

- Tarrío Varela, A. 1994. *Literatura galega. Aportacións a unha Historia crítica*, Vigo: Edicións Xerais de Galicia.
- Thompson, S. 1955-1958. *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature: a Classification of Narrative in FolkTales, Ballads, Myths, Medieval Romances, Exempla, Fabliaux, Jestbook and Local Legends*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 6 vols.
- T(orres). R(egueiro)., X. 1993. "Presentación", *Rexurdimento. Edición Facsímile da revista publicada en Betanzos no 1922 e 1923*, Betanzos: Asociación Cultural Eira Vella, I-II.
- Unamuno, M. de. 1920. "Nacionalismo universalista", *La Voz de Galicia*, A Coruña, 8/08.
- Varela do Campo, B. 1921. "A aspiração da Galiza. Dois grandes patriotas", *A Imprensa de Lisboa*, Lisboa, 14/03.
- Villar Ponte, A. 1935. "El serio problema del bilingüismo en la escuela", *El Pueblo Gallego*, Vigo, 23/01.

## WHY TRANSLATE MULTICULTURAL LITERATURE?

Isabel Pascua Febles  
 Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria  
[ipascua@dfm.ulpgc.es](mailto:ipascua@dfm.ulpgc.es)

**Resumen**

El objetivo de este trabajo es el compartir con otros investigadores una experiencia que estamos llevando a cabo un grupo de investigadores de la Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. Dicho proyecto tiene como propósito el uso, en colegios españoles y sobre todo de la Comunidad Canaria, de cierta literatura infantil multicultural traducida de lenguas como el inglés, el francés, el alemán, etc. Creemos que así se contribuiría a llenar un vacío que apreciamos en la literatura escrita originalmente en español (véase Pascua, 2003).

Los miembros del grupo consideramos que traduciendo estos cuentos se cubre un vacío cultural y se crea un nuevo polisistema que realmente no se ve reflejado claramente en la literatura española escrita para niños. Creemos que puede ser también un modo de animar a escribir tanto a autores españoles como a los propios inmigrantes, sobre todo, a narrar sus propias experiencias como ha sucedido en otros países europeos, Canadá y EE.UU.

En un principio comentaremos seis obras escritas principalmente por autores norteamericanos, para luego concentrarnos, en sólo dos de ellas, en algunos problemas al traducir referencias culturales.

**Palabras clave:** literatura para niños, multiculturalismo, interculturalidad, traducción

**Abstract**

The aim of this paper is to share with other researchers an experience which is part of a project I am carrying out with a group of colleagues on children's literature and translation in the University of Las Palmas, Spain. The aim of the project is the use of translated children's multicultural literature, originally written in English, German, and other European languages in Spanish schools, to fill the gap which exists in Spanish children's literature (see Pascua, 2003).

Together with the other members of the project, I hope that in translating these texts we can help to fill some cultural gaps and create a new polisystem, which has not existed clearly in Spanish children's literature. We also believe that these and other translations will encourage Spanish or immigrant authors to write original multicultural stories in Spanish, following the experiences of Canada and other European countries.

Although I will mention six beautiful stories, mainly written by North American authors, I will concentrate on the problems of translating some cultural references of two of them.

**Key words:** children's literature, multiculturalism, interculturalism, translation

## 1. Introduction

Why multicultural literature? There are two reasons for this.

One is the new phenomenon of immigration in my country, Spain, and particularly in my region, the Canary Islands, where a new multicultural and multiracial identity is emerging. The members of the group firmly believe that a new educational policy is needed to overcome certain hostility towards "the others", and that the use of multicultural literature would help to attain this educational objective.

The other reason is that, in these stories, there are many cultural references which are very interesting from a translational point of view.

In accordance with the first reason, my aim is that Spanish children might read multicultural books in translation and thereby get to know other children from other countries and cultures, the final purpose being to form future generations to be members of a new pluralist and intercultural society.

