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Bookbird

A JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

'inappropriate' books *collecting stories in ethiopia* *children's literature studies in germany* *wolf erlbruch*
prizes in canada *trash and utopia* *international children's books noted* *professional books reviewed*

INTERNATIONAL BOARD ON BOOKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

IBBY

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A JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

The Journal of IBBY, the International Board on Books for Young People

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A JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

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

FIT THE FIRST: JAM AND JUDICIOUS ADVICE

FIT THE SECOND: THOUGHTFUL AND GRAVE

FIT THE THIRD: SUCH QUANTITIES OF SAND

FIT THE FOURTH: WRAPPED UP IN A FIVE-POUND NOTE

FIT THE FIFTH: OF SHOES AND SHIPS AND SEALING WAX

The quoted stanza and the titles of the various *Bookbird* sections are taken from 'The Hunting of the Snark' and 'The Walrus and the Carpenter' by Lewis Carroll and 'The Owl and the Pussycat' by Edward Lear.

Editorial

CÉAD MÍLE FÁILTE! Welcome to the new *Bookbird*, now being edited and designed in Ireland.

As the new editors of *Bookbird*, our first loyalty is to the IBBY ideal and, of course, to those IBBY members – the scholars, teachers, publishers and librarians worldwide – who are the core of the *Bookbird* readership. It is our intention to maintain Bookbird's status as a serious refereed academic journal that provides an outlet for children's literature professionals and academics for their thoughtful and scholarly work on international children's literature.

But we also believe that what is happening in children's books worldwide is too important and too exciting and too fascinating to keep to ourselves. We want everyone involved with children and books to know about it. And for that reason, we want *Bookbird* to communicate new ideas about international children's literature to the whole community of readers interested in children's books, not just to specialists. We want it, certainly, to be a journal with the highest academic standards, but we also envisage it as the kind of magazine that a reader with a more general interest in children's books might be tempted to pick up.

We want* Bookbird *to communicate to the whole community of readers interested in children's books

We believe that 'serious' and 'scholarly' don't have to mean 'solemn', and we see no conflict between upholding rigorous standards and appealing also to a readership beyond the academy. That was how we briefed both our designer and our contributors, and the result is the issue you are now holding in your hand. We hope you will read it with enjoyment and will recommend it to your friends and colleagues.

The major change that regular readers will notice, apart from the new look, is that *Bookbird* is now open to articles on any topic in the field of international children's literature (rather than each issue having a specific focus topic). We hope that this new policy will help to keep the magazine lively and interesting, and will provide more opportunities for contributors to have their work considered for publication. Our submission guidelines are published on page 51, and a stylesheet is also available. We look forward to hearing from you, whether in the form of letters to the editors or in the form of submissions for publication.

And finally, a special word of thanks to the outgoing team of editors and the board of Bookbird Inc., all of whom have been so welcoming and supportive to us, and on whose very fine work we are privileged to build.

Bainigí taitneamh as bheith ag léamh! Bonne lecture! Yuedu Kuaile! Qirra'attun Sai'da! Viel Spass beim Lesen! Melam Yenebab Gize! Happy reading!

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A Challenge to Innocence

'Inappropriate' Picturebooks for Young Readers

In recent years, a number of picturebooks have featured a range of subjects that require children to confront stark images. Are such books appropriate for children? Carole Scott asks

BY CAROLE SCOTT

Carole Scott is professor of English at San Diego State University and a board member of its new Center for the Study of Children's Literature

The debate over the need to preserve the innocence of childhood is doubtless one that will feature indefinitely in studies of children's literature, tied as it is to the ever-changing construction of the child. While some find the concept of innocence itself dangerous and inviting evil,[1] parents and others continue to worry about the effects of the violence and sexuality that bombard our children from all directions. Parents feel they have at least some control over the books their children read, and publishers and librarians assist in their categorisation of age-appropriateness. Thus challenging topics such as death and violence (for example, Julius Lester's *When Dad Killed Mom*, or Sis Deans's *Every Day and All the Time*)[2] are identified as inappropriate for children under 12.

It is therefore of special note when picturebooks, usually considered a genre for the younger child, challenge this practice. In recent years, a number of picturebooks have featured a range of subjects that require children to confront stark images depicting, for instance,

parents' rejection of ugly children; the banality of death; grotesque depictions of the body and its functions; and the plight of homeless children, abandoned and ragged. Are these books suitable for children? Does 'suitability' depend upon the individual child and her or his parents' estimate of their child's reaction to the work? What is the authors' vision of their child readers? And are the techniques that the authors employ sufficient to allay any frightening ideas and underlying dark or disturbing messages that are introduced?

Are the techniques that the authors employ sufficient to allay fears?

Okilélé

Okilélé, by the French author Claude Ponti, involves the harsh rejection of a child. The title comes from the new infant's misunderstanding of the phrase with which his family addresses him, 'Oh! Qu'il est laid!' ['Oh! How ugly he is!'], which he thinks must be his name, Okilélé. The child is irrepressible and unruly. He makes a mask to hide his unacceptable features, but it makes him look worse; he connects his family with cords for better communication, but they end in a tangle; he takes a bath in *café-au-lait* and makes boats out of pastries. Everything he does either annoys someone or causes someone to annoy him. After aggravating everyone, he hides under the kitchen sink to cry; if he stays there, no one bothers him, and he is forgotten. When he next angers his parents they are enraged, and, despite his pleas, his father takes bricks and mortar and walls him up under the sink.

Fortunately Okilélé has created an elaborate living place with its own back door for himself behind the sink and is able to leave the prison his father has made. His cheerful attitude, 'can-do' approach to practical problems and philosophical outlook shield the reader from the ugly image of imprisonment. This book is indeed a fantasy, with talking alarm clocks, visits to other planets and the ability to metamorphose into a tree at will. As such it distances the child reader from the frightening vision of being so unwanted that one's parents will immure one. Also, Ponti provides a happy ending that resolves all former trials. Eventually Okilélé goes home to find his family's house in ruins with a river of tears running through it. Following the river of tears, he finds his family weeping, because nothing has been right since he left. The story ends on a happy note. He cooks them a meal, they dance together, rebuild their house, and we are left with the image of Okilélé dreaming of searching for his princess and marrying her. Thus the child's encounter with rejection and interment is reversed and the family is appropriately repentant for their behaviour.

Arlene Sardine

Chris Raschka's *Arlene Sardine* appears at first glance to be an upbeat, informative picturebook for children that, the cover tells us, demonstrates the long journey necessary 'to reach your dream'. The style of the book is jaunty and rhythmic, in keeping with an author who has created picture-books on the jazz artists Thelonius Monk and Charlie Parker. A superb example of the intricacies of its syncopated beat may be found in the passage shown on the right with its repeated words expressed in different syntactic structures to create a rhythmic verse that is both aural and visual in its poetic form.

This jazzy tempo finds a complementary partner in the rhythmic design of its colourful illustrations, which take very similarly shaped fish of various sizes swimming in multiple directions, filling pages with colour and movement. Like an effective jazz combo, the individual figures together weave the pattern of the design, and the illustrator must point out Arlene with an arrow sign to identify her amongst the others. Another rhythmic pattern is visually represented in the sardine cans, which portray the different ways that the sardines may lie together in their 'little can, a dingley can':

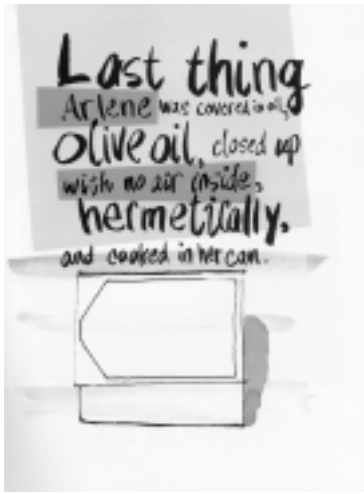
like this:
(2 LAYERS)
or like this:
(CROSSPACKED)
or like this:
(1 LAYER).

The style is jaunty and rhythmic, and the text finds a complementary partner in the rhythmic design of the illustrations

The route by which Arlene moves from her life swimming with her friends to her death and processing is covered in detail. When she was 'grown up enough to be a sardine' she entered a 'big purse net' where she swam around 'for three days and three nights and did not eat anything, so her stomach would be empty'. The net is dumped on deck, and 'here, on the deck of the fishing boat, Arlene died. However, Arlene's story is not over, because she was put on ice, in a box, with her friends.'

From this point on, although she is dead, the procedure for manufacturing her body into a sardine is carefully described: the travel to the factory, grading, salting, smoking, canning, inspecting and cooking. Bizarrely, Arlene retains her name and is described as though she is still alive and continuing to have emotions: she 'felt well rested' on the factory conveyor belt; and she 'was a little nervous' when it was time to be inspected. Having

established that Arlene is still aware and retains her ability to feel, the author continues:



Now, admittedly, this claustrophobic nightmare is mitigated by the rhythmic form of the layout, which offers a somewhat hypnotic effect, taking some of the sting out of the realisation of what is happening. Certainly the manufacturing method is interesting and informative, and the idea of life after death intriguing. And there are significant humorous elements reminiscent of 'Charlie the Tuna' television commercials. (Charlie was always rejected by the canning company because he didn't meet their high standards.) None the less, the glossing over of death as irrelevant and the personalisation of the little fish, giving her a name and describing her feelings so that the reader identifies with her, and her conscious entombment in a coffin devoid of air could be quite upsetting for a sensitive child

Mester Jægeren

Dorte Karrebæk's *Mester Jægeren* [The great hunter], published in Danish, offers another story that demands a sense of humour. As soon as his son is born, the Hunter sets off with him into the forest, where the child is suckled by a series of animals, ranging from a hedgehog to a wild boar. Eventually the Hunter and his son meet up with a family of friendly human-size cats and spend some time with them. The boy becomes attached to the mother cat, and one of the female kittens to the Hunter, so the parents exchange children. The Hunter takes the super-sized kitten home where the mother, surprised by the change of her child's sex and presence of a tail, none the less accepts her as her own, shaves her fur off and attempts to bring her up appropriately.

This story demands a sense of humour

The cat, as cats do, grows up very fast, reaching puberty within the first year at school. Images show her unhappy because she doesn't fit in: though her body is hairless, and she wears a red polka dot dress and heels, she must tie her tail up, and wear four bras to accommodate her figure. Furthermore, she is pictured at night straddling the back fence and howling at the moon. When her father lectures her on her behaviour, she hisses and scratches him. At this moment he suddenly recalls that she is in fact a cat, and that he has left his son in the forest. With his mental image of a sweet boy saying 'good day, father', he sets off to

reclaim him. The reality is different, for the boy has grown up with the cats, his fingernails are claws, his hair is teased into ears, and he has created a substitute tail from fur. None the less, the Hunter drags him home.

Those who enjoy the absurdity of the story may point out its playfulness

The book ends with two vignettes: the girl cat in a tree in the forest still wearing her dress, heels and with red polished claws, howling letters of the alphabet to the despair of the other cats, and the boy dressed in sleek and stripy clothing hunting in the streets. But he is hunting for women, and the final picture shows him in a buxom woman's arms.

Once again, those who enjoy the absurdity and fantasy of the story – mother can't tell the difference between her son and a female cat? father forgets he has swapped his son in the forest? – may point out the story's playfulness, its subtle irony of expression, the unique style of its graphic images and the clear voice of the author taunting the reader.

But other features offer elements which might be very disturbing to a young child. For example, the first double spread shows us that the child is only just born when his father snatches him away. The verso pictures the mother standing in the doorway, arms lifted from her sides as she drips blood on the floor from the birth; blood stains the bed and drops of blood trace the mother's path from the bed to the door. On the bed lie the scissors with which the umbilical cord was apparently cut, while, on the recto, the infant, sitting on his father's shoulders and clutching his hair for balance, is bound round the middle by a bandage which bears a blood spot at the navel.

Father is pictured large, with a gun across his back and a belt of ammunition around his waist. His shadow, and that of the child, fall behind him onto the verso, dwarfing the mother who is pictured a fraction of its size. While the verbal text simply tells us that the Hunter father is taking his son to teach him to hunt, the specific details revealed in the images exaggerate to the point of parody the male stereotype of father expecting his son to follow in his footsteps. This stereotype is further developed in the following double spread which reveals how the infant needs no mother: Karrebæk asserts that in the forest 'der er ikke tid til madre' ['there's no time for mothers'].[3] Instead five different animals permit him to suckle with their young and the infant looks blissful, though Karrebæk adds to the humour by having the child use a hose and tap

The specific details revealed in the images exaggerate to the point of parody

attached to the nipple of one of the creatures.

Clearly it's the Hunter's macho opinion that women aren't needed, because in fact the child must borrow other creatures' mothers to survive. He is weaned when the hedgehog's offspring rebel against the purloining of their mother's milk, and when his first tooth punctures the warthog's nipple; his father offers him a bone instead. The Hunter's use of the animals as wet-nurses for his son is set against his actions as a killer. For example, one picture features the roasting carcass of one animal, while another shows the cats and human beings sleeping beneath a tree from which hang the slaughtered bodies of a rabbit and some other creatures.

The despairing sexuality of the cat is another disturbing feature, but not as disturbing as the image projections in the boy's mind. When he meets the mother cat, he imagines a heart in the shape of two nipple-crowned breasts. As a man his mental image has grown to add rounded buttocks beneath. This macho attitude to women, as simply bodies for men's sustenance and use, continues the theme of man as hunter. Is this book appropriate for children? Certainly Karrebæk's relationship with the reader in the verbal text anticipates a young audience: for example, when the Hunter takes the newborn into the forest, she poses a direct question, 'You are probably wondering, how did the baby get something to eat? Are you wondering about that?' And the graphic images are brilliantly alive, easy to understand and delightfully humorous. Certainly she is sensitive to children's reactions, as is demonstrated by her second edition alteration to one of her illustrations in *Ispigen* to make it less negative.

Is this book appropriate for children?

Interestingly, Karrebæk, who makes off-hand remarks to her readers throughout, ends with a postscript question: 'Hvem ved for ovrigt hvad der er godt for andre? Gor du?' ['Who knows what is best for other people? Do you?'] Karrebæk's question is very pertinent, since it suggests an apprehension of her audience's responses to the picturebook with its stark, violent, even grotesque depiction of and perspective on animal and human nature. Yet her chatty tone, ironic voice and, above all, the humorous vividness of her very recognisable graphic representation help to sweeten her message.

We're All in the Dumps with Jack and Guy

Dumps ***presents a world far from the security of family environment … the shadow of evil hangs over it***

Maurice Sendak's *We're All in the Dumps with Jack and Guy* offers another example that raises questions about its fitness for young picturebook readers. Featuring homeless children living in cardboard boxes on the streets of New York and reproducing

newspapers that speak of unemployment, poverty, starvation and disease, *Dumps* presents a world far from the secure family environment of *The Sign on Rosie's Door* or *Where the Wild Things Are*. The action of the book is frightening: an abandoned child is rejected even by the older street children, and huge rats steal the child and some kittens and then play cards for their lives. The shadow of evil hangs over the scene: the economic picture reveals enormous wealth callously ignoring abject poverty, and the widespread corruption of power is not only symbolised by the rats, but featured in the newspaper stories. Perhaps even darker, memories of the Holocaust also pervade this world as they do that of Sendak's *Dear Mili*. The children are hauled away in a cart going to St Paul's Bakery and Orphanage, and the pairing of children with ovens is echoed in the image of the concentration camp smokestacks that loom in the background.

The tone of Sendak's story, like that of both *Arlene Sardine* and *Mester Jægeren*, is upbeat as it progresses. And, like Raschka's work, *Dumps* is rhythmic and musical, providing a performance aspect that moderates the harshness of the situation it depicts. In counterpoint with the basic rhythm of the first of the two nursery rhymes he has chosen as his basic text, Sendak overlays a second theme pronounced in several voices, and perhaps suggested by an opera production on which he was working at the time:

> ***Look what they did! Look what they did!***
> ***The rats stole the kittens and the poor little kid!***
> ***Rascal! Thief! Let's play bridge***
> ***Let's play for the kittens and the poor little kid!***

This secondary, counterpointing theme dies away as the book moves forward, giving way to the sole recitation of the book's second nursery rhyme, which becomes more positive:

> ***Come, says Jack, let's knock him on the head.***
> ***No, says Guy, let's buy him some bread.***
> ***You buy one loaf, and I'll buy two***
> ***And we'll bring him up as other folks do.***

Images of acceptance and retribution accompany this second part of the book: a giant moon, which at times metamorphoses into a cat, chases away the rats and comforts the kittens; Jack and Guy take the lost child and decide to feed him and take care of him. The moon shelters the children and the kittens, while Mozart and other angels rise into a sky of stars. And the abandoned child takes his place with the other homeless children. Perhaps Sendak considers that the temporary security the child finds in Jack's arms is enough of a happy ending to a children's book.[4] None the less the situation remains unresolved: the abandoned children must struggle on their own to survive in a debased world devoid of either personal or social care.

While Karrebæk has raised the question of what may or may not be good for people, Sendak has taken the issue head-on. Remembering the 'hair-raising' stories his 'incredible story-teller' father told him and his siblings, Sendak notes that he is now accused of 'being a storyteller who tells children inappropriate things', and posits that

> ***I must have learned it at [my father's] knee, because he never thought that any story was inappropriate for kids – if it was a good story. So he was the perfect children's writer, in my opinion, because he told us what we really wanted to hear – all the details – sometimes gruesome, sometimes hilarious, and sometimes bewildering because we didn't understand everything.***[5]

Conclusion

It is apparent from his statement about 'the perfect children's writer' that Sendak holds a view very different from those who aim to protect childhood innocence, and urges us to consider again Griswold's statement regarding the 'horrible burden [we place] on children [and] their ordinariness.'[6] It is clear that the idyllic, protected environment of Milne's Hundred Acre Wood, where every small problem is quickly solved, is very distant from the subjects presented in *Arlene Sardine*, *Mester Jægeren*, and *We're All in the Dumps*. This contrast dramatises the authors' construction of childhood, and is the kind of disparity that has spurred a number of critics to declare the 'death of childhood' and the 'death of children's literature'. These sentiments are countered by a look back to earlier literature for children, which swiftly brings to mind the depiction of events and images that are gruesome and frightening: the dancing feet driven by Andersen's red shoes that have to be chopped off with an axe; *Struwwelpeter*'s grotesqueries; Alice's fearful lack of control over her body and Carroll's frequent and often sly references to death. The Grimms' tales with their stories of attempted murder ('Snow White'), incest ('Thousandfurs'), child abandonment and cannibalistic urges ('Hansel and Gretel') have all been considered appropriate fare for children. And nursery rhymes, like the ones Sendak employs, originally commented upon the social and political world of their time.

