mistral's lyrical description of them as ogres. However, the illustrator fails to fully read Mistral's description of the girl as dispossessed. Mistral says that the girl's sackcloth outfit is like a Lent tunic that is covered in soot (4), whereas the illustrator represents her as one of Disney's princesses, wearing a light blue organdy gown, concealing in this manner Mistral's criticism of child abuse. In "The Rationalization of Abandonment and Abuse in Fairy Tales," Jake Zipes refers to successive erasures of the hardship experienced by child protagonists in fairy tales as a rationalization of childhood. Along these lines, obscuring Mistral's very forward image of abuse with such an iconic popular representation as a Disney princess, the illustrations romanticize the story and validate the fact that the girl is actually being enslaved by her foster family.

Obscuring Mistral's very forward image of abuse with such an iconic popular representation as a Disney princess, the illustrations romanticize the story and validate the fact that the girl is actually being enslaved by her foster family.

Once the ogresses have left for the ball, Mistral points out that the girl is left all alone and only little rats come to "watch her" (10); then the fairy godmother arrives, and like Blanca's dwarfs, the fairy invites the girl to tell her what saddens her heart: "¡Ah! Mi Cenicienta…ábreme tu corazón!" ("Oh! My dear Cinderella…open up your heart!"; 12). The girl's revelation puts the fairy in motion, crystalizing Mistral's ethics of care. If in the poem "Piececitos" the poet reproaches that no one is moved to action by the "blueish feet of the chilled child," in her poetic appropriation of *Cinderella*, Mistral willfully asserts that once the fairy notices the girl's sorrows, she responds actively.

If in the poem "Piececitos" the poet reproaches that no one is moved to action by the "blueish feet of the chilled child," in her poetic appropriation of Cinderella*, Mistral willfully asserts that once the fairy notices the girl's sorrows, she responds actively.*

As in Perrault's retelling, Mistral reports two royal balls. Thus, the fairy godmother shows up twice and fabricates a different gown each night. After looking at the girl closely, she blows off the soot—or blows in the spirit—and the fairy dresses the girl with a golden veil and a dress in the colors of *amaranto* and *carmesí* (see figure 6). *Amaranto* (Amaranth) is a red-flowered native plant from the Andes that was vital in



Figure 6.

pre-Hispanic cultures. *Carmesí* (crimson or carmine) was the color obtained from an insect (Kermes Vermilio) in Mediterranean Europe. After the Europeans arrived in the Americas, however, the production of carmine was replaced by the Americas' *cochinilla* (cochineal), which produces a similar, but more intense dye. Thus, I suggest that the description of Cenicienta's gown as *amaranto* and *carmesí* reveals Mistral's *mestizo* awareness as well as an Americanization of the story.

Mistral describes the girl's dress on the second night as a starry night on blue fabric. Juxtaposing the descriptions of Cenicienta's two magical gowns for the consecutive balls, Mistral subtly alludes to the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe, who is represented wearing a red dress, a starry blue veil, and golden rays above her head (Figure 7). Belief in Our Lady of Guadalupe is rooted in Mexican culture and identity. Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared four times before a native boy called Juan Diego in 1531. The legend says that as he went to inform the bishop of the apparition, her image appeared printed on the boy's tilma, or cloak, a rough *ayate* (sackcloth) like Mistral's Cenicienta's everyday Franciscan tunic. In 1895, Pope Leo XIII granted the venerated Our Lady of Guadalupe image a canonical coronation.

Along these lines, following Mistral's Latin American appropriation of the archetypical Cinderella, when the girl and the prince unite, Mistral sings that "Prince Sun" and "María Cenicienta" were wedded (28). The Incas and the Mesoamerican native cultures worshiped the sun; Mistral is well aware of this. The poem "Sol del trópico" ("Tropical Sun"; first published in the poetry collection *Tala* in 1938), for example, is a hymn to the sun—a long litany that brings together indigenous peoples of the Americas around the worshiped sun, mentioning Incas, Mayas, Aimaras, and Quichés. Referring to Cenicienta's prince as the sun subverts the European folktale, appropriating it in a composition where the poet exerts syncretism. At the same time, by calling the bride María Cenicienta, Mistral amplifies the allusion to Mother Mary of Guadalupe.



Figure 7.

But calling this girl, who only a while ago was the soot keeper, the orphan servant, María Cenicienta prompts another layer of interpretation. According to the documentary *Marías*, by Yosoyoho,[7] most indigenous women hired for domestic work in Mexico City would be called María by their employers. The documentary denounces the erasure of their given name, arbitrarily and lazily substituted by "María"; as Debra Dudek asserts, "erasure of a name [is] a signifier of loss" (366). When Mistral calls María Cenicienta "desnudita hija de Dios" ("naked daughter of God"; 28), she is blessing, dignifying, and empowering all the poor and mistreated girls, inverting the Gospel's beloved son of God for the daughter, establishing a sisterhood among all Marías, who become the blessed people of the Mount Sermon.

Retelling *Sleeping Beauty*

The fourth tale in Amanuta's collection is *La Bella Durmiente del Bosque* (*Sleeping Beauty*), which was originally published in 1928 in the Colombian journal *El Gráfico*. The illustrator for Amanuta's edition is Carmen Cardemil, who also collaborates with Fondo de Cultura Económica. Among other awards, Cardemil has received the IBBY award and Mexico's Illustrators' Biennial award. Cardemil works with techniques such as collage and grattage, which in this edition resonate with Mistral's cultural collage, intertwining various layers of intertextuality.

One of the children's rights expressed in Mistral's "Magisterio" is the right to a mother's vigilant eye, which is key in her poetic retelling of *La Bella* (but also present in the other stories: Snow White is homelessly wandering alone; Cinderella has no caring family). In Perrault's retelling, the queen and king are at their holiday estate when the girl suffers the dreaded accident. The absence of the "loving vigilant eye" is further noted by both Perrault and Mistral. Once everyone in the palace is put to sleep by the youngest fairy, the parents leave (in Perrault's retelling, the queen and king; in Mistral's, only the king), abandoning their people and daughter, like a captain who abandons the ship in a storm.

One of the children's rights expressed in Mistral's "Magisterio" is the right to a mother's vigilant eye, which is key in her poetic retelling of La Bella.

Artistically, Mistral's enumeration of those who fall asleep with the young fairy's enchantment includes herself, the poet: "se durmió la que lo cuenta" ("the one who tells the story fell asleep"; 22). Mistral writes that even the forest fell asleep, and after a hundred years, says Mistral, even Caperucita was horrified to approach the sleepy woods, so she bypassed it, making the sign of the cross (24).

As I have exposed in my analysis of *Caperucita*, an aspect that Mistral encourages throughout the four poems, and particularly emphasizes in *La Bella*, is a celebration of noble spirit above any superficial beauty. While Perrault's first fairy blesses the princess with the gift of becoming the most beautiful person in the world, Mistral's fairies bring harmony and joy in their rough pouches, as well as the capacity to inspire love. Likewise, the gifts they offer the girl foster agency: Bella is granted the ability to turn into a bird and to go across mountains and worlds (8). We should note that the youngest fairy, the one that reverts the evil fairy's spell, is called "Corazón" ("Heart"; 12), representing tender love and care. It is also notable that the fairies are carrying rough pouches, typical of country laborers and peasants in late nineteenth-century Latin America.



Figure 8.

In the illustration in figure 8, Cardemil depicts the imbalance between the two fairies, reminding us of the epic battle between David and Goliath, which frequently figures in Mistral's poetry. However, in Mistral's poetic appropriation of the tale, what seems to bring everything together is

In the illustration in figure 8, Cardemil depicts the imbalance between the two fairies, reminding us of the epic battle between David and Goliath, which frequently figures in Mistral's poetry.

another biblical element: the Parable of the Wheat and the Tares—the understanding that tares and wheat grow together, that there is an interdependence of good and evil. The allusion is repeated throughout the poem. Mistral begins by stating that the king invited the fairies that gift good and evil, but when the uninvited fairy arrives, she proclaims: "[M]e olvidasteis como al Mal" ("[Y]ou forgot me like you forget Evil"; 10). As the girl grows, Mistral says only one spindle was left in the palace, but it was invisible, like evil often is (18), thus conceding that evil is among us all along, even if we do not acknowledge it. Summoned by a voice—as in Disney's 1959 film—the girl reaches an old lady in a tower who is spinning "en suave / lana blanca, / el negro Mal" ("black evil into soft white yarn"; 20), reminding us also of the "hairy rough wolf" who devours the "soft fleece girl" (Mistral, *Caperucita Roja* 26).

Conclusion

In my reading of Mistral's poetic retellings of four well-known fairy tales with female protagonists, I have exposed the depths of Mistral's cultural appropriation, compost-like layered writing, and powerful critique of girls' status in 1920s Latin America. Mistral reveals her avant-garde awareness of children's rights through a profound understanding of what an ethics of caring is. She celebrates girls with agency: her protagonists escape Eurocentric princess stereotypes, figuring alternative gender models in her Latin American appropriation, such as fairies with workers' pouches, working Marías who resemble Virgin Mary, and independent girls who can fly across mountains and forests to find their own way home.

Her protagonists escape Eurocentric princess stereotypes, figuring alternative gender models in her Latin American appropriation, such as fairies with workers' pouches, working Marías who resemble Virgin Mary, and independent girls who can fly across mountains and forests to find their own way home.

From the orality in Mistral's octosyllabic rhythmic verses, to metanarrative commentaries inserted in the texts, to intertextuality with cultural, literary, and biblical references, Mistral brings forth the multilayered quality of literature, leaving her writing open to interpretations and connections—prospective layers of meaning—establishing dialogues with the Brothers Grimm or Perrault, and even enabling us to question subsequent popular film versions that seem more conservative than her work. In this sense, Cardemil's collage and grattage illustration techniques for *La Bella Durmiente del Bosque* (*Sleeping Beauty*) capture in the best way possible Mistral's retellings of these classic fairy tales: collage brings together bits and pieces from different sources, a diversity of textures, into a coherent composition, and grattage, with the suggested peeling it implies, invites the audience to scratch off the surface of the plot and uncover deeper meanings.

Illustrations published by Editorial Amanuta's permission
Caperucita Roja: illustrations by Paloma Valdivia on pages 4 and 5
Blanca Nieve: illustrations by Carles Ballesteros on pages 5 and 6
La Cenicienta: illustrations by Bernardita Ojeda on pages 7 and 8
La Bella Durmiente: illustrations by Carmen Cardemil on page 9

Notes

1. All translations are mine.
2. Proclaimed by a General Assembly Resolution in 1959. Later, in 1989, the Convention of the Rights of the Child was adopted by the UN General Assembly, but it only entered into force in 1990.
3. In Chile, women won the right to vote in 1934, but they actually voted for president in 1952 for the first time. In Mexico, women won the right to vote in 1953, but they actually voted for the first time at the national level in 1955.
4. For the sake of brevity, I do not summarize the plot of the stories; I assume that most readers are acquainted with Perrault's and the Brothers Grimm's versions of the fairy tales, as well as with Disney's film versions.
5. For theory on children's appropriation and subversion of spaces framed by adults, see Alida Mayne-Nicholls, *Espacios Tomados: representación de las niñas en Gabriela Mistral y María Flora Yáñez* (doctoral dissertation), Universidad Católica de Chile, 2018, 77.
6. As in Southey and Nicol's 1837 publication of *The Story of the Three Bears* (publisher: Porter & Wright).
7. The documentary *Marías* by Yosoyoho is available at www.facebook.com/watch/?v=860117457496417.

Works Cited

Children's Books

Mistral, Gabriela. *Blanca Nieve en a casa de los enanos*. Illustrated by Carles Ballesteros. Amanuta, 2014.

---. *Caperucita Roja*. Illustrated by Paloma Valdivia. Amanuta, 2014.

---.*La Bella Durmiente del Bosque*. Illustrated by Carmen Cardemil. Amanuta, 2012.

---. *La Cenicienta*. Illustrated by Bernardita Ojeda. Amanuta, 2014.

Secondary Sources

Dudek, Debra. "Seeing the Human Face: Refugee and Asylum Seeker Narratives and an Ethics of Care in Recent Australian Picture Books." *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, vol. 43, no. 4, Winter 2018, pp. 363-76.

Mistral, Gabriela. "Introducción." *Lecturas para mujeres*, compiled by Gabriela Mistral, México, 1924, pp. 7-17.

---. *Magisterio y niño*. Compiled by Roque Esteban Scarpa, Andrés Bello, 1979, pp. 62-65.

---. "Piececitos." *Gabriela Mistral en verso y poesía*, Real Academia Española & Alfaguara, 2010, pp. 177-78.

---. "Sol del trópico." *Gabriela Mistral en verso y poesía*, Real Academia Española & Alfaguara, 2010, pp. 263-76.

Peña, Manuel. "Blanca Nieve en la casa de los enanos: una versión original." *Blanca Nieve en la casa de los enanos*, by Gabriela Mistral, illustrated by Carles Ballesteros, Amanuta, 2014, pp. 30-31.

---. "La Bella Durmiente del Bosque: entre sueño

y realidad." *La Bella Durmiente del Bosque*, by Gabriela Mistral, illustrated by Carmen Cardemil, Amanuta, 2012, pp. 32-33.

Sepúlveda, Magda. *Gabriela Mistral: Somos los andinos que fuimos*. Cuarto Propio, 2018.

Zipes, Jack. "The Rationalization of Abandonment and Abuse in Fairy Tales: The Case of Hansel and Gretel." *Happy Ever After: Fairy Tales, Children, and the Culture Industry*, Routledge, 1997, pp. 39-60.



Andrea Casals Hill is an assistant professor at the Universidad Católica de Chile, where she offers a variety of courses related to young people's literature at the undergraduate and graduate programs. She is currently working on her postdoctoral research on environmental awareness in Chilean picturebooks. She is co-editor of the academic journal *English Studies in Latin America (ESLA)* and international liaison for the *Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE)*. Among her academic publications, Casals Hill has published on children's literature in *Anales de Literatura Chilena*, on Gabriela Mistral in *Taller de Letras*, and on ecocriticism in *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment (ISLE)*.

A boy enters a dimly lit street one morning with a backpack over his shoulder and a smile on his face. Then he sees a smiling cat standing in a well-lit doorway. Intrigued, the boy follows that cat. As he trails behind, the cat leads him deeper into an empty, mysterious building. Along the way, the boy collects drawings and becomes even more curious. With every room, there are clues that entice the boy to explore further. Tributes to artists, authors, and literature are sprinkled throughout the illustrations—in bookshelves, stacked in corners, or hanging on walls. The author wanted to pay homage to those items and "to the nostalgic beauty of old times and timeless things." Young readers will delight in the animals hiding in every picture, the eccentric house, and the conclusion of this wordless picturebook. Beautiful watercolor illustrations contribute a sense of wonder and joy.

Bettie Parsons Barger



Maja Kastelic

A Boy and a House

Berkeley, CA: Annick Press, 2018.
32 pp.
ISBN: 978-1773210551
(Wordless picturebook; ages 6-10)

Thinking and Caring Boys Go Vegan:

Two European Books That Introduce Vegan Identity to Children

by MARIANNA KOLJONEN

Marianna Koljonen approaches veganism as a counter-discourse to cultural and societal hegemony. Based on ecofeminist and intersectional analysis of gender and family norms in vegan identity books for children, Koljonen asks questions about the audience of these texts and about the ways in which these books introduce, explain, and support veganism. Koljonen provides a detailed analysis of two illustrated vegan identity children's novels, one from Finland and the other from Germany.

Framing Vegan Children's Fiction

Veganism is a rapidly growing movement all over the world, and its popularity has not gone unnoticed in children's literature. Reliable data about the exact numbers is lacking because veganism is not officially registered. Furthermore, in many cultures eating meat is rare, so their cultural shift is not as big as the one we see in Western countries. The available data, however, does suggest that there has been a 600% increase (Oberst). As more and more children follow a vegetarian and vegan lifestyle, a new array of children's fiction promoting vegetarianism and veganism has evolved. This article explores vegan identity books—a subgenre of animal advocacy children's books—their main characters, and the means by which they promote veganism to children. In most cases, the child(like) character turns vegan during the story, which means that vegan identity is promoted by arguments that try to convince the child to adopt a vegan lifestyle. The possible challenges of leading a counter-normative lifestyle are not addressed. The most common way to catalyze veganism is to establish an emotional bond and interspecies friendship between a child and an animal. The books also encourage their readers to think critically about habituation, food, and animal farming.

Veganism is a rapidly growing movement all over the world, and its popularity has not gone unnoticed in children's literature.

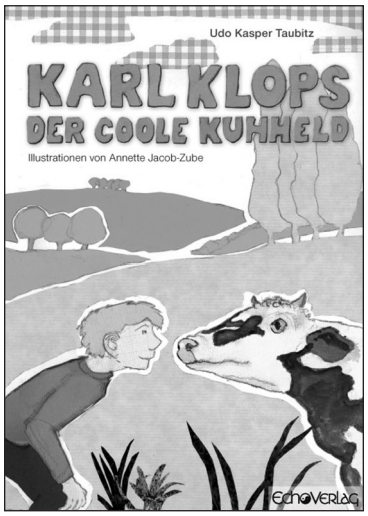
The most common way to catalyze veganism is to establish an emotional bond and interspecies friendship between a child and an animal.

© 2019 BY BOOKBIRD, INC.

Rational and emotional arguments are combined in the two books I study more closely: *Karl Klops, der coole Kuhheld* (*Karl Klops, the Cool Cowhero*; 2012) and *Eino ja suuri possukysymys* (*Eino and the Big Question Concerning Pigs*; 2018).

Rational and emotional arguments are combined in the two books I study more closely.

In January 2019, I searched the Internet using the keywords *vegan*, *book*, and *children* in Finnish, Swedish, English, German, French, and Spanish and identified thirty titles in eight languages (including Catalonian and Romanian, in addition to the languages listed above) concerning vegan identity. In vegan identity books, the story centers around a child(like) character who either experiences a startling awakening to the origins of meat or, more rarely, is already a vegan. I should note here that I am aware of the difference between veganism and vegetarianism—namely, that vegans, in addition to not eating animals, do not eat any animal products, either. Even though my focus is on vegan identity children's books, I also include some vegetarian identity books in my discussion because of the close similarities between the two.



According to Laura Wright, founder of vegan studies, veganism constitutes at once both an identity category, like race, sexual orientation, or gender, and a practice (6). Originally, veganism was defined as "a way of living which seeks to exclude, as far as is possible and practicable, all forms of exploitation of, and cruelty to, animals for food, clothing or any other purpose" (The Vegan Society). Today, veganism is a broad group of different identities, but it is usually chosen for ethical, environmental, or dietary reasons. In the children's books I have identified, the reason always relates to animal ethics, but at least three books also mention the advantageous environmental impact of plant-based foods. The healthiness of vegan foods only adds to the benefits of being vegan.

In the children's books I have identified, the reason always relates to animal ethics, but at least three books also mention the advantageous environmental impact of plant-based foods. The healthiness of vegan foods only adds to the benefits of being vegan.

Sociologists Matthew Cole and Kate Stewart have discussed children's veganism in their book *Our Children and Other Animals* (2014), in which they regard vegan children's fiction as defying the Western social standard and norm of exploiting nonhuman animals (see also Wright 19). According to Cole and Stewart, children are thought to mix up "affect, objectification [of production animals in particular] and denial, often in respect of the same species of animals" (23). Habituated denial of other animals' sensibility, agency, and exploitation in childhood motivates denial for the rest of our personal lives and reproduces a collective denial (21, 24, 138, 98).

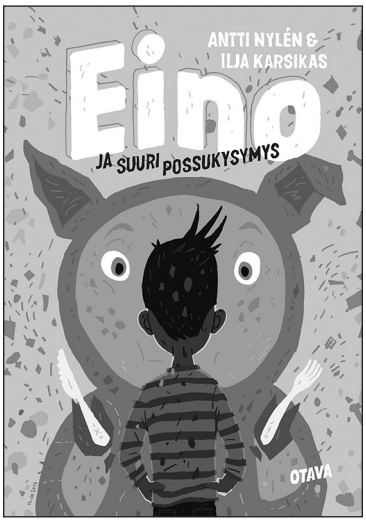
In this article, I too approach veganism as a counter-discourse to cultural and societal hegemony. Based on ecofeminist and intersectional analysis of gender and family norms in vegan identity books for children,

I ask questions about whom veganism is promoted to and about the ways in which vegan identity is espoused in these stories. I will then move on to a more detailed analysis of two illustrated vegan identity children's novels (one from Finland and the other one from Germany) chosen because of their elaborate plots and round, identifiable characters, in contrast to shorter picturebooks that are often relatively one-dimensional. I examine the ways in which these books introduce, explain, and support veganism.

I ask questions about whom veganism is promoted to and about the ways in which vegan identity is espoused in these stories.

Kids and Monsters Introducing Vegan/Vegetarian Identity to White, Middle-Class Boys

To the best of my knowledge, the first book to support a child vegetarian identity is *Victor the Vegetarian: Saving the Little Lambs* (1994) by Radha Vignola, illustrated by Julia Bauer. It is a prototype for most books of the genre, centering on a young boy, an only child from a white, heteronormative, middle-class nuclear family. One night, Victor overhears his parents' conversation concerning their intention to kill a few of their lambs for lamb chops. He considers the lambs to be his friends and escapes to the fields with them. When the worried parents find them, Victor declares he wants to become a vegetarian. Victor's mother expresses her worry over Victor's new diet, but Victor tells her that they should go to the library for more information on vegetarianism.



Interestingly, in most of the vegan and vegetarian identity books I have examined, parents welcome their children's new dietary and lifestyle choice with next to no objections. Thus, veganism is depicted as an attractive, easy, and happy lifestyle. The child is also the one to make the choice—only two books out of thirty represent a situation in which the decision comes from the parents. The ethos of vegan children's fiction is that children are active, thinking, questioning, and caring moral agents, autonomous enough to make their own moral decisions.

Another dominant feature is gender. Eight out of the thirty books I identified have female main characters, and half the books with a female protagonist belong to a *Veggie Vero* superhero series (2016-2019) by Veronica Green. Male prevalence is even more noticeable in the identity book subgroup of vegetarian or vegan monster books. In these books, the main character is a fictional monster or a dangerous predator animal, such as a lion or a T. rex. In all these thirteen books the monster is male.

Thus, veganism is depicted as an attractive, easy, and happy lifestyle.

In *The Sexual Politics of Meat*, ecofeminist Carol J. Adams states that manhood and meat are culturally interconnected, whereas women are more generally perceived to have a reduced meat intake due to ethical, health, weight, or financial reasons. On this note, Laura Wright states that meat is an essential, primal, and inescapable component of heterosexual

masculinity (26, 31, 107-130). So, in many ways, men have more to lose by challenging standard dietary choices (26). Men who choose to be vegan are viewed as simultaneously more virtuous and less manly (31). The high number of male characters might then be perceived as a specific invitation to people who identify themselves as boys or men to go vegetarian or vegan.

Men who choose to be vegan are viewed as simultaneously more virtuous and less manly (31). The high number of male characters might then be perceived as a specific invitation to people who identify themselves as boys or men to go vegetarian or vegan.

On the other hand, as a study by Janice McCabe et al. demonstrates, the majority of active picturebook characters are male, so in this respect vegan identity books are no different. Nor are they different in terms of heteronormativity. The family units in these books consist of middle-class mothers and fathers who dress and act quite conservatively. One possible explanation is that the conservative family model is preferred in order to mainstream veganism. Slight exceptions are *Eino and the Big Question Concerning Pigs*, the book I discuss extensively later in this article, and another book titled *My Mom Eats Tofu* (2009) that presents the life of a vegan-environmentalist mother and daughter, never mentioning a father.

It is also noteworthy that only one book, *Max's Lunch*, presents a black vegan child. According to race feminist scholar A. Breeze Harper, 70% of US vegans are white and female (158). Due to sociocultural factors, large numbers of low-income urban black Americans cannot afford a holistic plant-based diet (155). Thus, the voices of nonwhite vegans are the most rigorously marginalized of all (Wright 8). In this respect, vegan children's books seem to be reinforcing white, heterosexual, male hegemony.

One possible explanation is that the conservative family model is preferred in order to mainstream veganism.

Next, I focus on two illustrated children's novels that follow a child's growing awareness of the origins of animal-based food: *Karl Klops, der coole Kuhheld* (mentioned as *Karl* in the text from now on) and *Eino ja suuri possukysymys* (mentioned as *Eino*). The authors, Udo Taubitz and Antti Nylén, are well-known vegan activists in their home countries of Germany and Finland, respectively. After *Karl*, Taubitz wrote a second animal advocacy children's book titled *Schweinchen Schlau* (*A Clever Piglet*; 2016). And prior to writing *Eino*, Nylén had published several essays on meat eating.

It is also noteworthy that only one book, Max's Lunch, *presents a black vegan child.*

The Burning Secret of Dairy and Eggs in Karl

Karl, depicted as an ordinary eight-year-old German boy, plays football and adores Rosa, his pet rabbit. When his aunt serves them a roasted rabbit with white paper ruffles on its legs for Christmas dinner, Karl realizes that meat comes from actual living animals, just like Rosa. The dead animal's empty eye sockets seem to stare at him. New information and

emotional response combine, causing Karl to be sick all over the table.

After Christmas dinner, Karl never wants to eat meat again, but his father tries to convince him to eat organic meat: "It's good meat! Darned expensive!" (14), and "life is good for the animals on organic farms—and in the end, they exist to be eaten. And that is that" (14). Karl stands his ground and acts according to his own moral values, but when his grandfather, a retired doctor, comes to visit, he gives Karl a lecture on proteins. He is persuaded to consume milk and eggs to grow big and strong. As the story progresses to the organic farm of Karl's uncle, the setting is perfect to dig deeper into these issues.