We do not consider that children's literature is the ideal and unique recipe to influence the already tolerant attitude of future generations, but it definitely contributes to do so. Literature has always played an important and influential role in society. It has always had an impact on the reader. Among the various functions played by children's literature –ludic, creative, emotional, aesthetic, educational, informative and social functions– the last three of them are probably the most important ones in ethnical and multicultural literature.

Through the socializing function of literature, the child reader is undoubtedly helped to integrate in his new social environment. Many researchers agree on the fact that there is no such way to transform society as through literature. Indeed, the first step towards social change is by raising the awareness of the future citizens –in other words, children. Multiethnic literature is but a way of facilitating the process of integration of such children in society, of educating them to help them become socially and culturally conscious people and of making them aware of this new world with its cultural diversity. As such, they will accept and be accepted in a relationship of real reciprocity, an intercultural relationship.

In the last few decades and in various European countries, immigration has been chosen as a key topic in children's literature. It has been tackled in different ways, but the theme of tolerance has been recurrent, although I may personally call it 'acceptation'. Concerning the approaches to this problem in Europe during the last few decades, we may highlight the moralistic and paternal attitude in Central Europe in the seventies: the immigrant, and still more the immigrant child, was seen as a

weak individual in society, a victim of Western countries who needed protection. Today, however, the immigrant has become the young protagonist of children's books and he fulfills an important role in society. A clear example of this is *Madlenka*, the tale of a young girl who tells all her neighbours that she has lost a tooth. The story goes as follows: when she comes back home her parents ask her where she has been and Madlenka answers that she has been wandering around the world, visiting her neighbours among whom there was Gastón, the French baker, an Hindu chemist, an Italian ice-cream seller, a South American greengrocer, a Chinese woman, etc.

Obviously and because of historical reasons, this kind of literature is much more recent in Spain. In the sixties and seventies, Spanish and Portuguese children were still the main protagonists in, for instance, German, Dutch or Swiss literature, as shown by *Und dann kommt Emilio* (1974) by Gudrun Pausewang, a story about the friendship between two young boys: one Spanish and the other German.

## 2. Translating multicultural literature

The second reason for the project was the challenge of translating the cultural references present in these stories. What role would translators of children's literature play in these books? What has been achieved up until now and what still remains to be done? How has multicultural literature been used in those countries, which are already ahead of us in this particular field?

First of all, my mission was to choose some multicultural stories written in English and German by authors from different ethnic groups; secondly, to translate the books into our language, Spanish, paying attention to the strategies needed to maintain the otherness of the original stories. On the whole, to reveal "multicultural" literature and, as a translator and teacher of future translators myself, "intercultural translation" for a new group of recipients: multiethnic children.

As I have stated in previous works (Pascua, 2003), nowadays translation is seen rather as action between cultures than between languages. So, if culture is the central issue in translating, translators should be not only bilingual but also bicultural. However, the situation gets very complicated when working within multicultural literature, which reflect different cultures. Although all the stories are written in English, they talk about diverse and distant cultures such as Inuit, Vietnamese, Arabic, African, etc. Would this new situation imply that in order to translate multicultural literature translators should be multicultural instead of bicultural? Should the translators familiarise themselves with all these far-away cultures of the original stories?

What kind of strategies should be called for, when translating these tales into Spanish? And what would the reaction be to this multicultural literature in the new multiethnic Spain with so many different readers? How then should these stories be translated? Here lies the greatest challenge of our project.

As my main task as a translator was to let my readers know more about the foreign and the "other" world, I would naturally opt for "foreignization": keeping the

exotic and the unknown in the translated text as well. At the same time, while translating and maintaining the "cultural references" of the original text, the issues of acceptability and readability must be taken into account. The translated text should not maintain the "linguistic discourse" of the original language, as children will not like a text with strange-sounding sentences including complex grammatical structures. Readers should understand that it is a foreign text and feel that they are reading a translation of an original, with exotic names, places, food, clothes, customs, etc. This way of translating emphasises difference, something essential in translating multicultural literature, but at the same time we should not forget that the stories emphasise universal feelings, those that are shared by peoples all over the world.