A number of critics have declared the death of childhood and the death of children's literature

I believe that enduring works of children's literature are those with dual address, and that picturebooks offer the greatest equality in the reading experience

I believe that enduring works of children's literature are those with dual address that speak to both children and adults, and that picturebooks offer the greatest equality in the reading experience, since pre-literate children can engage in reading the pictures as the adult reads them the verbal text. (In fact, children are often better readers of the graphic details than are the adults.) For pre-literate children, the reading experience is a shared one, and one where the adult is mediator between text and child. With this consideration, works that may seem shocking or inappropriate for young children can be received through the filter of adult interpretation, the presence of the adult reader/parent providing the young child with a sense of security in dealing with potentially disturbing images and ideas.

The picturebooks I have discussed all offer levels of sophistication that are capable of engaging the emotions and intellect of both young and mature readers. And it is clear that the authors, on the whole, envisage children who are resilient, curious and well able to cope with the stark facts of life from which some adults may feel they need protection. In this way, the authors must view their texts as appropriate, providing an introduction to our world rather than constructing a cocoon for children to shelter from it. Like the concerned parent, the authors manage painful and upsetting information about the world by using a variety of techniques that soften its impact; but, as artists, they shy away from presenting 'inappropriate' works that are not truthful to the reality they perceive. Their books, dealing with serious issues, may involve some shocking means of communicating them. That they do this expresses not a view of children as powerless innocents, but rather a commitment to and respect for the children they

address, and for the part they will soon play in life. As Rosemary Johnston sees it, children's authors write for the adult that they hope the children will one day become.[7] The authors' awareness that children are still vulnerable is acknowledged by the techniques they use to communicate and soften their message: rhyme and rhythm (in both verbal and graphic terms), theatrical forms, parody and exaggeration, fantasy and, above all, humour.

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New York: Harper Collins 1993

[1] An article by Jerry Griswold, while pointing out that 'either view of the child – as original sinner or original innocent – is equally exaggerated,' goes further to assert that 'it is the cultural notion of the child's emphatic and malleable innocence … that lures the pedophile' and that this 'mythical and emphatic innocence … creates a horrible burden on children [and] their ordinariness'. 'Burdening Kids with Innocence,' *Los Angeles Times*, August 28, 2002.

[2] Harcourt, Inc.; San Diego 2001, and Henry Holt & Co.; New York 2003.

[3] My thanks to W Glyn Jones for his assistance with the translation.

[4] Certainly in his study, limited to two children's reactions to the book, Laurence Sipe found them aware of its humour and not overly depressed by the depiction of poverty and homelessness. Lawrence R. Sipe, 'The Private and Public Worlds of *We Are All in the Dumps. . .*,' *Children's Literature in Education* 27, no. 2 (1996) 87–107.

[5] Taken from the January 2003 exhibit 'Where the Wild Things Are: Maurice Sendak in his Own Words and Pictures' Skirball Museum, West Los Angeles, California

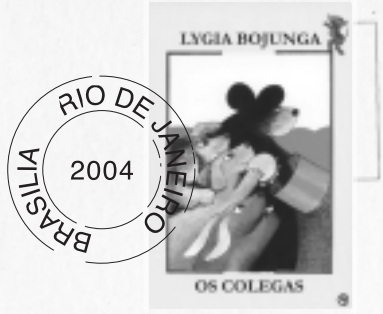
[6] See note 1.

[7] *Viva voce*, NorChiLNet Seminar, Biskops Arno, Sweden, June, 2002

Lygia Bojunga, author of twenty books translated into 19 languages, became the first writer outside Europe and the US to receive the Hans Christian Andersen Award, in 1982. In 2004 she received the Swedish government's Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award. This is the 50th edition of "Os Colegas", Bojunga's first children's book.

Named Best Book for Children by Fundacao National do Livro Infantil e Juvenil, Brazil's IBBY section, this book deals in a manner accessible to young readers with a socially relevant issue: joining forces to better face the hardships of life. The five characters are each disadvantaged in some way. Two are stray dogs who meet while scavenging in a garbage can and become friends. They are joined by a third dog who has run away from a mistress who insists on treating and dressing her as a little girl. Next come a bear who has escaped from the zoo and a rabbit abandoned by his parents. The five become companions who care for each other. While struggling to survive, they help each other to enjoy life. Animals endowed with human characteristics demonstrate existential values: freedom to speak, to live in peace, to work and to assert their rights. These concepts are incorporated subtly into the story through colloquial language and metaphor.

Elizabeth Serra



LYGIA BOJUNGA (GIAN CALVI illus)

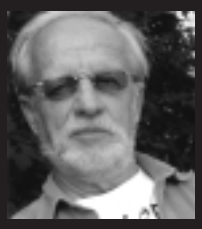
"OS COLEGAS" [THE COMPANIONS]

Rio de Janeiro: Casa Lygia Bojunga 2004
144pp ISBN 858902007X (fiction, 8–12)

How Much Cruelty Can a Children's Picturebook Stand?

The Case of Wolf Erlbruch's *Die Menschenfresserin*

BY HORST KÜNNEMANN



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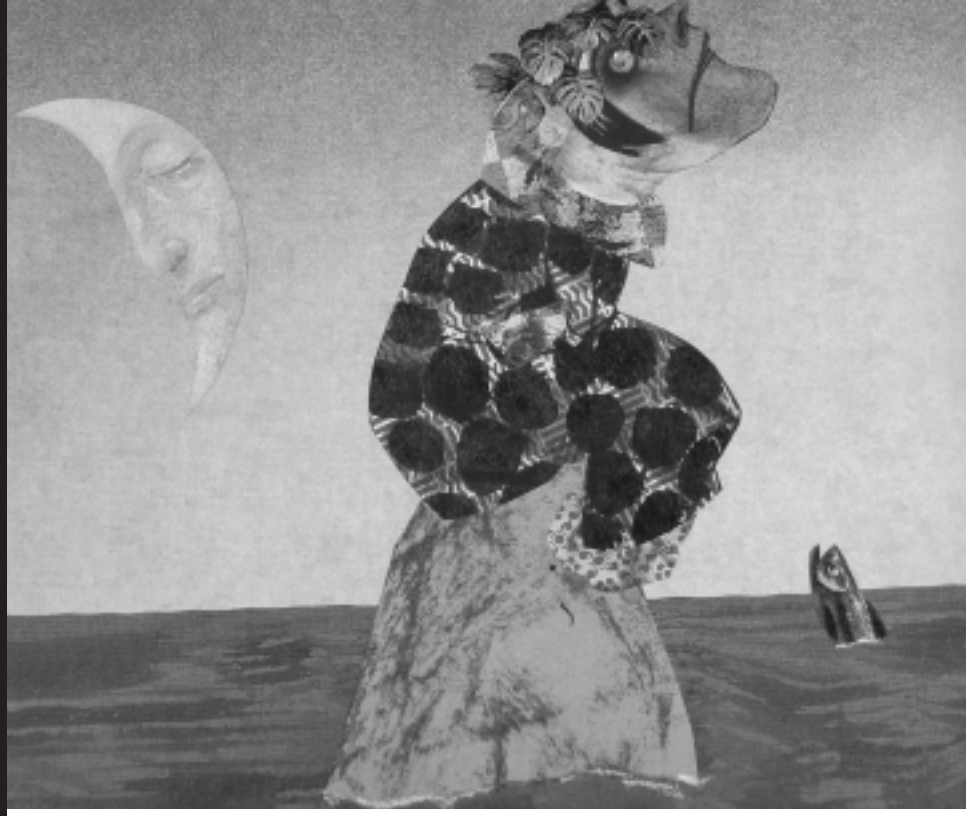
Translated by Eva-Maria Metcalf



In Horst Künnemann's opinion, no genre within children's literature has traditionally been more constrained than the picturebook. But the work of Wolf Erlbruch challenges traditional squeamishness

No genre within children's literature has traditionally been more constrained by taboos than the picturebook. As in most countries where picturebooks are produced, certain topics were proscribed in German picturebooks during most of the 20th century: bodily functions (such as urinating, defacating), sexuality, child abuse, dysfunctional families, handicaps, alcohol consumption, poverty, war, the atom bomb and the refugee problem. In the decades after World War II, such traditional taboos still operated in German children's literature, and the majority of picturebooks produced in the German-language area (Germany, Austria, part of Switzerland) in the 1950s to the mid-1960s present a scenario of absolute harmlessness, focusing on that which is cute and amusing. Fables and fairy-tale-like narratives generally featured anthropomorphic animals as main characters. Conflicts or crises in the plot are there merely to demonstrate the existence of a stable world harmony; in other words, conflicts seem to exist for the sole purpose of giving the story a happy ending. The lion's share of picturebooks were created predominantly in a mix of naturalism

and realism, conveying to adult book purchasers and child readers a view of the world as it should be, rather than as it actually is. This deplorable situation changed very little up to the end of the century, with the exception of half a dozen innovative German children's book publishers (such as Peter Hammer, Hanser, Beltz & Gelberg, Michael Neugebauer, Picus and Bajazzo), who provide opportunities for young artists to experiment with new picturebook codes.

Traditional concepts of the picturebook were first questioned in the German market by foreign illustrators

Traditional concepts of the picturebook were first questioned in the German market by illustrators from Scandinavia, Great Britain and the US, who challenged tradition and broke taboos. Children's book illustrators from former socialist countries, especially Poland and (the former) Czechoslovakia, supplied convincing evidence for the thesis that picturebooks could expand upon folkloristic elements by using impressionistic, surrealistic and cubist stylisations and still be grasped and understood by many children. Furthermore, new themes and first attempts at emancipated picturebooks broke open years of fossilisation in children's literature. Eventually, taboo subjects surfaced in picturebooks that were produced and published in Germany (both in domestic productions and in translations).

Without a doubt, the picturebook today has experienced an expansion of its scope and potential, taking great delight in experimentation. Parents and educational institutions have shown increased willingness to accept provocative titles that have given rise to discussion and debate. Still, one thing is clear: these experimental and extraordinary works make up a minority literature. Exceptions only confirm the rule.

The Work of Wolf Erlbruch

In 2003, Wolf Erlbruch was awarded the special illustrator's award (given to recognise a body of work over time, not for a particular title) within the framework of the Deutscher Jugendliteraturpreis (German youth literature award), the highest form of recognition for a picturebook artist in Germany. Since 1985, he had created fifteen picturebooks and oversized children's and family calendars, which had been well received. By the end of the 20th century, he had won numerous awards, among them the Deutscher Jugendliteraturpreis for the best children's picturebook of 1993 with *Das Bärenwunder* [The bear miracle] (1992).[1]

Early on, Erlbruch had developed a highly unique collage style by cutting and mounting banknotes, old bills, sheet music or Japanese stamps on wrapping paper that had previously been illustrated with animal and human figures, to create the final composition. In the eyes of adult mediators and critics, these creations, replete with comical people and animal figures, were stylistically close to the collages of Kurt Schwitters and the work of the Dadaists and Surrealists. Erlbruch's exaggerated caricatures lend his works a personal cachet, and his works are of a high quality and demand a careful and skilful reading.

Breaking taboos

Erlbruch is an artist who has never bothered to separate children's and adult literature, and many of his books break taboos; but the initial shock that may be experienced on first looking at his books dissolves after repeated observation and critical reading. I believe that the spatial and temporal distancing effect that Erlbruch's colouring and artistic design elicits in older and adult readers should also be available to children.

From the very start, Erlbruch had demonstrated a tendency to cross boundaries and to

break taboos. In 1990, Erlbruch's most successful work to date was published – *Vom kleinen Maulwurf, der wissen wollte, wer ihm auf dem Kopf gemacht hat* (published in English as *The Story of the Little Mole who Knew it was None of his Business*). Erlbruch's pictures show quite unambiguously what the text, by Werner Holzwarth, only hints at – an angry mole with a large turd on his head wonders who did this to him and searches for the perpetrator of this outrageous act. This wild 'road movie' in picturebook form caused a considerable stir among adult mediators and book buyers, and neither objections to nor praise for the book have diminished yet. Perhaps it was the ongoing controversy about the book that ensured its place in the limelight and its survival in the publisher's backlists. The story has also been published in various formats as mini-books and tapes. By the year 2000, it had been translated into eighteen languages, and more than a million copies had been sold.

From the very start, Erlbrach had demonstrated a tendency to cross boundaries and to break taboos

Erlbruch has illustrated the works of a number of authors (see bibliography), and he has also worked as a writer/illustrator, making use of personal and family experiences in dramatic and humorous stories, such as *Leonard* (1992), in which his son is the model for the hero, who learns to overcome his fear of dogs.

Die Menschenfresserin – *dealing with cannibalism*

In 1996, the picturebook *L'ogresse en pleurs/Die Menschenfresserin* [The weeping ogress], written (originally in French) by Valérie Dayre and illustrated by Erlbruch, appeared on the French and German markets. The author had previously been known for her screenplays, adult novels and her work for the theatre; and by then, Erlbruch was internationally established as an illustrator of children's books.

With *Die Menschenfresserin,* Erlbruch took yet another step into new territory. The thirty-two pages of this picturebook suffice to present a drama of cosmic proportions, ending with a view of the sky in which the constellations are left in total disarray. The text begins, 'Once there was a woman who was so evil that she wanted to eat a child.' The corresponding double-page illustration shows a female figure in a check dress rupturing the format. With the corners of her mouth pulled down and her massive chin she signals sinister determination. Even more frightening are her eyes, which resemble red-framed glass eyes. Equally alarming are the glass eyes in the masked faces (similar to pictures created by Stasys Eydrigevicius, who was born in Lithuania and is working in Poland). The giant's body posture is like that of an ape shortly before attacking. The title page,

showing an innocent young girl playing hopscotch and blithely jumping back and forth between heaven and hell, foreshadows the danger ahead.

Cannibalism, as the title suggests, is the main theme of the book. This tradition reaches far back into prehistoric times, as historians, archaeologists and ethnologists will confirm,[2] and allusions to cannibalism can be found in children's stories and particularly in the folktales collected by the Brothers Grimm (starting in 1812). In 'How a Little Child Played at Slaughtering with Another Child', 'Snow White', 'The Devil with the Three Golden Hairs', 'The Singing Bone' and most intensely in the *plattdeutsch* (dialect) version of the 'Tale of the Almond Tree', readers encounter scenes of children massacring one another, fratricide and eerie stories of a father unwittingly consuming his child. Some of these tales have origins that reach back more than a thousand years.

Valérie Dayre further increases our anticipation when she continues on the following spread, 'She had already done so many bad things in her life that I cannot describe them here, so terrible are they …' Such suggestions naturally stimulate the adult's active imagination and even more so the imagination of children, which is given to fantasy. Erlbruch shows the giantess, who is determined to commit further atrocities, progressing from the left to the right side of the page. Behind her on the horizon, a ship is sinking, its smoke stack still smoking, undoubtedly evoking the *Titanic* disaster and foreshadowing a tragic ending. The following spreads, featuring terse text, show the giantess hunting for different kinds of children. They do not seem to satisfy her craving, and her greed increases at the same pace as terrified parents struggle to keep their children off the street.

The arch of a bridge (which represents the world), over which floats a full moon with an indifferent expression, typifies Erlbruch's picturebook design. Bizarre and comical figures, a wide coastal landscape under big skies, and distorted parts of buildings in a style reminiscent of cubism signal an environment that does not seem to be of this world. Next to our real, somewhat banal, everyday world, another artificial, artistic world emerges that quite obviously follows different laws. Erlbruch uses his imagery to distance the observer from the growing suspense that is threatening to escalate into an existential catastrophe, in order to help the observer to cope with what is to come.

While parents play with their children in the shelter of their homes, the lamenting, begging giantess is racing through empty streets. She rejects the fruit she is offered as a substitute. Blinded by greed, she finally comes

upon a sweet, gentle-looking little boy, beautifully coiffed, who is standing on a table, playing a bandonium (a smaller rectangular version of an accordion). The following spread, coloured in explosive yellow on the left, depicts on the right a dressed-up, loudly screaming monkey who is beating his drums. The monkey explains to the reader what she sees and we cannot: the giant mother has devoured her own child!

The monkey explains to the reader: the giant mother has devoured her own child

After realising her grave mistake, the giantess comes to her senses to a certain extent. Before eating the child, she had been beside herself, overwhelmed by her greed. Yet, even after the deed, she seems without remorse. She conceals her own guilt and laments, 'He has been taken from me.' She promises to improve, becomes capable of love and earns our compassion, if we had not already empathised with her obsession early on.

Reaction to Die Menschenfresserin

Even though the range of picturebooks published in the 1970s and 1980s had been exploring new themes, no picturebook had appeared in German with comparable shock value. Professional critics from the daily papers and professional journals reacted with considerable approval and compared Erlbruch's work to

No picturebook had appeared in Germany with comparable shock value

the metaphysical world of the Italian artist de Chirico, to the surrealism of Max Ernst, to Japanese woodcut art and to the rich stylistic diversity of Picasso. The high artistic level of the picturebook was recognised, and it was correctly identified as Dadaist or Surrealist in its theatrical spectacle and its cleverly staged psychodrama; the book's closeness to the often shocking children's stories of the British writer Roald Dahl was also recognised.

For family mediators, preschools and schools, these arguments proved to be moderately helpful. The visual rendition simultaneously creates closeness to the problem and distance by means of the technique of alienation,[3] through which a critical approach becomes possible in the first place. Should children be confronted with such a crass theme? The question had previously been raised by publishers, booksellers and local bookstore owners. 'Children are entitled to illustrations that have a certain crudeness,' Wolf Erlbruch himself has argued.[4] However, artistically demanding critics who might add the book to their collections would not read it to their own children all the same, an outcome that could not make the publisher happy. Notwithstanding the success of *The Story of the Little Mole …* (which had sales of more than 1.3 million copies), only 15,000 copies of *Die Menschenfresserin* were printed on publication – though that compares with a norm of four to six thousand copies for the first printing of most new books.

Conclusion

Much remains unclear in our dealings with picturebooks concerning marginal experiences. The methods of creating an adequate picturebook experience are unclear. One possible approach to a picturebook featuring the theme of cannibalism could conceivably begin with a clarification of the expression 'I love you so much that I could eat you up.' With Wolf Erlbruch's difficult book as an example, educators – preschool and primary school teachers – can

Bibliography of Wolf Erlbruch's work

(Where English titles appear in brackets, this is for information only – it does not necessarily mean that the book exists in English translation. See note 1 for places of publication.)