One day Karl comes across a peculiar little cottage near his uncle's farm. It resembles the witch's cottage in *Hansel and Gretel*, except this house is covered with flowers and fruits instead of candy. An old lady lives there and beckons Karl to visit. The lady introduces herself as an "Herbal Witch" and tells Karl that she is "a real vegetarian" (30) who doesn't "drink cow's milk, eat goat's cheese or even eggs... Because she is sorry for the animals" (31). Upset by this statement, Karl asks why she rejects these foods. She tells him that it is better for him to find out the truth by himself and gives him a cup of hot chocolate that magically enables him to understand animal language until midnight.

As Karl can now talk to animals, he hears the cows' lament about constantly being milked, being impregnated, and giving birth to calves who are separated from them almost immediately.

As Karl can now talk to animals, he hears the cows' lament about constantly being milked, being impregnated, and giving birth to calves who are separated from them almost immediately. The same applies to hens, who are exhausted from laying eggs and having them immediately taken away. Devastated, Karl confronts his uncle, making him confess that old cows, hens, and male calves are regularly sold to the butcher. Karl's anger and reproaches make his uncle weep "his wellington boots full" (42).

In this scene, Karl's aunt and uncle are forced to face the consequences of their actions; despite their good efforts and kindness, they have actively hurt the animals. They react to the revelation with utmost sadness. All three decide to turn vegan and ask the Herbal Witch to teach them to cook plant-based food. His aunt and uncle decide to start an animal sanctuary and hotel on their land.

In *Karl*, critical thinking comes in the form of debate. Karl faces more objections to his vegetarianism than any other child in my resource material. In fact, the book entails the most typical arguments usually presented against vegetarianism and veganism. Yet, Karl is an outspoken child who bravely stands up to authority figures. When Karl's grandfather points out that humans are omnivores, Karl remarks that people do not eat everything: his mother was disgusted when Karl tried to eat an earthworm as a toddler. "And if rabbits are eaten, then why not dogs? (Karl's friend Torben had been to China and told that in China they serve roasted dog on special holidays)" (16). As discussed below, what constitutes food is even more relevant for Eino.

Eino and a Philosophical Toy Pig

Eino is described as an earnest seven-year-old boy who lives with his cat and his father after his mother passed away. Eino's father is a kind and caring parent who habitually cooks canned food for dinner. Eino strikes the reader as calmer and more contemplative than Karl. His journey to veganism starts on his birthday, when his mother's brother, Uncle Vihtori, gives him a special edible toy, a talking and moving pig made from some curious soft material. The pig is called Pulla ("bun" in Finnish) and declares that he can be eaten when Eino has finished playing with him.

Eino is utterly perplexed over his birthday present and does not know what to do with Pulla. The pig reaffirms several times that he is made from a substance meant to be consumed. Eino starts to spend time with Amalia, the vegan sister of his best friend, and appreciate her views. Amalia becomes Eino's vegan mentor in the same vein as the Herbal Witch tutors Karl. Notice that both vegan mentors are female. As Pulla the toy pig grows, so does Eino's understanding of ethical issues around food and eating. Eino's other mentor is obviously Pulla himself, similarly to the talking cows and hens in *Karl*.

Once, Eino and Pulla try to determine what food is. They conclude that Legos and sand are not food because they cannot be digested. "That you are able to eat something doesn't mean anything. Not everything you can eat is food" (34). Once, Pulla declares: "I am a pig and pigs are food for humans" (63). "Every time you eat a sausage, you eat a piece out of some pig's butt.... I know something that many adults know, too, but don't want to tell the children.... I am your friend, your pig buddy.... I am just like all the other pigs—those who don't happen to have nice boys as friends" (63). At that moment, Eino realizes that "every sausage was once a pig, and every pig will end up as sausage" (66).

At that moment, Eino realizes that "every sausage was once a pig, and every pig will end up as sausage."

During the year they spend together, Eino grows extremely attached to Pulla, so when the toy pig recounts to Eino his dream in which he lived in a forest, Eino wants to know if they lived there together. Pulla replies: "No. You were not in that dream. Neither were there any houses. There are no houses in a forest!" (44). This scene explicates that Pulla is not dependent on Eino, even though nonhuman dependency on humans is a main trope in children's culture, especially in animal toys that literally reach out to children with open arms and beady eyes (Cole and Stewart 95). In his dream, however, Pulla "had a magnificent long fur and great big tusks and wasn't at all cold!" (44). Pulla describes: "I had a large family, lots of little piglets with striped fur. And a large circle of acquaintances!" (44). Pulla's dream depicts him as an autonomous and active nonhuman agent, and Eino can relate to Pulla's dream because he misses his own mother.

When Eino finally announces to his father that he wants to be a vegan, Pulla diminishes into an ordinary pig toy and Eino imagines his animated version living with a family of wild boars in a forest, "happy and brisk" (92).

Similarities—Affect and Reason

Unaware of each other's books,[1] Taubitz and Nylén have created *Karl* and *Eino* to share many common features. Both their protagonists, for instance, are young boys with beloved companion animals, as Karl has a pet rabbit and Eino a cat. It is surprising that these books, which promote a counter-normative lifestyle, feature and address white, middle-class boys, thus maintaining conservative hegemony. However, these stories are subversive in the power relations between adults and children. Their vegan child characters are critical, empathetic, caring, and courageous, always ready to stand up for others when they perceive injustice. These boys' empathy flows over conventional species boundaries from companion animals to animals reared for human consumption. These boundaries are set up by adults who tell children what can be eaten and by whom, when, and how much. In vegan children's fiction, this learning/teaching takes the opposite route: the child becomes the teacher, the moral educator of the parent, teaching the adults in the family about the virtues of veganism. Karl introduces his aunt and uncle to veganism, and Eino guides his father to embark on a vegan diet as well. This kind of apprenticeship puts identity into practice and strengthens the children's self-esteem and vegan identity.

It is surprising that these books, which promote a counter-normative lifestyle, feature and address white, middle-class boys, thus maintaining conservative hegemony. However, these stories are subversive in the power relations between adults and children.

Karl and *Eino* are on the same page in their general approach to vegan identity advocacy. They emphasize both the rational and emotional aspects of animal rights and vegan lifestyle. In part, they convey the legacy of rational thinking that marks the emergence of the animal rights movement of the 1970s, when philosophers Peter Singer and Tom Regan had renounced the irrationality and sentimentality so often associated with animal advocacy (Singer ix-x; Regan xii) and argued the case for animal rights or liberation on a purely intellectual level.

In *Karl* and *Eino*, rational thinking is principally manifested in discussions about conscious and unconscious choices and the nature of food. The books also convey disturbing information about factory farming and farmed animals to arouse children's response to injustice. In this sense, both stories highlight the importance of empathy and affect in advocating for animals. And without the boys' friendship with nonhuman animals, the protagonists would not be likely to turn vegan. Ecofeminists such as Josephine Donovan have criticized Singer's and Regan's overt rational-oriented animal rights philosophy. As long-term animal rights activists, Taubitz and Nylén, the authors of *Karl* and *Eino*, seem to have made a conscious choice in synthesizing the rational and the emotional aspects of animal rights advocacy.

In Karl *and* Eino*, rational thinking is principally manifested in discussions about conscious and unconscious choices and the nature of food.*

In both *Karl* and *Eino*, mentors play an important role in communicating

this rational and emotional advocacy. They reveal the ignorance and lack of imagination behind people's choices for food. They also function as role models, demonstrating how veganism can work and how it is fun, safe, and delicious. The mentors, however, do not push Karl or Eino into a specific direction; they are simply there, answering the kinds of questions that few people dare to ask and even fewer answer. Toward the end of both books, the mentors cook huge amounts of vegan food, exhibiting how veganism does not equal deprivation (see Cole and Stewart 98). Again, it should be noted that both mentors are female, one very old and the other a teenager. The teen mentor, in particular, is not the usual type to be consulted for wisdom and understanding in Western society. The cows, hens, and toy pig, on the other hand, are mentors that function on a purely emotional level and appeal to the boys' empathy. Their lived experiences aim to remove boundaries between human and nonhuman animals. In these manners, mentors challenge societal hierarchies.

In both Karl *and* Eino*, mentors play an important role in communicating this rational and emotional advocacy. They reveal the ignorance and lack of imagination behind people's choices for food.*

Differences—Meeting Real Nonhuman Animals and Facing Adversity

There are some differences between the two stories as well, most importantly in terms of milieu. Karl travels to the countryside and meets his meat in flesh and blood before he becomes a vegan, whereas Eino stays in an urban setting, relying only on his reasoning and the company of the toy pig. Even though the majority of contemporary children are city-dwellers, books like *Eino* are a minority. In the group of vegan identity books I have reviewed, only three stories with a child protagonist do not involve actual, living production animals. In most books, the children either visit a farm or a farm sanctuary. This is only to be expected since, as mentioned above, arguments for veganism are manifold, and they balance between rational thinking and emotional bonds to nonhuman animals. For this emotional bonding to happen, children need to meet real animals.

Another difference between the two books—a difference that makes *Karl* an exception this time—is the degree of resistance and difficulty the boys face because of their newly chosen vegan lifestyle. Only *Karl* and one other book—*Benji Bean Sprout Doesn't Eat Meat!* (2004)—out of the thirty vegan identity books I have reviewed feature a vegan child character who faces severe objections. This is a serious shortcoming because veganism constitutes a major shift from the normative practice and ideology of human dominance over nonhuman animals (McDonald 1). According to Barbara McDonald, "to choose such a lifestyle essentially is to place oneself perpetually on the extreme margins of society. It is to

Only Karl *and one other book—*Benji Bean Sprout Doesn't Eat Meat! *(2004)—out of the thirty vegan identity books I have reviewed feature a vegan child character who faces severe objections.*

invite questions, criticism, alienation, suspicion, and misunderstanding" (1). There is a need for more books that support children's choice for a vegan lifestyle and, at the same time, realistically explore the hardships and challenges that usually come with such a choice, at least in the beginning.

After comparing the two books to each other and to the larger sample of thirty vegan books, I can safely state that *Karl Klops, der coole Kuhheld* and *Eino ja suuri possukysymys* align with the major trends that characterize vegan identity children's books, with the exception that Eino does not meet a real nonhuman animal and Karl faces substantial challenges and resistance because of his espousing of veganism. Some of the major trends that can be traced in both are their white, middle-class, boy protagonists; their use of mentors; and the balanced emotional/rational veganism advocacy.

Note

1. Conversation with Nylén, March 25, 2018.

Works Cited

Children's Books

Bader, Assia. *Barnabé, le petit lion végétarien*. Editions L'Harmattan, 2014.

Bass, Jules. *Herb the Vegetarian Dragon*. Illustrated by Debbie Harter. Barefoot Books, 1999.

Bodenstein, Dan. *Steven the Vega*n. Illustrated by Ron Robrahn. Totem Tales Publishing, 2012.

Buzo, Sánchez Rocío. *Dilo por mi*. Unión Vegetariana Española, 2009.

Corbin, Pascale. *Ninon ne mange pas ses amis*. Babelio, 2018.

Cortecero Sánchez, Aída. *El Cazador y la Tribu de los Lazulis*. La Locomotora, 2016.

Doinet, Mymi. *J'aime pas les côtelettes!* Illustrated by Fabrice Turrier. Nathan, 2009.

Garcia-Valiño, Ignacio. *Yago, el Cocodrilo vegetariano.* Illustrated by Carles Arbat. Buchmann, 2017.

Green, Veronica. *Veggie Vero and the Battle of the Lunch Ladies.* Illustrated by Noh A. Veronica Green, 2019.

---. *Veggie Vero and the Case of the Missing Calves.* Illustrated by Noh A. Veronica Green, 2018.

---. *Veggie Vero and the Mysterious Soup Festival.* Illustrated by Noh A. Veronica Green, 2017.

---. *Veggie Vero and the Sandwich Imposter.* Illustrated by Noh A. Veronica Green, 2016.

Hytönen, Ville, and Milla Mallius. *Brontosaurus Beppe.* Into Kustannus, 2017.

Laajarinne, Jukka. *Onnenpossu.* Illustrated by Panu Puukari. WSOY, 2003.

Neubecker, Robert. *Linus, the Vegetarian T. rex.* Beach Lane Books, 2013.

Nylén, Antti. *Eino ja suuri possukysymys.* Illustrated by Ilja Karsikas. Otava, 2018.

Patiño, Carlos. *Dave Loves Chickens.* Vegan Publishers, 2013.

---. *Dave Loves Pigs.* Vegan Publishers, 2018.

Plum, Violet. *Luke Walker: Animal Stick up For-er.* Violet's Vegan Comics, 2016.

---. *Max's Lunch.* Violet's Vegan Comics, 2014.

Ringgold, Robyn, and Vidya Vasudevan. *My Mom Eats Tofu.* Solar Publishing, 2009.

Rudy, Sarah. *Benji Bean Sprout Doesn't Eat Meat!* SK Publishing & Graphics, 2004.

Seibold, Otto J., and Siobhan Vivian. *Vunce upon a Time.* Illustrated by Otto J. Seibold. Chronicle Books, 2008.

Severin, Sybil, and Carlos Patiño. *Lena of Vegitopia and the Mystery of the Missing Animals.* Vegan Publishers, 2014.

Smith, Sean R. *Harmony on the Farm.* Illustrated by Jess Yeomans. Harmony Prime, 2012.

Stefanescu, Crisula, and Polina Zinoviev. *TUTU. Uimitoarele aventuri ale motanului Tutu, povestite de el insusi.* Sedcom Libris, 2012.

Taubitz, Udo Kasper. *Karl Klops der coole Kuhheld.* Illustrated by Annette Jacob-Zube. Echo Verlag, 2012.

Vignola, Radha. *Victor the Vegetarian: Saving Little Lambs.* Illustrated by Julia Bauer. AVIVA!, 1994.

Vignola, Radha, and Michelle N. Ary. *Victor's Picnic.* AVIVA!, 1996.

Yebra, Romero Ana María. *El sapito vegetariano.* Illustrated by Lobato Arcadio. Ediciones SM, 1998.

Secondary Sources

Adams, Carol J. *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory.* Continuum, 1999.

Cole, Matthew, and Kate Stewart. *Our Children and Other Animals: The Cultural Construction of Human-Animal Relations in Childhood.* Routledge, 2014.

Daniel, Carolyn. *Voracious Children: Who Eats Whom in Children's Literature.* Routledge, 2006.

Donovan, Josephine. "Animal Rights and Feminist Theory." *Signs*, vol. 15, no. 2, 1990, pp. 350-75.

Harper, Breeze A. *Sistah Vegan: Black Female Vegans Speak on Food, Identity, Health and Society.* Lantern Books, 2010.

Hübben, Kelly: *A Genre of Animal Hanky Panky? Animal Representations, Anthropomorphism and Interspecies Relations in the Little Golden Books.* Stockholm University, 2017.

McCabe, Janice, et al. "Gender in Twentieth-Century Children's Books: Patterns of Disparity in Titles and Central Characters." *Gender & Society*, vol. 25, no. 2, 2011, 197-226.

McDonald, Barbara. "'Once You Know Something, You Can't Not Know It': An Empirical Look at Becoming Vegan." *Society and Animals*, vol. 8, no. 1, 2000, pp. 1-23.

Oberst, Lindsay. "Why the Global Rise in Vegan and Plant-Based Eating Isn't A Fad (600% Increase in U.S. Vegans + Other Astounding Stats)." *Food Revolution Network*, 18 Jan. 2018, https://foodrevolution.org/blog/vegan-statistics-global/.

Regan, Tom. *The Case for Animal Rights.* University of California Press, 1983.

Singer, Peter. *Animal Liberation: A New Ethics for Our Treatment of Animals.* HarperCollins, 1975.

The Vegan Society. "Definition of Veganism." *The Vegan Society*, www.vegansociety.com/go-vegan/definition-veganism.

Wright, Laura. *The Vegan Studies Project: Food, Animals, and Gender in the Age of Terror.* University of Georgia Press, 2015.



Marianna Koljonen is a doctoral student at the University of Helsinki. Her dissertation will examine the representation of so-called farm or livestock animals and their animality in children's literature from a critical animal studies viewpoint. Her master's thesis explored the ways in which the Western animal rights movement of the 1970s influenced children's picturebooks. She is a board member of the Finnish section of IBBY, an active member of the Finnish Critical Animal Studies network, and an active member of a vegan parenting group in Helsinki. She has previously worked as a teacher and in an animal rights organization and instructs humane education in schools.

The plot of this novel portrays how Kaltrina and Darin (a sister and brother) become displaced as orphans and the difficulties with which they are faced. At school, Darin meets a classmate named Ada, whose friendship and support changes the siblings' gloomy life.

If readers are interested in the realm of Albanian young adult literature, I highly recommend this author. His novel affords the essentials of coming-of-age fiction; explores the most typical problems adolescents encounter; depicts Darin, Kaltrina, and Ada in the Albanian context through mesmerizing narrative; deciphers the development of self-identity and individuality, while focusing closely on the child's desire to grow up; catalogues the novel as genre-blending; and amplifies the therapeutic value of the novel in itself.

In depicting the protagonists' increasing levels of self-confidence, personal development, and self-identification, this novel may become an indispensable part of public and school libraries, which strive to develop required extracurricular activities.

Enkelena Shockett



Tirana 2016 Albania

Viktor Canosinaj

Zemra në pëllëmbë të dorës
The Heart in the Palm

Tirana, Albania:
Dyrrah, 2016. 263 pp.
ISBN: 99943-038-2-0
(Fiction; ages 12-18)

Big Nose, New Emile, and China's Revolutionary Children's Literature

by LIJUN BI AND XIANGSHU FANG

Lijun Bi and Xiangshu Fang examine Mao Dun's "The Story of Big Nose" (1936) and Lao She's "New Emile" (1936). They briefly explore the context of revolutionary children's literature that flourished in China during the 1930s, before they proceed to compare and analyze these dramatically different stories by two of the most important Chinese authors of that era.



Background

In the 1920s and '30s, the best-known Chinese authors for children, such as Bin Xing and Zhou Zuoren, maintained their stance as advocates of love, nature, and children-centered literature. At the same time, there emerged a group of authors promoting revolutionary ideology. These anti-traditionalist writers were inspired by the Russian Bolshevik revolution of the early twentieth century; they "felt that they now had significant heroic roles to play," and some of them even felt that they "would inspire the ardor of the revolutionary masses through the vehicle of a new proletarian literature" (Schwartz 137). Mary Farquhar notes that during this period, revolutionary children's literature became increasingly mainstream (147).

Revolutionary children's literature followed the Soviet Russian model in relation to basic issues such as political content, the relationship between the individual and the collective, and the concept of childhood. Under the guidance of the Communist-sponsored League of the Left-Wing Writers, activity in the field of children's literature became extremely vigorous, and

© 2019 BY BOOKBIRD, INC.

revolutionary children's literature of the time was characterized by a strong social commitment with hostility toward the privileged wealthy foreign capitalists, imperialists, and their Chinese collaborators. Revolutionary literature for children became a pedagogic instrument, used to project those values that supported the pursuit of a new nation based on the Marxist ideal of an egalitarian society (Bi and Fang 29).

Children's literature of the time was characterized by a strong social commitment with hostility toward the privileged wealthy foreign capitalists, imperialists, and their Chinese collaborators.

This new trend had a positive and uplifting character, marking the emergence of a kind of new militant romanticism. It shifted the focus onto the educational significance of children's literature in the effort to save China. The emancipation of individuals and the liberation of the entire Chinese people was to be done through active participation in activities such as militant street demonstrations and violent social class conflicts. Thus, the "imagined" revolutionary childhood and the "imagined" revolutionary nationhood became "intrinsically entangled" and their relationship was "historically contingent" (Xu 69-70). The revolutionary children's literature breathed optimism, revolutionary fervor, and a passion for battle into its young readers.

This article focuses on two short stories by two Chinese literary giants, Mao Dun and Lao She, whose achievements in mainstream adult literature often overshadow their work in the field of children's literature. Published in the same 1936 issue of *Literature*, an important journal of the League of Left-Wing Writers, Mao Dun's short story is a call for revolutionary activism, whereas Lao She's short story can be read as a warning against such activism.

The revolutionary children's literature breathed optimism, revolutionary fervor, and a passion for battle into its young readers.

Mao Dun and "The Story of Big Nose"

Mao Dun (pen name of Sun Yanbin, 1896-1981) is one of China's greatest twentieth-century realist novelists. Being one of the earliest members of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), he "had all along been committed to radical politics" (Huters 36). In 1930, he was actively involved in the establishment of the League of Left-Wing Writers in Shanghai.

The early and mid-1930s was a period of growth and maturity for modern Chinese children's literature, especially for the school of revolutionary literature. While Zhang Tianyi, with his fairy tale *Big Lin and Little Lin*, may be considered the forefather of this school during this era, other renowned authors also published significant revolutionary works for children. Mao Dun's "The Story of Big Nose" was published in a special children's literature issue of *Literature*. The same special issue also carried the translation of Gorky's "On Themes" as well as an introduction to Soviet Russian children's literature by Mao Dun. Mao Dun's "The Story of Big Nose" is a depiction of the miserable life of a homeless orphan boy nicknamed "Big Nose." It starts off as a realist piece, before shifting into the style of militant romanticism.

Big Nose survives by scavenging in the streets of prosperous Shanghai. Mao Dun claimed that "in this wealthy city, there are 300,000 to 400,000 similarly-aged children who either live on the streets or work in various factories, allowing the capitalist machines to suck their blood" (389-390). Realism is used skillfully and successfully to expose the struggles of these orphans. The author contrasts their miserable life, described as "worse than that of stray dogs" (389), with wealthy people's luxurious and often wasteful lifestyle. Mao Dun's writing differs from works that followed the earlier exposé trend, such as Ye Shentao's *Scarecrow* (1923), which was purely descriptive. Instead, Mao Dun uses a Marxist framework to analyze Big Nose's challenges and concludes that exploitation and imperialism are the roots of most social problems in China. In this way, the story becomes prescriptive, advocating for participation in revolutionary activities.

The author contrasts their miserable life, described as "worse than that of stray dogs" (389), with wealthy people's luxurious and often wasteful lifestyle.

Jonathan Spence comments that the writers of the Left-Wing League in the 1930s "meticulously followed the cultural line laid down by Stalin in the Soviet Union, which gave its own didactic definitions of how the world should be viewed and where political priorities lay" (412). The basic Stalinist premise was that to be "correct," any depiction of social reality must illuminate the exact class relationships of the protagonists and leave no ambiguities about the direction and purpose of the proletarian revolution.

Mao Dun's story shifts into the style of militant romanticism when Big Nose joins a group of marching revolutionary youths, who shout, "Down with the imperialists!," "Down with the traitors!," and "A Long Life to the Liberation of All Chinese!" His initial motivation to join the street demonstration, however, is not quite revolutionary. When he sees a well-dressed young couple pass by, he has a feeling that the young man wants to impress the young lady. He follows them, begging for money. From past experience, he knows patience will work in his favor, as eventually the young lady will show signs of annoyance and the young man will give him a few coins to buy their peace. Suddenly, he sees a wallet in another young man's pocket that is a lot more attractive. He is part of a group of young people who are waving little flags and shouting slogans. Big Nose does not understand these slogans, but he joins and imitates them by shouting: "Down With...Down With..." as a cover-up. Just as he decides that the timing is right for him to nab the wallet, some policemen rush out: "Stop shouting slogans! Stop shouting slogans!" They begin to bash the slogan-shouting youths, but as the youngsters have greater numbers than the police, they fight back. At this pivotal point, the protagonist decides to join the fight against the police, as he himself had often been beaten by these nasty policemen. Not only does Big Nose feel animated among the

Mao Dun's story shifts into the style of militant romanticism when Big Nose joins a group of marching revolutionary youths, who shout, "Down with the imperialists!"

demonstrating youths, he becomes morally dignified as well: when he sees the wallet fall out of the young man's pocket while fighting the police, Big Nose picks it up and returns it to its owner.

Revolutionary children's stories like Mao Dun's "The Story of Big Nose" all follow a strict and simple pattern. Their stance is openly Marxist; their setting is realistic and contemporary, mostly in Shanghai; and they all demand social awareness, bravery, and sacrifice. As the stories reach their climax, the protagonists, pushed to the brink, are incited to take desperate action against their oppressors, and thus, their revolutionary characteristics are galvanized. In most of these stories, the protagonists shout the same slogans and denouncements, so these works can be said to be more akin to propaganda than literature. A good example of these slogan-ridden works is "The Vanguard of the Juvenile" (1930) by Chen Zhengdao, a member of the League of Left-Wing Writers. It blatantly seeks to rouse the masses, especially the juvenile, for the May Day rally:

> We have grown up in iron and blood
> Our fathers and grandfathers were all laborers
> We, a jumping and shouting mob,
> are really the laboring children
> and we are the proletariats, Young Pioneers
> And we are attacking the bourgeoisie
> ....
> Red May has arrived
> We hold high the red flag marching onwards
> There are calls everywhere in the world
> Brothers, we will live in the blood of May
> We will march in the blood of May (Bi 92)

In comparison, it can be seen how the first part of Mao Dun's "The Story of Big Nose" demonstrates the author's skill for realism, whereas the militant romanticism in the second part of the story appears to be contrived, labored, and hollow. In several heated debates, radical writers such as Jiang Guangci defended works such as Mao Dun's by declaring that "[a]ll literature is a weapon for propaganda," an aphorism quoted ad nauseam from Upton Sinclair. Lu Xun criticized this idea, arguing that although all literature is propaganda, not all propaganda is literature (Bi 89-90). It was in this context that Lao She published his short story "New Emile."

Lu Xun criticized this idea, arguing that although all literature is propaganda, not all propaganda is literature (Bi 89-90).