As I have stated in my previous works, I firmly believe that translators are the authors of the translations, a new text for new readers. This does not necessarily imply anarchy; the limits are set by the situation of translation as well as the translators' own creativity and experience. Translators work with a dialogue which is comprised of several voices: the "you" of the author, the future child reader, as well as the translators' own childhood and adulthood experiences (see Oittinen, 2000). As a whole, ignoring and forgetting themselves will lead to the self-destruction of the translators. The limits are established by a variety of things: the text, the multicultural surroundings as well as the experience of the translators. This is not an easy task but it is the challenge which translators face when translating a new story in a new communicative situation.

Which multicultural stories should I choose for translation? Judith Saltman, scholar on Canadian children's literature, talks of Tolkien's "Cauldron of a Story, a metaphorical vessel of history and archetype, filled with a global broth of folklore, mythology and legends." She compares it with the cauldron of stories of the 90's in Canada, "which simmers with retellings of oral lore for children that reflect the breadth and diversity of the world's cultural heritage." This is a good way to start (see Pascua, 2004).

We will also have to choose stories which tell of something more than food, folklore, festivals, fun, the "four F's" as Ronald Jobe states (1995). He also says that we should emphasise more the word "culture" than "multi" and choose books where similarities and human universal characteristics are more important than exotic differences, which are more attractive at first sight.

We also have to look for books that promote their own identity, if we think that this is everybody's right. How can we claim that children from Morocco, Senegal, South America, China, Vietnam, Poland, etc. can identify themselves with the characters if the illustrations of classical stories are of European children? The list should contain stories about immigrants, stories set in countries from many parts of the world, legends and myths about places and peoples, about ethnic groups within certain countries (Canada, Great Britain, Germany, Belgium, United States, etc.).

Here are some examples of the cauldron of multicultural literature filled with stories that answer all these questions:

1. *Peace. Shalom. Salaam.* A book with a lovely message on the meaning of peace. Almost poetical but simple in its writing with beautiful illustrations representing children and people of different races and cultures, as well as different countries and landscapes from all over the world. The text is trilingual: English, Hebrew and Arabic.

Part of the sales benefits were sent to an organization in favour of peace in the Middle East. A funny cultural characteristic is that the book is to be read from back to front. I am planning to translate it into Spanish keeping the Hebrew and Arabic text though.

2. *Figs for everyone*, written by Nazneen Sadiq. The author, born in Pakistan, moved to Canada in 1964. Inspired by the experiences of her own daughters and those of her friends, born in the new country, she wrote this story, amongst others, to tell something of what it means to be Canadian and South Asian growing up in Canada. In this particular story, Shanaz goes to visit an understanding neighbour who helps her see that there are beautiful parts into her Muslim heritage and that she must learn to share them with others.

3. *The missing sun*, written by Peter Eyvindson. This is a story about a girl, Emily, and her mother, a meteorologist, who have decided to settle in Unuvik, a town in the Arctic. The little girl finds it difficult to believe her mother when the latter says that the weather will be different and that the sun will have disappeared. Once in Unuvik, her new friend, Josie, does nothing but confirms what her mum had said. When the sun disappears she starts looking for explanations: her mum gives her scientific explanations about the sun system, but Josie starts telling her a local legend according to which the sun was robbed by some ravens. Will Emily see it again?

4. Naomi Shihab Nye writes a beautiful book, titled *Sitti's Secrets*, about Mona's grandmother (Sitti in Arabic), who lives in a small town in Palestine. Mona lives in the United States but when the holidays come, she goes to visit her granny and discovers the great love they share. This love functions as a bridge between their two cultures and worlds so different. The girl is very happy there and she cannot understand the conflicts and wars in that part of the world. So, she writes an innocent and sad letter to the President of her country wishing him all the luck in the difficult task of finding peace. The author dedicates this story to Sitti Khadra Shihab Idais Al-Zer from Palestine, 105 years old, who still lives there and to all grannies who give our lives light and strength.