1985 *Der Adler, der nicht fliegen wollte* [The eagle who didn't want to fly] Peter Hammer (text by James Aggrey)
1990 *Vom kleinen Maulwurf, der wissen wollte, wer ihm auf den Kopf gemacht hat* Peter Hammer (text by Werner Holzwarth) (available in English from Chrysalis Books as *The Story of the Little Mole who Knew it was None of his Business*)
1990 *Die fürchterlichen Fünf* [The terrible five] Peter Hammer
1991 *Leonard* Peter Hammer (winner of the prize for illustration of the Gesellschaft für evangelische Publizistik)
1992 *Das Bärenwunder* [The Bear Miracle] Peter Hammer (winner of the Deutscher Jugendliteraturpreis – Bilderbuch 1993)
1993 *Die Abenteuer von Eduard Speck* [The Adventures of Eduard Speck] Hanser (text by John Saxby)
1993 *Ratten* [Rats] (in the series 'Die tollen Hefte') Maro
1993 and **2003** *Wolf Erlbruch's Kinderzimmerkalender 1994/2004* (a children's calendar) Peter Hammer
1994 *Das ist doch kein Papagei* [That's not a parrot] Hanser (text by Rafik Schami)
1994 *Die Werkstatt der Schmetterlinge* [The butterflies' workshop] Peter Hammer (text by Gioconda Belli)
1994 *Wolf Erlbruchs Kinderzimmerkalender 1995* (a children's calendar) Peter Hammer
1995 *Frau Meier, die Amsel* [Mrs Meier the blackbird] Peter Hammer
1995 *Zehn grüne Heringe* [Ten green herrings] Hanser
1995 *Wolf Erlbruchs Kinderzimmerkalender 1996* (a children's calendar) Peter Hammer
1996 *Mein kleiner Hund Mister* [My little dog Mister] Carlsen (text by Thomas Winding)
1996 *L'ogresse en pleurs / Die Menschenfresserin* [The weeping ogress] Éditions Milan/Peter Hammer (text by Valérie Dayre)
1996 *Wolf Erlbruchs Kinderzimmerkalender 1997* (a children's calendar) Peter Hammer
1996 *Wolf Erlbruchs Kinderzimmerzirkuskalender 1997* (a children's circus calendar) Peter Hammer
1997 *Wolf Erlbruchs Kinderzimmeralphabetkalender 1998* (a children's alphabet calendar) Peter Hammer
1998 *Wolf Erlbruchs Kinderzimmerkalender 1999* (a children's calendar) Peter Hammer
1998 *Mein kleiner Hund Mister in der Nacht* [My little dog Mister at night] Carlsen
1998 *Neue Abenteuer von Eduard Speck* [The new adventures of Eduard Speck] Hanser
1998 *Die wundersame Reise des kleinen Krötenichs* [The fantastic voyage of the little toad] Hanser (text by Mirjam Pressler and Yaakov Shabtai)
1998 *Das Hexeneinmaleins* [The witch's multiplication tables] Hanser (text by Goethe)
1998 *De Beer in de speeltuin/Das Bär auf dem Spielplatz* [The bear in the playground] Leopold/Beltz & Gelberg (text by Dolf Verroen)
1998 *Twee druppels water* [Two drops of water] Leopold (text by Carli Biessels)
1998 *Engel und anderes Geflügel* [Angel and other fowl] Rowohlt (text by MC Graeff)
1998 *Auf dem Strom* [On the stream] Carlsen (text by Hermann Schulz)
1999 *'s Nachts/Nachts* Stichting CPNB (Amsterdam)/Peter Hammer
2000 *Neues ABC Buch* [New ABC] Antje Kunstmann (text by Karl Phillip Moritz)
2003 *Am Anfang* [In the beginning] Peter Hammer (text by Bart Moeyaert)
2003 *En Hemel voor Beer/Ein Himmel für den kleinen Bären* [A heaven for little bear] Leopold/Hanser (text by Dolf Verroen)
2004 *La grande question/Die grosse Frage* [The big question] Éditions Être/Peter Hammer

In addition, Wolf Erlbruch has so far created over seventy covers for Peter Hammer's African, ethnological and narrative titles.

experience the difficulties of mediating picturebooks. Age-specificity, psychosocial aspects, societal respect or lingering taboos could be incorporated into a critical evaluation of the book. The fact that at least seven thousand copies of the first edition of *Die Menschenfresserin* have already found their way into the hands of readers is evidence enough that many individuals and professional groups are on their way to exploring the new territory of the modern picturebook.

1 Erlbruch's major works were first published by Peter Hammer Verlag in Wuppertal. Since 1993, they have also been published by Hanser (Munich), Carlsen (Hamburg), Beltz & Gelberg (Weinheim), Maro (Augsburg); and occasionally they are published in France and in the Netherlands by Leopold (Amsterdam).

2 *Menschen essen Menschen: Die Welt der Kannibalen* [People eat people: The world of cannibals] by Christian Spiel (Frankfurt: Fischer Paperbacks, 1974, with an extensive bibliography) is only one of numerous studies on the topic.

3 Bertolt Brecht invented the term *Verfremdung*, which we may translate as 'alienation', to mean keeping a distance from events and persons instead of identifying with them.

4 In a *Bookmarket* interview 1996.

Testifying to the talents of the 2004 winner of the Hans Christian Andersen Award is this popular picturebook, currently in print and published since its first edition in a variety of formats, including a board book, an audio tape, and a 'big book'.

'Owl Babies', one of this gifted author's best-loved titles, bears all the hallmarks of a Waddell picturebook. Each word has its rightful place in the carefully crafted, spare, uncluttered text. Warm and engaging characters draw the reader into the narrative. Dialogue and repetition invite participation and encourage identification with the emotions expressed. A satisfying outcome provides a young reader or listener with reassurance.

Three baby owls live in a hole in a tree with their mother. Waking one night to find her gone, they worry and cope in their individual ways. Sarah, the eldest, tries to be strong and optimistic. Percy, the middle one, follows her lead, struggling to be brave but imagining the terrible things that might have happened. Only little Bill, with the repeated refrain, 'I want my Mummy,' reveals his true state of anxiety. As the night wears on, optimism falters and they huddle together on Sarah's branch to wish for Mother Owl's return.

Patrick Benson's atmospheric illustrations, executed in dark, shadowy colours, work in perfect harmony with the text. Line and texture are effectively employed, bringing the little owls to life and supporting the realisation of the narrative. 'Owl Babies' is a memorable book, ideal for sharing.

Lucy O'Dea

MARTIN WADDELL AND PATRICK BENSON

"OWL BABIES"

London: Walker Books 1992 32pp
ISBN 0744521661 (picturebook, 4–7)

Sumo, Japanese wrestling, has its roots in ancient mythology. Two wrestlers, naked except for a loincloth, fight on a circular 'ring' until one is thrown down or pushed out. As you turn the pages of this book, you see the traditional interiors of the Sumo stadium. You learn the ancient history of the sport, and the meaning of its every movement and formality. You experience a wrestler's typical day, including details of his training, dress and diet. Some popular winning tricks are illustrated. The work of those behind the scenes, including that of hairdressers, is shown. Drawings and photographs are clear and attractive. Descriptive text, while simple and easy to understand, has touches of an elevated style appropriate to an introduction to this traditional national sport.

A brief autobiography of Mai-no-umi, the retired popular wrestler who supervised the book, provides added interest in this comprehensive study.

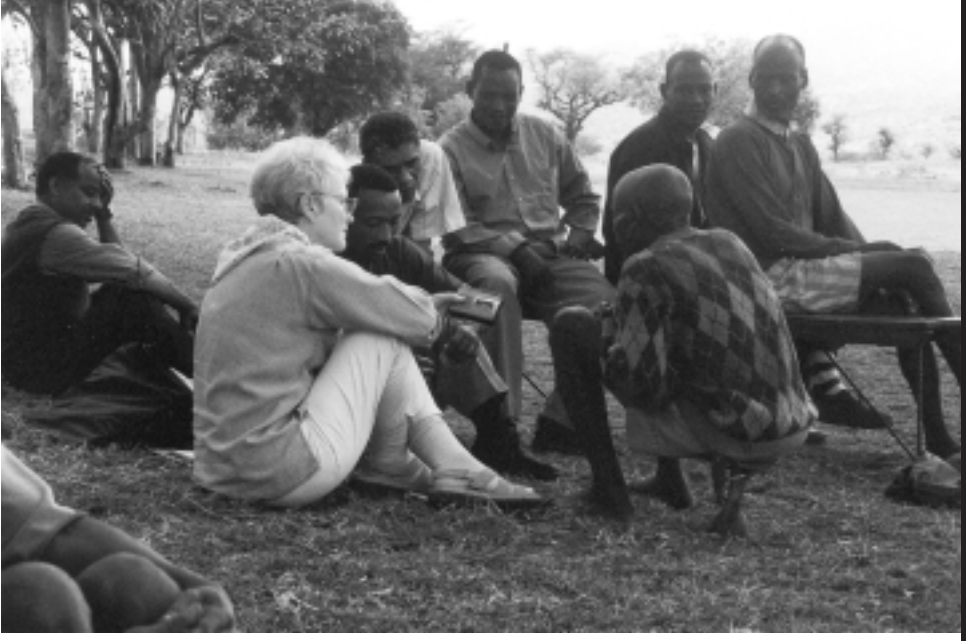
Kimiko Abe

SACHIE ONO

"HAJIMETE NO OH-ZUMO"

[An introduction to Sumo]

Tokyo: Iwasaki Shoten 2003 47pp
ISBN 4265055915 (non-fiction, 8+)



Stories from the Source of the Nile

Collecting Stories in Ethiopia

Children's writer Elizabeth Laird travelled the length and breadth of Ethiopia collecting some of the rich treasury of folk stories of that country and its diverse cultures. Here she describes the amazing project in which she found herself engaged

To begin with a confession. You might suppose, dear reader, that the proper person to collect folk stories would be an ethnologist, an anthropologist or at the very least a folklorist. I am none of these. I was once a teacher of English to speakers of other languages, and, much later in life, became a writer of children's books. Neither of these career paths was an adequate preparation for the amazing project I found myself engaged in, which I shall now describe to you.

What was this project? In a nutshell, it was to travel the length and breadth of Ethiopia, visiting as many as possible of the different ethnic groups, in order to collect some of their rich treasuries of folk stories. The aim was to rewrite the stories in simplified English, and publish them in readers suitable for schoolchildren in Grades 3 and 4, one or two for most of the fourteen regions of Ethiopia. In this way, Oromo children would learn English using their own Oromo stories, Nuer children would read Nuer stories, Afar children, Afar stories, and so on. A secondary aim was to publish as many of these stories as possible for native speakers of English in Europe and America, in order to showcase this unknown aspect of Ethiopian culture.

BY ELIZABETH LAIRD

Elizabeth Laird is the author of several novels for children and young people, including The Garbage King

Why Ethiopia? The short answer was that Ethiopia was a country I knew well, having taught there in the 1960s, and visited since. The more important answer was the extraordinary richness and diversity of Ethiopian culture.

Ethiopia claims to be the oldest Christian country in the world. Over centuries of isolation, Ethiopian Christianity developed in a unique way, preserving extremely ancient rituals and Judaic practices. At the same time, many parts of Ethiopia have strong Islamic traditions, while in the remoter regions older religious beliefs and practices of different kinds still hold sway. The visible signs of Ethiopia's fascinating history are evident in her unique, centuries-old rock-hewn churches, her 17-century palaces, her extraordinary fresco art and manuscript paintings. But her less tangible heritage of myth, legend and folk story is much less well known.

The story-collecting project was initiated by the British Council in Ethiopia, under the aegis of its then inspired director, Michael Sargent. The hard work of organisation was done first by Michael Daniel Ambatchew, then by Dr Solomon Hailu. They worked in close collaboration with the Ethiopian Regional Cultural Bureaux, which operate in each of the fourteen regions of Ethiopia. Before my visit, the regional cultural officer would assemble storytellers, arrange for local translators (there are more than 75 languages in Ethiopia) and oversee all the practical arrangements. Without exception, in every region, the officials concerned entered into the project with great enthusiasm. There were often complications. Many narrators whose mother tongues were minority languages such as Anuak, Haderinya or Afarinya, could not speak Amharic, the *lingua franca* of Ethiopia. It was often necessary for their stories to be translated first into Amharic before they could be rendered into English.

The stories were taped, first in the mother tongue, and then often in the Amharic translation. I would work on them with the Amharic translator (Michael Daniel Ambatchew or Mesfin Habte-Mariam). After the trip was over, I would rewrite the stories in carefully graded English, so that they were easy enough for new, young readers to understand. The stories would then be returned to the regions for the storytellers to check and approve. The series illustrator (Yosef Kebede, a talented artist from Addis Ababa), would work on the internal artwork, while an illustrator from the region would create the cover. The design and layouts were done in Britain, and the printing was done in Ethiopia. Once finished, the books were returned to

Without exception, in every region, the officials concerned entered into the project with great enthusiasm

the regions for distribution to the schools. To date, nine books have been produced, and eight more are in the pipeline.

This complex joint venture was truly experimental. There is little experience of publishing children's books in Ethiopia, except for school textbooks, which are centrally produced and distributed by the Ministry of Education. Our books were not part of the government-funded curriculum, but supplementary, support materials, open to a wider readership. Producing these books has been a new experience for everyone involved. There was a serious hiccup over the question of copyright. Ethiopians are, correctly, wary of allowing their heritage to be 'patented' by outsiders. At the same time, it was important to establish the concept of copyright, without which no publishing industry can work, and to protect the author, illustrators and producers of the books. No copyright can apply to the stories themselves, as they are in the public domain and the property of the Ethiopian people. They can be retold in any version by anyone. The actual words and pictures used in the books remain of course the copyright of the author and artists.

Ethiopians are, correctly, wary of allowing their heritage to be 'patented' by outsiders

It's impossible, in a short article, to convey any sense of the excitement of those extraordinary journeys, the often slow and difficult expeditions across the vast, magnificent landscape, the thrill of meeting the storytellers, their growing confidence, and the constant surprise and delight in the stories as they unfolded. Some sessions took place in the cool, windswept highlands. The storyteller might be a farmer, a merchant, a schoolteacher, a deacon, a government official, a Coptic nun, and once was the hereditary bard to the long-defunct royal house of Bonga in the southwest. There were several sessions in the hot town of Assayita in the Danakil region, while the camel market proceeded outside, and the storytellers refreshed themselves with 'chat', a stimulating herb. In Gambella, in the steamy southwest, our first session was held in the prison, and the second under the mango trees by the banks of the Baro river. Stories were told on the shores of Lake Tana, the source of the Blue Nile, in towns and villages, homes, schools, offices, under shady trees, or round smoky, incense-scented fires.

There is a perception in the west that folk stories were created for children, and that children are their primary audience

There is a perception in the west that folk stories were created for children, and that children are their primary audience. This has only been the case since they were written down and ceased to be part of an oral tradition. Some tales, of course, are clearly 'teaching' stories, with a clear aim: to impart good manners, to provide moral examples, to advise or to warn. These are obviously aimed at children. But stories in Ethiopia are usually told by adults to adults, and enjoyed by everyone. It's sad that adults in the west no longer listen to and enjoy traditional stories, as many of them have profound and eternal meanings. In many European homes, even the Bible is undergoing the same process of infantilisation. Noah, for example, is treated as primarily a children's story, and often sanitised in the telling, while a Noah's ark is a popular child's toy.

In Ethiopia, adults still 'own' their stories, and often, after a story session, there is a discussion on the story's meaning, which can range widely over questions of morality, politics,

Types of Stories

Creation stories: Perhaps my favourite of all, these stories are common throughout Africa. They may explain, for example, why the crow is black, how the tortoise got his shell, how fire came to the earth, how the first man planted food.

Origin myths: These describe the origin of a particular ethnic group, and may narrate how a line of kings came into being, or how a particular custom became enshrined as law. These stories are often highly original, and differ greatly from one part of Ethiopia to another.

Animal fables: These stories abound throughout Africa, and the same cast of characters appears again and again. The cunning fox, the tyrannical lion, the tricky monkey and the untrustworthy hyena are always recognisable. These stories are often the vehicle for simple moral teaching and are widely reproduced in school textbooks. Similar stories are familiar to European readers of Aesop or La Fontaine.

Inheritance stories: There are so many versions of this basic story that I have given it a classification to itself. It begins with the dying father explaining to his three sons how his property is to be divided between them. In some tellings, the sons are sent out on journeys, in others, they have to perform tasks nearer home. These stories are strongly didactic, and some employ sophisticated and beautiful imagery.

Ogres, wizards, witches, jinns and were-creatures: Different creatures with magical powers are to be met with in the various regions of Ethiopia. In the east, where the influence of Arabian stories is strongest, jinns are common. In Gondar, there is a particular tradition of magicians who have the evil eye and can turn their victims into zombies. In the far southwest, there are many tales of cannibalistic ogres. Everywhere, were-hyenas are to be met with, along with demons who live in rivers or caves, and various kinds of seers and soothsayers. Some of these stories bear striking resemblances to European fairy tales. I encountered versions of 'Hansel and Gretel', for example, all over Ethiopia, as well as delightfully humorous (and much more interesting!) versions of 'Chicken Licken' and the mother goat and her two little kids.

Story cycles of cunning tricksters
Elsewhere in Africa, the Anansi stories are very well known. In Ethiopia, similar cycles of tales revolve around Aleke Gebre Hanna in the Central Highlands, Hirsi and Kabaalaf in the eastern Somali lowlands, and Abu Nawas and Nasreddin in Muslim Harar. A delightful new cycle centres round the antics of a foolish communist official in the time of the previous Stalinist regime under Mengistu Haile Mariam.

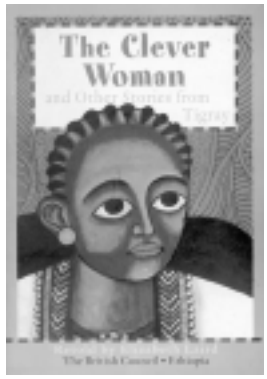
Clever women: I was told so many stories about clever women (was this a subtle form of flattery?) that I gave these a category to themselves. These stories often show how an intelligent wife rescues a foolish husband from the consequences of his actions, or frustrates the unwanted attentions of a would-be adulterous suitor.

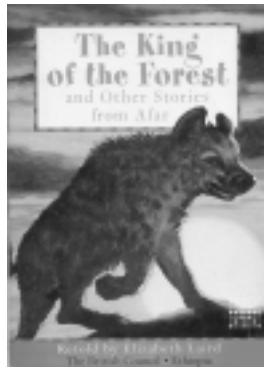
Philosophical stories: Some stories were so profound and unsettling that they didn't fit comfortably into my rather *ad hoc* categories.