Lao She and "New Emile"

Lao She (pen name of Shu Qingchun, 1899-1966) was born in Beijing in 1899. His family was of Manchu ethnicity. According to Paul French, "[f]rom 1924 to 1929 he lived and worked in London as a Chinese language teacher...and was greatly influenced by contemporary English literature. He developed a deep appreciation of Dickens, Joyce, and the Bloomsbury Group, among others" (1). While many 1930s authors turned to

Communism as the only solution to China's problems, Lao She remained "on equally good terms" (Hsia 180) with the Communist-sponsored League of the Left-Wing Writers and its opponents.

Published in the same special issue of *Literature* (1936) as Mao Dun's "The Story of Big Nose," Lao She's "New Emile" is puzzling. "New Emile" is regarded by Farquhar as "a Chinese version of Rousseau's *Emile* in his famous tract on education" (164). Emile is the central character of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Émile, ou de l'éducation* (Emile, or On Education) (1762), which asks readers to turn their thoughts to the very nature of childhood. Rousseau's philosophy of education goes beyond particular techniques that best ensure the absorption of information by the pupil. Instead, it extends the purpose of education to ensuring that the child's character develops in such a way so that he or she has a healthy sense of self-worth and morality. Rousseau advocates for a natural upbringing. The child should be neither indoctrinated nor introduced to dead, abstract concepts and words. Rousseau argues that someone who has been properly educated will be engaged in society and will be able to relate to his or her fellow citizens in a natural way (Delaney).

"New Emile" is regarded by Farquhar as "a Chinese version of Rousseau's Emile *in his famous tract on education."*

Lao She's story is a fictional first-person narration of an experimenting educator, who teaches a Chinese Emile. In Lao She's ironic narrative, the Chinese Emile's revolutionary upbringing is the exact opposite of that of Rousseau's Emile. It stands in stark contrast to Rousseau's child-centered educational philosophy, which was in fact responsible for the emergence of modern Chinese children's literature. In a tragic vein, Lao She traces and exaggerates the "stern," "scientific," and "experimental" (497-504) upbringing of the future revolutionary generation of China in an artificial environment that frustrates natural development. In Lao She's Chinese version, Emile's life is presented as lasting only eight years, four months, and twelve days. The teacher-narrator declares at the beginning of the story:

In Lao She's ironic narrative, the Chinese Emile's revolutionary upbringing is the exact opposite of that of Rousseau's Emile.

> I really don't think there were serious flaws in my educational methodology, but small errors were always inevitable. On a whole, my experiment was based on right principles. If his death was caused by a small careless mistake, then it is precisely what an experiment is all about—the spirit of science is not afraid of making mistakes, but of not correcting them. If in the future I have a second Emile, I am confident I will be completely successful, because I have gained experience now.... True, Emile died, unfortunately, but I am not sad. On the contrary, I am happily waiting for the future success. In the matter of upbringing children, there is no need to be sentimental. (497)

The experiment of bringing up Emile begins from the moment he is

born and starts crying. Even though in reality it is impossible to tell a newly born infant to stop crying, in this fictional story Emil is immediately taught that life is a struggle and crying is a sign of weakness. He never cried again till his death. When he is merely three days old, he is "rescued" from his mother: "humanity's regressing can all be blamed on mothers of the world" (498). His mother's milk is described as the wrong start, which would make him soft and feminine, like bean curd. To be a steel soldier of the future, he must be overtly masculine, not "a little cutie." Thus, he has to learn to eat bread at four days old. His educator claims that starvation is the fuel for revolution, and hence uses it as a training tool. Through starvation, the little boy learns the value of bread. When he begins to learn to speak, he shouts, "I want bread!" and his shouting for bread is described as "exhilarating and inciting" as "he sounds just like a slogan-shouting revolutionary leader" (498).

Even though in reality it is impossible to tell a newly born infant to stop crying, in this fictional story Emil is immediately taught that life is a struggle and crying is a sign of weakness. He never cried again till his death.

At the age of three, Emile begins to receive education about facts, such as the size, the age, the formation, and the ultimate and inevitable extinction of the moon, while others at his age would have been learning about the rabbit on the moon or the folklore about fairies flying to the moon. These stories are all nonsensical, according to the narrator. The formal introduction of revolutionary concepts to Emile echoes Lenin's teachings: "Give me four years to teach the children and the seed I have sown will never be uprooted" and "Give us the child for eight years and it will be a Bolshevik forever" (qtd. in Muehlenberg).

The formal introduction of revolutionary concepts to Emile echoes Lenin's teachings.

While abstract words like *revolution*, *struggle*, and *justice* are difficult to such a little child, the experimenting teacher believes that these words are like seeds with hard shells—the seeds will eventually break the shells and shoot out in his young mind. The revolutionary educator claims that "the method of total transformation of a child is like trimming all his flesh off the bones and sucking up all his blood and replacing them with revolutionary ideas" (503). As a result, Emile is like a machine: he doesn't laugh or smile, just as he doesn't cry. His heart is made of iron and rock. All the human characteristics in him are uprooted.

While abstract words like revolution, struggle, *and* justice *are difficult to such a little child, the experimenting teacher believes that these words are like seeds with hard shells—the seeds will eventually break the shells and shoot out in his young mind.*

The teacher is absolutely proud of young Emile's ability to use revolutionary slogans: "Emile says, we'll make revolution, down with, down with running dogs. We fight to the end, sacrifice, sacrifice, blood flows like a river, to drown you all" (503). At one point, Emile is shown to be confused when he is encouraged to shout the slogan: "Down with Ertuzi to save the world," as Ertuzi was just another child in

his neighborhood, not really so significant in the revolutionary world. What Emile doesn't understand is that Ertuzi is a symbol, not only of the class that Emile is fighting but also of more basic human connections, like friendship. According to his teacher, Emile does not have any friends "because of his revolutionary maturity" (504). His teacher also claims that friendship is a bourgeoisie concept and proletarians only believe in class fraternity (504).

The lonely boy eventually stops breathing and dies. The teacher declares that he is not discouraged but is happily ready to continue the experiment, and firmly believes that with the second Emile he will be able to bring his grand plan to fruition.

At the age of eight, Emile begins his formal study of politics, and he is described as showing genuine interest. Even though he becomes sick, he continues to work hard. His teacher admits that he seldom took him to the doctor, because he did not want him to learn to feign illness to avoid work. Alas, Emile really is sick, so the teacher tries to use revolutionary stories to inspire him, while also giving him some medicine. The lonely boy eventually stops breathing and dies. The teacher declares that he is not discouraged but is happily ready to continue the experiment, and firmly believes that with the second Emile he will be able to bring his grand plan to fruition.

One important question remains at the end of the story: What is the purpose of the revolution? Is it supposed to change, or at least improve, the life of children like Big Nose in Mao Dun's story? Or is it unavoidable that during the process of the revolution, children like the new Emile in Lao She's story will become the necessary casualties? Lena Rydholm summarizes the characteristics of Lao She's writing as often containing "several layers of meaning, overt, realistic, as well as symbolic and hidden, expressed through a carefully constructed narrative framework with several competing and conflicting narrative discourses" (69).

One important question remains at the end of the story: What is the purpose of the revolution? Is it supposed to change, or at least improve, the life of children like Big Nose in Mao Dun's story?

Reading Lao She's "New Emile" is like reading a madman's account, or a horror story. Is this the effect that the author hopes to achieve? While many writers perceived an urgency for revolutionary education, Lao She appears to have seen beyond the realm of the revolution, cautioning against the serious consequences of the new revolutionary education on a child's life, socialization, and well-being. His story functions as a magic mirror, magnifying the adverse outcomes of approaches that distort the very nature of childhood. In his story, Emile is not an individual with human feelings. He is just a scientific experiment, trained to be a total dialectic materialist revolutionary robot. At the end, he is sacrificed in the name of a future utopia. The moral of the story could be perceived to be that when children's literature becomes a mouthpiece for revolutionary

Reading Lao She's "New Emile" is like reading a madman's account, or a horror story.

indoctrination, it can destroy childhood and kill off children. It is impressive that Lao She presented his view about revolutionary children's literature to the writers of the Left-Wing League themselves through his publishing in the special children's literature issue of their league's *Literature*.

While many writers perceived an urgency for revolutionary education, Lao She appears to have seen beyond the realm of the revolution, cautioning against the serious consequences of the new revolutionary education on a child's life, socialization, and well-being.

Although not a believer in the Communist revolution, Lao She was a friend of the Communists. He lived in the United States from 1946 to 1949. When he heard of the Communist victory and the establishment of the People's Republic in 1949, he immediately returned to China. Sadly, and ironically, he underestimated the efficiency of Communist political education. In the early stage of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), millions of party-state, brainwashed, revolutionary Emiles, who called themselves the "Red Guards," began to wipe out all the residues of the old culture. Lao She instantly became their chief target. He was publicly denounced and humiliated as "an active counterrevolutionary" and was subjected to severe physical torture by slogan-shouting youngsters. On August 24, 1966, Lao She drowned himself in Taiping Lake in Beijing. When his body was cremated, Red Guards did not allow his family to keep his ashes. His family placed in an empty container small items that had belonged to him—a pair of glasses, a pen, a brush, and some jasmine tea leaves—to keep the great soul company (Jin Shikai 259-263).

When he heard of the Communist victory and the establishment of the People's Republic in 1949, he immediately returned to China. Sadly, and ironically, he underestimated the efficiency of Communist political education.

Concluding Remarks

China's revolutionary children's literature emerged in an era in which there was constant political upheaval and in which intellectuals and writers presented themselves as enduring a constant state of cultural and emotional crisis regarding the imminent destruction of the Chinese nation. Chinese authors created in their works monstrous images of foreign imperialism and spinelessly corrupt Chinese government officials, aiming to instill in the young a sense of urgency for the survival of the nation. Numerous literary works, mainly in the short story genre, presented scenes of patriotic demonstrations against foreign imperialism and the weak stance adopted by the Chinese government. This signified these writers' deep concern for the fate of the nation. An important feature of these works is the inclusion of political slogans. The language in these works is explicitly political and sometimes very passionate and even violent.

Revolutionary children's literature, like traditional Confucian children's books, used art and literature as an instrument for moral and social persuasion and ideological indoctrination.

Revolutionary children's literature, like traditional Confucian children's books, used art and literature as an instrument for moral and social persuasion and ideological indoctrination. Like Confucianism, it viewed childhood as a period of preparation for an adulthood of being a "future comrade," thus ignoring the nature and state of childhood, disregarding its independent significance and value, and denying children their own rights. Unlike Confucianism, it was used as a political weapon to bring about radical social change, rather than social harmony. Furthermore, its authors believed that social equality could only be achieved through armed struggle, rather than the Confucian notion of maintaining social hierarchy through obedience. In this literature, as pointed out by Lao She, the child was a steel soldier of the new China, molded sternly for a revolutionary purpose, and was always ready to do what ought to be done. This could range from a heroic action or sacrificial martyrdom in the battlefield to the ruthless termination of old and bourgeois cultures.

When a socialist China was finally established in 1949, literature for children became directly correlated with political agendas, and it encouraged children to participate in class struggle. Many poems and short stories were hastily produced, and their quality was very poor. During their heyday, the revolutionary youngsters were deeply indoctrinated by these propaganda works. They blindly followed Mao Zedong's words and became ruthlessly violent. Lao She's "New Emile" foresaw the detrimental effects of ignoring the nature of childhood, and his personal tragedy attests to the severity of such education.

Lao She's "New Emile" foresaw the detrimental effects of ignoring the nature of childhood, and his personal tragedy attests to the severity of such education.

Works Cited

Children's Books

Chen Zhengdao. "Shaonian xianfeng" ["The Vanguard of the Juvenile"]. *Zhongguo ertong wenxue daxi, shige I* [*The Great Anthology of Chinese Children's Literature, Poetry I*], edited by Jiang Feng, Hope Publishing House, 1988, pp. 129-30. Originally published in *Xindi yuekan* [*New Land Monthly*], April 1930.

Lao She. "Xin Aimier" ["New Emile"]. *Zhongguo ertong wenxue daxi, xiaoshuo I* [*The Great Anthology of Chinese Children's Literature, Short Stories I*], edited by Pu Manding, Hope Publishing House, 1988, pp. 497-504. Originally published in *Literature*, *Special Issue of Children's Literature*, July 1936.

Mao Dun. "Dabizi de gushi" ["The Story of Big Nose"]. *Zhongguo ertong wenxue daxi, xiaoshuo I* [*The Great Anthology of Chinese Children's Literature, Short Stories I*], edited by Pu Manding, Hope Publishing House, 1988, pp. 387-406. Originally published in *Literature*, *Special Issue of Children's Literature*, July 1936.

Secondary Sources

Bi, Lijun. *China's May Fourth Poetry: Educating the Young*. Common Grounds

Publishing, 2014.
Bi, Linjun, and Xiangshu Fang. "Proletarian Fairytales in Bourgeois Metropolitan Shanghai: Chinese Revolutionary Children's Literature in the 1930s." *The International Journal of Critical Cultural Studies*, vol. 15, no. 3, 2017, pp. 21-30.
Delaney, James J. "Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778)." *Internet Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, www.iep.utm.edu/rousseau/#H5.
Farquhar, Mary. *Children's Literature in China: From Lu Xun to Mao Zedong*. An East Gate Book, 1999.
French, Paul. "Unity Endings: On Lao She." *Los Angeles Review of Books*, 13 Oct. 2013, lareviewofbooks.org/article/untidy-endings-paul-french-on-lao-she/#!.
Hsia, C. T. *A History of Modern Chinese Fiction.* 2nd ed., Yale UP, 1971.
Huters, Theodore. "Mao Dun and His Masterpieces." *Routledge Handbook of Modern Chinese Literature*, edited by Ming Dong Gu, Routledge, 2019, pp. 36-47.
Jin Shikai. *Lishi de daijia* [*The Cost of History*]. China Great Earth Publishing House, 1993.
Muehlenberg, Bill. "Culture and Civilisation: Education Wars: The Battle for Our Children." *News Weekly*, 29 Sep. 2012, news weekly.com.au/article.php?id=5343.
Rydholm, Lena. "Lao She's Fiction and *Camel Xiangzi*." *Routledge Handbook of Modern Chinese Literature*, edited by Ming Dong Gu, Routledge, 2019, pp. 59-71.
Schwartz, Benjamin. "Themes in Intellectual History: May Fourth and After." *An Intellectual History of Modern China*, edited by Merle Goldman and Leo-fan Lee, Cambridge UP, 2002, pp. 97-141.
Spence, Jonathan. *The Search for Modern China*. W.W. Norton & Company, 1991.
Xu, Xu. "Imagination: Imaginations of the Nation—Childhood and Children's Literature in Modern China." *(Re)imagining the World: Children's Literature's Response to Changing Times*, edited by Yan Wu et al., Springer, 2013, pp. 69-80.



Lijun Bi lectures at the School of Languages, Literatures, Cultures and Linguistics, Monash University, Australia. Her research publications are mainly on Chinese children's literature.



Xiangshu Fang is a senior lecturer in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Deakin University, Australia. His research interests cover political and moral indoctrination in China, Confucianism, and Chinese intellectual history.

Tooran Mirhadi and Jella Lepman: Two Women, Two Continents, One Aspiration

by LEILA (ROYA) MAKTABI FARD

This is a printed version of Leila (Roya) Maktabi Fard's 36th IBBY Congress keynote speech. An earlier German version was published in* JuLit. *An Iranian children's literature researcher, critic, and librarian based in Munich, Maktabi Fard compares and draws parallels between these two exceptional, perseverant, hardworking, and pioneering women who established influential organizations for children's literature, one in the East and the other in the West.

I strongly believe that some people have an extraordinary talent to survive in the most difficult circumstances and simultaneously love, build bridges, and create environments where people can empower themselves amidst all the plights and troubles. Regardless of all negative voices and barriers, they constantly work and leave a legend of themselves behind.

Two of these exceptional figures were born within a span of thirty years, one in the East and one in the West: Tooran Mirhadi (1927-2016) and Jella Lepman (1891-1970). Both were perseverant, hardworking, and pioneer women who established influential organizations for children's literature.

Two of these exceptional figures were born within a span of thirty years, one in the East and one in the West: Tooran Mirhadi (1927-2016) and Jella Lepman (1891-1970). Both were perseverant, hardworking, and pioneer women who established influential organizations for children's literature.

Tooran Mirhadi was born in 1927 in Tehran to a German mother and an Iranian father. Mirhadi's father was among the first generation of engineers dispatched to Germany for higher education in the first Pahlavi era. During these years, he met Greta Dietrich, who came from a Catholic family. She was a sculptor and studied art in Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich. The acquaintanceship led to their marriage. Greta traveled to Iran with her husband, Fazollah Mirhadi, and lived there for fifty years until her last

© 2019 BY BOOKBIRD, INC.

day. Despite adopting Iranian ways, she never ceased to cherish European culture, values, and traditions and used them in raising her children. Tooran Mirhadi was raised in a bicultural atmosphere where Christmas was as important as Norouz (Persian new year's ceremony). She received the care and attention she needed from servants who strictly observed Islamic rules while she received the best training in dance, music and swimming and a fine education in French, English, and German. She acquired the German discipline and perseverance from her mother, mixed it with the Oriental benevolence and humbleness, and eternalized her name in the history of education and children's literature in Iran. Studying biology at Tehran University, she soon realized that her restless soul sought a different path (Mirhadi, "Kasani ke Jame'e ra Misazand"). Therefore, she decided to go abroad and study education at the Sorbonne. But what Sorbonne, and which France are we talking about? The France of 1946 was ruined after the war, and the university was flooded with politics and affected by the French Resistance force. At that time, Europe was suffering from rationing, and the postwar reconstructions had not started yet. In this period, Mirhadi joined worker and student unions to take on volunteer work as a laborer in railway construction and reconstruction of the war-affected areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the Tatra mountains in Slovakia.



Photo by Mehrdad Oskouei; from the private collection of the Mirhadi family.

She retells her philosophy of life in one sentence: Peace must be learned from childhood.

Mirhadi, who had heard the devastating memories of the First World War from her mother, was witnessing how the Second World War was demolishing Europe and the rest of the world. The influence of that period and her observations in Europe remained with her for the rest of her life and led her to seek making a peaceful world for children. She retells her philosophy of life in one sentence: Peace must be learned from childhood.

The school that was born out of Mirhadi's ideas and ideals proved itself a model for the future of child education in Iran.

Despite all the partisanship and political activism, her cooperation with leftist parties, and the offer to be Iran's representative at the Women's International Democratic Federation, she returned to Iran in 1952, a short while after her graduation. During her eighty-nine years, she accomplished three prominent and influential tasks that were all interrelated. The first one was establishing Farhad Kindergarten, an organization that developed into Farhad Educational Institute. She named the institute after her brother who died in an accident at the age of sixteen. In her memoir, Mirhadi recounts that her mother taught them "to turn great grief into great work" (*Touran Khanom*).

What facilitated such evolution in Mirhadi's school was the existence of a library as the third pillar of learning beside the teachers and the students.

The school that was born out of Mirhadi's ideas and ideals proved

itself a model for the future of child education in Iran. In her institute, she turned the ever-present teacher-oriented procedures into student-oriented methods, replacing the old-fashioned, one-way, competition-based approaches with a research-based methodology. What facilitated such evolution in Mirhadi's school was the existence of a library as the third pillar of learning beside the teachers and the students. It was during this period that Mirhadi and her colleagues at Farhad School realized the shortage of suitable materials for children and young adult learners. Mirhadi, who had sensed the problem before, decided to open a book exhibition exclusively designated to younger readers in 1956. The reception of the exhibition was so good that the experience inspired them to establish the CBCI—Children's Book Council of Iran. The idea bore fruit in 1962.

Mirhadi, who had sensed the problem before, decided to open a book exhibition exclusively designated to younger readers in 1956. The reception of the exhibition was so good that the experience inspired them to establish the CBCI—Children's Book Council of Iran. The idea bore fruit in 1962.

Eighteen years later, another organization was born out of CBCI, this time with Mirhadi and her husband, Mohsen Khomarloo, at its core. The organization aimed to create a reference book, called *The Iranian Encyclopedia for Young People*. So far, seventeen volumes of twenty-eight have been released. All of the entries are written by experts in the related field and are sorted according to age level. Up until the very last years of her life, Mirhadi was busy with the task of managing the encyclopedia and went to her office every day in her eighties.

The work is accomplished with the power of love. It is home to all the people who consider themselves passionate about literature, books, and everything related to children. Out of all the places that I have been in my life, there is only one other place where I feel as comfortable, and that is the International Youth Library in Munich, the library that emerged like a phoenix out of the ashes of World War II through the untiring efforts of Jella Lepman.

Out of all the missions and projects that Mirhadi was involved with, I consider CBCI as the core of her endeavors. CBCI was registered as the Iranian section of IBBY two years after its establishment and backs up more than fifty years of our efforts in the area of children's literature in Iran. During this time, it never diverged from its noble goal, which has always been improving children's literature in Iran. They have neither lost their independence under the most severe social, political, and economic hardship nor accepted a dime from the government. In a subsidy-based and oil-oriented economy, keeping independence is a difficult task for a non-governmental organization. Hierarchy does not mean anything in CBCI because everybody is equal in making decisions. The work is accomplished with the power of love. It is home to all the people who consider themselves passionate about literature, books, and everything related to children.

Out of all the places that I have been in my life, there is only one other place where I feel as comfortable, and that is the International Youth



Library in Munich, the library that emerged like a phoenix out of the ashes of World War II through the untiring efforts of Jella Lepman.

In the difficult days after World War II, when people did not have enough food to eat and proper clothes to wear, Lepman emphasized the necessity of cultural activism and the importance of providing books for children. She knew if the human condition were to improve in the future, it would only happen through a newly educated generation. In her memoir, she writes, "One principal measure of achieving this, I suggested, would be an exhibition of the best children's books from various nations. Bit by bit, let us set this upside-down world right again by starting with the children. They will show the grown-ups the way to go" (33).

These two exceptional women, despite living and growing in two different climates, are strangely similar to each other, and this resemblance is not only in their aspirations and actions but also in their stories and fates. Both Lepman and Mirhadi suffered a lot in their lives. They were widowed when they were young and had toddlers. Mirhadi's first husband (Major Vakili) was executed in the second Pahlavi era due to political activism and resisting against the regime. Mirhadi remarried a few years later but once again lost her husband, this time to illness. What completed her unfortunate days was the death of her child, Kaveh, during a flood and the wreckage of a bridge in northern Iran (Mirhadi, "Madar wa Panjah").

These two exceptional women, despite living and growing in two different climates, are strangely similar to each other, and this resemblance is not only in their aspirations and actions but also in their stories and fates.

Both of these women have been at least once in their lives bitterly rejected and somehow dropped out of their jobs despite all their merits. Lepman was fired in 1933 on the ground she was Jewish, and Mirhadi was expelled from her school, where she spent twenty-five years of her life, after the Islamic Revolution in 1981 and forced to an early retirement.

The two world wars affected each of them in some way.

The two world wars affected each of them in some way. Mirhadi's father spent several years in the Allied prison during the occupation of Iran because of his studies in Germany. Lepman's husband was injured during the First World War and died from the severity of those injuries years later ("Jella Lepman"). Witnessing the devastations that the war had left behind led these two women to the same goal—a goal with two basic elements: advocating peace and educating children.

By creating important, lasting, and influential institutions, they created movements in national and international children's literature that changed the direction of children's literature forever.

I would also love to point out the common, creative, ways these two women adopted in order for their dreams to come true. The most important thing that both of these women did was institutionalization. By creating important, lasting, and influential institutions, they created movements in national and international

children's literature that changed the direction of children's literature forever. Opening book exhibitions were the points of departure for both of them. Lepman came up with the idea of opening an exhibition at the time because Nazi censorship and book burning had left almost no children's books in Germany; Mirhadi decided to set up an exhibition a few years later in Iran to prove the importance of children's books to Iranian educators. She knew very well that she could not educate a smart and different generation just by relying on textbooks. Reading should be established and internalized as a second habit in young children, and it could not happen through just setting up temporary exhibitions. To reach such a target, a permanent, long-lasting movement was needed. This was the idea that led Mirhadi and her colleagues toward founding the CBCI.

Lepman came up with the idea of opening an exhibition at the time because Nazi censorship and book burning had left almost no children's books in Germany; Mirhadi decided to set up an exhibition a few years later in Iran to prove the importance of children's books to Iranian educators.

However, the most exciting point of my research process was finding out about the time that these two women met each other. Around the year 1958, in the course of developing her activities in the field of children's books, Lepman traveled to some developing countries, including Iran. Based on the evidence from the trip, Lepman, accompanied by Dr. Richard Bamberger, one of the co-founders of IBBY, met with cultural activists as well as Iranian educators such as Professor Mohsen Saba,[1] Dr. Shams-al-Muluk Mosahab,[2] and Tooran Mirhadi. Unfortunately, there is no evidence of the details of their interactions, but Mirhadi remarks in her memoir that at the same time she had an idea for establishing an institute for children's books, and she brought up her idea to Lepman (Mohammadi and Ghaeni 172). Among the fascinating documents I found during the course of my research for this article was the dedication leaf that Dr. Mohsen Saba had sent to Lepman on the tenth anniversary of the library in 1959 (figure 1).

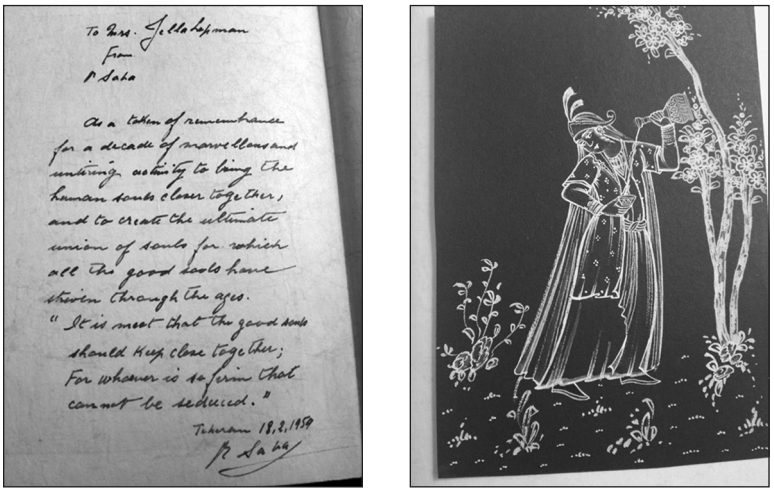


Figure 1. From a private collection of the Lepman family; photo by Anna Becchi.