5. Maxine Trottier, *The Walking Stick*. In this lovely book, a young man, called Van finds a walking stick at the foot of a big tree. Blessed by Buddha, it becomes his talisman, his link to the past and the support he needs to come into the uncertain future of the new world. With the walking stick and his strong spirit, Van leads his family to a new land. Years pass in peace and when the stick fulfills his odyssey, it is Van's granddaughter with black hair and blue eyes who carries it back to Vietnam and places it at Buddha's feet. It is a story of a "marriage" between cultures.

6. *The Tale of a Silly Goose*. This book contains some stories written with a clear didactic purpose by the author, who teaches in the Faculty of Education of the

University of British Columbia. In this particular story, the characters are animals living in a farm: a silly goose who does not want to be with other animals like the chicken and the duck because they do not speak like she does; they are different. The names of the characters are: Gisela, the Goose; Danny the Duck and Chic-Chic, the Chicken.

### 3. Some problems of translating cultural references

Cultural references usually pose greater difficulties for translators than mere linguistic problems, since translators have to overcome cultural barriers, a task in which they have to be more creators, rather than transcribers (see Pascua/Marcelo, 2000). That is why I have chosen some of the difficulties and interesting cultural problems which I found on translating those books I worked on during my stay in the Education Library in the University of British Columbia.

The first title is *The Tale of a Silly Goose and Other Multicultural Stories*. As I said before, the characters in this occasion are animals which live on a farm. The first problem arose with their names: Gisela, the Goose; Danny the Duck and Chic-Chic, the Chicken.

In contrast to my approach in the other multicultural stories I mentioned in other papers (Pascua, 2003), in which I kept the original names (José, Mona, Oli, Fast One, Mona, Shanaz, etc.), on this occasion I decided to be more "visible" and changed the names. The original names, in the source text (ST) in English, have a clear function of alliteration. If I translated them literally *Chi-chi, el Pollo, and Danny, el Pato*, I missed the alliteration, as a typical element in children's literature. However, if I wanted to maintain the alliteration and, at the same time, look for the acceptability of the target text (TT) and understanding by new readers, I would have to change the names. So, I finally wrote: La Gansa Constanza, Paco el Pato, El Pollo Po-Po.

Other cultural references I had to face within the same story were some onomatopoeic sounds from the animals, which I "domesticate" in order to make them closer and natural for the children:

ST: Split, splat!	TT: ¡Plaf, plaf! (the goose's noise on the mud)
ST: Ssss!	TT: ¡Ah! (the goose gets angry)
ST: Mmmm! Mmmm!	TT: Hummm! (the fox, thinking of food)
ST: Clack, clack!	TT: ¡Pio, pio, pio! (the noise a chicken does)
ST: quack, quack	TT: ¡Cua, cua! (a duck)
ST: chomp!	TT: ¡Ñam, ñam! (the fox bites the goose).

The second book I want to refer to is *The Missing Sun*. The story has a simple language and the structures are not complicated. However, many changes had to be made, since they were necessary in order to reach fluency in the Spanish language, to get the necessary acceptability and readability on translating for children. Let's see some examples:

ST: When it came to the missing sun business, Emily didn't know who to believe.  
 TT: Cada vez que Emily pensaba en que el sol desaparecía, no sabía a quién creer.  
 ST: That old sun isn't coming back! He was too small. And too easy for Raven to steal.  
 TT: Aquel sol ya no volverá, era demasiado pequeño y por eso el cuervo lo robó tan fácilmente.

Sometimes it was necessary to change the position of a whole sentence. For example, in the middle of a conversation between the girls, the author wrote this:

Emily knew about ravens. Up there, the big black birds were everywhere. Squawking. Complaining. And always stealing garbage.