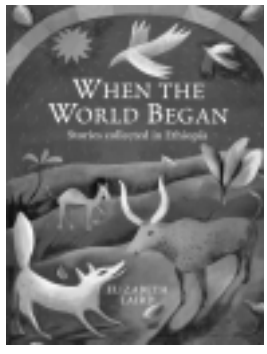
history and philosophy. Sadly, this practice is in decline. Increasing literacy, the introduction of radio and, most damagingly of all, television, inevitably sounds the death knell to a vibrant oral tradition. Already, young people are ignorant of their grandparents' treasuries of stories. The memories of the literate are short.

Some of the stories I was told echo Aesop, others have extraordinary resonances with the Old Testament or the Arabian Nights

Rich oral folk canons exist (or once existed) in many parts of the world, but Ethiopia must have one of the most fascinating. The country is a patchwork of different languages, cultures and religions. It lies on the crossroads between Africa and the Middle East. Its early kingdom of Axum formed the farthest limit of the ancient world known to the Greeks, Egyptians and Romans. In the third century CE, the Persian prophet Mani named Axum as one of the four great kingdoms of the earth, along with Babylon/Persia, Rome and China. It's no wonder that some of the stories I was told echo Aesop, others have extraordinary resonances with the Old Testament, while still others mirror fairy stories familiar to us from European collections or from the Arabian Nights of old Baghdad.







As well as this long indigenous history, there has been the constant cultural refreshment brought by the trade routes that criss-cross the country. For millennia, salt has been mined in the Danakil region in the east and transported across the highlands to the Sudan and beyond as far west as Timbuktoo. Coffee, which originated in the southeast of Ethiopia, has been exported since time immemorial. Incense, hides and honey have long travelled down these ancient roads. At the same time, given the rugged geography of this vast land, there are many peoples in the remoter regions who have been almost untouched by influences from beyond their own small ethnic groups. Their stories are often unusual and intriguing.

Gradually, as my cassettes and notebooks filled with stories, I began to see how they might be classified. This, I must confess, is where a training as a folklorist would have been invaluable. Instead, I used my own rule of thumb, a rough and ready system, which I offer to you here. Anyone familiar with folk tales from any part of the world will recognise many of these types of story.

It is with one of the unsettling philosophical stories that I would like to end this article. It was told to me by Yisihak Aldade, as we sat by the lake in Awassa in the south of Ethiopia, surrounded by the flutterings of birds.

Everything Changes, Everything Passes

told by Yisihak Aldade

Once there was a merchant, who travelled far and wide through all the land of Ethiopia, selling his wares.

One day, as he was going along the road, he saw a farmer who was ploughing his field, but yoked to the plough in the place of an ox there was a man. The farmer was whipping the man cruelly.

'Go on, you lazy good for nothing,' he was shouting. 'Pull harder!'

The merchant wept at this pitiful sight. The man pulling the plough looked up and saw his distress.

'Don't cry for me,' he said. 'Don't stop your journey for me.'

The merchant was impressed by the man's courage and dignity.

'This is wrong,' he said, 'that one person should set another under a yoke as if he was an ox.'

But the enslaved man said, 'Listen, my friend. Everything changes, everything passes, and my suffering will pass too.'

So the merchant, shaking his head sadly, went on his way.

A few years later, he returned, and he remembered the strange sight he'd seen.

He stopped a passer-by and said to her, 'A few years ago, in this very place, I saw a man pulling a plough like an ox. What's happened to him? Can he still be alive?'

The woman laughed.

'He didn't die,' she said. 'God took pity on his misery. He gave him riches and honour and that same man is now the king of the whole region. If you don't believe me, go and see him for yourself.'

So the merchant hurried to the king's palace and slipped in through the gate. The man he remembered, dressed in fine clothes, was sitting in state, surrounded by crowds of people. The merchant was so happy for him he laughed out loud.

The king called out to him, 'Why are you laughing, stranger?'

'Well, sir,' the merchant replied. 'As I travelled through this place a few years ago, I saw you pulling a plough like an ox and I wept for you. I was on the same road today and I heard that you had become king so I came here to rejoice in your happiness.'

The king smiled.

'Come,' he said, 'and sit beside me. Let's eat and drink.'

When they had finished eating, the king said, 'My son, God will bless you for remembering the poor man under the yoke.'

'How could I forget you!' the merchant cried. 'And to see you now like this! It's marvellous! Wonderful!'

'Yes,' said the king, 'but everything changes, everything passes, and this happiness of mine will pass too.'

The merchant went on his way, but a few years later, he returned once more, and hurried straight to the palace to see how the king was faring. He ran in through the gates, but there, wearing fine robes, was another king, a man he had never seen before.

'Who is this?' he said to the people around him. 'What happened to your old king?'

'He died,' they told him. 'This man is king now.'

'Show me the old king's grave,' the merchant said sadly, 'so that I can pay him my respects.'

So the people took him to the graveyard and showed him the stone under which the king was buried. An inscription was carved on the tombstone.

'Everything changes, everything passes,' it said. 'And

even this will pass too.'

Sadly, the merchant went on his way.

Many years later, when he came again, he hurried to the graveyard.

Whatever else has happened, the grave will still be there, he thought. That cannot change. That cannot pass.

But a modern city had grown up in the meantime and the graveyard had disappeared. The grass, the shady trees and the tombstones had all gone. Workmen were carrying bricks and panes of glass and trucks were spilling out tons of sand and cement.

The merchant called to a workman and said, 'My friend, there was a graveyard here once, and on one of the headstones there was an inscription. Do you know where it has gone?'

'I remember that stone,' the man said, 'but you won't find it now. The city's master plan has swept the graveyard and all the headstones away, and in its place is that great building. Look.'

The merchant looked up to where the man was pointing and saw a modern building, gleaming with glass and new concrete. He shook his head.

'My friend was right,' he said. 'Everything changes, everything passes, and one day even this great building will disappear too.'

A version of this story was first published in When the World Began, Stories Collected in Ethiopia *by Elizabeth Laird, illustrated by Yosef Kebede, Emma Harding, Griselda Holderness and Lydia Monks, Oxford University Press, 2000.*

Bear is in love with butterfly. He finds her beautiful, as beautiful to him as heaven, the most beautiful place he can imagine. Since she ignores him, he does everything to draw her attention. He paints red hearts on the trees, but butterfly finds it all very messy. He knits a coat for butterfly, but she says it looks like an egg-cosy. Next, he builds a very high house for her, but butterfly suffers, inexplicably, from a fear of heights. Finally, bear gives up, cuts everything he has created into little pieces, and sets fire to them. Butterfly finds the gloomy clouds of the fire so beautiful that she at last declares her love for him.

An exquisitely beautiful picturebook. Both text and illustrations are from a young writer/illustrator who has won many awards for her work. Repetition in the text of this well-constructed story engenders suspense and excitement, leading the reader on to a poignant final act. The full-page illustrations in watercolour and ink both reflect the fanciful atmosphere of the story and express the humour and fun inherent in it. Text and illustrations invite young children to fantasise, wonder and smile.

Toin Duijx

Annemarie Van Haeringen

"BEER IS OP VLINDER"

(BEAR IS IN LOVE WITH BUTTERFLY)

Amsterdam: Leopold 2004
isbn 9025842550
24pp (picturebook, 4-7)

Trash Aesthetics and Utopian Memory

The Tip at the End of the Street and *The Lost Thing*

BY KERRY MALLAN

Kerry Mallan is an associate professor at Queensland University of Technology, Australia. She has published widely on various aspects of children's literature and film, and has a particular interest in picturebooks

Trash is all around us – in our homes, in the community, on our computer desk-tops … and in children's books. Kerry Mallan explores its symbolism and its role in two Australian picturebooks, The Tip at the End of the Street *and* The Lost Thing

Trash pervades most aspects of contemporary living, and children, as active consumers in a throw-away society, contribute to its production and accumulation. From an early age, children become familiar with trash and its various purposes – Oscar the Grouch from *Sesame Street* lives in a trashcan, the trash bin (recycling) icon on computer desktops swallows up unwanted words, garbage receptacles in homes and community remove and recycle trash. Many children are also avid collectors of 'trash' - wrappers, bottles, toy boxes. For many children, trash is such a familiar part of their daily lives that it is rendered invisible. For other children, trash is highly visible as a vital source of food and survival. This paradoxical view of trash is also realised aesthetically, as trash can violate and offend the senses, as well as give pleasure and surprise through artistic reclamation and metamorphosis.

Trash exists as a record of 'time-space compression',[1] an archaeological treasure trove of society's secrets and wealth hidden in its discarded commodities. It is a 'heterotopia',[2] in that it is a juxtaposition in a real place of several incompatible sites. Polysemic in nature, trash can be seen and understood literally as well as read symptomatically as a metaphorical figure for social indictment or negative comment ('talking trash', 'rubbish!'). Trash is the ideal utopian metaphor, inviting both critique of current society and transformative possibilities. Its redemptive and transformative qualities are seen in popular culture, where marginalised youth have transmogrified waste materials (discarded oil barrels, garbage lids) into musical instruments, and where picturebook artists use discarded materials to create stunning collages.[3] Furthermore, when trash is transformed, the human capacity for resourcefulness and improvisation is mobilised. For example, when Duchamp mounted a bicycle wheel on a wooden stool (*Bicycle Wheel* c 1913) he invented a new form of art, which utilised 'found objects' to create playful nonsense or to make social or political comment. This capacity for art to 'make strange' (like the Formalists' 'defamilarisation') strips away familiarity from the world about us, so that we see things anew and a space for political/aesthetic reflection is opened.

As all this suggests, the motif of trash can serve multiple purposes. It can be a device for commenting on society's rampant consumerism and unequal social formations. It can also offer an alternative aesthetics by revalorising, through inversion, what is often regarded as useless. Here I want to explore this hybrid potential of trash to function as both alternative aesthetics and social critique, in considering two Australian picturebooks – *The Tip at the End of the Street* by Tohby Riddle (1996) and *The Lost Thing* by Shaun Tan (2000). Each of these books incorporates the leitmotif of trash as part of the social condition of (post)capitalist, postindustrial societies.

Picturebooks can offer children a space for reflection. The genre is characterised generally by a sense of optimism or utopian desire as, more often than not, its stories provide resolutions to conflicts, and disruptive plans and anxieties are managed in a way that offers reassurance, hope and comfort to young readers. The picturebooks focused upon in this paper do not offer readers an unambiguous path to utopia. Rather, they challenge readers to consider the allegorical nature of their texts, and to discover utopian moments in memory. These forgotten or reconstructed traces of the past can provide projections of a better world – such utopian possibilities are what Ernst Bloch urges readers to seek out in texts.[4] For Bloch, all ideological artefacts contain expressions of desire for a better life. Sometimes utopian desire needs to be deciphered, as it may lie hidden in allegory or symbol and so is not always obvious or easily apprehended. In my selection, trash is the emotional and aesthetic means for considering the utopian use of memory.

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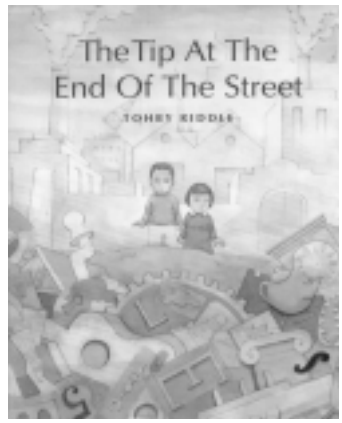


At the conclusion of *The Tip at the End of the Street*, the narrator confides that the two young protagonists, Carl and Minnie, 'are always surprised at what people throw away'.[5] This seemingly banal statement provides an ironic closure to a story that tells of the children's surprise find in the local tip – an old man. (In keeping with the book's key motif, it is also a recycled comment, as it forms part of the introduction.) The children take the old man home and settle him into an old train carriage (another tip find) in their backyard. The old man is a treasure trove of stories and forgotten songs, which tell of a world now past and unknown to the children. The story's privileging of 'the tip' as a site for serendipitous adventure and discovery provides an ideal *mise en scène* for analysing the representations of trash from a utopian perspective. In one sense, the old man's recollection of the past – giant airships, silent movie stars, Ragtime and Dixieland, old dances and songs – exemplifies a postmodern aesthetics of recycling and pastiche. His stories evoke nostalgia for a time past. As romance tales, with their utopian reconstructions of a better way of living, of a different kind

of society, they provide an antidote to postmodern cynicism. Storytelling, therefore, operates as a sanctioned form of fantasy-making and the storyteller is the bearer of utopia tales.

Storytelling operates as a sanctioned form of fantasy-making and the storyteller is the bearer of utopia tales

The tip in this story is a heterotopic space, a place that holds untold treasures for the children to retrieve. Visually, the tip is depicted as a jumbled site of accumulated trash. The children's parents see the tip from an adult perspective: 'The tip! Why do you want to go there? It's all just piles of other people's refuse.' But the children 'loved it' – they find the most amazing things – a penny-farthing, a harpsichord, 'a flying machine', old books, old chairs, old musical instruments and more. The tip is a plentiful supply of goods for the children. Its abundance and accessibility suggest a kind of communistic utopia where greed is eradicated and all property becomes public. Yet, ironically, its excesses come from capitalism and the processes of consumption: in carnivalistic spirit, the tip represents the ideal lower-stratum shopping mall with everything you desire at no cost. While the children in the story enjoy the spoils of the tip, their recycling is born of pleasure, not of necessity. Unlike those other literary dump-dwellers, Jack and Guy,[6] and real-life children who exist on the margins of society, obliged to recycle the material waste of the dominant culture, Carl and Minnie are able to restore the forgotten worth of a cast-off object for recreational purposes. Restoration also serves as an analogy for the process of revealing the hidden worth of the discarded old man and his stories. This function of hidden worth of the past is central to Bloch's recognition of 'the importance of memory as a repository of experience and value in an inauthentic, capitalist world'.[7] While the idea of 'inauthentic' is open to challenge, memory is valorised in the story and the past achieves a more authentic status than the present, which appears disrespectful and neglectful of achievements and knowledge of the past, at least from the adult perspective.

As the terminus for society's waste, a dumping ground for the unwanted, broken and used, the tip is the collective memory for all that society produces and represses. Retrieving the old man from the tip is the return of the repressed. His presence and his stories embody a past history that postmodernism has sought to ignore by substituting 'a perpetual present' and eradicating the memory of tradition.[8] Only the children want to hear his stories, the parents remain on the margins of the children's life and, as such, have no contact with the old man, nor do they appear to want to know him. Rather than being seduced by the electronic contact that is part of a post-McLuhanite global village, the children seek and enjoy the kind of intimacy with the old man that comes with a genuine social relationship between people.

When the children find the old man dead in his chair, he has a 'faint smile on his face' and 'his weathered hands rest(ed) on a map of the world', he appears to be 'in the deepest sleep' and in the background –

A 78 was spinning on the gramophone.
It crackled away …
I'm looking over
a four-leaf clover …
… then went silent.

This quiet, romanticised demise of the old man amid old technology, old songs, old optimism is a stark contrast to more dramatic spectacles of death that are presented to children through popular film, computer games and television.

Death occurs in a recycled space – a disused train carriage – and appears as a happy heterotopia, a final resting place where the dead man smiles and the optimistic lyrics of the 78 record provide a fitting farewell tribute. Perhaps it is significant that the old man appears to the children to be blissfully asleep. Such a perceived euphoric state invites speculation as to the personal satisfaction and social possibilities that utopian *dreaming* offers.

An integral element of the utopian possibility of *The Tip at the End of the Street* is the probability of finding a certain object at a certain location at a certain moment in time. A similar sense of probability underscores Shaun Tan's *The Lost Thing*. Here, a boy, who is also a collector of trash (bottle tops), first spies the 'thing' on a beach at the edge of an imposing metropolis. Baffled by its existence, the boy thinks it has 'a sad, lost sort of look': he talks to it, plays with it and tries to find its owner. Eventually, the boy takes the thing home, but his mum complains that 'Its feet are filthy!' and his dad warns, 'It could have all kinds of strange diseases.'[9] Like the old man in *The Tip at the End of the Street,* the thing is *taken out* (like household trash) to live in the back shed, where the boy feeds it old Christmas decorations.

One day the boy finds an advertisement in the newspaper that offers a place to take 'trash' off your hands – nameless objects, unclaimed property, leftovers, 'things that just don't belong'. The place is 'The Federal Department of Odds & Ends' (whose motto *Sweepus underum carpetae* evokes both trash and secrecy). The boy's efforts to find a home for the lost thing are frustrated by bureaucratic form-filling. After receiving an anonymous clue (a card with an arrow pointing 'somewhere') by a lowly cleaner, the boy eventually finds a Daliesque space, which is cluttered with 'things' that just don't belong in a world that has lost its capacity to accept difference or to deal with the irrational and the inexplicable. Here Tan appropriates and transforms Hieronymous Bosch's *The Garden of Earthly Delights* (*c* 1504) by depicting a visual space of playful energy. It is a dreamlike space with a multitude of bizarre figures and objects occupying a delightfully implausible, otherworldly landscape, where all the elements appear to exist in a state of harmonious chaos.

Baffled by its existence, the boy thinks it has 'a sad, lost sort of look': he talks to it, plays with it and tries to find its owner

According to Peel, setting in utopian fiction is rooted in *topos*.[10] This attention to place or, in more general terms, space, is an inherent feature of the modernist tradition to which many utopian narratives adhere. However, place in *The Lost Thing* takes on a postmodern interpretation in that it is a depersonalised, postindustrial urban space, which is far from idyllic. Yet, features of the urban space in *The Lost Thing* reflect in a perverse way Thomas More's[11] utopia, in the uniformity of dress, lack of individuality

and regulation of the citizenry through official forms and permits.

Features of the urban space in* The Lost Thing *reflect in a perverse way Thomas More's utopia

The Lost Thing mocks the grand narratives of modernism and its utopian dreams of progress through its depiction of a rusting and obsolete postindustrial urban space and by ironically playing with logic (eg the idea that something that is alone and different must be lost) and utilising pastiche as the dominant style of artistic expression. The represented urban space and its inhabitants are nameless, and repetition and sameness of both architecture and human form deny identity, diversity and cultural difference. The strangeness of the unnamed society, nevertheless, bears traces of familiarity in its technological and bureaucratic systems and architectural designs.[12] Here Modern works of art are recycled – Jeffrey Smart's *The Cahill Expressway* (1962), John Brack's *Collins Street 5pm* (1955), Charles Sheeler's black-and-white photographs of American industrial scenes and Edward Hopper's *Chair Car* (1965). However, for the young readers of this book, there would be no memory of the illustrations' original context: a point which reinforces Jameson's notion of the 'perpetual present' of postmodern society.