Reading the few lines Lepman wrote on her trip to Iran, and what Mirhadi mentioned in her memoir, I found another interesting similarity between the two women. Sometime around the year 1950, Mirhadi was asked to make a speech at the Chinese Women's Congress about Iran, and she chose to speak about "The condition of carpet weaving girls in Iran" (Mirhadi, Forsathay-i Estesnaie 40). Interestingly, the subject is exactly what attracted Lepman's attention in her trip to Iran. Lepman talked bitterly of carpet-weaving children in Iran. She found their condition so disturbing that she said the beauty of Persian carpets disappeared before her eyes (153). This incident was one of the most beautiful intellectual links I found between these two women who came from different times and places.

Mirhadi was asked to make a speech at the Chinese Women's Congress about Iran, and she chose to speak about "The condition of carpet weaving girls in Iran" (Forsathay-i Estesnaie 40). Interestingly, the subject is exactly what attracted Lepman's attention in her trip to Iran. Lepman talked bitterly of carpet-weaving children in Iran. She found their condition so disturbing that she says the beauty of Persian carpets disappeared before her eyes.

While Mirhadi was an advocate of the leftist ideology, Jella Lepman accomplished a large portion of her plans with the help of the US Army and American foundations such as the Rockefeller Foundation; she was a liberal democrat and definitely supported different political views (Becchi). However, such a fundamental difference fades away when it comes to the result of their work. Humanitarian missions, especially where children are concerned, can be far beyond politics.

Despite the difference in their political views, the distrust of these two figures toward modern media was something they had in common. Mirhadi considered the lack of radio and television one of the gifts of her childhood, and in her memoirs, she mentions the destructive effects of television and other modern media on children, seeing them as instrumental in the hands of the capitalist world (Mirhadi, *Forsathay-i Estesnaie* 13).

The faith of these two women in the great power of children is, however, one of the most important or probably the most important idea that binds them together. Interestingly, Lepman was also concerned about the negative effects of cinema, television, and the radio (127). Such a trust is what Lepman employed in managing her library by implementing an open shelves system that had been unprecedented in German libraries. The height of Lepman's trust in children was reflected in the Young People's United Nations program. The program was designed to rebuild the United Nations General Assembly with the participation of twelve- to sixteen-year-old children from around the world. Interestingly, Tooran Mirhadi also used a young advisory council to assess the articles she planned to publish in the children's encyclopedia. They had regular meetings held in the office of the encyclopedia where they listened to and discussed articles that were mostly concerned with the adolescents' world.

In spite of all common interests and aspirations between Mirhadi and Lepman, I would like to point out a big difference as well. As I have

mentioned already, Mirhadi was a supporter of left parties, and although she was never known as a political activist, the ideology stayed forever with her and played a significant role in her attitudes and decisions. Resisting mass media, specifically TV programs, and opposing any kind of competition are a few examples of her beliefs that have roots in such ideology. She was of the belief that these were actually mediums to control and channel public thoughts, especially children's, in order to imply the benefits and goals of imperialism and capitalism. She did not consider the fact of change, modern technology, and the differences among generations.

I would like to stress that I feel extremely lucky that my path has crossed with these two exceptional women. I collaborated with Tooran Mirhadi for years, and I learned many invaluable lessons from her. Actually, I grew up in an environment she built compassionately with her day-to-day struggle and I had the chance to develop my own personal views. While my perspectives are not necessarily identical with Mirhadi's, I owe my self-dependence and the courage to maintain and share my personal opinion to the way Mirhadi taught us.

The story of Lepman and me is, of course, another kind of story. I never met her. None of the people of our generation have, but I have had the opportunity to work in the library she founded and to live in a city wherein she conceptualized her golden ideas. Whenever I go to the library and meet people from different nationalities, I feel Lepman's soul by my side.

The heritage of Lepman and Mirhadi is in our hands now. This intangible heritage needs not only acknowledgment but also maintenance. There are still many children in the world who fight for their basic rights: protection, joy, happiness, and even food. They deserve a fair and standard educational system. They deserve to enjoy the magic of literature. It is up to us to do something for them, as every generation needs to have its own angel. An angel who is called Jella Lepman, Touran Mirhadi, or ...

They deserve to enjoy the magic of literature. It is up to us to do something for them, as every generation needs to have its own angel. An angel who is called Jella Lepman, Touran Mirhadi, or ...

Notes

1. Dr. Mohsen Saba (1906-1992): journalist, editor, translator, writer, university lecturer, and one of the founders of modern librarianship in Iran.

2. Dr. Shams-al-Muluk Mosahab (1913-1997): poet and writer, she was in the first group of Iranian women who went to the university and was elected as senator.

Works Cited

Secondary Sources

Becchi, Anna. "Jella Lepman: Die Gründerin der Internationalen Jugendbibliothek" ["Jella Lepman: The Founder of International Youth Library"]. *LIBREAS—Library and Ideas*, vol. 25, 2014, pp. 29-60, libreas.eu/ausgabe25/05becchi/. [German]

"Jella Lepman." *Wikipedia*, 2 Aug. 2018, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jella_Lepman.

Lepman, Jella. *A Bridge of Children's Books: The Inspiring Autobiography of a Remarkable Woman.* Translated by Edith McCormick, O'Brien Press, 2002.

Mirhadi, Touran. *Forsathay-i Estesnaie* [*The Exceptional Chances*]. Edited by Simin Zarrabi, The Iranian Encyclopedia for Young People Press, 2017. [Persian]

---. *Kasani ke Jame'e ra Misazand* [*The People Who Build the Society*]. Edited by Shahrdad Mirzaie, Dibaye, 2007. [Persian]

---. *Madar wa Panjah Sal Zendegi dar Iran* [*Mother and Fifty Years Living in Iran*]. Edited by Simin Zarrabi, Ghatreh, 2004. [Persian]

Mohammadi, Mohammad Hadi, and Zohreh Ghaeni. *Tarikh-i Adabiyat-i Koudakan-i Iran* [*History of Children's Literature in Iran*]. Vol. 10, Institute for Research of the History of Children's Literature in Iran, 2004-. [Persian]

Razeghpanah, Violet. *Zendeginamah wa Khadamat-i Elmi wa Amouzeshi-i Touran Mirhadi* [*Biography and Cultural and Educational Services of Touran Mirhadi*]. Anjoman-i Asar wa Mafakher-i Farhangi [Society for the Appreciation of Cultural Works and Dignitaries], 2000. [Persian]

Touran Khanom [*Lady Touran*]. Directed by Rakshan Banie'temad, performance by Mojtaba Mirtahmaseb. Online Screenings, Summer 2018, www.hashure.com.

Special thanks to Persian-to-English translator Erfan Mojib.



Leila (Roya) Maktabi Fard is an Iranian children's literature researcher, critic, and children's librarian based in Munich, Germany. She started her activities in the field of children's literature in 1995, through her collaboration with the Children's Book Council of Iran (Iranian IBBY's section). She worked as an assistant professor in Kharazmai University Tehran until 2014, when she moved to Germany. As of 2017, Maktabi Fard is the Persian language specialist at the International Youth Library in Munich, and since 2018 she has been working as a children's librarian at the City Library of Munich as well. Her research focuses on children's literature and library services for children and young adults.

Manuela Bacelar and Her Groundbreaking Work in the Field of Portuguese Picturebooks

by CARINA RODRIGUES

Carina Rodrigues discusses and introduces to an international audience Manuela Bacelar and her groundbreaking work in the field of Portuguese picturebooks. Bacelar was one of the precursors of and the most emblematic voice in Portugal's picturebook segment.

Introduction

Picturebooks have been the focus of much debate aiming to clarify and define, but mostly to determine the criteria for classifying them. They are most often defined as the intersemiotic relationship established between the verbal and pictorial components that give them form and that together convey meaning, in a coordinated and complementary relationship.

While in some European countries and in the United States this genre underwent a remarkable development from the 1950s and 1960s onward, due to technical advances in the graphic arts, it must be recognized that its arrival in the Portuguese context was both late and tentative and remained "one of the scarcest market segments and/or aesthetic-literary areas in the publication of Portuguese authorship" (da Silva; my translation). Persistent research conducted abroad, particularly in the United States, England, France, and Spain, also did not have the necessary influence on the Portuguese academic and investigative panorama, and it was systematically overlooked compared to other areas of literary studies, even those dedicated to children's literature.

This is the context for this study, with the fundamental intention of presenting and bringing the work of Manuela Bacelar to a wider audience. Bacelar was one of the precursors of and surely the most emblematic voice in the picturebook publication segment in Portugal, especially concerning her work as a single author (i.e., being both the author and illustrator of a book).

Renowned researchers in children's literature theory and criticism—such as Perry Nodelman, David Lewis, Peter Hunt, Cecília Silva-Díaz, Maria Nikolajeva and Carole Scott, Lawrence Sipe (*Storytime*; Sipe and

© 2019 BY BOOKBIRD, INC.

Pantaleo), Jesús Díaz Armas ("La imagen"), Sandra Lee Beckett, Ana Margarida Ramos (*Literatura*), Sophie Van der Linden (*Lire l'album* and *Album[s]*), and Bettina Kümmerling-Meibauer (*Picturebooks* and *Routledge Companion*), among others—have systematically insisted on the need to study picturebooks as a major literature genre due to their uniqueness and complexity. Building on this, an attempt is made here to observe the evolution of the works of this creative illustrator/author over the first decade of the twenty-first century, reflecting on aspects related to narrative and visual treatment and attempting a deeper dialogic reading of the discursive interdependence between her linguistic and visual texts. This study also analyzes Bacelar's themes, some of which are forerunners of the current publishing panorama for children. Exploring such themes as difference, multiculturalism, intercultural dialogue, and LGBTQ subjects, her work calls for clear transformations and encourages reflection upon socially relevant and current topics. Although other creations of the visual and literary arts may be mentioned throughout this study, enabling a broader view of her work, I have chosen to focus on these books by Manuela Bacelar: *O dinossauro* (*The Dinosaur*; 1990); *O meu avô* (*My Grandfather*; 1990); *Bernardino* (2005); and *O Livro do Pedro (Maria dos 7 aos 8)* (*Pedro's Book [Maria from 7 to 8]*; 2008).

Exploring such themes as difference, multiculturalism, intercultural dialogue, and LGBTQ subjects, her work calls for clear transformations and encourages reflection upon socially relevant and current topics.

Manuela Bacelar's Picturebooks: A Brief Profile

Except for some references in book reviews and essays, Bacelar's work has not received much attention from literary critics and researchers. This is in spite of the fact that her unique books have been popular with young readers for nearly three decades now and have won several national and international awards.

Manuela Bacelar was born in Coimbra, Portugal, in 1943. She completed her secondary studies at Soares dos Reis School of Decorative Arts in Porto and took a course in illustration at the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague in 1970. She was, perhaps, the first trained Portuguese illustrator and the first to dedicate herself exclusively to illustration in the Portuguese context. She had numerous individual and collective exhibitions and participated regularly in illustration biennials (in Barcelona, Bratislava, and Belgrade, for example) as well as in international exhibitions (e.g., in Italy, France, Austria, Spain, Slovenia, Japan, and Singapore).

A prolific artist, she has illustrated about 150 visual texts, including collaborations with renowned authors of Portuguese children's literature, such as Agustina Bessa-Luís, António Torrado, Ilse Losa, Manuel António Pina, and Matilde Rosa Araújo, among others. Bacelar has also authored more than fifty publications in Portugal and abroad, offering a polymorphous and unequivocally remarkable work for child readers. Among other awards, in 1989 she received the Golden Apple at the Bratislava Biennial of Illustration; in 1990, the Gulbenkian Prize for Illustration, for her

illustrations in *Silka* (1989), authored by Ilse Losa; and in 1996, the Prize for Illustration from the Portuguese Ministry of Culture and IBBY for her illustration of *A Sereiazinha* The Little Mermaid (1995), authored by H. C. Andersen.

In the early '90s, at a time when the publishing world was not very receptive to publications for very young readers, this award-winning visual artist took full advantage of her potential and took the risk of writing and illustrating within an innovative segment of the Portuguese publishing world. She was revealed, in the footsteps of the seminal work of Leonor Praça and Maria Keil, as the author/illustrator mainly responsible for introducing picturebooks and establishing them as an important category of children's literature in Portugal.

Bacelar's narrative discourse results from the interaction of verbal and visual codes, and her picturebooks show cohesion and clear structural unity at all levels. She makes use of pictorial-verbal combinations that skillfully stimulate children's imagination. Appealing to the child's tendency to reflect and question, her work encourages young readers to fill in the "blank spaces" created by the verbal and visual narratives. Her works approach the world of the intended audience by re-creating themes, motives, scenarios, and characters that engross her child readers. Her work moves between reality and fantasy, with child characters, anthropomorphized animals, and other typical figures of children's imagination, who often embark on a journey—especially understood in its plural and symbolic meaning—pursuing their freedom and dreams. Her stories are constructed around specific and condensed actions but still maintain, in terms of their diegetic treatment, a colloquial and vivid discourse.

She was revealed, in the footsteps of the seminal work of Leonor Praça and Maria Keil, as the author/illustrator mainly responsible for introducing picturebooks and establishing them as an important category of children's literature in Portugal.

Bacelar's picturebooks are also characterized by genre fluidity and postmodern experimentation. This is evidenced by genre hybridism, dialogism and polyphony, as well as metafictional and subversive elements. Bacelar fearlessly disobeys the conventional canons of textual and visual representation, combining multiple discourses, voices, and linguistic registers, enabling a dialogue between different visions of the world. She often challenges and involves the reader, drawing him or her into reflective questioning.

Loaded with symbolism and poetry, her visual language is based on the use of drawings and gouache paintings, large watery spots, and multiple chromatic variations that achieve both sensory and emotional engagement. Her illustrations often appear in complex compositions, where the position, posture, and facial expression of the characters and playful use of visual detail, color, shape, and perspective, as well as light, shadow, and depth, bring about the effect of movement and dynamism.

The images are notable for their expressiveness; they extend the text with which they interact, insofar as they often reflect a more extensive

context than the one created by the textual narrative. Manuela Bacelar's illustrations allow readers to formulate and confirm hypotheses about what is verbally narrated or even encourage them to invent a new story. Her images often give form to the written text, adding a large number of descriptive details that enhance textual meanings.

Thematic Constants

"An artist who has never ceased to pursue novelty and change" (Gomes, "MB: maturidade e inovação" 54; my translation), Bacelar has always been at the forefront of emerging literary themes, some of them indeed unusual in the context of Portuguese children's literature. She creates themes that strongly relate to diversity and explicitly or implicitly addresses a wealth of multicultural experiences. Analysis of Bacelar's work reveals a constant celebration for and acceptance of difference.

O dinossauro, her first stand-alone picturebook, was published in 1990, at a time when the genre underwent an emancipation and took its first great qualitative leap in the field of Portuguese children's literature. The story follows a giant dinosaur that awakes after millions of years and sets on a journey, taking with him the people and animals who were living on him, as they thought he was a mountain. In a synergistic combination of words and images, the inhabitants of this strange village-on-a-dinosaur are taken on a trip to the most varied corners of the world and see "people, some the same, some different," and houses of all sizes, colors, and shapes; the child reader is inspired to marvel at the magnificence of ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity across the world (see figure 1).



Figure 1.

Transported to the heart of five continents, the reader is led to discover characters differentiated by skin color, physiognomy, and clothing (as well as other imaginary figures, such as Santa Claus) and monuments, dwellings, and other icons, representing the great variety of places and people in the world and activating the young reader's curiosity for the traditions, customs, and life experiences of others.

Besides simply informing the reader of the coexistence of different nations and cultures, *O dinossauro* may well contribute to an awareness of the importance of and need for socialization among them, emphasizing the richness and benefits of intercultural dialogue. As José Antonio Gomes suggests, readers confronted with the phenomenon of interculturalism "will be more open to respect the art and culture of other peoples, thus devaluing exacerbated feelings of cultural nationalism" (Gomes, "Literatura" 11; my translation). Examples of other representations illustrated by Bacelar include a large number of social concerns and new realities: the transformation of contemporary lifestyles, particularly issues of new

family models and parenting and subsequent allusions to divorce, adoption, or single-parent families.

O meu Avô focuses on the emotional and close relationship between a grandfather and his grandson. In the child's narrative voice, this picturebook captures both the routine and the most striking (and humorous) exploits of this special person in the boy's life. This very tall grandfather, who picks up his grandson from school and lunches and plays with him, is also a pastry cook, and despite being very annoyed when he "forgets to go to the kitchen and the pots of jam bubble over," he can also become "very small" and become a true accomplice in mischief, games, and parties (see figure 2). In *Introducción a la literatura infantil y juvenile* (*Introduction to Literature for Children and Youth*; 2008), Teresa Colomer alerts us to the ever more present figures of grandparents—mostly grandmothers—as well as to their more "enterprising" nature in contemporary children's narratives, showing increased contact with their grandchildren and joining in with them in their most eccentric and imaginative projects.

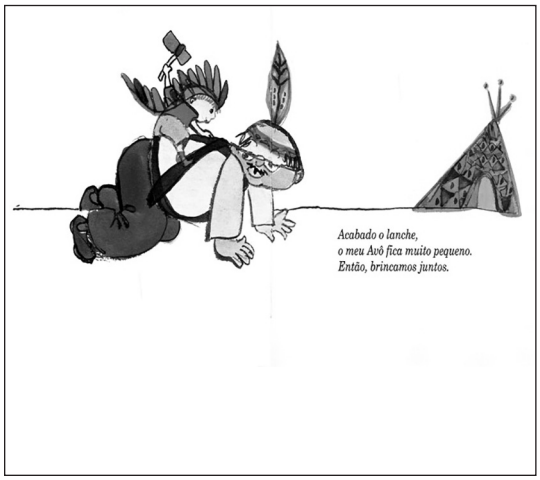


Figure 2.

In this original picturebook, however, the elderly protagonist shows a permeable nature, assuming unconventional roles and tasks, contributing to the deconstruction of gender stereotypes and confirming the heterodoxy of Bacelar's work.

Another emblematic case is the picturebook *Bernardino*, whose main theme lies precisely in heralding the difference and individuality of the little lion that gives the book its name. It is a simple, open-ended narrative, in which all the animals have a strong element of human expressiveness, bringing it in line with the fable or animal tale. The little hero has "a lion's body" but "the soul of an artist" (Ramos and da Silva 5; my translation). He is distinct from his father, who is "very big and very strong." Bernardino acts as a counterpoint to the powerful figure of his father, as he is a vegetarian instead of a carnivore, and a true admirer of art and nature (see figure 3).

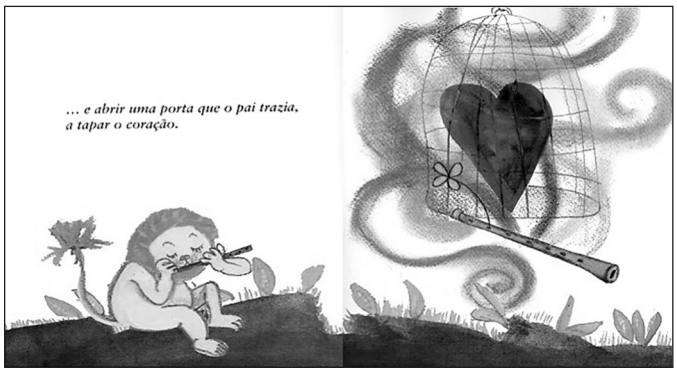


Figure 3.

Bernardino demystifies father-son relationships and male stereotypes. And by presenting a lion that prefers peace and tolerance to power and superiority, this picturebook joins a progressive trend for antiauthoritarian literature. It is a true celebration of difference, providing different levels of interpretation and demanding decisive action against intolerance and for the right to individual freedom and pleasure—the right to *be*.

Also focusing on the theme of family, *O livro do Pedro* was the last book

created by Bacelar and the one that caused the most controversy. At the time of its publication, it dealt—with care and subtlety—with an innovative theme in Portuguese children's literature: same-sex parenting. The book was the subject of much analysis due to its quality and originality. The narrator is Maria, a young pregnant woman who tells her daughter, "for the 73rd time," the story of a happy period in her childhood, when she lived with her two dads, Pedro and Paulo. The novelty of the work lies in the representation of an unconventional type of family. However, the images that compose the brief autobiographical narrative of Maria—photos "captured by one of her parents during a year of her life and transformed into a personal album that chronicles a clearly luminous time" (Ramos 308; my translation)—seem to extol the role of this family nucleus in the healthy upbringing of the girl, with perfect formative, emotional, and affective balance. The cover illustration of the cover of the book, a simple drawing of a red heart, is symbolic of the central theme. In fact, as Ana Margarida Ramos points out,

> surrounded by some expectation due to the novelty of the subject in question, the publication of this book seems to be underpinned by the conviction that there are no forbidden themes for children's literature, although the issue of homosexuality is broached with special subtlety, passing almost unnoticed, as the central question is the unconditional defence of affection. (Ramos, "Saindo do armário" 308; my translation)

Also, the insistence on the act of recounting—and the attention to the parallelism on which the opening and closing of that narrative is based—expresses in itself the avid desire of the protagonist to perpetuate and ritualize, with her own children, the bonds and memories of her childhood and her special family (see figure 4).

While proposing a certain subversion, the intent of this work is essentially to present a story of "a happy family, where what is important is not having, but being" (Câncio; my translation). Themes of (in)tolerance, difference, and, above all, affection intersect.



Figure 4.

Western Cultural Tradition: Resources and Symbolism

Bacelar's artistic and literary work explores different schools and aesthetic trends. In this manner, through contact with an amalgam of techniques, languages, and representations, it awakens in its young readers/viewers the ability to perceive the work from a sensitive and critical point of view. Her work does not lack strong analogies (parodistic and subversive) with symbolic-religious and irreverent imagery, referring the reader to different types of symbols, images, and myths. One identifies, for instance, numerous echoes of religious/pagan mythology, whether generally in terms of thematic treatment, iconographic appropriation, or characterization; these echoes communicate both her cultural influences and some of her key concerns about current moral or religious ideologies in a disguised, ironic tone.

The naming of her characters, for example, often attests to an openness to influences of a religious/biblical nature. Even if in some cases these kinds of allusions do not prove so obvious or conclusive (as in *Bernardino*), in others they are almost systematic, looming either in a (semi)declared way by the reiteration of several archetypal elements of the sacred figures referred to, or by the inclusion of other small details that provide clues to the young reader or the adult mediator. The fact that the names of the two greatest heroes in the history of Christianity, Peter and Paul, the principal founders of the church (Réau), are given to the two gay characters in *O livro do Pedro*, embodying in this story the founders of a loving family, does not seem to arise from a fortuitous choice.



Figure 5.

The representation of the three characters around a wall is, by itself, enlightening (see figure 5). Regarding the symbolic ambivalence of the wall—which, along with other spatial symbols, such as the window, for example, has maintained an assiduous presence in various examples of artistic expression—Jesús Díaz Armas distinguishes, among other variants, on the one hand, imprisonment and prison, real or metaphorical, and on the other, the defensive wall, a refuge against the aggressions of the outside, the wall as a page or canvas, as a reason for meditation, or even as an obstacle that can be overcome, enhancing heroism or the human ingenuity.

Visually, moving from allusions to primitive paintings to the reworking/adaptation of modern artworks (such as Chagall, Klimt, and Van Gogh), passing through classical art and references to Greco-Roman mythology (with allusions to the bacchanalia of Bacchus), to painting and medieval architecture (with references, for example, to Gothic art or representations of carnival), to various tributes to Renaissance paintings (by Da Vinci or Botticelli), to Baroque mannerisms (including Velázquez), Bacelar's work takes the reader on an extraordinary journey through the history of art (see figure 6).

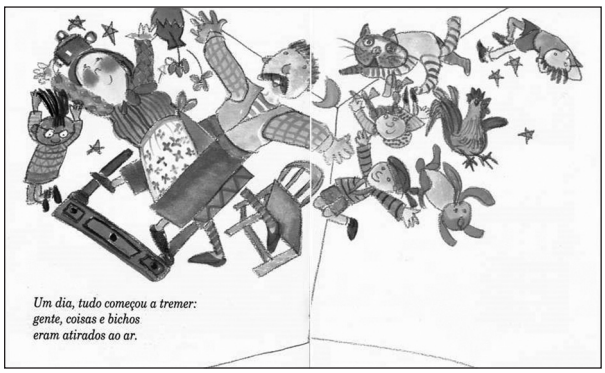


Figure 6.

Often aided by humor and parody—even briefly touching on nonsense—this oeuvre not only aims to bring the reader closer to art, it also seems to want to turn to the adult readers and, with an encouraging wink, have them participate in a complicit game of visual/intertextual enigmas.

Conclusion

Rather than telling a story, Bacelar's picturebooks set up a sort of game with the reader, where both text and illustrations mutually complete each other and where all elements combine and act in the construction of meaning, allowing room for ambiguity by encouraging anticipation and prediction in more attentive and curious readers. Bacelar strives to challenge both her younger and older readers. She reworks and renews ancestral

works through her subversion and the consequent recourse to reinterpretative processes such as humor, parody, satire, and irony, demonstrating aesthetic and intertextual virtuosity. Manuela Bacelar's work brings the reader closer to names and works of the Western cultural tradition and offers allegorical visions of a broad set of symbols, images, and myths.