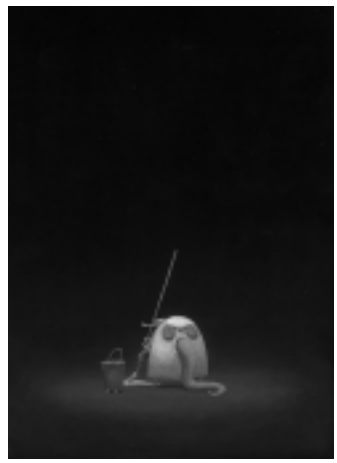
Litter – squashed cans, scattered papers, a telephone hand set, an array of cryptic graffiti

The book embodies a trash aesthetics in both its setting and format. Litter (squashed cans, scattered papers, a telephone hand set, an array of cryptic graffiti) provides a familiar urban waste decoration of the streets, and 'found objects' (bottle tops, facsimiles of official documents, snapshots of urban life) comprise the collage-like format pasted over a background of mathematical and scientific formulae, tables, drawings of machines, instruments and useless data. The serious scientism of the background is juxtaposed with and subverted by the unscientific naming of the central subject – 'the lost thing' – and by the end papers of ordered rows of bottle tops, which are similarly inscribed by additional scientific iconography. In the middle of the serried rows of bottle tops, with their various graphic fragments of useless information, is one which bears the inscription 'entropy', signifying the book's themes of disorder, decay, degeneration and a loss of energy.

The book's yellowed wallpaper backdrop of miscellaneous pseudo-scientific bits and pieces suggests that the history of science has led us to the current state of technological excess. The repeated motifs of symbols, equations and technical drawings reflect the puzzle-solving approach of science to unexplained phenomena. The search for a solution to the puzzle also underpins the central story element of finding a home for the 'lost thing' – an object that comes close to Haraway's cyborg, a hybrid 'nature–culture' form of the postmodern imagination.[13] Visibly 'a thing' and not a human, the bulky ugliness of its large, red, industrial-strength shape elicits the reader's gaze: it is a bit of trash, yet it is not without its aesthetic appeal. Far from being a thing of beauty, it is nevertheless a curiosity, a thing to be contemplated like a work of art. The thing comprises both human and animal characteristics and attributes – it likes to eat, enjoys company and has animal-like appendages. Yet, like many other images in the book, 'the lost thing' is a reworked image with its resemblance to the position of the one-armed observer in Smart's *The Cahill Expressway*. Apart from the transposition of a non-human thing instead of Smart's one-armed man in a suit, the sense of alienation that the lone figure in the original painting suggests as it stands

next to the expressway is softened in Tan's book by the figure of a boy who stands next to the thing, forming a twosome.

Companionship provides a counterpoint to the text's sense of obsoletism, lack of interpersonal communication, and uninspired and dispassionate citizens. While this urban tale may indeed offer an allegorical reference to the collapse of modernist visions of a utopia gained through the spoils of progress, it also offers hope in the human capacity to care for one another. Such humanistic sentiments are often missing or lost in a society characterised as having a high degree of social entropy. To return to Harvey's idea of time–space compression, the lost thing and the boy's search for a home for it not only suggest a poignant nostalgia for a place to belong, but characterise the migratory nature of globalisation. Through time–space compression, place becomes space, and a universal sense of disconnection to a place (home) or 'placelessness' become symptomatic of the postmodern condition. If one takes seriously Bloch's suggestion to seek out the utopian possibility in a text, then such a possibility arises in the final illustration, where the lowly cleaner, a cyborg with tail, appendages and a machine-like body mops with an old fashioned rope mop and a humble tin bucket – a convergence of old and new technologies. The cleaner is also the messenger who gave the boy the clue that led him to find a home for the lost thing. The message was delivered by 'a tiny voice' that said: 'If you really care about that thing, you shouldn't leave it here … This is a place for forgetting, leaving behind, smoothing over.' While the final image in the book of the solitary figure mopping in a black void encodes the melancholic experience of estrangement, of *human trash* in postindustrial societies, its earlier entreaty to the boy 'to care' and the boy's concern and compassion for the lost thing are testimony to a lingering humanity in this bleak dystopic space. This theme of the uneasy relationship between scientific rationalism and humanism pervades both the narrative and the illustrations, and is perhaps a further indication that the utopian impulse is not completely abandoned.



Herbert Marcuse optimistically noted with respect to the potency of the utopian impulse in art: 'art cannot change the world, but it can contribute to changing the consciences and drives of men and women who change the world'.[14] Both picturebooks discussed have children as the ones who are able to find something special in trash. The ease with which they make friendship with that which is marginalised and different provides a sense of hope for the future. In *The Tip at the End of the Street*, the old man's recollections of a golden age are brought to life for the children, but in the end the children only 'sometimes' return to the old train carriage to play the

Children are the ones who are able to find something special in trash … providing a sense of hope for the future

old 78s and to retell the old man's stories. Similarly, the boy in *The Lost Thing* admits that he thinks about the lost thing 'from time to time' but is often 'too busy doing other stuff' to notice if there are more lost things around. The children's desire to stay in the present but revisit their memories offers an optimism that is often denied in the postmodern condition. As Geoghegan notes, 'Sensitivity to personal and social memories can both enrich the resulting utopian imagery, and increase tolerance for the motivating memories of others.'[15]

[1] David Harvey, *The Conditions of Postmodernity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989).

[2] Michel Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces', *Diacritics* (1986), pp 22–7.

[3] For instance, see Eve Bunting, *Smoky Night*. illus. David Diaz (New York: Harcourt, 1994).

[4] Ernst Bloch, *The Principle of Hope* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1986).

[5] Tohby Riddle, *The Tip at the End of the Street* (Sydney: HarperCollins, 1996).

[6] Maurice Sendak, *We Are All in the Dumps with Jack and Guy* (New York: HarperCollins, 1993).

[7] Vincent Geoghegan, 'Remembering the Future' in J O Daniel and T Moylan (eds), *Not Yet: Reconsidering Ernst Bloch* (London: Verso, 1997), p 25.

[8] Fredric Jameson, 'The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism' in *Postmodernism, Or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (London and New York: Verso, 1992), pp 1-54.

[9] Shaun Tan, *The Lost Thing* (South Melbourne: Lothian, 2000).

[10] Ellen Peel, *Politics and Persuasion and Pragmatism: A Rhetoric of Feminist Utopian Fiction* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2002), p xix.

[11] Sir Thomas More, *Utopia* (1516), R Adams (trans/ed) (New York: Norton, 1992).

[12] Not only is the paper trail of bureaucracies humorously realised in the boy's frustrating search for information, but several of the images in the text are based on urban scenes from Australia and the United States.

[13] Donna J Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York: Routledge, 1991).

[14] Herbert Marcuse, *The Aesthetic Dimension: Towards a Critique of Marxist Aesthetics* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1979), p 32.

[15] Geoghegan, *Remembering the Future*, p 32.

Elisheva mourns the loss of her two friends who were killed by a Palestinian. Wafa has had her home repeatedly destroyed by Israeli soldiers and rebuilt each time with the help of Israeli volunteers ...

These are snapshots from the lives of Palestinian and Israeli children whom Ellis interviewed in the winter of 2002. The children speak, among other things, about death, injury, their feelings toward the opposite side and their struggle to lead normal lives in a dangerous and scary environment. Some of them have lost friends and family members to shootings and bombings; others have been injured.

The profiles end with subjects sharing their wishes, reminding readers that hope can still thrive within children living and coping through war. Ellis suggests titles for further reading and lists organisations attempting to effect change in the Palestinian/Israeli conflict.

This powerful and insightful book provides some children living through this conflict with a chance to have their voices heard globally and offers, through children's voices, a refreshing perspective on an ongoing situation.

Carol-Ann Hoyte

DEBORAH ELLIS

"THREE WISHES: PALESTINIAN AND ISRAELI CHILDREN SPEAK"

Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre 2004
110pp isbn 0888996454
(non-fiction, 10+)

Researching Children's Literature in Germany

Children's literature studies are well established in German universities and are supported by good collections and reference books. Barbara Scharioth reports on the historical and the current situation

BY BARBARA SCHARIOTH

Barbara Scharioth is director of the Internationale Jugendbibliothek (International Youth Library) in Munich

Translated by Nikola von Merveldt

Research and teaching in the field of children's and young adult literature in post-war Germany rest on three major pillars:

- the academic institutions – most notably the Institut für Jugendbuchforschung (Centre for Children's Literature Research) at the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University in Frankfurt am Main, founded in 1963
- scholarly and public collections of children's literature, including those of the Frankfurt Institut, the Staatsbibliothek (State Library) in Berlin and the International Youth Library in Munich
- extensive bibliographies, handbooks and reference works, especially the yearbook *Kinder- und Jugendliteraturforschung* [Research in Children's and Young Adult Literature], published since the mid-90s

Academic Institutions

Didactic and moral interests dominated scholarship in German children's literature until well into the 20th century. Ever since the publication of JH Campe's *Robinson der Jüngere* [Robinson Junior] (1789/80), an overtly instructive adaptation for children of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719, published in German in 1720), the evaluation of children's literature was left to teachers and educators. It attracted hardly any attention among German studies scholars.[1]

In the late 1950s, however, when authors like Michael Ende, James Krüss and Otfried Preußler paved the way for modern children's literature, critics took notice of the changes and commented on them. These new texts intrigued readers with compelling fantasy narratives on the one hand and realistic descriptions of a child's point of view on the other. They were no longer judged exclusively by pedagogical but also by literary standards.

Nevertheless, most studies continued to focus on moral and didactic issues. It was not until the end of the 1960s, when the anti-authoritarian movement caused much controversy about educa-

tion in general and the role of literature within a child's upbringing in particular, that things began to change. A stronger emphasis on the socio-historical aspects of the production and reception of texts led to a new definition of literature as a whole. The restrictive concept of 'high' literature as opposed to mass-produced popular literature was abandoned in favour of a more general analysis of various types of literary text. From then on, children's literature research gradually began to be accepted as part of literary studies.

The restrictive concept of 'high' literature as opposed to mass-produced popular literature has been abandoned

The Institut für Jugendbuchforschung in Frankfurt was a pioneer in establishing children's literature research as an academic discipline. Klaus Doderer, director of the Institut was specifically concerned with breaking down narrow disciplinary boundaries. He wanted to teach and explore children's literature from a poetological point of view and to consider questions like the reception of the various texts, adaptation to other media (film or audio, for example) and their historical context.[2]

The *Lexikon der Kinder- und Jugendliteratur* (1975–82), an encyclopaedia of children's and young adult literature, was a tribute to this new spirit in children's literature research.[3] Seminars and lectures started to focus on issues relevant to German studies, the Institut's roots in education were gradually forgotten, and in the 1970s the Institut was integrated into the department of German philology. Hans-Heino Ewers has been the director of the Institut since the beginning of the 1990s. His focus is on the theory of children's literature, and the courses offered at the Institut range from historical and comparative topics to literary theory and the analysis of comic strips.

The second largest research institution was founded in the mid-1970s at Cologne University. Theodor Brüggemann, who published the seminal *Handbuch zur Kinder- und Jugendliteratur*[4] [Handbook of Children's Literature] was a founding father of historical children's literature research. This 'handbook' (it actually extends to four volumes) is a bibliographical and historical work describing the different historical forms of the various genres. At the beginning of the 1990s, the department adopted the name ALEKI (Arbeitsstelle für Leseforschung und Kinder- und Jugendmedien – 'Centre for Research in Reading and Children's Media') and is led by Bettina Hurrelmann and Gisela Wilkending. Apart from working on the completion of the handbook, ALEKI specialises in the history, psychology and sociology of reading.

The* Handbuch zur Kinder- und Jugendliteratur *extends to four volumes and describes different historical forms of various genres

A third field of study developed at the university of Oldenburg, where Jens Thiele is addressing aesthetic and literary issues in children's literature and has made important contributions to the theory of picturebooks.

In addition to these specialist centres, other German universities – at least 33 of them, according to Otto Brunken[5] – offer courses in children's and young adult literature, though most of these are in education programmes. Furthermore, Brunken notes that about 150 specialists are working in the field of children's literature and contributing to a wealth of scholarly publications.

A smaller research project on children's literature in East Germany was developed by Rüdiger Steinlein, who is also preparing a handbook on

children's and young adult literature in the (former) GDR. East-German scholars in this field used to publish in the journal *Beiträge zur Kinder- und Jugendliteratur* (1962 to 1992); this journal was later continued under the name of *Beiträge Jugendliteratur und Medien*.

Collections

Until the late 1960s, no academic library in West Germany was collecting children's literature. The Institut at Frankfurt was the first – and for a long time the only – institution with a corpus of primary literature. Klaus Doderer insisted on the importance of having an exemplary collection of children's literature. The German publishing houses donated one copy of every new title to the Institut and made it possible for some historical collections to be acquired over the years. The Intsitut library now houses the third largest collection of historical (*c* 18,000 titles) and contemporary children's and young adult literature (*c* 100,000) in Germany.

Both of the other institutions mentioned above – the University of Oldenburg and the Cologne University – also have important collections.

The State Library in Berlin's extensive children's books collection is based on the holdings of the former Prussian State Library, which was kept in East Berlin after World War II. From 1951 onwards, the director of the library, Horst Kunze, systematically built a children's book collection – a remarkable initiative for a public academic library.[6] The library possesses about 50,000 historical books (published before 1945) and a total of 135,000 volumes.

The International Youth Library in Munich is home to the largest collection not only in Germany but in the world:[7] over half a million international books for children and young adults in over 130 languages and holdings of more than 120,000 German-language titles have been collected over the years. This library was founded in 1949 in the belief that the collection of children's books from around the world could contribute to peace, tolerance and understanding among peoples.

The International Youth Library in Munich is home to the largest collection not only in Germany but in the world, with over half a million books

To this day, the International Youth Library is true to the vision of its founder, Jella Lepman.[8] Lepman not only wanted to promote democracy in post-Nazi Germany through books and reading, but also argued for an aesthetic appreciation of children's literature. She considered children's books as unique cultural artefacts with great research potential for various academic disciplines. This insight had been the driving force also behind the establishment of the League of Nations library of the Geneva Bureau International d'Éducation, which started building an exemplary international children's book collection of all 35 member-states in 1928.[9] Jella Lepman's international concept of children's literature surely also influenced Klaus Doderer, when he was a young scholar who admired and supported her projects, and possibly also Horst Kunze, the director of the Berlin State Library.

Ever since its early days, the International Youth Library has considered itself an archive and documentation centre for research in international children's and young adult literature. The historical collection (books published prior to 1950) comprises about 60,000 books, including many precious and rare original editions also in non-European languages. The lion's share of this valuable historical collection – about 20,000 titles – was catalogued by the late 1990s with the support of the Deutsche Forschungsgesellschaft (German Research Council) and is available online.

Bibliographies, Publications

The creation of catalogues and bibliographies for the various collections[10] and the publication of handbooks and seminal studies are further indications of intensive scholarly activity in the field. Until the mid-90s, all library holdings were accessible through card catalogues, but with the transfer to electronic cataloguing, all libraries are participating in more detailed cataloguing of their holdings. Unfortunately, however, German libraries do not have a common software system. This is because cultural politics – including the management of libraries and universities – functions at a regional level; there is no federal ministry of culture to push for centralisation.

Unfortunately, German libraries do not have a common software system, because cultural politics functions at a regional level; there is no federal ministry of culture to push for centralisation

The International Youth Library enjoys a privileged status in this respect. Because of its international mandate to foster and promote intercultural dialogue, and thanks to financial support from the federal government, the land of Bavaria, and the city of Munich, the International Youth Library can offer all titles catalogued since 1993 in a searchable online database (about 140,000 titles available at www.ijb.de, with English guidelines). The library's website also provides access to the 'White Ravens', an annual, annotated list of 250 notable new titles from 35 to 40 countries in about 30 languages, by now featuring a total of more than 2000 recommendable children's books.[11]

The children's book holdings of the universities can only be accessed via the general university online catalogue; a limited search within these special holdings is not yet possible.

The children's book section of the Berlin State Library has prepared many important bibliographies, including the richly illustrated *Alte deutsche Kinderbücher 1507 bis 1850* and others,[12] which number among the standard reference works in historical children's literature.

The four volumes of the *Lexikon der Kinder- und Jugendliteratur*,[13] popularly known as 'the Doderer', were already mentioned above in context of the Frankfurt Institut. Since 1994, the director of the Institut, Hans-Heino Ewers, has been general editor of the yearbook of children's book research published by the Gesellschaft für Kinder- und Jugendliteraturforschung (Society for Children's Book Research). This society was founded in the early 1990s and unites scholars from Switzerland and Austria (both German-speaking countries). It organises an annual conference and publishes the results in the yearbook, which is especially noteworthy because of its chronological bibliographies of all publications in the field of children's and young adult literature, which are now also available on CD-ROM.[14]

Looking to the Future

Research and teaching in the field of children's and young adult literature has been remarkably active and productive over the last 20 years in Germany. In the academic world, many younger scholars have been able to follow in the footsteps of the post-war generation of founding fathers and have contributed to shaping the discipline by opening up new perspectives. Currently, there is a general interest in the development of the various old and new media for children, in their different uses and in the phenomenon of inter-mediality. What remains to be wished for is a common online database of all children's literature catalogues and bibliographies.

[1] See Hans-Heino Ewers, *Children's Literature Research in Germany. A Report* (with an extensive bibliography), available in English on www.hhewers.de. A slightly modified version of this article was published in *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* (2002-03) 27 (3).

[2] See Klaus Doderer, 'Die Anfänge des Instituts für Jugendbuchforschung', and Helmut Müller, 'Es begann im „Untergrund". Vorgeschichte und Aufbauphase des Instituts für Jugendbuchforschung', both in *Kinder- und Jugendliteraturforschung Frankfurt. Aus der Arbeit des Instituts und der Bibliothek für Jugendbuchforschung* 2 (2003), pp 9–12 and pp 13–20 respectively.

[3] Klaus Doderer (ed), *Lexikon der Kinder- und Jugendliteratur, Personen-, Länder- und Sachartikel zur Geschichte und Gegenwart der Kinder- und Jugendliteratur* (4 vols), Weinheim: Beltz 1975-1982.

[4] Theodor Brüggemann and Otto Brunken, *Handbuch zur Kinder- und Jugendliteratur. Vom Beginn des Buchdrucks bis 1570*. Stuttgart: Metzler 1987; ——*Von 1570 bis 1750*. Stuttgart: Metzler 1991. Theodor Brüggemann and Hans-Heino Ewers, ——*Von 1750 bis 1800*. Stuttgart: Meltzer 1982. Otto Brunken *et al*: ——*Von 1800 bis 1850*. Stuttgart, Weimar: Metzler 1997.

[5] Otto Brunken, 'Die zünftige Wissenschaft oder: Was machen Pippi und Robinson an der Uni? Forschung und Lehre zur Kinder- und Jugendliteratur' in Renate Raecke (ed) *Kinder- und Jugendliteratur in Deutschland*, München: Arbeitskreis für Jugendliteratur 1999, pp 69–88; includes a list of all German-speaking universities offering courses in children's literature.