Works Cited

Children's Books

Bacelar, Manuela. *Bernardino*. Edições Afrontamento, 2005.
---. *O dinossauro*. Edições Afrontamento, 1990.
---. *O livro do Pedro*. Edições Afrontamento, 2008.
---. *O meu avô*. Edições Afrontamento, 1990.
---. *Sebastião*. Edições Afrontamento, 2004.
---. *Tobias, os sete anões e etc.* Porto Editora, 1990.

Secondary Sources

Beckett, Sandra Lee. *Crossover Picturebooks: A Genre for All Ages*. Routledge, 2013.
Câncio, Fernanda. "Ilustrar todos os afectos." *Diário de notícias*, 2008, dn.sapo.pt/2008/03/01/dngente/ilustrar_todos_afectos.html.
Colomer, Teresa. *Introducción a la literatura infantil y juvenil*. Sintesis Educación, 2008.
da Silva, Sara Reis. "O caso da editora Bruaá—Caminhos e atalhos da edição para a infância em Portugal." *Primeiro de Janeiro*, 2008, www.bruaa.pt/o-caso-da-editora-bruaa-caminhos-e-atalhos-da-edicao-para-a-infancia-em-portugal/.
Díaz Armas, Jesús. "La imagen en pugna con la palabra." *Saber (e) educar*, vol. 13, 2008, pp. 43-57.
Gomes, José António. "Literatura para a infância e a juventude entre culturas", Gulbenkian–Casa da Leitura, 2008, http://195.23.38.178/casadaleitura/portalbeta/bo/abz_indices/001421_lit.pdf.
---. "MB: maturidade e inovação." *Malasartes [Cadernos de Literatura para a Infância e a Juventude]*, vol. 2, no. 17, 2009, 53-55.
Hunt, Peter. *Understanding Children's Literature*. Routledge, 2005.
Kümmerling-Meibauer, Bettina, editor. *Picturebooks: Representation and Narration*. Routledge, 2014.
---. *The Routledge Companion to Picturebooks*. Routledge, 2017.
Lewis, David. *Reading Contemporary Picturebooks: Picturing Text*. Routledge-Farmer, 2001.
Nikolajeva, Maria, and Carole Scott. *How Picturebooks Work*. Routledge, 2006.
Nodelman, Perry. *Words about Pictures: The Narrative Art of Children's Picture Books*. U of Georgia P, 1990.
Ramos, Ana Margarida. *Literatura para a infância e ilustração—Leituras em diálogo*. Tropelias & companhia, 2010.
---. "Saindo do armário—Literatura para a infância e a reescrita da homossexualidade." *Forma breve—Revista de literatura*, vol. 7, 2009, pp. 295-314.
Ramos, Ana Margarida, and Sara Reis da Silva. "Aqui há gato!

Representaçõesfelinasnaliteraturaparaainfânciaeajuventude."*Gulbenkian—Casa da Leitura*, 2008, 195.23.38.178/casadaleitura/portalbeta/bo/abz_indices/001172_AH.pdf.

Réau, Louis. *Iconografía del arte cristiano. Iconografía de los santos. De la P a la Z—Repertorios*, *II(5)*. Ediciones de del Serbal, 1998.

Silva-Díaz, Cecília. "Libros que enseñan a leer: Álbumes metaficcionales y conocimiento literario." PhD thesis, University of Barcelona, 2005.

Sipe, Lawrence. *Storytime: Young Children's Literary Understanding in the Classroom*. Teachers College Press, 2007.

Sipe, Lawrence, and Sylvia Pantaleo. *Postmodern Picturebooks: Play, Parody, and Self-Referentiality*. Routledge, 2008.

Van der Linden, Sophie. *Album[s]*. Éditions De Facto/Actes Sud, 2013.

---. *Lire l'album*. L'atelier du poisson soluble, 2007.

Acknowledgments

The author would like to acknowledge Dave Tucker for the revision of the text and Afrontamento Publishers for permission to use illustrations from Manuela Bacelar's books. She is also thankful for the financial support provided by Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, through doctoral scholarship SFRH/BD/44145/2008.



Carina Rodrigues studied childhood education at the Escola Superior de Educação de Coimbra and completed a master's degree in educational sciences at the University of Aveiro. In 2013, she completed her PhD dissertation on Manuela Bacelar's work at the University of Aveiro, under the scientific guidance of Dr. Ana Margarida Ramos and the financial support of FCT—Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia (SFRH/BD/44145/2008). Her work has been divided between teaching, mostly in preschool education, and research. She has made several presentations at high-level international events and has published various papers on children's literature in international edited volumes and peer-reviewed journals.

Let's Tell a Tale: Storytelling Events in English L2

by ELISA BERTOLDI

In Italy, cultural organizations and associations promote children's literature and the pleasure of reading through storytelling initiatives. These initiatives support reading from very early childhood to adolescence, starting from parental storytelling and gradually proceeding to autonomous engagements with books. The initiatives are organized and take place in libraries, theaters, cultural centers, and schools where volunteer narrators and librarians run open-access storytelling events based on books for children or adolescents (*Nati per Leggere*, *Crescere Leggendo*, *Youngster*). To cater to the many different languages used in Italy and to promote inclusion through activities and initiatives that are relevant at the intercultural level for children, local libraries in Italy also organize storytelling events in languages other than Italian.

For many years, the collaboration between the University of Udine and the Municipal Library "Vincenzo Joppi" in Udine (Northeast Italy) has given rise to initiatives that promote plurilingualism through children's literature.

For many years, the collaboration between the University of Udine and the Municipal Library "Vincenzo Joppi" in Udine (Northeast Italy) has given rise to initiatives that promote plurilingualism through children's literature. A few years ago, a lecturer of the University of Udine, Maria Bortoluzzi, and the librarians of the main municipal library decided to offer some storytelling events in English as a second language (from now on *English L2*) in the main library of the town. For the children and the narrators, English is a foreign language. The main aim was to promote the acquisition of English L2 through narrative and informal modalities in libraries as significant and familiar contexts for children. Thanks to the local librarians, teachers, and educators, a series of storytelling meetings called "Let's Tell a Tale" was organized. The events in English L2 have been taking place in the town libraries and focus on children from four to eight years old. The volunteer narrators have been offering to little boys and girls the opportunity to listen to stories in English inspired by books for children. The initiative promotes English acquisition not only as a second language but also as a multicultural means to offer a wider perspective on children's literature in languages different from the native languages. The events have been taking place in recent years at the children's section

© 2019 BY BOOKBIRD, INC.

of the Municipal Library of Udine, and they are based mainly on picture-books of stories in English.

In June 2018, regional funding resulted in the initiative "Let's Tell a Tale" being transformed into a research project of the Udine University entitled "Storytelling in English L2 for Young Learners and Adolescents in Informal Contexts of Acquisition: Innovative and Inclusive Approaches for Local Library Networks." The project (directed by Maria Bortoluzzi, Udine University) is organized in collaboration with the librarians of the Children's Section of the Municipal Library of Udine, led by Tiziana Danna. I (Elisa Bertoldi) am involved in the project as a research assistant. My role is to identify best practices and effective actions to support students from nursery, primary, and middle school in their approach to English L2 through narration used informally in extra-school contexts such as libraries.





The initiative "Let's Tell a Tale" has been extended to four district libraries of the Udine area. The project is also used to conduct qualitative research about the use of children's literature in informal contexts to approach English L2 in an effective, emotionally positive, and motivating way. This gave me the opportunity to organize and supervise sixteen storytelling events from October 2018 to May 2019. The local libraries that have been chosen to host "Let's Tell a Tale" 2018-2019 share some common characteristics: even though they are quite small in terms of space, they have a large catchment area, and they are not yet equipped with a multilingual section for children.

The decision to host these events in the district libraries was also aimed to reach a wider number of parents and caregivers in order to disseminate the importance of giving children the opportunity of an early approach to a second language through literature. Recent scientific research in the field of second language acquisition has demonstrated the extraordinary advantages of acquiring and learning languages different from the native tongue especially, but not exclusively, at a young age. Being able to use a second language offers remarkable advantages at neurological, cognitive, and sociolinguistic levels through adaption to communicative contexts, acquisition of additional metalinguistic competences, and flexibility in adopting intercultural attitudes and practices. From very early childhood, we start developing the ability to listen to stories and understand them in our native language or in a second language. Listening to a story fosters the development of verbal and communicative competencies and social and intercultural skills. Storytelling represents a fundamental strategy in second language teaching as it stimulates creativity, facilitates comprehension, and raises awareness of the complexity and variety of communicative contexts.

The Narrators of "Let's Tell a Tale" 2018-2019 Edition

For the storytelling events of "Let's Tell a Tale," the volunteer narrators are the students of the teacher education section of the University of Udine. These students help little girls and boys discover English through narration, picturebooks, and silent books. Each event lasts one hour and the storytelling session is followed by workshops in which children can create crafts and do activities connected to the topics and characters of the storytelling event. The main objective of "Let's Tell a Tale" is creating contexts for communication and stimulating creativity, imagination, and motivation to use English as a second language. Narrators use children's picturebooks as frames for promoting inclusive communicative modalities and cognitive flexibility in language acquisition.



The aspects connected to narration deserve great attention: the appropriate choice of children's books, techniques and strategies for storytelling, good practices for interaction, and group dynamics management during storytelling events are fundamental. To plan their events and be effective, volunteer narrators have the opportunity to participate in training workshops on children's literature and storytelling workshops at the university. By taking part in the workshops, students can expand their knowledge in the field of children's literature and improve their competences as storytellers.

Selected Books for Storytelling Sessions



The first step in the organization of "Let's Tell a Tale" 2018-2019 edition was selecting books for each storytelling event. In order to give continuity to the whole initiative, the best solution was to choose a theme to select books linked by a common topic. This year's edition focuses on the theme of nature and animals, allowing children to approach a complex, current, and extremely relevant issue such as the relation between humans and the environment.

In order to choose stories suitable to the very young age of the audience (from four to eight years old), all the sixteen books selected are picturebooks; some of them are wordless books, which allows children to make meaning from illustrations even if they are pre-readers in English L2. By listening to stories like *Tree, Seasons Come, Seasons Go*, children can learn to more attentively observe the changes in the environment around them. Narrators show children how inspiring it could be to look at a clear sky through the pages of *How to Catch a Star* and *Little Cloud* and how amazing it could be to live an adventure in natural environments with *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* or *Flashlight*. Not less important is that children can feel how deep and touching the relationship with animals and nature can be through the illustrations of wordless books such as *Wave* and *Flora and the Penguin*. The initiative "Let's Tell a Tale" offers children a sheltered environment in which they can explore complex aspects of life. English as a second language offers boys and girls the opportunity to face these themes from a new point of view and understand their global relevance.

Children's Feedback

The storytelling events of "Let's Tell a Tale" are planned in uncertainties: narrators do not know how many children will participate each time, how old they will be, or whether they have special educational needs, so flexibility is a fundamental requirement in planning both the storytelling session and the follow-up workshops. The initiative, up till now, involved approximately nine or ten children for each session, which is a suitable number considering the size of the libraries. To understand if the event has been effective, I ask children for feedback at the end of each session. On a magnetic whiteboard, they place happy-face magnets or sad-face magnets over three drawings that represent the narrator, the book, and the workshop. Children's feedback has so far been mostly positive. A most interesting aspect of the events concerns the unexpected participants. It happens frequently that children come to the libraries with their families and their little brothers or sisters. Two-year-old children and even a nine-month-old baby took part in the events, and surprisingly, they listened to the stories very attentively, observing the images of the books and paying attention to the narrators. The official information of the library gives four to eight as the age range of participants.


Università di Udine – DILL Biblioteca "V.Joppi" – Sezione Ragazzi

Progetto Let's Tell a Tale: incontri di narrazione in lingua inglese L2 in biblioteca per bambini e bambine

Assegnista di ricerca: Dott.ssa Elisa Bertoldi Responsabile: Prof.ssa Maria Bortoluzzi

Sabato 22 dicembre alle 10,00
vi aspettiamo alla biblioteca di Cussignacco
per pattinare con Flora e il suo amico pinguino!

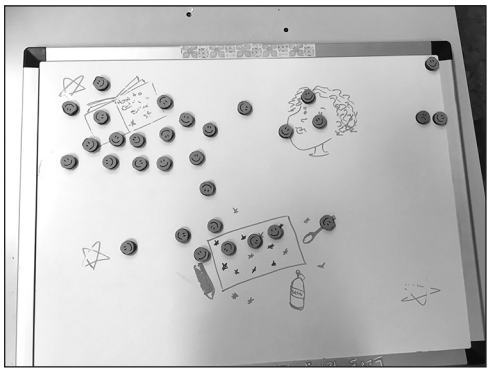
Are you ready for skating?
Vieni con noi fino al lontano Polo Sud, dove Flora e il suo amico pinguino si stanno esibendo in un magnifico duetto.
Con le sole immagini, Molly Idle ci porta in un paesaggio innevato in perfetto stile natalizio con due simpatici amici.
Giorgia Nardella ci racconterà in **inglese** questa dolce e divertente avventura.
Cosa combinerà questa volta Flora, dopo le vicende di *Flora and the Flamingo*?
Seguirà il laboratorio creativo *Let it snow* per ricreare una delle pagine della storia decorandola con tanti fiocchi di neve.

Altre letture proposte: *The Snowman* di Raymond Briggs, *Fox's Garden* di Princesse Camcam, *The Snow Rabbit* di Camille Garoche, *Indovina che cosa succede. Una passeggiata invisibile* di Gerda Muller, *Follow the Polar Bear* di Sonia W. Blaack.

L'iniziativa rientra nel lavoro di ricerca finanziato dalla Regione Friuli Venezia Giulia Narrazione in lingua inglese L2 per bambini e adolescenti in contesti informali di acquisizione: approcci innovativi ed inclusivi per le reti di biblioteche del territorio (NIL2) - 01/06/2018 – 31/05/2019

Open-Access Online Resources

Volunteer narrators, but also teachers, librarians, and educators, will be able to use guidelines and resources produced and developed during the storytelling events in the libraries through the storytelling thematic group in the open-access professional community for teaching and learning English, Yell & Tell. The community is part of the platform LearnWeb, developed by the L3S Research Center of the Leibniz University in Hannover; it is a virtual environment for research and collaboration that allows sharing and discussing resources and practices for language teaching and learning. The online community offers resources, bibliographical references, tips, ideas, downloadable materials, and examples of the use of children's literature for storytelling events in informal L2 contexts for nonexpert narrators. It also allows access to collect and share digital materials and resources based on children's literature (videos, audio files, worksheets, pictures, posters, flashcards) created for and during the events in the libraries. All the materials and activities developed during the initiative "Let's Tell a Tale" are available on the platform in the storytelling thematic group and can be used as open-access materials. To access the Yell & Tell community and explore the resources, we invite storytellers, teachers, librarians, educators, and parents to follow the instructions available in the Yell Blog (yell.uniud.it) and join the *Storytelling Group*.



Works Cited

Children's Books

Boyd, Lizy. *Flashlight*. Chronicle Books, 2014.
Carle, Erik. *Little Cloud.* Penguin, 2001.
Idle, Molly. *Flora and the Penguin*. Chronicle Books, 2014.
Jeffers, Oliver. *How to Catch a Star.* Harper UK, 2010.
Lee, Suzy. *Wave.* Chronicle Books, 2008.
Rosen, Michael, and Helen Oxenbury. *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*. Walker Books UK, 1989.
Teckentrup, Britta. *Tree, Seasons Come, Season Go.* Little Tiger Kids, 2015.

Secondary Sources

Blezza, Picherle S. *Formare Lettori, promuovere la lettura. Riflessioni e itinerari narrativi tra territorio e scuola*. FrancoAngeli Editore, 2013.
Born to Read. "Born to Read: Let's Read. They Grow Inside." *Nati per Leggere*, www.natiperleggere.it.
Brewster, J., and G. Ellis. *The Primary English Teacher's Guide*. Penguin English, 2002.
Bruner, J. S. *Acts of Meaning*. Harvard UP, 1990.
---. *Actual Minds, Possible Worlds*. Harvard UP, 1986.
---. *The Culture of Education*. Harvard UP, 1996.
---. *Making Stories: Law, Literature, Life.* Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2002.
Fabbro, F. *Neuropedagogia delle lingue.* Astrolabio Ubaldini, 2004.
Grosjean, F. 2010. *Bilingual—Life and Reality.* Harvard UP, 2010.
LearnWeb. "Welcome to LearnWeb." learnweb.l3s.uni-hannover.de/lw/.
Marini, A. *Manuale di neurolinguistica.* Carocci, 2008.
Murphy, V. A., and M. Evangelou, editors. *Early Childhood Education in English for Speakers of Other Languages*. The British Council, 2016.
Pavlenko, A. *The Bilingual Mind and What It Tells Us about Language Thought*. Cambridge UP, 2014.
Wright, A. *Storytelling with Children.* Oxford UP, 1995.
YELL/TELL. "Communities and Resources." *Yell*, yell.uniud.it/?page_id=157.

Further Online Resources

Biblioteca Civica "Vincenzo Joppi" di Udine / Sezione Ragazzi. www.sbhu.it/udine-sezione-ragazzi/#ora-delle-storie-per-bimbi-4-8-anni.
Bilingualism Matters. "About Us." www.bilingualism-matters.ppls.ed.ac.uk.
Crescere Leggendo. crescereleggendo.it.
YELL blog. yell.uniud.it
"Youngster." *Damatrà: Ricerca creativa per l'infanzia*, www.damatra.com/servizi.php?sezione=2&s_sezione=37&pagina=170&lingua=1.



Elisa Bertoldi is a research assistant in the Department of Languages, Literatures, Communication, Education and Society at the University of Udine (Italy). She is a qualified primary school teacher of English L2 and has worked full time in Italian primary schools for eleven years. She is a teacher educator (pre- and in-service courses) and a teaching resource developer. She has published articles on language teaching technologies and her recent research focus is on storytelling for English L2 acquisition in informal contexts as well as on eco-narratives for language education.

The Birth of the Little Critic

by FATEMEH FARSHCHI, FATEMEH JAFARI, AND SEYEDEH MAHSA MAHDAVIAN

We were three Persian literature undergraduates in Iran who chose to pursue a postgraduate program in children's and adolescent literature because of our desire to gain expertise in this area of our interest. By the end of the first year of our program, we realized the need to address the existing limitations in this field, and our goal became that of restoring children's literature to its rightful audience—the children. The idea of launching the "Little Critic" educational platform in social networks evolved, and on June 7, 2018, the idea was put into action with the following motto: "Take the Children's World Seriously."

Why Little Critic?

At the beginning, the main goals of Little Critic were introducing top children's and adolescent books, communicating with children's literature activists, encouraging children and adolescents to read books, and, most importantly, providing an appropriate space for children to analyze and review books, relying on the theoretical notion of "children as critics." Little Critic's organizing members read books available in the global book market, including poetry and storybooks, for all age groups from young children to adolescents, and introduce the ones they believe are the best to share with children. In Iran, various organizations, institutions, and approved individuals are doing the same thing. However, what distinguishes Little Critic from the others is paying special attention to its audiences, applying children's and adolescents' ideas to their own books, and publishing those ideas. Accordingly, each week we introduce a suitable book for a particular age group and ask the audience to read the book and comment on it. Throughout the week, we receive a number of book review videos from children and share some of them after obtaining parental permission. The following week, we share all of the comments on the book. Finally, we post our own ideas and reviews on the book for parents to learn more about effective children's books and the criteria for choosing a good book for their children.

Engaging in children's literature in this way can help develop children's critical and evaluative attitudes as well as improve their self-confidence by inviting them to critique whatever they have been offered to read in informal venues.

Engaging in children's literature in this way can help develop children's critical and evaluative attitudes as well as improve their self-confidence by inviting them to critique whatever they have been offered to read in

© 2019 BY BOOKBIRD, INC.

informal venues. This will encourage them to develop a critical perspective as they grow into adulthood. As children are offered the stage to critique, they will have a deeper and more critical reading of the text as they take ownership of the texts. Children will potentially read wholeheartedly and confidently should they know that their ideas will be heard and their critiques read and contemplated. They will use their creativity while critiquing a text and simultaneously will raise both positive and negative issues; they may even suggest to delete parts and scenes they find unsavory.

As authors, poets, and other creators of children's books acknowledge these intellectual ideas and critical readings by children, they ultimately might be influenced to create richer and more refined works of literature that would fit the intellectual demand of their young audiences. This is the case with Farhad Hasanzadeh and Tahereh Eybod, who accompanied Little Critic projects from the beginning of their professional careers. They both noted the comments and critiques they received from their audience and as a result, crafted more mature texts based on the children's responses. Moreover, this feedback will benefit not only authors and literary professionals but also researchers and parents. For instance, it is important to know what interests children. What are their likes and dislikes? What are the concepts that attract them, and what repels them? How do they reveal their growing values and understandings? It is essential for almost everyone involved with children to be aware of children's tastes, interests, and opinions.

What Has Been Learned So Far

What we have learned so far from the Little Critic project is significant as we learn about children's engagements with books when given a voice and a venue to share their responses. Below are some of our key insights:

- What created a concern or made children uncomfortable during reading a story was shared among almost all of them.
- Dark scenes and pages in comics and photo novels (as in a large wave and storm in *The Lost Penguin* by Oliver Jeffers) made children anxious or nervous, creating unconscious fears; they unanimously either wanted those to be removed from within the narrative or required major revisions.
- Getting to know or befriending a pet or an animal, especially ones unknown or less known, was a unanimously exciting experience for children.
- Children are attentive to every detail of which adults might remain ignorant.
- Although we have introduced a wide spectrum of stories from around the world, we find children still identify with the characters except in rare cases. For instance, in stories in which a character had to act alone, without his or her parents, children were baffled by this fact, and the following question was raised as a result: "Where are his or her parents, then?" This showed

how closely children were identifying with those characters, making the process of identification problematic for Iranian children, due in large part to their cultural upbringing. This, nevertheless, is also a general concern among contemporary Iranian narratives.

- Even though "supermarket books" are a contemporary cultural phenomenon of our times, when we called to our Little Critics to introduce their favorite book, they turned to ones that are known for their quality and integrity, either translations or original narratives.
- In presenting their criticism, almost all children tend to mimic their parents or their grown-up friends, especially when their criticism is to be viewed openly; this can influence their tone and discourse. Luckily, the main objective of Little Critic was to provide children with space so that they would distance their responses to reading from their parents' points of view; at the Little Critic Instagram page, we have witnessed this particular form of growth as time passes—students sharing their voices and perspectives in feedback that reflects a more personal and rather frank tone.

Little Critic: A Summary

The first phase had the following objectives: introduce several titles in children's and teenagers' books, publish children's reviews on books, hold Instagram tournaments for occasions such as World Children's and Youth Day, and award prizes to selected individuals.

Several months after setting up the first phase, Little Critic entered the second phase of its work and made the first actual contact with the audience in the form of a five-session workshop at a special recording studio to educate children on correct reading techniques. At the workshop, the main participants were children aged eight to eleven, who were taught in a friendly atmosphere the basics of storytelling by the staff of Little Critic. They then practiced creating a short story consisting of several characters (each of whom was played by one of the participants) and used the storytelling strategies they had learned. Their voices were recorded, resulting in the production of an audiobook by the end of each session.

It should be noted that while Iranian writers and translators have sincerely worked to translate or craft the best children's books, accessing these literary resources for children in all parts of the country is unfortunately very difficult. Moreover, the cost of preparing these books is an undeniable issue for many. To solve this problem, we opted for audiobooks, which are more accessible and are available at a much lower cost. Additionally, listening to stories in their own voices helps children develop their identity.

Most of the books that were produced in the form of audiobooks at our first workshop were poetry for youngsters and children, namely, short poems; moreover, they enabled the children who attended the workshop to role-play with practice. Examples of books that were prepared and

recorded at the workshop are *Dinosaur, Hey Dinosaur* by Niloofar Bahari and *Public Transportation*.

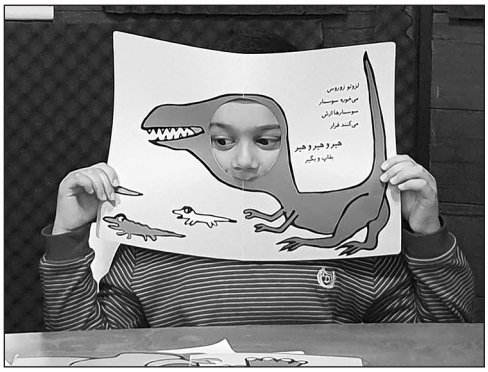
In the workshop, communicating with kids taught us a great deal about our children. The children's view of the text of the book and the pictures, their comments on how to understand each other's readings, their questions about the text of the story, their opinions about the characters in the story, and sometimes their identification with characters around them were among our most notable insights while working with them.



Four months after launching the Little Critic page on Instagram and introducing it to an acceptable range of audiences during the aforementioned period, Little Critic could finally make relevant connections with some publications active in the field of children's literature. The first connection was formed with the representative of the Iranian Technical Publishing House, a children and adolescent group. A variety of books were suggested to Little Critic by this publisher. After the group reviewed the suggested books, the best ones were selected and introduced to the followers on our Instagram page.

Our Long-Term Objectives

Workshops will be held shortly by Little Critic, first in group meetings and book readings (one session with the author and one private session with just children). The main objective is to allow children to listen to one another's comments and readings at a meeting, improving their patience and listening abilities before they voice their ideas, and eventually forming a critical perspective by listening to and questioning each other.



In the next step, Little Critic aims to organize a workshop to teach children techniques that help them review and share their critiques properly. In teaching children the basics of criticism, the main objective of Little Critic is to broaden their present horizons for reading and reviewing books confidently, rather than creating any specific and planned mental pattern in children. They will consider what types of issues and happenings might be questioned, whose perspective is being shared in a book, how one frames a concern in a way that is not threatening to others, or if a story is developed in a realistic way. If the spirit of critique, analysis, evaluation, and expert examination of works written exclusively for children is developed over time, what will eventually be achieved is a global scale of experts, who are able to critique and analyze the varied texts to which they are exposed as they grow into adulthood. Finally, an advanced workshop for creating audiobooks will take place. This workshop will continue the activities of the group, allowing for incoming young people to be heard while building on and honoring both past and present participants.



What Little Critic believed in from the beginning was expanding the area of children's literature to a global scale. As a critic, the child does not rely on biased criticism and rushed judgments. This can bring children together in a world beyond borders, along with friends of different cultures, religions, and thoughts. Little Critic as a brand will be able to launch the first national and international festival with the "child as critic" approach. To accomplish this, we need the support of activists in this area and in different parts of the world who see and respect children as they actually are. A wide variety of individuals with different spectrums of academic experience and thought have supported the formation of Little Critic by way of photographing pages, running workshops, starting a think tank for workshops, and designing a logo. The main past and present members of the group are three students from Shahid Beheshti University: Fatemeh Farshchi, Fatemeh Jafari, and Seyedeh Mahsa Mahdavian.



Fatemeh Farshchi is a graduate student in children and adolescent's literature at the Shahid Beheshti University in Tehran and a mother of a three-year-old son.



Fatemeh Jafari is a graduate student in children and adolescent's literature at the Shahid Beheshti University in Tehran, with a background in illustration.



Seyedeh Mahsa Mahdavian is a high school teacher and a graduate student in children's and adolescents' literature at the Shahid Beheshti University in Tehran.

Labyrinths, Threads, Aeolus's Bag, and Other Connected Vessels:

An Interview with Maria Papayanni

by ANGELA YANNICOPOULOU



Maria Papayanni is one of the most acclaimed contemporary children's authors in Greece. Maria was born in Larisa in 1964. She studied Greek language and literature in Thessaloniki and worked as a journalist in radio and television, as well as for newspapers and magazines. Since the publication of her first book in 2001, Maria Papayanni has published thirty books for children and youth and a novel for adults. Her picturebook *I Want to Win!* was illustrated by Eve Tharlet and published in various languages by Minedition and in Greek by Patakis Publishers. She also writes librettos and theater plays. Maria Papayanni has won several awards, including the Greek IBBY and the Diavazo journal awards for her book *As If By Magic* (*Os dia Magias*) and the Diavazo journal and National Young Adult and Youth Book awards for her book *The Lonesome Tree* (*To Dentro to Monacho*). She also won the Greek IBBY award for her book *Shoes with Wings* (*Papoutsia me Ftera*). Maria Papayanni is Greece's nominee for the 2020 Hans Christian Andersen Award and her work has been included in the *White Ravens* catalog.

Maria, how do you start writing a book? What inspires you to write?

It usually starts with a "why." From a young age, I would always turn to stories—what we call in Greek the "red thread" of storytelling—to find my way out of the labyrinth, out of the big or small challenges of life. By making up stories, I would try to fill in the gaps or imagine the things I could not understand. This is how I persevered through difficult situations, by building parallel worlds. So, I always leave the door of the imagination open, and when a "why" begins to grow, I set course for the place where everything is possible.

I would always turn to stories—what we call in Greek the "red thread" of storytelling—to find my way out of the labyrinth, out of the big or small challenges of life.

© 2019 BY BOOKBIRD, INC.

Are there any autobiographical elements in your work? Do you write about what you have experienced, what you would like to experience, or about things that only exist in your imagination?

I write about the invisible hump that I carry on my back.

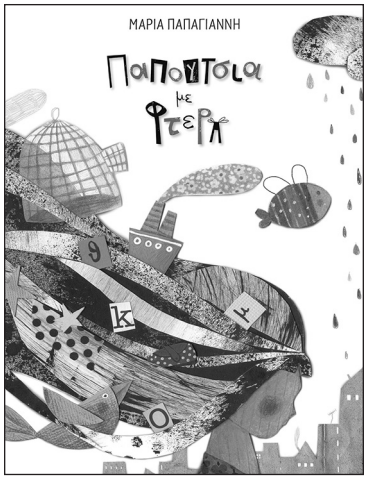
I write about the invisible hump that I carry on my back. I write about everything I have lived through and also about things that I have not experienced but somehow reside inside me. I draw from wells of things like details and little stories that I have passed by or heard or read about. Sometimes, I cannot even determine how they came to me. Life is the place you start from, but you are always trying to shed light to life's invisible, secret, most precious parts.

Life is the place you start from, but you are always trying to shed light to life's invisible, secret, most precious parts.

You mostly write for children, but you have also authored stories for older audiences. You write novels as well as shorter stories. And you have published stories that include images as well as stories that are not illustrated. How do you determine the genre you want to work with each time?

I never think that I have to write about a specific issue that is of interest to a specific age group. I follow the clues, connect the dots, and try to decode mental images. I strive to find the best way to tell the story. Now, why do I usually write for children? Perhaps it's because I am still haunted by the same questions, or because I find children's way of thinking absolutely poetic, or because, like them, I also still believe in happily-ever-afters. When I write for children, I am not thinking that I write for a naïve audience; I am rather thinking that I write for people who have stocks of courage and justness, people who consider it their obligation to find the thread that will help them break out of the labyrinth. And this moves me deeply.

When I write for children, I am not thinking that I write for a naïve audience; I am rather thinking that I write for people who have stocks of courage and justness, people who consider it their obligation to find the thread that will help them break out of the labyrinth. And this moves me deeply.



Even when your stories are entirely fictional, they still recall reality. How do you achieve this effect? How do you attain this balance between truth and dream?

I think these are parallel worlds. Just like in life. Our dreams can reveal things that we could not have imagined otherwise, but it is also in our dreams where we hide our guilts, anxieties, and aspirations. It is all connected. There is no recipe, but on the other hand a story cannot exist without the format in which you tell it. And every story is born within everyday living, which carries with it all the dramatic context of its era. You cannot forget that—even when you are writing a fairy tale for very young children. Besides, children's literature is expected to help children grow up. And they will grow up in this world, not some rosy, sugarcoated world that never existed.

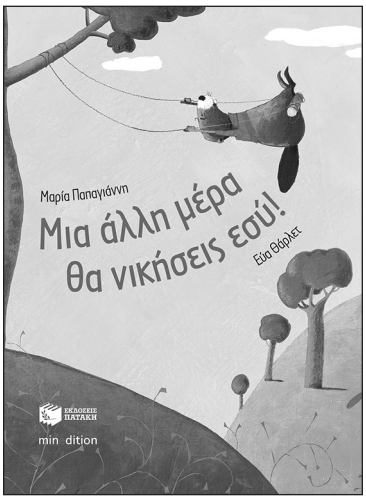
Throughout your writing career, you have received several awards and distinctions. Has this recognition influenced the way you write?

I would be lying if I said it doesn't make me happy. On the other hand, I never forget a friend who once told me that we make books (*vivlia*) and not awards (*vravia*). As you get older, you mature, and you learn to measure quality on your own scales.

The goal is for every young reader to find the book that will change their life.

Do you think that contemporary children and teens in Greece read books? What effect does this have on you, as an author for children and youth?

When I visit schools, I am sometimes disappointed but other times I leave with a new set of wings. As they grow, children seem to read less and less. I think the Greek educational system does not favor reading. This is why, in my opinion, there is this reading decline from childhood to adolescence. There are always, of course, older children who make the time to read, in spite of their overwhelming school obligations. For me, this is the goal: for every child to find the book that will set them on a voyage, a book that will stop time and open doors and windows to them. The goal is for every young reader to find the book that will change their life.



Your books are often in conversation with fairy tales, myths, songs, melodies. How important is this "intertextuality" for your work?

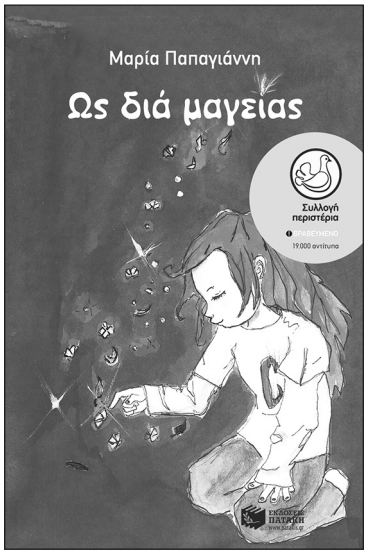
Very important. We are connected vessels. I am the stories, the songs, and the melodies I love. They feed my dark roots and make my branches stronger. When I write a story, I often find out that a fairy tale would be able to tell it in a better way, so I use it. Known fairy tales and stories are tools that enable you to talk about things that your characters cannot talk about. I like that; it's like introducing a second narrator, a supplementary voice, to the story.

Your writing moves freely between tradition and modernity. How do you manage to keep this balance?

We live in a time where everything is moving fast, everything keeps changing. The world keeps moving, our references keep changing, maps change; the ways we fall in love, or travel, or think, keep changing. As expected, the way we express ourselves is also constantly changing. The format you choose to tell your story is informed by the time you live in. On the other hand, I believe there are things that do not change. Don Quixote will always fight windmills, Tom Thumb will always find his way home, and the wolf will always try to deceive Little Red Riding Hood. The elixir of happiness will be brought by the one who listens, who has the patience to stop and take heed of a poor old

The elixir of happiness will be brought by the one who listens, who has the patience to stop and take heed of a poor old lady's advice.

I live and rush in my own era, but every now and then I stop, I bend, and I put my ear to the earth.



lady's advice. This is what I do. I live and rush in my own era, but every now and then I stop, I bend, and I put my ear to the earth.

Your most recent book is an illustrated adaptation of* Nils Holgersson's Wonderful Journey through Sweden*. Why did you decide to retell this well-known tale?

This book is a little beacon. It started as a textbook and became one of the most-read stories of all times. This is what drew me to it. I tried to support what I always thought, that everything can be told in different ways. Everything can be told as a story. And when I work on a known text, I become wiser. What was challenging was the task of telling the story to younger readers, with fewer words but with as much magic, and quest, and adventure.

Your books have been published in many languages. How important is it for Greek books to be translated in other languages? What does this mean for Greek children's literature?

There are excellent Greek authors and illustrators. Unfortunately, our language is not widely spoken across the globe and our books generally do not travel, which is a shame because stories connect people. We storytellers will always dream of sharing our stories with many others. This is only natural, is it not?

No, a book cannot change the world. But it can open Aeolus's bag of wind; it can unleash new winds and give birth to new questions. A book can lure young readers to the forest of life, where they can search for answers that will lead to a more just society.

Do you believe that a book can change the world?

No, a book cannot change the world. But it can open Aeolus's bag of wind; it can unleash new winds and give birth to new questions. A book can lure young readers to the forest of life, where they can search for answers that will lead to a more just society.



Angela Yannicopoulou is a professor of children's literature at the Department of Preschool Education at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece. She is mainly interested in picturebook research. Her articles appear in Greek and international journals. She has published academic volumes in English and in Greek.

Chinese-Greek Collaborative Ventures around Children's Books

by PANAGIOTIS KAPOS

This article describes recent Chinese-Greek collaborative ventures around children's books, presenting them as an example of the prospects and opportunities emerging for creative and diverse synergies between children's book publishers that break away from dominating English-language book markets. The article is informed by my participation in the 36th IBBY International Congress in Athens, my visit to Zhejiang Juvenile and Children's Publishing House facilities in China, and my on-site research around the Chinese book publishing industry.

Today, relations between China and Greece are constantly becoming tighter with the increasing emergence of new cultural, educational, and business collaborations between state institutions and private companies. A memorandum of cooperation for a "Project for translation and publication of classical and modern literary works of China and Greece" was signed in April 2017. A cooperative publishing model had emerged some years earlier, in 2008. Anthologies of Greek poetry, children's books, short stories, and theater plays were translated into Chinese and published in China on the occasion of Greece's participation as an honored country at the 2008 International Book Fair in Beijing. Two years later, in Thessaloniki, Greece, this model continued, as it was the turn of Chinese books to be translated in Greek, on the occasion of China's participation as an honored country at the Seventh International Book Fair in Thessaloniki.

Today, relations between China and Greece are constantly becoming tighter, with the increasing emergence of new cultural, educational, and business collaborations between state institutions and private companies.

In 2010 a new model of publishing efforts was launched in Beijing through the Sino-Greek Cultural Exchange Project, which focused on children literature at the beginning stage. According to the agreement, two children's books would be published, the first one written by a famous Greek author (Eugenios Trivizas) and illustrated by a Chinese illustrator, and the other written by a famous Chinese author (Qin Wenjun) in collaboration with a Greek illustrator (the agreement has not yet been implemented). In 2011 state and private organizations from Greece and China (Aikaterini Laskaridis Foundation, Greek and Chinese IBBY, and Zhejiang Juvenile and Children's Publishing House, among others) collaborated to

© 2019 BY BOOKBIRD, INC.

put together an exhibition of contemporary children's book illustrations in Athens. Sixty projects by eighteen well-known Chinese illustrators, as well as two hundred contemporary Chinese illustrated children's books, were exhibited.

Since 2010 Chinese and Greek children's book publishing industries are becoming more active in the field of buying and selling rights. The most important collaborations are listed below in chronological order:

- 2010: *The Three Little Wolves* by Eugenios Trivizas. This is published in China by The People's Literature Publishing House; Minoas is the Greek publisher.
- 2013: *The Little Triangle-Fish* series (seven books) by Vangelis Iliopoulos. This is published in China by Tianjin Maitian Culture Communication Co. Ltd.; Patakis is the Greek publisher.
- 2017: *Become a Planet Agent* and *The Revenge of Pee-ew* by Eleni Andreathaki (the *Planet Agents* series). The Chinese publishing house CITIC Kids ensured the translation rights of the two books, which are published in the Greek market by Metaichnio publications.
- 2018: *Ash Dresses Her Friends* by Fu Wenzheng. The Greek publishing house Oasis has established the translation rights of the book, which is published in China by ZJJ&C.

The preferred themes in the examples listed above include ecological issues, friendship, culture and language, and myths.

Many important steps have been taken, but more can be done. Continuing challenges are the lack of knowledge of each other's markets; the lack of long-term planning, continuity, and consistency; and the lack of translators who can translate directly from one language to the other. It is important to note, however, that in spite of their differences, the two book markets do share some common characteristics, such as the highlighting of their celebrated cultural heritages—in terms of their rich mythology, history, and tradition—combined with efforts to renarrate their traditional stories for new generations of readers, focusing on universal themes.



Panagiotis Kapos was born in Athens, Greece. He is professionally active in publishing books. He is a philologist, book editor, and cultural communications specialist. Panagiotis Kapos is currently working on his PhD thesis. The topic of his dissertation is "The digital transition of the book publishing industry." He has participated in many conferences on the cultural and creative industries and is especially interested in children's book publishing, reading habits, and children's digital literacy. His long-term goals are the embracing of "glocalization" in book publishing and the dissemination of good quality diverse content.

Focus IBBY

by LIZ PAGE

36th IBBY Congress 2018

To complete our reporting from the 2018 IBBY Congress that took place in Athens, Greece, I am pleased to share the message from the sponsor of the 2018 IBBY–Asahi Reading Promotion Award: Shin-ici Kawarada, the Bureau Chief of the Asahi Shimbun in Rome.

Kalimera sas

I am so glad to join the IBBY International Congress in Athens and it is an honor for me to meet everyone at the ceremony of IBBY–Asahi reading promotion award today.

I am a chief of the Rome bureau of the Japanese daily newspaper *Asahi Shimbun* and I am in charge of the Mediterranean countries, including Greece. For your information, the *Asahi Shimbun* is one of the leading daily broadsheets written in Japanese and we deliver about six million copies to families in Japan every morning. I am a correspondent in Rome and I write articles every day to send to Japan covering every topic, not only politics and economics but also culture and fine arts.

However, I'm not good at writing even now. I am very curious to see the parts of the world I've never seen. Especially in my childhood, I loved to daydream and spend time in a fictional world as if I were a character in a story.

Books transported me to different worlds. I am so grateful to my parents for giving me a lot of illustrated and classic children's books that every child should read.

Books transported me to different worlds. I am so grateful to my parents for giving me a lot of illustrated and classic children's books that every child should read.

I present here some books which are so memorable to me and that I can't forget to this day. One is a Japanese illustrated book, *Nenaiko dareda* (*Who Wouldn't Sleep?*), which my mother often read to me when I was two or three years old. In this illustrated book, it is said that midnight is inhabited not by thieves and mice but ghosts, and if a child would not sleep at midnight, the ghosts would turn the child into one of them and carry him away to the ghost's world. I can't erase the picture of the book from my mind, in which a white ghost made of torn paper was set against a black paper background. Though I was scared every time my mother read it to me, I often asked her to read it to me again and again from under the covers of my bed, where I took refuge.

Then a German children's book, *Der Räuber Hotzenplotz*, written by Otfried Preussler, was one of the most absorbing books

© 2019 BY BOOKBIRD, INC.

I read when I was an elementary school student. It provided a chance to get to know a foreign culture for the first time. In the story, I learned about many things that I had never seen, for example, a witch, tobacco snuff, and a coffee grinder. Looking at pretty illustrations, I imagined the color, form, and smell of these things that existed in a completely different culture.

The next book I read, *Momo* (Michael Ende), is one of the masterpieces that is read all over the world; it has deepened and broadened my imaginative world through recognizing and thinking of abstract concepts such as "time" and "happiness."

Today, I think that the imagination I cultivated by reading books is very useful for my work as a journalist. Actually, in journalism, I have to describe events that happen as they are, and I have to tackle social problems and issues of the real world. I don't use my imagination to do these things. But, I think it is so important to use imagination for researching the background of the topic I'm writing about.

If it were only a case of reporting when and where something happened, then artificial intelligence could do it, but I believe that the significance of having news reported by journalists is the attitude to seek the truth joined with the ability to imagine and think independently.

Children's books equip them with a lot of tools to make it in society. In books, children would be chased by dinosaurs, they would grieve the separation from friends, and they would fight for and demand peace. I think it's not too much to say that these experiences empower them to forge a path in their future lives.

Today, all the groups nominated for the IBBY–Asahi Reading Promotion Award are continuing the efforts to show a new world to children. I would like to express my great respect for your activity. I hope that through your group's activities, more children will learn to be considerate to other people, be flexible enough to accept other cultures, and love peace.

I would like to finish by thanking you for your attention.

Efcharisto sas.

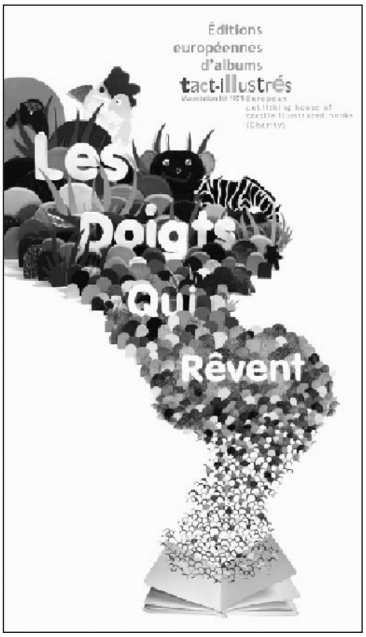
The 2018 winning project is Les Doigts Qui Rêvent (LDQR; Dreaming Fingers), based in Talant in France, with a worldwide reach.

The 2018 winning project is Les Doigts Qui Rêvent (LDQR; Dreaming Fingers), based in Talant in France, with a worldwide reach. Philippe Claudet, the founder and recently retired head of the group, gave a visual presentation of the project and its reach. The nonprofit organization was established in 1994, after the American Printing House for the Blind produced the first tactile illustrated books (TiBs) in 1991. Les Doigts Qui Rêvent was set up by a group of parents and a teacher for visually impaired young people to address the need for books to teach reading. Their focus was and remains on books for visually impaired children and young people; these include blind children and partially sighted children with or without

other disabilities, as well as partially sighted parents, blind parents, and sighted parents.

The mission of LDQR since 1994 has been:

- To give reading access to partially sighted and blind children
  - Before learning to read = early literacy
  - When learning to read = first- and second-grade levels
- To give useful information to parents and professionals
- To produce materials in a non-exploitative way
- To co-operate with other organizations
- To help other countries in this mission whenever possible
- To engage in research about tactile pictures and perception



To achieve this LDQR has created, adapted, and produced TiBs; attended book fairs; run workshops for children; participated in conferences; undertaken research; and initiated international projects, such as Typhlo & Tactus and BiTiB.

Typhlo & Tactus is a worldwide network of organizations that works toward the improvement of the quantity and the quality of tactile illustrated books available to young blind and partially sighted children with the aim of giving them access to reading. Every two years, the International Tactile Illustrated Book Competition is organized to draw attention to the needs of visually impaired children and their families. The 2019 contest results will be announced in October in Belgium (www.ona.be). For more information visit the websites of Typhlo & Tactus (www.tactus.org) and Les Doigts Qui Rêvent (www.ldqr.org).

The full presentation given by Philippe Claudet can be viewed on the IBBY website (www.ibby.org). An article based on Philippe's acceptance speech can also be found in *Bookbird* issue 57.2.

New IBBY Section in Sri Lanka

In 2018 the IBBY Executive Committee accepted an application by the Readers' Foundation of Sri Lanka to re-establish the IBBY National Section of Sri Lanka. After being accepted, the following were invited to join the Readers' Foundation: Sri Lanka Book Publishers' Association, various book promoters and publishers, and author Gunasena Vithana and illustrator Palitha Jayasinghe.

Since then, the section has participated in numerous events, starting with the Asian Children's Literature Convention held in Hunan, China. Dinesh Kulatunga was invited to present *Children's Literature in Asian Countries* and had an opportunity to meet the presidents of IBBY Japan and Korea. Together with the Lions Club of Polgasowita, IBBY Sri Lanka set up a small library in a newly built house in Thanthirimale Maha Vidyalaya (230 km. away from Colombo) in the Anuaradhapura District.

Between November 2018 and January 2019, IBBY Sri Lanka conducted a contest to promote book reading at Victoria Maha Vidyalaya at Hanguranketha (160 km. away from Colombo) in the Central Province. Fifty awards,

including three cash awards, along with certificates, were presented to the contestants. This was a joint project with the Alice and Upali Kulatunga Memorial Foundation, from Canberra in Australia. The first round of the competition was held in November and selected fifty students out of one hundred participants, and the final round was held on January 10, 2019. Upon request of the teachers and students, it was decided to run this program annually. Various meetings took place during the rest of the year. During one of these meetings, it was suggested that the section could organize a children's literature convention in connection with International Children's Book Day. Children's authors, illustrators, and publishers, as well as officials of the Ministry of Education, National Institute of Library and Information Services–Colombo University (NILIS), National Library Services Council, and the National Institute of Education participated in this initial planning meeting. After further discussion, it was decided to hold the convention at the Sri Lanka Foundation Institute in early April 2019. This was the first convention on literature for children and youth to be held in Sri Lanka, and an organizing committee for the convention was appointed. The committee met several times and decided on the following objectives:

- Understanding the true status and feasibility of literature for Sri Lankan children and youth
- Identifying avenues of raising the appreciation of literature for children and youth
- Identifying a program to increase interest in literature for children and youth among children, youth, teachers, and parents
- Updating knowledge and evaluating regional and international literature for children and youth
- Understanding the impact of translations on Sri Lankan literature for children and youth



Participants at the typography workshop.

In January 2019, IBBY Sri Lanka organized a workshop on typography for children's literature. Twenty-five participants, including graphic designers, writers, and illustrators, participated. The invited resource persons were from the University of Moratuwa and AKURU Collective (a group of researchers and designers).

Exhibitions: IBBY Silent Books at the International Book Arsenal Festival, Kyiv Ukraine

Each year, about two hundred Ukrainian writers and one hundred guests from around thirty countries host the Book Arsenal Festival. From May 30 to June 3, 2018, the eighth festival took place and united literature with art. More than 150 publishing houses and niche projects were presented.

In 2018, the special IBBY collection of silent books was presented with the support of the Embassy of Switzerland in Ukraine. The 2017 selection comprises fifty-one books from IBBY National Sections in twenty countries. Evelyn Arizpe, a senior lecturer at the University of Glasgow in the UK and leading specialist for children's literature and reading, introduced the collection and its history. She also shared new models of storytelling to a wide audience of readers, authors and illustrators, publishers, educators, and librarians. The Embassy of Great Britain in Ukraine supported her participation at the festival.

When Evelyn Arizpe presented the project, she shared with the local librarians her experiences and techniques on how to use silent books when working with children. She presented several of the individual titles from the collection, such as *The Journey* (Francesca Sanna), *Flotsam* (David Wiesner), *Arrival* (Shaun Tan), and *Mr. Wuffles!* (David Wiesner). The detailed illustrations and an efficient combination of color and design can provide an opportunity to tell one's own story and put essential questions to readers, such as "What do you see?," "What do you think?," and "What do you imagine?"—thus paving the way to understanding the other.



Exhibition of silent books at the library.

In an interview with the journal *InKyiv*, Evelyn answered the question "Are silent books changing the adults?" by saying: "I think they are, because the first time they see them, like the children, they are surprised. The first reaction is surprise—*where are words?* Children get used to it very quickly and they like it. They like the challenge. But adults are suspicious. They think: how do I read this book? Can I read the book if there are no words? They think that books are tools for learning to read. So how can you learn to read if there are no words? These seem to be the first reactions. But once they begin to see the possibilities and potential they change. And now I have seen many blogs, especially by US and UK teachers who are excited about these books. Not all Silent Books are about migration. But the idea that these books will go to a library for children who are migrating or are refugees, people like that, and think that it is a good idea. Today there are a lot of picture books that are about migration, although they are not necessarily silent i.e. without words. I think that they do make people feel in a more intense way. If you hear the story or rather if you see the story, you want to know more of something that happened to a migrant. Watching the television or reading reports in the newspaper does not make your reaction very personal. But when you read it in a book, when you see the images, they are very powerful, and I think they do provoke feelings in a way that sometimes an article cannot do."