[6] Carola Pohlmann, 'Die Kinder- und Jugendbuchabteilung der Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin Preußischer Kulturbesitz: Vergangenheit und Gegenwart' in Hans-Heino Ewers *et al* (eds) *Kinder- und Jugendliteraturforschung 1995/1996*, Stuttgart: Metzler 1996, pp 3–6.

[7] *Bookbird* 40 (3) (2002): 11–15

[8] Jella Lepman, *A Bridge of Children's Books*, Dublin: O'Brien Press 2002; translated by Edith McCormack; previously published in German by the IYL.

[9] In 1953 the International Youth Library was recognised as an associated project of UNESCO and the collection of the League of Nations, amounting to about 30,000 volumes from 58 countries, was donated to the IYL in 1969.

[10] Carola Pohlmann,' Bibliographien zur deutschsprachigen historischen Kinder- und Jugendliteratur', in Hans-Heino Ewers *et al* (eds), *Kinder- und Jugendliteraturforschung 2000/2001*, Stuttgart, Weimar: Metzler 2001.

[11] Internationale Jugendbibliothek (ed), *The White Ravens. A Selection of International Children's and Youth Literature* München: Internationale Jugendbibliothek, annually March/April. The list of all titles can also be accessed from the website of the International Children's Digital Library (www.icdlbooks.org), which created this cumulative list for the International Youth Library.

[12] Heinz Wegehaupt, *Alte deutsche Kinderbücher. Bibliographien 1507–1850* vol 1; ——*1851–1900* vol 2; Berlin: Kinderbuchverlag and Hamburg: Hauswedell 1979 and 1985 respectively; ——*Illustrierte Bibliographie 1524–1900* vol 3, Stuttgart: Metzler 2000.

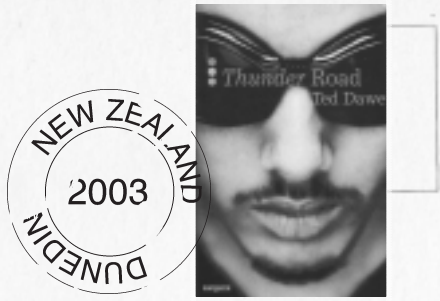
[13] See note 3 for details.

[14] The database is not available online, but copies of the CD-ROM are sent (from the Institut für Jugendbuchforschung in Frankfurt) upon request.

This raw, powerful story was the winner of the Senior Fiction Award in the New Zealand Post Book Awards for Children and Young Adults, and also took away the Best First Book Award.

It is narrated by Trace, aged 19, and generally at a loose end until he hooks up with Devon, who introduces him to the thrills of street racing. But Devon's ambitions don't stop at having the fastest car in town. He has plans to make money by stealing a crop of cannabis and selling it on the street. Uneasily, Trace tags along with his friend. But suddenly the pair find themselves in trouble with the street gangs, and the trouble just gets deeper and deeper. This book is significant because it signals a new willingness in New Zealand teenage fiction to examine some unusually tough and provocative themes. At the same time it's a story that will hold the interest of many reluctant teenage male readers.

Lorraine Orman



Ted Dawe

"Thunder Road"

Dunedin: Longacre Press 2003 287pp
isbn 1877135879 (fiction, 15+)

Children's Literature Awards Around the World

Canada: The Governor General's Literary Award

BY TIM WYNNE-JONES

Tim Wynne-Jones has (in different years!) both sat on the judging panel for the Governor General's Literary Award and been awarded that honour himself, for Some of the Kinder Planets *and* The Maestro

The most prestigious award for children's books in Canada is the Governor General's Literary Award. Like most literary awards, it generates controversy as well as public and media interest

Prizes figure prominently in the literary life of children's book writers in Canada for the simple reason that publishers here seldom put much money into marketing titles intended for young readers. Any notice you can get is deeply gratifying! As well, prize money of any denomination does make a nice ringing sound in the bottom of one's cup. There is a perfectly good reason that publishers skimp on advertising, although we children's writers are loath to accept it. To include a promotional budget in the production cost makes a book prohibitively expensive for young pocketbooks. So children's authors, by and large, find their audience via school visits, young author conferences, or touring this enormous and sparsely populated country under the auspices of the Canada Council for the Arts.

Our books find an audience of interested professionals through reviews in trade magazines and a variety of library and school journals. Newspaper reviews range from mere mention – lists of 'must reads' – to a couple of column inches if you're lucky, and these reviews tend to be sequestered in the nether regions of the Saturday book pages. Children's books, if not the pariah of the literary scene, are still seen as … well, children; their relevance limited to the attention of nurse and nanny.

Prizes help to raise the profile of a book. Ostensibly. But this winsome idea is made flesh in a slow and cumulative process rather than anything like real press coverage, with popping flashbulbs and a scrum of excited reporters. The general public learns about most book prizes for children's writers over an extended period of time, if at all. There will be a notice in the bulletins of the Canadian Children's Book Centre (CCBC), the Canadian Society of Children's Authors, Illustrators and Performers (CANSCAIP) and The Writers' Union of Canada (TWUC), if you're a member of one or other of these august organisations. Maybe there will be a buzz on one listserv or another. As well, you get to mention the prize in the jacket copy of your next book. And you are of course introduced as the winner of said award at functions forever after. It's not exactly like winning the lottery.

The Canadian Library Association Book of the Year Award is a case in point. It is considered in the business a prestigious prize, and yet the only time I've ever known who won the award anywhere near the time of its announcement was when I happened to be the winner.

If I sound sardonic, it is not out of disrespect for the various children's book awards of which there are really quite a number. It is always a genuine honour to win *any* kind of recognition for one's writing. Writing is, after all, a lonely business and it is great when your peers and associates in the field take notice of your labour. It is especially fun when young readers pay you the tribute. We now have a plethora of 'Tree' awards, as they're affectionately called, sponsored by provincial library associations and decided by young readers based on a number of books nominated by an adult panel. There's the Red Cedar in British Columbia, the Willow awards in Saskatchewan and a whole forest of spruces and birches and who knows what else awarded in Ontario each for a different age groups. These awards generate a great deal of enthusiasm and word-of-mouth endorsement. But the hum never gets much beyond the schoolyard.

It is always a genuine honour to win recognition for one's writing. Writing is, after all, a lonely business

My apparent lack of wholehearted ardour about these awards in general is only to do with the sad fact that most of the winners go essentially unnoticed by the public at large. There is one very big exception: the Governor General's Literary Award. The GG we call it and a spirited mount it is, to be sure.

There is that whiff of royalty. The Governor General is the (British) Queen's official representative in the Dominion, after all, and there is, accordingly, a suitable amount of pomp and ceremony associated with the event. Indeed, in recent years the presentation has been moved to the elegant residence of Her Almost-A-Highness, Rideau Hall, in Ottawa. Prior to that, the awards were given at secular venues in Montreal and Toronto on an alternating basis, to reflect the bicultural nature of this country and of the awards, which are presented in seven categories to both French and English writers.

Tim Wynne-Jones won the Governor General's Literary Award in 1995 for The Maestro

The Prize was inaugurated in 1937 by the GG of the day, Lord Tweedsmuir, known outside of the peerage as John Buchan, an author himself, famous for his spy thriller, *The Thirty-nine Steps.* It took quite a number of steps before children's books were considered worthy of this quasi-regal attention. In fact it took fifty years. In 1987, what was then called the Canada Council Prize for Children's

The sad fact is that most prize-winners go essentially unnoticed by the public – except in the case of the 'GG' award

Literature was accorded full grown-up status alongside works of adult fiction, non-fiction, poetry and drama. The translation prize was added the same year. For the past seventeen years, BMO Financial Group has generously sponsored the award.

Perhaps more important than the lucre itself is that the cash attracts media attention

In the beginning, one would have to have been something of a spy to know the prize had been presented at all. No money was awarded in Buchan's day or for most of the years that the award was administered by the Canadian Authors Association. The Canada Council assumed responsibility for funding, administering and adjudicating the award in 1959. The value of the award has risen from $250 in the 1950s, to $15,000 as of the first year of the new millennium. In 2002, the CC went so far as to give $1000 to each finalist.

This kind of money is not to be sneezed at. Only one other children's book award matches it in this country, The Vicky Metcalf Award presented by the Writers' Trust of Canada. But the Vicky Metcalf is awarded for a body of work, so it's never a horse race like the GG. Two other awards weigh in at $10,000: the Norma Fleck Award for Children's Non-Fiction, administered by the CCBC, and the Ruth and Sylvia Schwartz Children's Book Award administered by the Ontario Arts Council and the Canadian Booksellers Association. The Fleck Award is a relative new comer and a most welcome prize. The Schwartz has been around for nearly thirty years but only upped the prize money in 2003. It remains to be seen whether either of these prizes will generate the kind of media attention the GG gets.

And that is the point. Perhaps more important than the lucre itself is that the cash attracts media. This, however, does not happen automatically. In the early 1980s, the GG was worth a hefty $10,000, but you could win it and still safely go anywhere without the need for dark glasses. Publishers pleaded with the CC to put some money into publicity and that they have done in fine style. Every year the Council hires an English- and a French-language publicist. Seven hundred thousand bookmarks and close to four thousand posters are distributed to over a thousand bookstores and twelve hundred libraries across the country. News releases go out to print, radio and television. Since 1998, the Council has also provided special promotional grants to the publishers of winning books. Currently, publishers receive $3000 towards strategic advertising. This makes a huge difference.

Typically, the media hoopla of the actual ceremony revolves around the adult fiction winners

Typically, the media hoopla of the actual ceremony revolves around the adult fiction winners. But this past year, the CC and the Governor General's office made an admirable attempt to rectify the situation with

regard to the children's book winners by wresting some of the attention away from the lions. A hyena's share, shall we call it? The four winners in the children's category (text and illustration in French and English) were announced two days earlier than the other winners, and the occasion was celebrated at Rideau Hall, but with actual, real live children in attendance and the Governor General, Madame Adrienne Clarkson, very much in the middle of things. It must be said that, in past years, the GG has made a nominal appearance (kind of had to, really, what with it being the GG award), but Clarkson, a former journalist and television personality, and co-vivant to the highly respected author John Ralston Saul, has been marvellously proactive in the arts and in literature especially. The next GG will, no doubt, be just another culturally oblivious ex-politician, so we are enjoying the attention while it lasts.

Controversy? What would a literary award be without it?

Controversy? What would a literary award be without it! There have been odd choices over the years; glaring omissions of works that have gone on to become classics and curious commissions of books (and authors) who have rapidly fallen off the edge of the literary world. The biggest problem with the prize, I feel, is the size of the jury and its make-up. There are only three jurors in each category. What's more, as a government agency, it behoves the Council to ensure that these three jurors represent a wide diversity of specialisations, cultural backgrounds and regional perspectives. That's a lot of political correctness for only three people to shoulder! On both occasions that I have sat on a GG jury, there has been marked intransigence, if not out-and-out filibustering, on the part of one member of this diminutive panel. There is obviously nothing wrong with passionate opinion, but obduracy tends to be mitigated in a larger body of decision-makers, as, for instance, on the Newbery committee, which consists of fifteen jurors, I believe. Fifteen people coming to accord can still result in a surprising winner, but it's hard to second-guess the decision. With a panel of three, a single juror holds too much sway and there is the chance that the best book won't necessarily take the prize but rather the one all three jurors can live with. Real controversy is good for an award; indifference is not, and, truth to tell, there have been indifferent GG winners over the years. The same problem plagues the adult fiction category, which is rapidly being overtaken in status by privately funded awards.

If children's writers are to mingle with the grown-ups, it's still expected that we be seen and not heard

A more recent controversy in the children's book category, however, arises from the decision mentioned above to separate out the children's book awards from the adult awards. Rachna Gilmore, a former GG winner herself, reported on this for the CANSCAIP newsletter. She makes the point that the special attention of a special day, complete with macaroni cheese (gosh, how jolly!) is great, but that it would be nice if the children's book laureates were included in the speeches during the *real* presentations of the awards two days later. The children's laureates are allowed to show up for the fancy dress affair, to be sure, but not actually to talk. That's a shame. Children's writers in this country have made huge strides towards being allowed to come down from the nursery but apparently, if we're to mingle with the grown-ups, it's still expected that we be seen and not heard.

Combining fiction and reality, imagination and magic, Robbana sends two children, Simsim and Machmoum, through their country on a voyage of discovery, a means of sharing their cultural inheritance with other children. This collection of tales about Tunisia is intended to explain, in a style that will engage child readers, the cultural specificities of the country. The children's learning experience spans 3000 years of history. It is a magical journey that leads them through many suspenseful adventures and sets them problems to solve. When they lose their horse, Mosaique, for example, they must learn to decipher coufic writing to recover him. Their magical journey into the heart of Tunisia and its history speaks to modern readers even as it transports them centuries back in time.

Wafa Mezghani

Latifa Robbana (Souheil Fakhfakh illus)

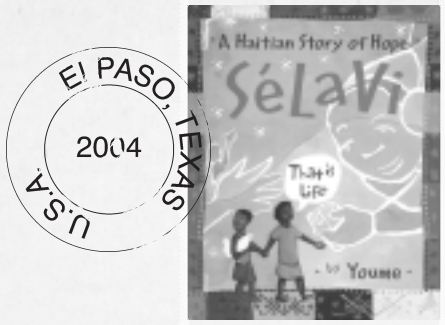
"Tunisie, mon musée"
(Tunisia, my museum)

Published by the author 2003 40pp (with animated CD) ISBN 994184410 (story collection, 10–14)

This is the true story of Selavi, a small boy who finds himself homeless on the streets of Haiti. Selavi finds other street children who share their food and a place to sleep with him. With caring adults, they open a shelter for homeless children and create Radyo Timoun, children's radio, a station run by and for children. (Sadly, Radyo Timoun, which broadcast messages of hope for children for over nine years, was burned in the chaos of recent unrest in Haiti.) Landowne laces a sad story with the courage and hope the children themselves express even in the midst of deprivation and cruel treatment. When the murals they create on the outside of buildings to describe their plight are painted out, they work together to found a radio station. 'We will write our messages in the air where they cannot be painted out.'

A harsh story is offset by pictures painted in warm colours. Appended to the tale, and illustrated with photographs of Haitian children, is an author's note answering the question, 'Is this story really true?' and a brief, readable account of Haitian history written by the distinguished Haitian writer, Edwidge Danticat.

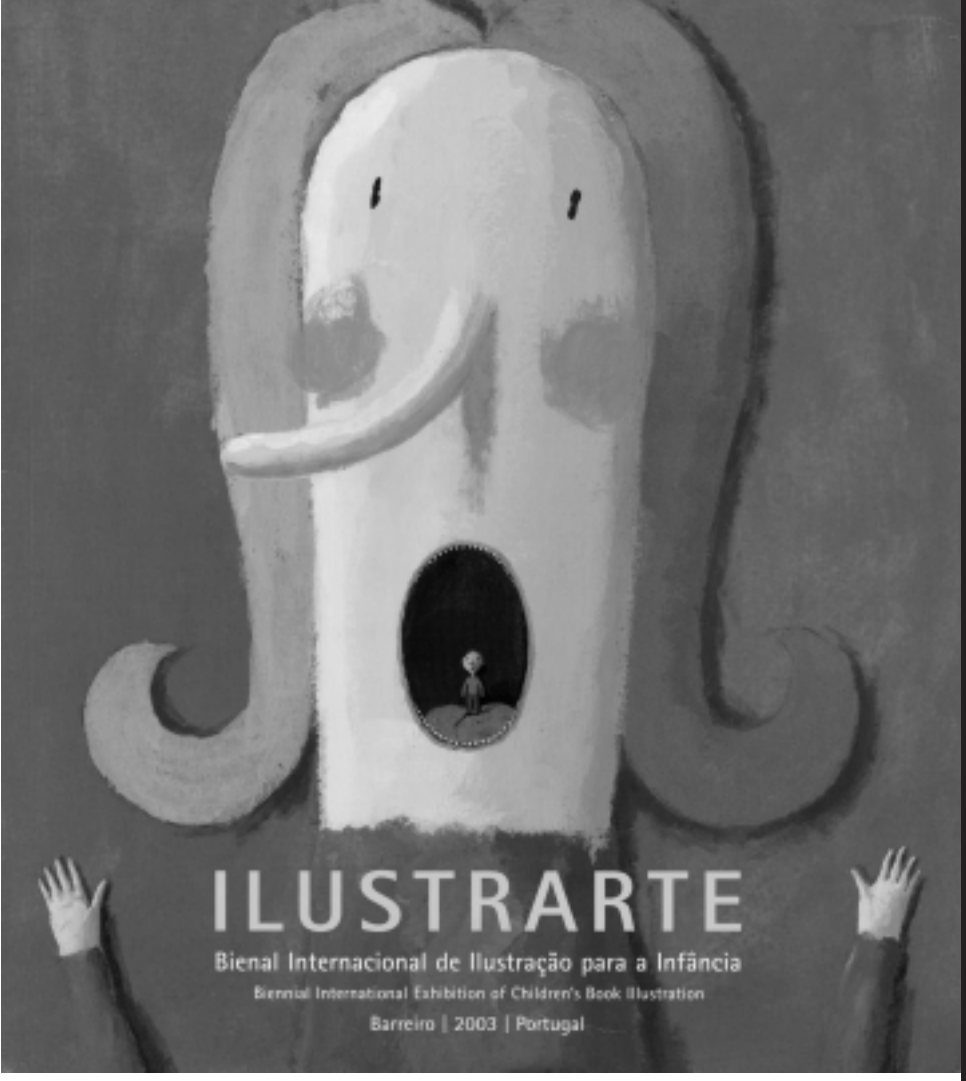
Glenna Sloan



YOUME LANDOWNE

"SÉLAVI, THAT IS LIFE:
A HAITIAN STORY OF HOPE"

El Paso, TX: Cinco Puntos Press 2004 40pp
ISBN 0938317849 (non-fiction, 8–12)



Books on Books

Professional Literature Reviews

Barbara Scharioth presents reviews of a Danish biography of Hans Christian Andersen, a book on illustration in Portuguese children's books, plus reviews of books from Australia, the United States, Austria, France, Romania, Lithuania and Japan

Edited and compiled
BY BARBARA SCHARIOTH

Barbara Scharioth is director of the Internationale Jugendbibliothek (International Youth Library) in Munich

Reviews are translated by Nikola von Merveldt

AUSTRALIA

MAURICE SAXBY

Images of Australia: A History of Australian Children's Literature, 1941–1970

Gosford, NSW (et al): Scholastic Press 2002 848pp
ISBN 1865042773 AU$ 59.00

This is the second volume of Maurice Saxby's three-volume set about the history of Australian children's literature. First published in 1971 and now completely rewritten, this tome closely analyses the wide range of books written for children during an important period of time 'when Australia was reinventing itself after the Great Depression of the 1930s and its involvement in World War II' and when a national identity was beginning to evolve.