Evelyn Arizpe

After the festival, the silent books were exhibited at the National Children's Library, the home of IBBY Ukraine. A further event was an exhibition at the newly renovated—very modern, spacious, and full of light—Central Children Library in Kyiv, which is a pilot project of the Kyiv City Administration. In October, the doors were opened at the reading rooms for the children from the Kyiv City Rehabilitation Center for Children with Disabilities. This event was far from ordinary. It comprised elements of a quest: a map, tasks, direction signs, and hints. It allowed the organizers not only to wake the interest of the young visitors to the key elements of the interior, stock of books, and services of the library, but also to use the opportunity to the fullest and show the international exposition of silent books.

The 2017 IBBY silent books were well used and explored during this very exciting tour of Kyiv in Ukraine. Our grateful thanks go to Guillaume Scheurer, the Swiss Ambassador in Ukraine, and Oksana Kornitska, Director of Cultural Projects at the Swiss Embassy, for making this event possible.

Juan de Isasa
December 31, 1940–January 26, 2019

It was with great sadness that the news of the passing of our dear friend Juan de Isasa at the age of seventy-eight reached IBBY early this year. For sixty years Juan was a member of the Marianist Order and for over twenty-five years he was a member of IBBY.

With a degree in physical science and theology, he was the director of the prestigious Colegio del Pilar in Madrid. In 1987 he began to work in the publishing area of Ediciones SM, where he remained until he retired in 2012. He served as president of the publishing house, and at the same time he was the president of the Federation of Spanish Publishers.



Juan de Isasa

Passionate about children's and young people's education, he promoted the development of high-quality literature and illustration for them. Aware of the importance to support IBBY in the promotion of international understanding through children's books and reading in the world, Juan began to collaborate with the Spanish Section of IBBY. In 1994 he was a member of the Organizing Committee for the IBBY 24th Congress in Seville. Since then, he was a member of the IBBY Executive Committee and served as IBBY Vice President from 1992 to 1996. In 2004 he became a member of the IBBY Foundation Board and served until 2010. In 2010 Juan was bestowed with IBBY Honorary Membership at the 32nd IBBY Congress in Santiago de Compostela in Spain.

Juan was a person with a great capacity for analysis and critical spirit. He was always up-to-date with scientific discoveries and he had a fascination for space and the universe, among other subjects—topics that he used to share through his inspiring and stimulating conversations.

His always intelligent, open-minded, positive, and conciliatory attitude

made him win friendships all over the world. Those of us who were lucky enough to meet him will never forget his sharp and intelligent sense of humor. Juan made our life more enjoyable and was always willing to give good advice and to help everyone. He was a luminous person, full of joy, who went through our lives doing good.

We will always remember his humble and wise life.

Rest in peace, our dearest friend, you will have a special place in our hearts forever.

María Jesús Gil
IBBY Honorary Member



Liz Page was born in Britain and moved with her family to Heidelberg, Germany, in 1983. After nearly two years they left Germany and settled in Basel, Switzerland. Through her interest in children and books Liz helped to establish the Intercultural Children's Library in Basel–JUKIBU, which opened in 1990. She was a member of the managing board with responsibility for the day-to-day running of the library for the first years and was elected President of the Intercultural Children's Libraries Association of Switzerland, now called INTERBIBLIO. She joined IBBY as Assistant to the Executive Director in 1997 and in 2009 was appointed Executive Director.

This book consists of letters written by Melati, a little girl, to her mother, who has passed away. It is written in Javanese, one of the local languages in Indonesia, and not in the national language, making this book unique.

The girl's letters reveal her feelings when she lost her mother, and she has no one else to love and support her, except their neighbor, Cik Lily, who happens to be a Chinese descendant. This book thus provides readers with the emotions of sadness, longing, happiness, and gratitude that a child can feel in this complicated world, while at the same time, multiculturalism is depicted by presenting a Chinese Indonesian as the helper of this orphan Javanese girl. Although the selected language limits readership to people who understand Javanese, this fact is actually positive in preserving a local language.

Theresia Enny Anggraini



Galuh Larasati

Melati: Serat kagem Ibu
Melati: Letters for Mom

Illustrated by Marcellina Saraswati / Graphic designer Alit Ayu Dewantari
Yogyakarta, Indonesia: Bestari, 2019. 33 pp.
ISBN: 978-602-341-173-3
(Fiction; ages 10-15)

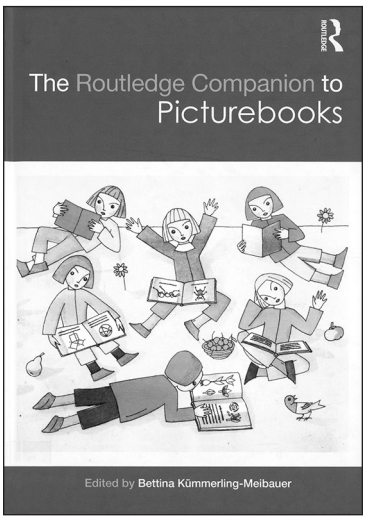
Books on Books

EDITED BY JUTTA REUSCH

THE ROUTLEDGE COMPANION TO PICTUREBOOKS.

Edited by Bettina Kümmerling-Meibauer. Routledge, 2018, 525 pages.
ISBN: 978-1-138-85318-8

The publication of *The Routledge Companion to Picturebooks*, a collection of nearly fifty articles in a volume of over five hundred pages, is a clear indication that picturebook research has considerably improved over the last years and the picturebook has gained a prominent place within children's literature. The *Companion* is a panorama of international picturebook research and analysis, and it includes chapters that investigate a huge variety of issues concerning current research. As the collection addresses nearly every issue concerning picturebooks, it becomes the ultimate guide to this genre.



Articles focus on key issues of picturebook research, such as paratexts (Sylvia Pantaleo) and emotions (Maria Nikolajeva), as well as a broad spectrum of different genres, like crossover picturebooks (Sandra Beckett) and informational picturebooks (Nikola von Merveldt), addressed to audiences ranging from babies (Bettina Kümmerling-Meibauer and Jörg Meibauer) to adults (Åse Marie Ommundsen). The collection also investigates the impact of the arts, like cinema (Tobias Kurwinkel) or photography (Jane Wattenberg), on picturebooks, and examines how different theoretical frameworks, such as literary studies (Evelyn Arizpe et al.), influence current picturebook research. In addition, topics regarding the translation of picturebooks (Riitta Oittinem) and adaptation of picturebooks into other media (Marlen Zöhrer) are presented.

The *Companion* is divided into five parts: fourteen chapters are devoted to fundamental concepts and topics of picturebook research, which range from canonicity to hybridity and from metafiction to the presentation of gender. The second part offers twelve chapters on picturebook categories, extending from ABC books to multilingual and digital picturebooks. Five chapters in section 3 cover themes of interfaces with related forms, like artists' books and photobooks. In the fourth part, an array of thirteen studies scrutinizes the domains that enrich picturebook research, such as developmental psychology, multimodality, and narratology. The fifth and last part includes four chapters on adaptation, remediation, and the merchandising industry.

The collection combines topics already well researched, such as the picture-text relationship (Nathalie op de Beck) and picturebooks as adaptations of fairy tales (Vanessa Joosen), with comparatively new ones, such as seriality in picturebooks (Bettina Kümmerling-Meibauer) and materiality (Ilgim Veryeri Alaca). Some topics can also be found in *Picturebooks: Representation and Narration* (2014), another very interesting book edited by Bettina Kümmerling-Meibauer. However, regardless of the novelty of the theme, all the chapters make a considerable contribution to the flourishing research of picturebooks that nowadays is proving to be among the most dynamic fields of literary criticism.

Bettina Kümmerling-Meibauer, a professor in the German Department at the University of Tübingen, Germany, who is an expert on picturebooks and an international editor of research

© 2019 BY BOOKBIRD, INC.

volumes on picturebook theory, managed to bring together a wide range of contributors from different backgrounds, such as children's literature scholars, artists, linguists, and media researchers. Besides the experience of the editor, the high quality of the *Companion* was guaranteed by authors who have been making important contributions to the field; see, for example, "Picturebook and Ideology" by John Stephens, "Research in Picturebooks: The Wider Path" by William Moebius, or "Picturebooks and Media Studies" by Margaret Mackey.

In more than five hundred pages, the *Companion* manages to accomplish the ambitious task of covering a vast proportion of the more interesting topics concerning picturebooks. Even topics that seem to be lacking, since there is no separate chapter on them, are in fact not entirely absent. For example, historical reviews of specific genres, such as ABC books and pop-ups, are also made within the relevant chapters, although the collection on the whole deals exclusively with contemporary picturebooks and not with the history of the genre.

Since a deeper understanding of the picturebook and how it works requires the study of a broad corpus of books published not only in one country but worldwide, the *Companion* gives an overview of the European and non-European picturebook market. While some chapters focus on examples from one country, others analyze picturebooks in different languages and from various countries. The collection highlights the current trends of picturebook research that will interest a broad international audience. Even when certain kinds of picturebooks, rather unique in one culture, are presented—such as the Wimmelbooks (Cornelia Rémi), which present a somewhat German genre—they are examined not as a national phenomenon but in how they forge new paths within the general framework of picturebook theory.

Addressed to a broad international audience, the collection highlights the general trends of picturebooks that are common in many different cultures. The volume is strongly recommended not only to scholars and researchers of picturebooks but also to children's literature students, picturebook publishers, and critics. Teachers and parents can also benefit considerably by reading a book that deals with a wide spectrum of topics that open up new perspectives in picturebook analysis.

Angela Yannicopoulou
Professor of children's literature
National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

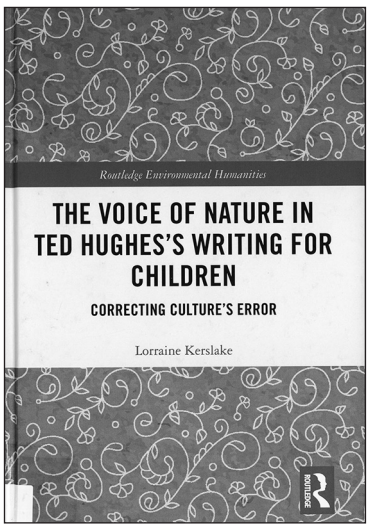
THE VOICE OF NATURE IN TED HUGHES'S WRITING FOR CHILDREN.
Correcting Culture's Error.

By Lorraine Kerslake. Routledge, 2018, 82 pages.
ISBN: 978-1-138-57367-3

Keith Sagar, the veteran Ted Hughes scholar-critic, opens *The Laughter of Foxes: A Study of Ted Hughes* (2000) by describing Hughes as the greatest British writer of the second half of the twentieth century. Indeed, Hughes wrote for children extensively throughout his career; yet, surprisingly for a writer of his stature, there weren't, I think, any book-length critical studies on his writing for children—until Lorraine Kerslake's *The Voice of Nature in Ted Hughes's Writing for Children: Correcting Culture's Error* set a milestone in children's literature criticism. But it is not just for this reason that I feel the book deserves critical attention. Of course, it does generate certain original ideas on Hughes's perception of children's literature. Another noteworthy reason is that *The Voice of Nature* is included in *The Routledge Environmental Humanities* series and the book perfectly configures with the objectives of the editors of this series, for it is an original and inspiring venture recognizing global environmental catastrophe resultant of a crisis of culture. Kerslake argues that Hughes's concept of the therapeutic value of nature is more assertive in his children's literature. At times bordering into a biographical reading, Kerslake considers Hughes's works for children as the panacea that aided him to come to terms with his own personal tragic struggles. Further, this study explores Hughes's shamanic experiences and his mythic re-creations, and above all, it delineates the ever-permeating and progressive journey Hughes made into ecoconsciousness.

Therefore, I consider Kerslake's study as the gospel-truth proclamation of Hughes's bonding of ecology with environmental ethics in his writings for young people.

In her introduction, Kerslake drives home the necessity to write a full-length critical study that examines in detail Hughes's contributions to children's literature. The aim of the book is to elucidate the eco-therapeutic values that Hughes perceived and portrayed in his poems, plays, and prose for children. Hughes's ecoconsciousness is attributed to a deep sense of environmental responsibility, and I enjoyed reading the text because it provides the discerning reader with a holistic sense of the central arguments that follow, which unravel in two main segments.



Part I shapes the background reading, deals with Hughes's childhood, and then presents Hughes as an environmental writer. In chapter 1, "A Life Close to Nature," Kerslake maps Hughes's creative universe onto the geographical makeup of his childhood. Whereas Neil Robert's article "Ted Hughes's Paradise," which appeared in the book *Ted Hughes, Nature and Culture* (2018), recalls Hughes's early years of hunting and roaming through nature with his brother Gerald, Kerslake gives a more picturesque description of Hughes's childhood and helps the reader visualize Hughes as Rousseau's Emile. The second chapter, "Reconnecting with Nature," presents Hughes's early awareness of environmental degradation. Kerslake convincingly argues that Hughes was profoundly influenced by early environmentalists like Rachel Carson. Having underpinned the ecocritical and ecofeminist theories that persuaded Hughes, Kerslake presents Hughes as an environmental activist engrossed in environmental campaigns in the 1980s and deeply concerned with issues such as river pollution.

Part II traces "the seeds of Hughes's children's writing" (chapter 3) and subsequently makes a detailed literary analysis of Hughes's writings for children. Kerslake offers a critical appreciation of Hughes as an eco-playwright (chapter 4), an eco-poet (chapter 5), and an eco-storyteller for children (chapter 6). In the closing chapter, she sums up the major arguments and delineates perspectives for future research especially by exploring the depth of Hughes's educational achievements. What strikes particularly in this study is the author's mission to make the reader perceive all her arguments through the double periscope that enables one to view everything through Hughes's shamanic quest and through his dichotomy of nature/culture or human/nonhuman.

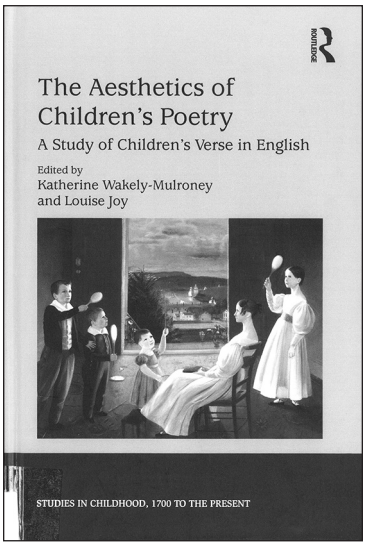
Unfortunately, however, the book is not very readable. Kerslake should have sought the aid of a native English speaker to proofread her book. There are some minor errors in the usage of sentences, instances of wrong vocabulary, and a few examples of fragmentary constructions. Despite these linguistic slips, the central argument is sound, and *The Voice of Nature* is, no doubt, a worthy attempt to look at Hughes's writings for children as a significant effort to correcting culture's errors. By demonstrating that his oeuvre for children is "ecologizing humanity / humanizing ecology"—to borrow Greg Garrard's expression from *The Routledge Companion to the Environmental Humanities*—Kerslake's book successfully proves how Hughes is a pioneer of green children's literature. By offering an elaborate study of Hughes's children's writings in different subgenres such as poetry, prose, and drama, as well as by a scrutinized reading of his critical essays and letters, *The Voice of Nature* has an indelible spot, if not a pivotal position, in ecocriticism, especially for including children's literature into environmental humanities.

Anto Thomas Chakramakkil
St. Thomas's College, Thrissur, Kerala, India

THE AESTHETICS OF CHILDREN'S POETRY. A Study of Children's Verse in English.

Edited by Katherine Wakely-Mulroney and Louise Joy. Routledge, 2018, 264 pages.
ISBN: 978-1-4724-3831-7

Children's poetry occupies a peculiar position in the literary system, mainly for two reasons. On the one hand, it has been traditionally viewed as a stagnant part of children's literature, with "strong, resilient lines of continuity that run across the centuries," according to Morag Styles. And, on the other hand, there is a relative scarcity of scholarship in the field, compared to the number of studies written about fairy tales or, more recently, picturebooks. The latter can be definitely a consequence of the former. Maybe scholars think that it is not worth exploring such a conservative literary genre. What is the point, they would probably argue, of dealing with a part of children's literature that seems to be frozen in a never-ending Arcadia of animals, rhymes, nonsense, and humor?



Nevertheless, children's poetry is far from being an unproblematic literary genre. Rather, the contrary: it is one of the most challenging parts of children's literature even nowadays. Many scholars, as Peter Hunt provocatively pointed out, have doubted its very existence, since *poetry* and *children* seem to be two words that do not match. The first one is connected to complexity and highbrow culture, while the second one is linked to simplicity and lowbrow culture. So, there is a question that always arises when speaking of children's poetry: Does children's poetry really exist? And, if so, is there an aesthetics of children's poetry?

Answering these two questions (and especially the second one) seems to be the main goal of *The Aesthetics of Children's Poetry: A Study of Children's Verse in English*. In fact, the aim of this collective volume of essays on children's poetry, as it is clearly stated in the introduction by the editors, is on the whole "to understand what it is that we do when we encounter this peculiar kind of writing—children's poetry—which in its very simplicity and familiarity poses such complex critical questions." Therefore, despite the absolutely rich variety of propositions included in this volume, its overall thesis is very clear: there is an aesthetics of children's poetry, and that means that children's poetry has its own specific characteristics and literary devices. And, consequently, it must not be reduced to playing a merely preparatory role for the appreciation of adult poetry.-

Nevertheless, in order to demonstrate that there really is an aesthetics of children's poetry, the essays of this book have to prove two main points: first, that children's poetry has a literary tradition of its own. And second, that children's poetry needs new critical approaches in order to be fully understood and valued as a literary genre. With one part of the studies focusing on the past and the other focusing on the present, *The Aesthetics of Children's Poetry* certainly proves both.

The essays of Corinna Russell on William Blake, Katherine Wakely-Mulroney on Lewis Carroll, Kristie Blair on Victorian children's poetry, and especially the four included in the third part, regarding anthologies, take a look at the past. They lead readers to conclude that from the eighteenth century onward, children's poetry has always suffered from a tension between humor and didactism. Although the didactic mode is always a problematic aspect regarding children's literature (as it is analyzed in a whole section of the introduction), in children's poetry the battle was won by the comic mode, as is clearly stated by Louise Joy and others in the essays focusing on the present. According to the authors, this is one of the

main differences between adult's and children's poetry nowadays. Considering that, new and more specific approaches to children's poetry are needed today in order to understand children's poetry better. And this is precisely what Louise Joy, Debbie Pullinger, Karen Coats, and James Williams offer in their essays, by linking children's poetry to body, play, music, and cognitive poetics. This last approach, proposed by Karen Coats, is particularly suggestive, since it deals with the responses of children when reading poetry, and it can thus open the door to more empirical methodologies.

Taken together, the essays seem to conclude that contemporary Anglo-American children's poetry clearly privileges the comic mode over a specifically lyrical mode. Given the increasing presence of lyrical poetry for children in several countries today, like Italy, France, and Spain, the question arises whether or why this isn't also the case in Great Britain.

Nevertheless, *The Aesthetics of Children's Poetry: A Study of Children's Verse in English* constitutes a suggestive approach to children's poetry that, albeit only focused on the English tradition, proposes new approaches to the genre that can be useful for scholars all over the world.

Juan Senís

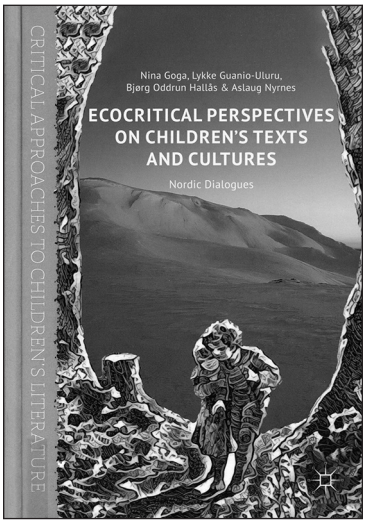
Universidad de Zaragoza (Spain)

ECOCRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON CHILDREN'S TEXTS AND CULTURES. Nordic Dialogues.

Edited by Nina Goga, Lykke Guanio-Uluru, Bjørg Oddrun Hallås, and Aslaug Nyrnes.
Series: *Critical Approaches to Children's Literature*.
Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, 299 pages.
ISBN: 978-3-319-90496-2

This book delivers on its promise to bring Nordic children's literature into dialogue with international trends in ecocriticism. The book's primary research question, "How is nature represented in Nordic children's literature?," is explored through seventeen lively chapters grouped into five subsections: ethics and aesthetics, landscape, vegetal, animal, and human. These overarching themes enable intriguing discussions of children's literature in relation to ecocritical terms such as the pastoral and the postpastoral, the posthuman, and the Anthropocene, and the roles of animals and plants in children's literature. The Nordic figure of the "capable child," who enjoys a pragmatic and energetic physical closeness to nature, is encountered in several of the chapters, amid explorations of the ways in which Nordic children's literature inherits and subverts international environmental tropes.

The introduction deftly situates the book within ecocritical literary criticism and provides a thorough overview of previous work on children's literature and ecocriticism, which has primarily focused on American, British, and Australian literatures. The essays that



follow reference a wide range of ecocritical perspectives, while drawing frequently from Greg Garrard's influential *Ecocriticism*. The book considers contemporary Nordic children's literature (including digital narratives) alongside a handful of classic and contemporary international texts. The broad range of genres includes picturebooks, poetry, middle-grade fantasy fiction, dystopian young adult (YA) fiction, a TV documentary series, and digital storytelling apps. Several of the chapters speculate that the texts they analyze *may* contribute to the formation of ecocitizens, while chapters 15 and 16 engage more closely with real children

to uncover how they speak about and move through the natural world.

A major strength of the book is its integrated thematic structure, which is achieved partly through its deployment of its main conceptual tool, "The Nature in Culture (NatCul) Matrix." The tool enables a visual, graphical representation of the way texts, or elements within them, celebrate or problematize nature, from either anthropocentric or ecocentric perspectives. The matrix consists of a y-axis, which points up to "Celebrating nature" and down to "Problematizing nature." This intersects with an x-axis, which points left to an "Anthropocentric horizon" and right to an "Ecocentric horizon." The axis is ringed by a zone named "*techne*," which the authors say signifies a third dimension, taken from rhetorical theory, referring to the "intentional crafting of self, world and society," which draws attention to the fact that "all children's and YA texts are already mediated, hence are crafted, representations of nature" (Boellstorff 13). The authors present the matrix as an "organic thought figure," which has evolved over time and is open to further revision.

As a visual tool, the NatCul Matrix might be particularly well suited for conference presentations and discussions, but it nevertheless encapsulates some central tensions of ecocritical analysis, while identifying notably few truly "ecocentric" texts. The tool helps diagnose how texts situate themselves in relation to nature and culture, but it is used most interestingly when employed to interrogate paradoxes and contradictions within texts themselves. One example is Lykke Guanio-Uluru's analysis of the Norwegian picturebook character Gubbe, an anthropomorphized log, who represents both harmony with nature and a child's view of the world, while being himself a severed "dead" portion of a tree. Another is Nina Goga's analysis of Frida Nilsson's *The Ice Sea Pirates.* The NatCul Matrix helps her to track the transformation of the protagonist Siri's perspectives throughout the narrative.

The essays, which encompass a variety of topics, localities, and theoretical positions, each refer to the matrix, which ensures that the chapters speak to each other and come together in a thoroughly workshopped, critically sound collection. The research questions of each essay are clearly stated, and the end of each essay articulates the points it has to offer to larger debates. At certain moments, however (for example, in chapters 5, 10, and 12), the theoretical scaffolding threatens to overwhelm the analysis of the primary texts. Chapter 11, an ambitious allegorical discussion of John Marsden and Shaun Tan's Australian picturebook *The Rabbits*, could have been tightened slightly in order to combat some minor historical inaccuracies and to clarify some terminology. A regrettable absence from the book is any consideration of Sami literature and culture—this would be a fruitful area for further study. Overall, however, the collection offers a rich and timely consideration of representations of the environment in Nordic children's literature and culture, while gesturing toward its global context. The book eloquently and rigorously opens up the field and demonstrates that there is still much work to be done.

Melanie Duckworth
Faculty of Business, Languages
and Social Sciences
Østfold University College

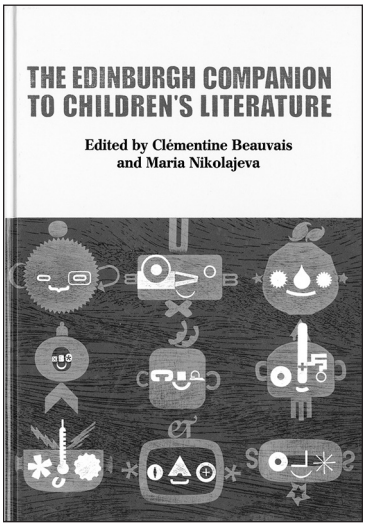
THE EDINBURGH COMPANION TO CHILDREN'S LITERATURE.

Edited by Clémentine Beauvais and Maria Nikolajeva. Edinburgh University Press, 2017, 376 pages.
ISBN: 978-1-4744-1463-0

The title of this rich anthology could just as well have been *Children's Literature: The State of the Field*, especially since the introductory essay by the coeditors of the volume asks: "Where Have We Come From? Where Are We Going?" The majority of contributors are based in the UK, with a sprinkling of others from Continental Europe and the United States. Literary scholars are heavily represented, with slightly fewer hailing from a background in literacy education—although, interestingly, the majority of both categories are housed in departments of

education or the like. This dual influence of literary criticism and pedagogy—intrinsic to the field—is reflected in the contemporary focus of the anthology overall, which is evenly divided into three clearly defined sections: "Contemporary Directions in Children's Literature Scholarship," "Contemporary Trends in Children's and Young Adult Literature," and a final section devoted to possible future directions in the field, entitled "Unmapped Territories."

The editors' brief introduction functions to explain how this collection seeks to contribute to the discourse on children's literature and its study. It first describes how the academic field of children's literature has developed beyond the "[d]efinitional work" that was central to "the early major works on children's literature" (2) in English-language scholarship of the late 1980s and early 1990s. The field has expanded since then, fracturing due to its interdisciplinary nature, but nevertheless "develop[ing] its own discourse" (2). The editors then offer a concise summary, liberally salted with citations, of the variety in theoretical positions adopted by scholars in the area. Finally, they argue that an emerging "material turn in children's literature" (3) is setting a new paradigm in the discipline, encompassing diverse approaches that nevertheless share "a stretched cross-disciplinarity, extending across the humanities, the social sciences, and the so-called hard sciences" (4). The collection's stated purpose is not an "overview of the field"; rather, it seeks to "present emerging practices and interests in the field as well as emerging publication trends" (5). There is no summary for each chapter, as is usually the case in introductions to anthologies, but offsetting this disadvantage for the scholar are the descriptive, self-explanatory titles of each essay. An experienced researcher will likely know what awaits in an essay entitled "Multimodality and Multiliteracies: Production and Reception" or "The Genetic Study of Children's Literature," and will thus have little difficulty navigating the book. (By implication, this feature may make it difficult for beginning or even more advanced students to use.)



As a report on the current state of the field and a suggestion for new directions, the *Edinburgh Companion* offers diverse starting points for scholars in the field. Each essay presents itself as an introduction to the topic it is describing, so it will be useful to scholars and instructors of children's literature seeking to develop their knowledge of that subfield. Lydia Kokkola's essay on "Carnality in Adolescent Literature," for example, offers a guided tour of this topic by framing the issue; the theoretical background on the topic; and the various ways in which the topic has been treated by authors, readers, and scholars of young adult (YA) literature in the past and present. Several other essays work to bridge the theoretical gap between scholarship in "general literature" and "children's literature," where the latter has generally been late to the game because of its newness. For instance, while Anja Müller acknowledges that "research into the canon of children's literature is a fairly 'recent invention,'" despite the topic's history in "general literary studies," she demonstrates how both creators and scholars of children's literature are deepening and expanding their treatment of canonicity (156).

This effort to demonstrate the field's growing engagement with the approaches and themes trending in literary scholarship more generally—timely keywords such as *ecocriticism*, *posthumanism*, *distant reading*, and *animal studies* also make their appearance—provides a welcome resource for scholars of children's literature who must still often point out the relevance and sophistication of the field to their colleagues and home institutions. Also noteworthy, and quite distinctive to the

children's literature field, is the third of the book that explicitly addresses the important connection between the scholarship and production of children's literature. It is hard to imagine a similar collection devoted to the general literary sphere that would give as much space to, for example, the impact of technologies on literary production (e.g., Martin Salisbury's essay on "Pattern, Texture, and Print: New Technology, Old Aesthetic in Contemporary Picture-Book Making") or current trends in the dissemination of children's literatures (e.g., Gillian Lathey's chapter on "Serendipity, Independent Publishing and Translation Flow: Recent Translations for Children in the UK").

This reader's only regret was the heavily Anglocentric nature of the collection. A quick look at the references at the conclusion to each essay, helpfully separated into "Primary" and "Secondary," shows in both categories the marked absence of non-English (and non-Western) works or even works in translation. Selecting a more diverse pool of contributors could have allayed this problem. Hopefully, aspiring editors will take this well-constructed anthology as an inspiration and compile a more international "companion" to it in the near future.

Melek Ortabasi
Associate professor/director
World Literature Program
Simon Fraser University
Vancouver, Canada

LA NOUVELLE BANDE DESSINÉE ARABE. Short histoires courtes en bande dessinée.

[*Contemporary Arab Comics: Short Stories in Comic Form*]
Edited by Mohammed Shennawy, translated by Sarah Siligaris. Actes Sud, 2018, 259 pages.
ISBN: 978-2-330-08670-1

Little known in Europe, the works of comic artists from the Arab world have also long remained marginal in the creative and culture scenes of their home countries. For a long time, they were looked down upon by the general public as mere entertainment for children. The past ten years have changed this considerably.

During the so-called Arab Spring (2011-2013, with sustained uprisings in Tunisia, spreading to Egypt, Libya, Bahrain, and Yemen), many young Arab artists accompanied and critically commented on the political and cultural conflicts in their countries using contemporary forms of artistic expression, such as street art, graffiti, blogs, videos, rap, poetry, caricatures, animated shorts, and especially comics.

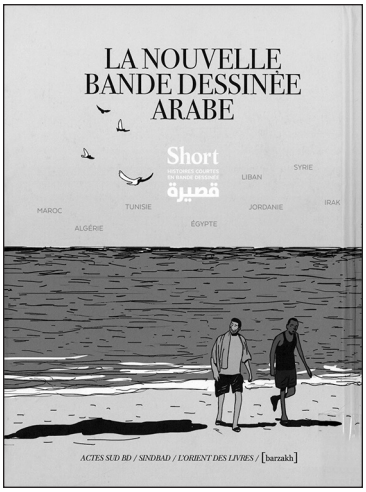
It is all the more welcome, therefore, that—even after the Arab Spring subsided due to cultural restoration and renewed repression—the Institut français d'Égypte, the Institut français in Paris, the Goethe-Institut in Cairo, and the German-French Cultural Fund have taken the initiative to present the following comics from the Arab world in an exhibition as well as in a 259-page volume: twenty-seven of the most important Arab comic artists from Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia, Iraq, and Jordan; seven of the most important comic magazines and fanzines (*Lab619* from Tunisia, *Mesaha* from Iraq, *Tok Tok* from Egypt, *Samandal* from Lebanon, *Shefkef* from Morocco, *Zeez* from Lebanon, and *Habka* from Libya), and ten key comic websites.

The exhibition was held in January 2018 at the Comic Festival in Angoulême, France, under the title "Nouvelle Génération: BD arabe d'aujourd'hui" ("New Generation: The Contemporary Arab Comic").

The exhibition catalogue was published by the French publishing house Actes Sud. Three excellent introductory articles, both knowledgeable and entertaining, provide a basis for understanding the contemporary Arab comic scene.

In her introductory essay, Mathilde Chèvre, French researcher and publisher (Le port à jauni), brilliantly elaborates the history of the development of Arabic illustration. Paying special attention to Egypt, she emphasizes the importance of the great Egyptian illustrator Mohieddin Ellabbad (1940-2010) for the current developments of Egyptian and Arab comics. In his contribution, the US-American scholar Jonathan Gyer (Harvard University)

explores the avant-garde character of Arab comic art in form, (colloquial) language, and themes. He shows that Arab comic artists also like to provoke, both aesthetically and thematically, and thus consciously challenge the censorship authorities over and over again. The third article transcribes a round-table discussion between the Algerian comic artist Rym Mokhtari, Shennawy from Cairo, and the Lebanese artist and musician Mazen Kerbaj, who lives in Berlin. The French journalist Tewfik Hakem skillfully moderated this fascinating conversation about their respective artistic careers, the new narrative strategies of Arab comic art, and the overt and more hidden interactions between the movements of Arab Spring and contemporary comic art.



In Arab countries such as Egypt, Tunisia, and Yemen, young people under the age of eighteen now make up 40% of the population and are most affected by dictatorship, social upheaval, and the lack of prospects in their home countries. For them, the many demonstrations in the Arab world (e.g., on the famous "Tahrir" Square in Cairo), as well as in social media, were not only about political demands for "bread/work" and "social justice," both of which phrases were repeatedly chanted, but above all about "freedom." This also explicitly meant freedom of expression, including the freedom to express oneself artistically in new forms and to take a stand on all, even taboo, topics.

La nouvelle bande dessinée arabe is an important publication at the right time: In his comic *Bouteille de sable* (*Bottle of Sand*; pp. 209-214), the Syrian comic artist Salam Alhassan drastically shows that the "critical genie" has long since escaped the bottle in the Arab comic scene, despite all repressions. The commitment and mastery of many artists from the Arab world seems to be the best prerequisite for a flourishing future for comics in this part of the world, despite the political and social rollback.

Sibylle Weingart
International Youth Library
Translation: Nikola von Merveldt



Jutta Reusch studied German literature, linguistics, and musicology at the Albert-Ludwigs-University in Freiburg/Breisgau and library and information science at the Humboldt-University in Berlin. After several years as an editor for a publishing house, she worked as a librarian for the German Literature Archive in Marbach. Since 2008, she works for the International Youth Library in the position of the head of library services, with a focus on collection-building of secondary literature for the research library, as well as building and curating the historical collections and archives. She manages the research library, the public children's library, and the library projects.

Lucy, a sixteen-year-old traumatized by a sexual abuse experience, leaves her mother in New York City to join her archeologist father in South Africa, where he is leading a so-far fruitless dig at the fictional Barclay Bay on the country's west coast. At first just an observer, she slowly becomes drawn into the work of his team of young researchers and gains better understanding of a parent with whom she had little contact in recent years. She makes a psychic—and ultimately healing—connection with an ancient human ancestor, a woman called Hap, even before her bones are uncovered during a frightful storm.

Beake convincingly channels the turmoil of teenage Lucy's thoughts and feelings and gracefully interweaves her story with Hap's. The novel's premise also resonates well with recent discoveries of ever more prehistoric humanlike fossils in southern Africa. This title received South Africa's Sanlam Gold prize for youth literature.

Barbara A. Lehman



Lesley Beake

Hap

Cape Town, South Africa: Tafelberg, 2017. 170 pp.
ISBN: 978-0-624-08199-9
(Fiction; ages 13+)

When Kim Dolse was little, he caught a high fever that left him crippled. Kim Dolse could not use his legs, but he developed skills to use sewing needles and even became able to hunt a wild boar with needles. When Japan invaded Joseon (a Korean dynastic kingdom), Kim Dolse was ready to sacrifice his life and fight with his needles. The Sosabal battle in 1597 is recorded as one of the most vicious battles during the Jungyou War (1597-1598). The author spent many years of thorough research to write this book, and she introduces the Sosabal battle along with corrupt government officials, discrimination on the basis of social class, and the limitations on women's roles in the Joseon Dynasty in the sixteenth century. Shinha Ha used to work for a national broadcasting network in Korea, and now she enjoys meeting and working with children as a children's book author.

Jongsun Wee



Shinha Ha

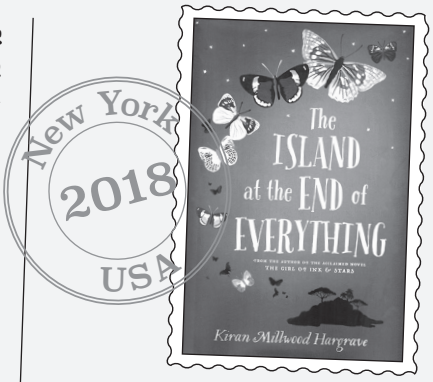
바늘장군 김돌쇠
Kim Dolse, the Needle Fighter

Illustrated by Sunhwan Jang
Paju, South Korea: Nonjang, 2018. 224 pp.
ISBN: 9788984143180
(Fiction; ages 10+)

Set in the Philippines in the early 1900s, the story begins on Culion Island, an actual place that became the world's largest leper colony between 1906 and 1998. Twelve-year-old Amihan lives happily on the island with her mother, who has the disease. When Mr. Zamora, an unfeeling government official, arrives on the island, Amihan's life changes. Mr. Zamora implements a new government policy that removes healthy children from the island and places them in an orphanage across the sea. Amihan, a strong, determined girl, shows resilience and courage throughout the book. With brave friends, Amihan escapes the orphanage and travels in an old boat back to her terminally ill mother and her beloved home.

A compelling plot, lyrical and poetic language, universal themes, and the first-person perspective contribute to an enjoyable read for young people. An author's note gives historical background, and a glossary of Tagalog words is included.

Evelyn B. Freeman



Kiran Millwood Hargrave

The Island at the End of Everything

New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2018. 243 pp.
ISBN: 978-0-553-53532-7 (trade)
(Fiction; ages 10-13)

The text consists of thirteen rhymes inspired by Robert Schumann's **Kinderszenen** titles and brilliantly illustrated in watercolor. It tells the story of a daydreaming boy who travels the world on his hobbyhorse. His "Windlawaai" (Hullabaloo) is his birthday, when he expresses his wishes. After a warning of escaping dreams in "Dromery," inspired by "Traümerei," the final rhyme suggests that the inner child should be kept alive and that each day should be cherished, because of the Land of Sleep ahead.

Grobler's playful and delightful illustrations complement the narrative perfectly. In "Haastig," familiar symbols from fairy tales like Snow White's apple and mirror fly from De Vos's bag of stories while three pigs watch from a hill and the wolf talks to Red Riding Hood in the foreground. This charming book for all ages is also available in English as **Day for a Hullabaloo**.

Magdel Vorster



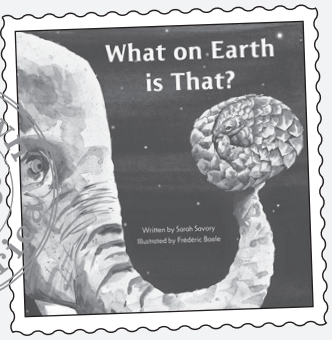
Philip de Vos

Vandag is ek 'n Windlawaai (Day for a Hullabaloo)

Illustrated by Piet Grobler
Pretoria, South Africa: Protea Boekhuis, 2018. 36 pp.
ISBN: 978-1-4853-0764-8; ISBN, Day for a Hullabaloo: 978-1-4853-0765-5
(Picturebook; ages 5+)

An unusual book about an unusual creature—the pangolin. Be honest! What's **your** knowledge of this intriguing creature? **What on Earth Is That?** is cleverly conceived. It starts with a simple picturebook story in which two children compare a pangolin to other African creatures—zebra, giraffe, armored rhino, nocturnal owl—until the nature and lifestyle of the pangolin becomes apparent. Then it switches to color photographs and facts about this pleasant, harmless animal. Simple verse text presents the story, and bright artwork is eye-catching and effective, even if the portrayal of creatures is better than of humans. The shrinking number of large creatures such as elephants and rhinos is fairly well known. Smaller beings are not sufficiently known. Books can help bring awareness, and any book that helps to prolong the knowledge and existence of an endangered creature should get our vote.

Jay Heale



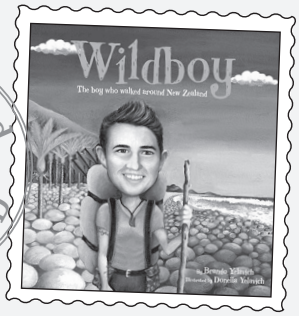
Sarah Savory

What on Earth Is That?

Illustrated by Frédéric Baele
Cape Town, South Africa: Struik Children, 2018. 36 pp.
ISBN: 9781432308698
(Picturebook; ages 8+)

In this beautifully illustrated picturebook, the author tells the true story of his adventures as the first person to walk 8,000 kilometers around the coastline of New Zealand over 600 days. Brando gains confidence as he learns to navigate difficult terrain and feed himself, mostly from the land, facing many challenges, including hunger and cold. Yelavich's account was first published by Penguin as a 288-page memoir, but the text has been faultlessly reduced, shaped, and paced in picturebook format to complement the stunning paintings by his mother, Donella Yelavich. These illustrations reflect the dominant blue and green of the New Zealand coast, as well as details of the local flora and fauna and a map of his journey. On each page there is a compass for keen eyes to find.

Nicola Daly



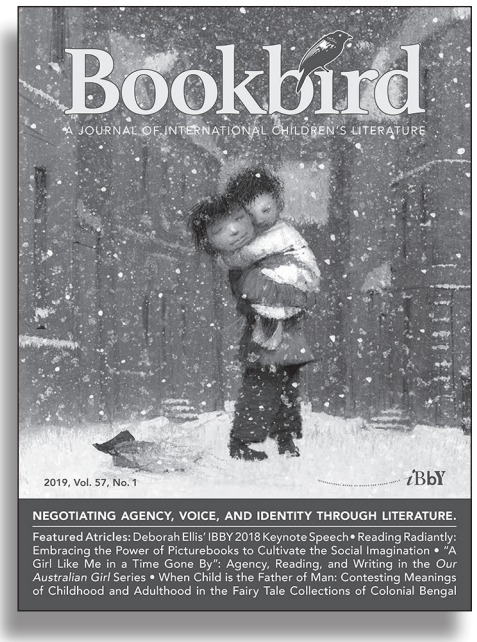
Brando Yelavich

Wildboy: The Boy Who Walked around New Zealand

Illustrated by Donella Yelavich
Auckland, New Zealand: Penguin Random House, 2018. 32 pp.
ISBN: 9780143772453
(Nonfiction; ages 5-8)

Bookbird 1/2019

Negotiating Agency, Voice, and Identity through Literature



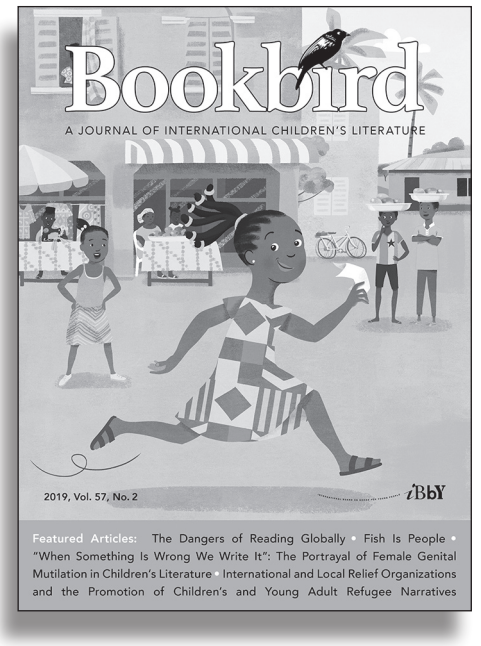
Building on Björn's legacy and on the legacy of the editors who preceded him, we are extremely proud of this first *Bookbird* issue under our editorship. It addresses a theme that is important and timely, and we are particularly happy to be able to open this special issue on agency, voice, and identity with the printed version of a powerful and moving speech delivered by Deborah Ellis at the 2018 IBBY Congress in Athens. As Deborah explains, she chose to title her keynote talk "Before They Give the Order" because there needs to be "a before":

> We have had plenty of "After They Give the Order." Nearly seventy million refugees are on the move all around the world today because of "after they give the order." Animal species are on the brink of extinction because of "after they give the order." […] But what I really want is a "Day Before." How can we change things so that there can be a Day Before? I want a Day Before the order is given to drop the drone on the wedding party in Afghanistan. I want a Day Before the order is given to toss the chemicals in the river. I want a Day Before the order is given to produce more guns so that someone can take them and shoot up a movie theatre or a rock concert or a gay bar or a school.

In a fast-changing world, where power is becoming more and more oppressive and undemocratic, agency, voice, and identity are the very life elements that can sustain us. Our sense of agency—our ability to assert our identity, exert our voice, and make a difference in the world is closely related to our drive to live, act, and hope. Citizens who contribute to, and receive from, their local and global communities strive to have a voice in issues that matter and to be part of decision-making processes that are of importance. Such empowerment comes from developing a strong sense of identity. One important way in which people do this is by sharing their stories. Experiencing acts of agency through reading and writing offers powerful ways to consider the potential for our own agency and to learn about other members of our local and global communities.

Bookbird 2/2019

Slowing Down, Reading, and Asking Provocative Questions



As Kęstutis Kasparavičius writes in his message for the 2019 International Children's Book Day celebration, "Someone who enjoys reading—be it a child or adult—is much more interesting than someone who doesn't care for books, who is always racing against the clock, who never has time to sit down, who fails to notice much of what surrounds us." Slowing down, noticing, reading, inevitably lead to questioning: questioning the text, questioning ourselves, questioning others, questioning the world. The authors we host in issue 57.2 are interesting people—people who slow down, read, and question—so they inevitably ask interesting questions. And more often than not, difficult and provocative questions are the most interesting ones.

Kathy Short asks about the dangers of reading globally. She sees great value in reading globally, of course, but she also asks us to think about our social responsibilities as bookmakers, readers, and educators, and about what happens during the interaction of young readers with global literature when these responsibilities are taken lightly.

In "Fish Is People," Perry Nodelman asks whether picturebooks that feature anthropomorphic animals encourage children to ignore the "otherness" or difference of other species. And might children's thinking about animal characters also be shaping how children think about different kinds of people? In a playful analysis of numerous picturebooks with a focus on fish, Nodelman asks: "Do we respect others because we think of them as being like ourselves, or because of our awareness and acceptance of their differences from us?"

Ann Alston asks even more difficult questions about the portrayal of female genital mutilation (FGM) in children's literature, and Vassiliki Vassiloudi asks provocative questions in relation to refugee narratives produced, endorsed, and promoted by international refugee relief organizations. In an interview with Rob Bittner, author Elana K. Arnold asks us to consider what it currently means to write about sexual assault, rape culture, and violence against women and girls from a feminist standpoint. Asahi award winner Philippe Claudet poses provocative questions about how blind children read the world and how tactile illustrated books (TiBs) have been adjusting to their different ways of reading. And finally, Saori Katagiri asks us to think how one makes and performs Kamishibai in Arabic for Muslims in Japan, when certain Kamishibai images are bound to shock and alienate this audience.

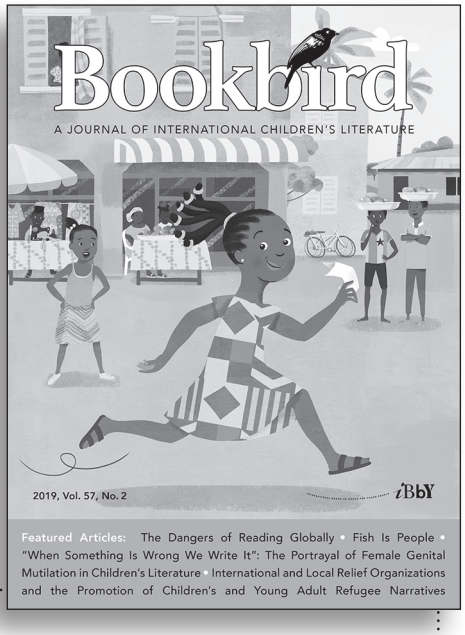
This is an open-theme issue, but it so happened that there is a vibrant, strong theme running across every single text in it: Slow down, read, and ask provocative questions.

Bookbird

A JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

"Those with professional interests in children's literature need Bookbird*!"*

Kimberley Reynolds
Professor of Children's Literature
University of Newcastle, UK



☑ YES!

I wish to take out an annual subscription to *Bookbird*.

Name (individual or institution):

.....

Postal address, including postal or ZIP codes and country:

.....

.....

Enter appropriate amount for your type of subscription:

- ☐ **Individual rates:** (US $50/Mexico $60/Canada $63/Rest of the World $65)
- ☐ **Institutional subscription rates:** (US $100/Mexico $115/Canada $120/Rest of the World $125)

Prices include postage. There are back issues available.

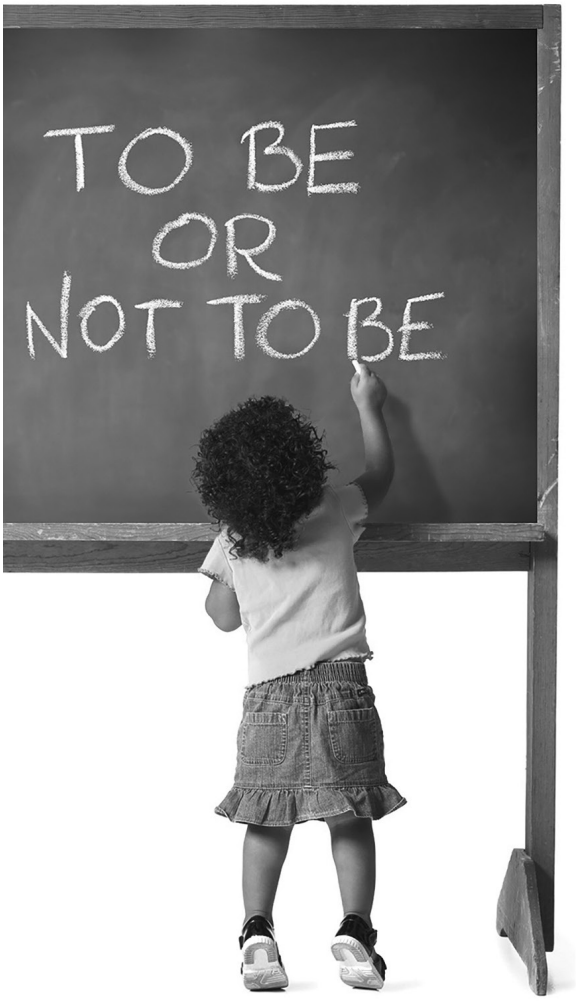
Please enclose your US$ check or draft, or pay by credit card (probably the most convenient method for subscribers in Euro or other currency zones)**:**

I wish to pay by: ☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa

Card number: _____

Expiry date: _____

SEND TO:
The Johns Hopkins University Press
2715 N. Charles Street
Baltimore, MD 21218-4363, USA



New perspectives

that are anything

but elementary.

JHU Press scholarly journal offerings in
Children's Literature:

Bookbird: A Journal of International Children's Literature
P-ISSN: 0006-7377 / E-ISSN: 1918-6983

The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books
P-ISSN: 0008-9036 / E-ISSN: 1558-6766

Children's Literature P-ISSN: 0092-8208 / E-ISSN: 1543-3374

Children's Literature Association Quarterly P-ISSN: 0885-0429 / E-ISSN: 1553-1201

The Lion and the Unicorn P-ISSN: 0147-2593 / E-ISSN: 1080-6563

www.press.jhu.edu/journals

JOHNS HOPKINS
UNIVERSITY PRESS