Second of a three-volume history of Australian children's literature, a comprehensive standard work

With the help of numerous examples, this renowned children's literature expert explains how the representation of multiple images of Australian life in children's books – from the early settlement of the continent and the influence of immigrants to the specifically Australian landscape (desert, bush, rivers) and animal life (kangaroos, wild dogs, etc) – influenced the images Australians and people abroad had of Australia. Saxby's comprehensive standard work thus offers an indispensable overview of this country's children's literature scene.

Claudia Söffner

AUSTRIA

SABINE FUCHS AND ERNST SEIBERT (EDS)

… weil die Kinder nicht ernst genommen werden: zum Werk von Christine Nöstlinger

[Because children are not taken seriously: about the oeuvre of Christine Nöstlinger]
(Series: 'Kinder- und Jugendliteraturforschung in Österreich' 4)

Wien: Praesens 2003 331pp ISBN 3706901870 €35.00

Christine Nöstlinger is one of the most famous children's book authors of the German-speaking world and enjoys immense popularity among young readers. She has been awarded numerous prizes, including IBBY's Hans Christian Andersen Award (1984); in 2003, Nöstlinger (along with Maurice Sendak as illustrator) was the first to receive the prestigious Swedish Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award for Literature.

This volume features conference proceedings from an international symposium organised by the Austrian Society of Children's Literature Research on the occasion of Nöstlinger's 65th birthday in 2001. The contributions offer varied and interesting approaches to Nöstlinger's work. Several essays present the reception of Nöstlinger abroad (US, Italy, Soviet Union, Spain and Korea); Maria Lypp treats the question of humour; Ernst Seibert explores Nöstlinger's concept of imagination; Peter Malina analyses the author's personal relation to contemporary history; and Hans-Heino Ewers looks at the various social stances she adopted and at her impact on modern children's literature.

If there is one regret, it is that the conference proceedings are published only in German – otherwise they could have contributed to a broader international reception of Nöstlinger's work.

Barbara Scharioth

DENMARK

JENS ANDERSEN

Andersen: en biografi [Andersen: a biography]

København: Gyldendal 2003 (2 vols) 527pp and 439 pp

ISBN 8702020297 DKK 598.00

Jens Andersen, literary critic of the *Berlingske Tidende* and scholar of literary history, studied the many primary and secondary sources relating to Hans Christian Andersen with great care and spent four years writing the most voluminous Andersen biography to date. In its first year, this biography has seen three editions, and it marks the beginning of the publications in preparation for the Andersen year 2005 (the 200th anniversary of his birth and the 130th anniversary of his death).

Andersen on Andersen – the most voluminous Andersen biography to date

Jens Andersen critically analyses the myths surrounding Andersen's life and offers new and more realistic interpretations. He also comments on Andersen's inhibited sexuality, correcting wherever necessary and without any sensationalism. More than in previous biographies, there is a strong focus on Andersen's difficult rise from great misery and his relentless ambition to succeed. The volumes are lavishly illustrated with contemporary images and photos of great documentary value, with various portraits of Andersen – both painted and photographed – as well as with silhouettes and drawings from his own hand. The second volume comes complete with a name and title index and with an extensive bibliography of the primary and secondary sources on Andersen's life.

Andreas Bode

FRANCE

FRANÇOISE BALLANGER (ED)

Enquête sur le roman policier pour la jeunesse [Investigation into detective novels for young readers]

Paris: La Joie par les Livres (also Paris Bibliothèques) 2003 160pp ISBN 2951375344 (also 2843311179) €12.00

BÉATRICE NICODÈME

Le roman policier: bonne ou mauvaise lecture? [Detective novels: good or bad reading?] (Series: 'La littérature jeunesse, pour qui, pour quoi?')

Paris: Éd. du Sorbier 2004 143pp 2732038121 €10.00

Two recent French releases focus – from different perspectives – on the detective novel for children and young adults. The first title, *Enquête* …, originally a companion to an exhibition, is a collection of essays investigating the genre on three levels: the question of a possible definition and typology of the genre is followed by comments on the reception of detective novels for children and by a historical section on the development of French publishing in this field. Interviews with authors and publishers are especially revealing and show the other face of the detective-novel market.

This is also the vantage point for Béatrice Nicodème's study, published in the new series 'La littérature jeunesse, pour qui, pour quoi?' [Children's and young adult literature, for whom and for what?]. Herself an author of detective novels for children and adults since 1987, Nicodème makes the case for an unbiased approach to this genre. Working with a vast corpus of detective novels published in France, she elaborates various typologies, which reflect the genre's broad range of themes and literary techniques. The study clearly contradicts the old prejudice that detective novels are cheap literature.

Both titles celebrate the year 1986 as a turning point in the history of the genre. Following the

success of the first detective-story series 'Souris Noire' [Black Mouse] exclusively designed for children by the publishing house Syros, other publishers realised the genre had potential and followed suit.

Elena Kilian

MICHÈLE PIQUARD

L'édition pour la jeunesse en France de 1945 à 1980 [Children's and young adult publishing in France 1945 to 1980]

(Series: 'Référence')

Villeurbanne: Presses de l'enssib 2003 391pp

ISBN 2910227499 €47.50

Based on the author's doctoral thesis in communication studies, this volume offers a vast documentation of French publishing houses for children's and young adult literature from post-war France until 1980. The main focus is on the development of the publishing scene within the changing social context after 1945.

With her 41 case studies, Piquard offers a detailed analysis of the economic, technical and cultural changes and the varying strategies the publishers adopted accordingly. Six well-structured chapters trace the historical development of the publishing houses, their geographic distribution, their legal structures; a grouping by genre (for example, schoolbooks, novels) is suggested, and it is shown how the publishers' policies can be understood in relation to new interests, technologies and an increasing tendency towards internationalisation. The author does not neglect the major trends in the publishers' lists and convincingly interprets these as a reaction to radical social change such as that of 1968.

Elena Kilian

JAPAN

KODOMO NO HON HONYAKU NO AYUMI KENKYŪKAI (ED)

Zusetsu kodomo no hon honyaku no ayumi jiten [An illustrated encyclopaedia of the history of Japanese translations of children's books from abroad]

Tokyo: Kashiwa Shobo 2002 398pp

ISBN 4760121897 JP¥ 8500

This reference work is based on a catalogue that accompanied the opening exhibition of the International Library of Children's Literature, Tokyo, in 2000, prepared in collaboration with JBBY. The 962 selected works – not including traditional literature, poetry, songs, picturebooks and non-fiction titles – reflect the reception of foreign children's literature in the larger context of the overall development of Japanese children's literature from 1868 until 1979. Brief commentaries, full text columns and biographies of important translators give a comprehensive picture of the beginnings and later development of a specifically Japanese culture of translation over a period of more than a hundred years.

The reception of foreign children's literature is mainly characterised by adaptation and 'Japanisation' because – following 235 years of Japanese isolationism – non-Japanese subjects were perceived as ethnically and culturally alien. This trend was especially strong in the early years, during the second half of the 19th century and only changed towards the mid-1950s, when an increasing number of faithful and complete translations began to be published.

The historical section is followed by contemporary data and statistics. Unfortunately, however, the original titles of the Japanese translations are not given, which makes identification somewhat difficult.

Fumiko Ganzenmüller

LITHUANIA

VINCAS AURYLA

Lietuviųegzodo vaikų ir jaunimo literatūra 1945–1990 [Lithuanian children's and youth emigration literature] vol 1: ***Proza*** [Prose], vol 2: ***Poezija ir dramaturgija*** [Poetry and drama]

Kaunas: Šviesa 2002, 2003 638pp and 637pp
ISBN 5430033766, –774 €8.00 each

During the Soviet occupation of Lithuania in World War II, about two-thirds of Lithuanian authors left the country and continued writing in German refugee camps. After the war, many emigrated to the United States and published works in Lithuanian in an attempt to preserve

A meticulous collection of works of children's literature by over one hundred Lithuanian emigrants

their cultural identity or, at least, to provide the next generation with a second identity. These literary works of the second half of the 20th century – especially the ones for children and young adults – had been dispersed over the continent and the extent of the production was never known. The Lithuanian scholar of children's literature Vincas Auryla has now meticulously collected the works of children's literature by Lithuanian emigrants and presents them in two volumes structured by genre, without discriminating by political outlook or literary quality, and provides readers with further information on the life and work of over a hundred authors.

Werner Küffner

PORTUGAL

EDUARDO FILIPE ET AL (EDS)

Ilustrarte: Bienal Internacional de Ilustração para a Infância = International Biennial Exhibition of Children's Book Illustration, Barreiro, 2003, Portugal

[Barreiro]: [Ver p'ra ler et al] 2003 135pp
ISBN 9729051852 €35.00

In 2003 the Portuguese town of Barreiro celebrated the inauguration of its Bienal Internacional de Ilustração para a Infância [International biennial exhibition of children's book illustration]. In the first year of the competition, 476 mostly younger artists from 31 countries submitted their work, which was judged by a top-class international jury of illustrators (Henrique Cayatte, Olivier Douzou, Stefano Giovannoni, Martin Jarrie und Lisbeth Zwerger). The first prize was awarded to the French illustrator Frédérique Bertrand; Chiara Carrer (Italy), Katja Gehrmann (Germany) und José Manuel Saraiva (Portugal) received special mention.

The well-designed and graphically appealing catalogue features works and bio-bibliographical information on 50 participants and gives a lively impression of the art of illustration on an international level. The quality of the works is compelling evidence for the aim of both the organisers of the biennial and the members of the jury to understand illustration as an art-form ('ilustrarte') and to judge it by aesthetic standards.

Jochen Weber

ROMANIA

IOAN ŞERB

Antologia basmului cult românesc: anthologie [Anthology of the Romanian literary fairytale]

Bucureşti: Ed. Grai şi Suflet – Cultura Naţional 2003 (2 vols) xxi + 561 pp, viii + 580pp ISBN 9739232752 ROL 500,000 (*c.* €12.50)

This anthology brings together masterpieces of the Romanian literary fairytale of the 19th and 20th centuries, accompanied by detailed biographical and bibliographical documentation.

Anthology of literary folktales with folklore origins, accompanied by a critical overview of folklore scholarship

The first volume presents 31 literary fairytales that have their roots in the tradition of folklore narratives. Arranged by author, they clearly reflect the existence of similar motifs and their different literary treatment. The second volume gives a critical overview of scholarship in the history and literary criticism of folklore and encourages further studies on the relationship between 'high' and folk literature. It also provides biographies of the authors and an extensive bibliography of the fairytales that appear in the first volume. This bibliography also lists the sources of the various motives and presents all known versions of each fairytale, published and unpublished.

Doris Amberg

UNITED STATES

DANA L FOX AND KATHY G SHORT (EDS)

Stories Matter: The Complexity of Cultural Authenticity in Children's Literature

Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English 2003 xi + 340pp ISBN 0814147445 US$ 35.95

In today's multicultural societies, the demand for children's books that offer their readers an authentic background is constantly increasing. In this collection, the editors have gathered 22 essays by 28 US contributors who discuss the complex issue of cultural authenticity. They explore topics as diverse as the social responsibility of authors and political correctness, the role of literature in education and the authenticity of content and images.

The introductory section outlines important historical events and traces the beginnings of the current debates. In the second chapter, renowned authors, illustrators and editors analyse questions concerned with the creation of 'authentic children's books' such as: Who is qualified to write an 'authentic' book for a particular audience and why? In chapter IV, this perspective is counterbalanced by the educators' point of view, which focuses on questions such as the use of Spanish in Latino children's literature in English and the role of cultural values in the authenticity of picturebooks.

Claudia Söffner

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

Submission Guidelines for *Bookbird*

Bookbird: A Journal of International Children's Literature is the refereed journal of the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY).

We are now seeking articles and papers for publication in 2005 and beyond. Manuscripts on any topic related to children's literature and of interest to an international audience will be considered. Contributions are invited not only from scholars and critics but also from editors, translators, publishers, librarians, classroom educators and children's book authors and illustrators or anyone working in the field of children's literature. Please try to supply illustrations for your article (Book covers are sufficient, but other illustrations are also welcome.)

Length: Up to 3000 words

Language: Articles are published in English, but where authors have no translation facilities, we can accept contributions in most major European languages. Please contact us first if you have a translation problem.

Format: Word for Windows (Mac users please save your document in rich text format – RTF) as an email attachment; send illustrations as JPG attachments.

Style and layout: The author's name and details should appear in the email only, not in the paper itself. Please consult the stylesheet for more detailed guidelines

Deadline: *Bookbird* is published every quarter, in January, April, July, October. Papers may be submitted at any time, but it is unlikely that your paper, if accepted for publication, would be published for at least six to nine months from the date of submission, to allow time for refereeing and the production process.

Contact details: Please send two copies: one to boobkirdsp@oldtown.ie AND one to bookbirdvc@oldtown.ie
NB: Please put **Bookbird submission** followed by your initials in the subject line.

Please remember to include your full name and contact details (including postal address), together with your professional affiliation and/or a few lines describing your area of work in the body of your email.

International Research Society for Children's Literature

EXPECTATIONS AND EXPERIENCES:
CHILDREN, CHILDHOOD AND CHILDREN'S LITERATURE:

The 17th Biennial Congress of the IRSCL will be held in Trinity College Dublin, Ireland 13–17 August 2005. Keynote speakers include Paul Muldoon, Declan Kiberd, Ann Higonnet and Michael Rosen.

Proposals are invited for papers and panels exploring the conference's theme. Aspects of the theme on which the conference will focus include:

Strand A. Childhood and families
Strand B. Childhood and morality: message and medium
Strand C: Childhood on display
Strand D: Childhood and theory

Twenty minutes will be allocated for each paper, and up to two hours for each panel presentation. For poster presentations of work in progress, authors will have 10 minutes to present their topic based on a poster.

The closing date for proposals is 31 January 2005

For information on the congress and about submitting proposals please see the IRSCL website **www.irscl.ac.uk**

Focus IBBY

A poster and message for International Children's Book Day 2005 from the Indian Section of IBBY, the Association of Writers and Illustrators for Children

The Indian Section of IBBY, the Association of Writers and Illustrators for Children, is the sponsor of the poster and message for International Children's Book Day 2005. The message is based on an ancient Indian legend, rewritten for ICBD by Manorama Jafa.

Manorama Jafa has written many books for children and is currently secretary general of Indian IBBY. The poster art is by the well-known illustrator Jagdish Joshi, who was the Indian candidate for the Hans Christian Andersen Illustrator Award in 1998. Copies of the poster and message can be ordered from Indian IBBY at awicbooks@yahoo.com. Prices are available on application.

Compiled and edited
BY KIMETE BASHA I NOVOSEJT

Kimete Basha i Novosejt is outgoing executive director of IBBY

Books are my Magic Eyes

A message for International Children's Book Day (2 April) to the children of the world from an Indian author

Long ago in ancient India, there lived a boy named Kapil. He was fond of reading and he was also very curious. Questions whirled around in his head. Why was the sun round and why did the moon change its shape? Why did the trees grow tall? Why did the stars not fall off the sky above?

Kapil looked for the answers in the palm leaf books written by learned sages. And he read every book he found.

One day, Kapil was busy reading a book. His mother gave him a package and said, 'Put your book away and take this food to your father. He must be very hungry.'

Kapil got up with the book in his hand, picked up the package and walked away. He continued to read as he walked along the rough and uneven forest path. Suddenly, his foot struck a stone. He tripped and fell down. His toe began to bleed. Kapil picked himself up and kept on reading, his eyes fixed firmly on the book. Again he hit a stone and fell flat on the ground. This time it hurt much more, but the text on the palm leaf made him forget his injury.

Suddenly, there was a flash of lightning and melodious laughter. Kapil looked up. A beautiful lady, wearing a white sari and with a halo of light around her head, smiled at him. She sat on a graceful white swan. She held a luminous scroll in one hand and a veena [a string musical instrument] in two other hands. She stretched her fourth hand towards him and said, 'Son, I am impressed by your thirst for knowledge. I grant you a boon. Tell me, what is it that you desire the most?'

Kapil blinked in awe. Saraswati, the Goddess of Learning, was in front of him. Quickly, he folded his hands, bowed and mumbled, 'Please, Goddess, grant me a second pair of eyes on my feet so that I may read as I walk.'

'So be it,' blessed the Goddess. She touched Kapil's head and vanished into the clouds above.

Kapil looked down. A second pair of eyes now blinked on his feet. He jumped with joy. Then he raced down the winding forest path, his eyes on the book while his feet led him on.

With his love for reading, Kapil grew up to be one of the most learned sages in India. He was known far and wide for his profound wisdom. He was also given another name, 'Chakshupad', which in Sanskrit means 'one with eyes on his feet'.

Saraswati is the mythological goddess of learning, knowledge, music and speech and this story is an ancient Indian legend about a boy who discovered that knowledge comes through the words that wise men write on palm leaf manuscripts.

Books are our magic eyes. They give us knowledge and information and guide us along the difficult and uneven path of life.

—Manorama Jafa

IBBY India is this year's IBBY sponsors of International Children's Book Day.

Baie Dankie South Africa!

The 29th IBBY Congress 2004 Celebrates African Children's Literature

For five eventful days in September 2004, Cape Town, South Africa, became the centre of the IBBY world. Over five hundred participants from 68 different countries gathered in various venues across the beautiful city that lies along the foothills of Table Mountain, to address the congress's theme of 'Books for Africa'. The lectures, seminars, exhibitions and informal discussions focused on the challenges of children's book publishing in Africa, but were not limited to these considerations. The varied programme encouraged fruitful discussions about and provided helpful responses to the difficulties of providing books to children everywhere in the world. In this way, the 29th IBBY congress was a roaring success and the participants were unanimous in their praise.

It was clear that something important had happened in Cape Town: the congress had generated a rare energy and enthusiasm

The congress went far beyond its announced aims. By the end of the week, it was clear that something important had happened in Cape Town: the congress had generated a rare energy and enthusiasm among the participants and had, in fact, become a catalyst in developing a constructive response to questions about the future of IBBY. Amongst the many important decisions that were made in Cape Town, perhaps the most crucial was embedded in the promise that IBBY made to its African partners to maintain and develop its ties with them and to explore new ways of working together.

In my closing remarks to a hushed audience sitting in the auditorium of the Somerset House School, where children had charmed us with their music and their words, I noted that IBBY would

> ***take from this congress the lessons of those who have confronted and understood the complex African realities and who have told us very clearly that if IBBY is to be an opportunity for Africa, it must do everything it can to include African partners in its work here and that it must do this generously and thoughtfully. We are in Africa where story began and where much needs to be done to allow the story to continue. Our African partners have a right to their part of the IBBY dream and by coming here we have promised them that they will have it.***

These were not vain words but the consequence of all that had been shared in Cape Town; they were not idle phrases but a heartfelt conclusion to the conversations that had engaged us all for five intense days. Now we have only to keep the promise and help all those working with children's books in Africa to make their IBBY dream come true.

Kimete Basha i Novosejt

Opening Ceremony

The congress opening ceremony began with a welcome address by Anna Louw, chair of the South African Children's Book Forum. She greeted the guests and government officials, participants, speakers, sponsors, media people, volunteers and guests who had come from 68 countries to join in IBBY's first congress on the African continent. She set the celebratory tone for the congress even as she reminded the participants of the urgent challenges with which Africa is confronted.

In his address, IBBY's president, Peter Schneck, announced that IBBY's presence in Cape Town

We are grateful to have the opportunity to visit a country that has given the world an example of peaceful change

> ***acknowledges [its] commitment to support the work of the South African Children's Book Forum as well as other African National Sections as they continue to promote children's literature even as they deal with the dramatic economic circumstances that this continent faces. We are grateful to have the opportunity to visit a country that has given the world an example of peaceful change as it transforms itself into a society based on the principle of racial equality. We must thank all those who have worked so hard to plan such a rich programme and who have succeeded in bringing so many of us together to discuss how IBBY's mission statement can be the source of other changes in Africa and, in particular, how it can contribute to a better world for the African children.***

Alderman Nomaindia Mfeketo, mayor of Cape Town, then welcomed IBBY to her city and reminded everyone of the historical context in which they were joining her fellow-citizens: South Africa was celebrating ten years of democracy and the end of apartheid. She outlined the many achievements of the post-apartheid period, but reminded the participants of the many difficulties still at hand. The need to bring books to children, to educate and to prepare them to participate in their changing world was a major focus of the work of all those building the new South African society and she applauded the efforts of the South African Children's Book Forum in this regard.

The deputy Minister of Education, Mr Enver Surty, expressed his pleasure and pride in welcoming the IBBY congress to South Africa where, he reminded the audience, the place of the book in the lives of most of its children had still to be made. He applauded IBBY's mission and purpose in Africa and encouraged a deeper involvement in the future.

The highlight of the opening ceremony was the presentation of the

Top: Wolfgang Schneider, president of ASSITEJ, and Kimete Basha at the opening ceremony

Below: Speakers at the plenary session, day 1

Hans Christian Andresen Awards 2004, which was chaired by IBBY's Executive Director, Kimete Basha i Novosejt. Coming as it did after a musical interlude provided by the energetic and engaging New Apostolic Church Junior Choir, the ceremony was touched with a joyful intimacy that set the tone for the whole evening. In her introductory comments, Kimete Basha thanked the Hans Christian Andersen jury whose only honour and recognition for their generous efforts was

> ***knowing that theirs was a job well done: they [had] gratified the work of the National Sections who, at great expense and effort, made their nominations, and they [had] safeguarded the value of the Hans Christian Andersen Award as a platform for IBBY's critical work to promote books as bridges of understanding.***

Additionally, IBBY's Executive Director noted the importance of the sponsor's contribution and thanked the Nissan Motor Company who, she said, had continued to remember the child and celebrate the story. She thanked Mr Julio Panama, who represented the Nissan Motor Company, and remarked that the Japanese company had illustrated 'that there are many ways that humankind can invest in the future and they have proven time and time again, that [Nissan] have come to believe the dreamers that are IBBY members who affirm that the child's imagination is the starting point for everything else.'

The president of the jury, Jeffrey Garrett, offered the *laudatio* and told the audience that

> ***this year's winners of the Hans Christian Andersen medals represent pillars on either side of the fairy tale divide. For all that separates them – culturally, linguistically, in their chosen medium of expression – they are joined spiritually by a shared understanding that life and society present challenges to young people, and that to prevail children must stand upon a bedrock of values, of faith in self, at times of scepticism directed at their elders, even while recognising their own potential and that of their friends and of loved family members, for self-doubt, betrayal and all other vices. For these temptations reside in everyone.***

He then introduced the winners, Martin Waddell and Max Velthuijs, who addressed the charmed audience.

Martin Waddell spoke of personal memory and the source of his stories. He recounted his origins in Ireland and his childhood during which the story was a source of fun and wonder; where a now-battered copy of the stories of Hans Christian Andersen offered by a story-teller-friend, Terence Pim, was the doorway into the young Martin's imagination, and where the seeds of all his stories were provided by the life around him in County Down.

Life and society present challenges to young people, and to prevail, children must stand upon a bedrock of values

Max Velthuijs spoke of the enduring battle to 'translate one's fantasy into images'. No award, however gratifying, could make the fight with the empty page easier, but it did make his heart lighter. With words that were charged with a remarkable economy and a simplicity that reminded the listeners of the magic of his pictures, he spoke of his pride and pleasure in receiving the award, and, even though he admitted that he did not know how he had actually done it in the past, he promised that he would continue to try to make the idea, the imagined thing into something real – to make a fantasy into a picture that pleases a child.




Clockwise from top left: The Junior Apostolic Choir; Max Velthuijs being presented with the Hans Christian Andersen Award by Jeffrey Garrett; At the plenary session, day 2; Martin Waddell being presented with the Hans Christian Andersen Award by Jeffrey Garrett

The evening ended with entertainment offered by the Pinelands High School Marimba Band; the Apostolic Church Junior Choir and the St Louis Steel Band. The Nissan Motor Company sponsored a gala reception during which IBBY Netherlands offered participants the gift of a pocket-sized copy of *Frog in Love* and a bright and soft Frog toy. In short, the congress had begun on a high note of fun and celebration.

Speakers from around the World to Provide a Synoptic View of Children's Literature

The following three days offered a rich and extremely innovative programme. Plenary speakers on the first day included Professor Osazee Fayose from Ibadan University, Nigeria, who emphasised the need to create the reading habit in children from a very early age, and Teresa Cardenas from Cuba, who danced and told her own story of survival even as she told about Cuban stories that have their cultural roots in Africa. Other speakers and contributors on the first day came from more than twenty countries and explored themes as varied as the place of the

A storytelling moment with Gcina Mhlophe

oral tradition in developing literacy to examining the representations of Africa in American books for young people.

Sessions on the second day were spurred on by an enlightening historical analysis of the children's book in South Africa that was presented by Professor Emeritus Elwyn Jenkins of the University of South Africa. Participants fell under the spell of the *universal storytelling moment* led by Gcina Mhlophe who told them a story of 'love, kindness and compassion' that was echoed in stories told to children at the same time all over South Africa. Speakers from more than 22 countries were involved in sessions during the day and provided a rare opportunity to examine the challenges that are experienced all over the world by those who try to bring books and story to children who are often living in desperate situations.

Speakers from more than 20 countries examined the challenges experienced all over the world in bringing books to children

Day three began with a plenary session that brought together Beverly Naidoo, a South African author now living in the United Kingdom; Jean Williams, Director of Bibilonef, South Africa; Dr Neville Alexander, Director of PRAESA in Cape Town; and Carole Bloch, co-ordinator of the Early Literacy Unit at PRAESA. This session focused on challenges of providing books in contemporary South Africa. Once again, speakers from more than twenty nations continued to enrich the day's programme, which included discussions about the place of the new technologies in developing literacy.

The last day of the congress provided opportunities for participants to reach out into the Cape Town community through visits to the Centre for the Book, where a symposium entitled 'Humour in the World of Children's Literature' was organised; through visits to local schools and libraries sponsored by Scholastic Publishing; and through participation in various tours in and around Cape Town.

Asahi jury: (standing behind) jury president Xose Antonio Neria Cruz, (left to right in front): Chieko Suemori, Nathalie Beau, Jant van der Weg, Beth Serra. Missing from photo are Anne Pellowski and Kimete Basha (ex officio)

The IBBY–Asahi Awards Ceremony

The Italian Club in Rugby provided the festive setting for the presentation of the IBBY–Asahi Reading Promotion Award 2004. The president of the jury, Xosé Antonio Neira Cruz, gave the *laudatio* and, together with the representative of the Asahi–Shimbun, Mr Osaki, presented the $US10,000 and diploma to Lorato Trok, the project co-ordinator of 'First Words in Print', a book development project that aims to ensure that all young South African children have access to the stimulation of picturebooks and story books in their own languages.

Xosé Antonio Neira Cruz called IBBY members

'builders of books, tellers of stories, painters of words [whose] world is made of words or images to illustrate words. With our words, we will try to

He praised the winning project for 'having filled the South African houses with words and with books'

sow new seeds even as we tend the harvest of the seeds planted by others before us.' He told participants that they had all

> ***finally come to Africa to talk about dreams and words; we've come to celebrate the endless creativity of Africa and to learn more about how books reach African children. We know already that there are many obstacles in the way of the African people who try to make this happen, but we also know that what they can teach us can fill all our houses with unexpected discoveries and intensely stirring dreams.***

He praised the winning project for 'having filled the South African houses with words and with books. With these gifts has come, as it often does, the hope of a better world for everybody.'

In her acceptance speech, Lorato Trok, speaking on behalf of all those involved with the project, said that the IBBY–Asahi Award

> ***is a victory for all South African children who have long waited to read and enjoy books that depict the surroundings they live in, and most importantly in their own languages. What better time could be to receive this award than now as we are celebrating ten years of democracy in our country! The problem of illiteracy in South Africa is one of the most vicious legacies of apartheid. In homes where the adults are illiterate or functionally illiterate, the children stand little or no chance of developing the literacy skills they will need to be able to make sense of their school environment when they begin formal schooling. … There is a perception that African people have a culture of non-reading. I dispute this. I grew up in poverty and neither my mother nor my father was a reader. What I know is I have always loved books and reading. I would pick up anything with words on it to read. There weren't any books in my native Setswana language that I could read except textbooks. The only thing that kept me from owning books was [that] my parents couldn't afford to buy us books, and there was no library in our area and in any of the schools I attended. What we rather say is African people love books and reading just as much as anyone, but because the majority of them are poor, buying books is not a priority in terms of needs … We often equate books with intelligence and wealth, and this excludes the rural poor, and also makes them feel threatened. With the First Words in Print project we are unearthing the love of reading from children whose parents cannot afford to buy books for them, and in the same way inculcating a culture of reading in that delicate early age, as well as appreciating their languages. We are also saying reading books should be fun. We still have a long way to go, but we are making huge progress.***

Honour List 2004

Nineteen nominees on the IBBY Honour List 2004 came to Cape Town to receive their diplomas for excellence in translating, writing and illustrating. Respecting tradition, Leena Maissen presented all the nominated titles for writing and illustration in a slide presentation which she commentated. Kimete Basha congratulated the nominees, whom she called 'the creators who make the difficult seem simple' and invited them to receive their awards and gifts from Peter Schneck and Liz Page.

The Japanese translator Kyoko Matsuoka thanked IBBY on behalf of the nominees and emphasised the importance of its mission to promote publishing of quality children's literature as a vehicle for international understanding.

Future of IBBY Sessions

The President of IBBY, Peter Schneck, and the Executive Director, Kimete Basha, organised a discussion, chaired by Professor Sandile Gxilishe of Cape Town University, called 'The Future of IBBY'. These sessions were a continuation of the work begun in September 2003 with the comprehensive survey of all National Sections. The main aim of the survey was to identify the concerns of the membership and to generate responses to these. In this way, the survey intended to involve the National Sections in the process of change and development, and to invite them to suggest areas for improvement. The main aim of the 'Future of IBBY' sessions was to ensure that discussions built on the findings of the survey and that they generated recommendations for the Executive Committee that would influence future policy in seven key areas:

- ***Funding***
- ***The Structure of IBBY or IBBY governance***
- ***Internal Communications and Co-operation***
- ***External Communications and Co-operation***
- ***IBBY Goals and Objectives and Developing Nations***
- ***IBBY Activities***
- ***The Purpose and Responsibilities of National Sections.***

Seven working groups were established; each was led by a member of the 'Future of IBBY' subcommittee, which included Nilima Sinha, Elizabeth Serra, Vagn Plengne, Anne Pellowski, Liz Page, Peter Schneck and Kimete Basha. About 90 to 100 participants attended the session, and more than twenty countries were represented.

Recommendations included that IBBY employ a fund-raiser who knows IBBY well to define and implement a co-ordinated fundraising strategy; that more modestly organised regional congresses be encouraged; that IBBY develop an interactive website that would encourage an increased synergy between the National Sections and the Secretariat; that IBBY should develop stronger partnerships with other international organisations with shared goals; that IBBY introduce an associate membership category that would allow groups in countries with no National Section to be part of the IBBY network; that IBBY encourage more extensive twinning initiatives modelled on the successful experiences that already exist; and, finally, that IBBY expand its international presence through an increased range of international activities, especially those involving developing countries. Copies of the complete report of the 'Future of IBBY' sessions have been made available to all liaison officers of the National Sections.

The main aim of the 'Future of IBBY' sessions was to ensure that discussions built on the findings of the survey and that they generated recommendations for the Executive Committee

Closing Ceremony

The 29th IBBY Congress came to a happy close at the Somerset House School, where the new and outgoing Executive Committee members were celebrated and where Leena Maissen received her diploma of Honorary Life Membership of IBBY. Kimete Basha thanked the organisers on behalf of IBBY and during her address officially stepped down from her role as

Executive Director. In her closing address, she urged that

> ***When we pack tomorrow or the next day, let's be sure to take with us some of the energy and enthusiasm that we have encountered at this congress. We shall all need it when we return to the constraints that we all confront every day as we try to make our IBBY dreams come true. Like Jella Lepman, we live in a troubled world and every day our work to put good books into the hands of children is a struggle. If, when we return to our various battlegrounds, we remember these now familiar faces and their stories, we will remember that we are part of a community of many engaged in the fight for the sake of the book and the child, and that IBBY's mission to build a more peaceful world may be difficult but it is shared by many good men and women in whose determination we can find sustenance when we most need it.***

She cheered the organisers and thanked them in Afrikaans with an unexpected

> ***Baie Dankie, South Africa. Baie Dankie to the dozens of volunteers who attended to all our needs with untiring courtesy and warmth, and who made us feel at home. Baie Dankie to Jay Heale and his extraordinary team who were somehow able to plan a congress that addressed specifically the many challenges of children's book publishing in Africa, even while it went far beyond this to speak about all books and all children everywhere.***

In closing, she added quietly that there was one more thing she must do alone:

> ***I must end all my words by saying* Falemnderit *in my own language – Albanian – because it is the language of my first stories and the language of my heart's own music.* Falmenderit *to you all for the year that has passed, for the friendships I have made, for the dreamers I have met and for the memories that I will take with me to strengthen me when* I *need it. It has been a privilege to serve IBBY for even a very short while. When I came, I think that above all I secretly wanted to touch all your lives, transform IBBY and make things somehow 'better' for the children who are at the heart of everything I have ever done with my life. Now that I am going, I realise that, in fact, it is all of you who have touched mine and made it very different from what it was a year ago.***

The evening and the congress ended with the farewell dinner at Somerset College, during which Jay Heale handed over the baton to the next congress organiser, Hai Fei from China, who offered an exciting invitation to gather again in Beijing in 2006.

Top: Leena Maissen receives Honorary Life Membership; Middle: General Assembly, includes Nilima Sinha (India) and Beth Serra (Brazil); Bottom: Children from the Somerset House Preparatory School at the closing ceremony

IBBY Elections in Cape Town, South Africa

Peter Schneck (Austria) was re-elected to serve a two-year term as President of the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) at IBBY's 29th General Assembly in Cape Town, South Africa on Wednesday 8 September 2004. Until his retirement two years ago Peter Schneck was responsible for children's literature at the Austrian Federal Chancellery's division of literature. As well as remaining very active in his home country, he has brought tireless energy to his function at IBBY. Since his election in 2002, he has travelled widely and advocated for a greater presence of IBBY in the world of children's literature. He has visited China, Japan, New Zealand, Australia, Iran, Uganda; thanks in great part to his personal efforts, Estonia, Italy, Kazakhstan, Palestine, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, and Uganda have joined IBBY during this period.

Patricia Aldana (Canada) and **Shahaneem Hanoum** (Malaysia) were nominated as Vice-Presidents. Patricia Aldana is a Canadian publisher of children's books. Shahaneem Hanoum is President of the Malaysian Section of IBBY and has written and published a series of children's books about Malaysian folktales.

Other members elected for a two-year term on IBBY's Executive Committee, serving until the 2006 Congress in Beijing China, are **Huang Jianbin** (China), critic and writer as well as Secretary General of the Chinese Section of IBBY and Editor-in-Chief of children's books at Fujian Children's Publishing House; **Ann Lazim** (UK), librarian and key figure in the revival of the British Section of IBBY; **Elda Nogueira (**Brazil), teacher and translator as well as assistant to the Secretary General of the Brazilian Section of IBBY; **Mari Jose Olaziregi** (Spain), who was President of the Spanish Section of IBBY (Basque Branch) during 2000-2001 and member of the Royal Academy of the Basque Language; **Anne Pellowski** (US),consultant, lecturer, writer and storyteller; Vagn Plenge (Denmark), founder of Hjulet publishing house, which specialises in translations into Danish, Swedish and Norwegian of books from Africa, Asia and Latin America; **Chieko Suemori** (Japan) publisher of her own children's book publishing company, Suemori Books; and **Jant van der Weg-Laverman** (The Netherlands), critic, writer, President of IBBY Netherlands and the *Stichting it Fryske Berneboek* (Foundation for Frisian Children's Books).

Jeffrey Garrett (US) was re-elected as the President of the Hans Christian Andersen Jury. He is currently bibliographer for the Literature and Linguistics collections at Northwestern University Library where he is acting Head of Collections. Jeffrey Garrett has been active as a writer and speaker in the field of international children's literature for more than twenty years.

Liz Page (Switzerland) will continue as Administrative Director at the IBBY Secretariat in Basel, Switzerland. **Urs Breitenstein** (Switzerland), Director of the publishing house Schwabe AG, was confirmed as Treasurer, and **Peter Gyr** (Switzerland) and **Fritz Rothacher** (Switzerland) were re-elected as auditors. Peter Gyr was President of the Swiss Section of IBBY from 1988 to 1994 and has been IBBY's auditor since 1998. Fritz Rothacher has been IBBY's auditor for the same period.

Valerie Coghlan and **Siobhán Parkinson** were confirmed in their role as the new co-editors of IBBY's journal *Bookbird*.

IBBY Executive Committee Meetings
11–12 April, Bologna, Italy
7–8 September, Bratislava, Slovakia

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