In the TT, however, I did not cut into the dialogue of the girls and wrote those sentences at the end. So, the logic of the text and the fluency were not broken:

– "¿Un cuervo?", se burlaba Emily. "Es demasiado pequeño y el sol es muy grande. Puede llevarse la basura pero no puede llevarse el sol".  
 – "Sí que puede, ¡el cuervo hace trampa!", le replicaba Josie.

Emily ya conocía a los cuervos; aquí, esos pájaros negros estaban por todas partes, graznando, gritando y siempre robando desperdicios.

In the following example we have followed the characteristics of Spanish expressions. Indeed, these tend to be more expressive and emphatic than in English (Pascua, 1998). We have also made great use of the illustration: the little girl looks so upset and desperate. We have then taken into consideration the dialogue that is established (Oittinen) between the picture and the text, an aspect we cannot forget when translating illustrated tales.

ST: "Raven, bring it back here!" Emily shouted. "Immediately!"  
 TT: "Cuervo, ¡devuélvenos el sol, enseguida!" gritó Emily enfadada.

Word repetition is another characteristic which can lead to translation difficulties and which can be sorted out through the use of synonyms. For instance, the words *dicendi, mother, Emily, raven, she*, etc. are constantly repeated throughout the text. In previous researches we personally emphasized that repetition is a universal textual convention in children's literature, particularly in literature for the youngest ones (Pascua, 1998). As such, when we have had to translate the recurrent sentence "It looked right side up and flat", we have decided to keep the same repetition in the target text to reinforce the girl's assertion.

On the other hand, this tale's aim being to bring forward the concept of intercultural education, we have decided to respect all the cultural references. The setting of the present text is the Arctic, no matter where the action takes place: Finland, Iceland, Alaska or the North of Canada. The most important feature is that a girl, who used to live in a hot place, now lives in a polar climate and gradually learns about her

new environment and particularly about the absence of the sun during many months of the year. It is also interesting to highlight the scientific and mythological content of the text. Her mum tells her about the solar system, but the young girl prefers the mythological version of her friend to the boring explanation of the grown-up.

Another problem is that of the translation of proper names. As references deeply set in a culture, the names of characters can be a real challenge for the translator. In this particular case, the main protagonists are Emily, a girl who comes from Regina and her friend Josie Tucktoo, from Inuvik. We have decided to respect the names, knowing foreign names –whether names of characters or places– being part of the education process mentioned before, although they might be difficult to pronounce for the child reader.

Apart from the semantic structures mentioned above, another difficulty consists in the translation of the title of the book. Following the advice we give in our translation classes, we have decided to leave it till the end of the process, after having analyzed and translated the whole text. The verbal adjective *missing* in *missing sun* is undoubtedly a traditional problem for translators from English into Spanish and would have to be changed for a structure such as *el sol que desapareció, que se perdió...* However, we disagree with such a translation because it loses the impact the original title creates on the reader. Moreover, with a view to a future publication and marketing requirements, some literary, artistic and didactic criteria had to be taken into account. The final translation was then *¿Dónde está el sol?*, a question introducing a feeling of loss and almost distress on behalf of the protagonist throughout the book.

Another case of cultural adaptation in the book is the girl's answer to her mother's scientific explanation concerning the rotation of the earth and its influence on the sun's rays. Emily complained:

ST: "Meteorological mumbo jumbo", complained Emily.

What the girl means is that her mum's explanation is a real bore ("un rollo" in Spanish). We then have to think about what a child of the same age would say listening to such a tedious explanation. The expression has to be acceptable in the target language, even if we resort to the process of foreignising. Hence our translation:

TT (suggestion): "¡Menudo rollo meteorológico!" (Qué rollo, fuerte rollo...)

Another aspect which cannot be forgotten is the so-called dialogue between the text and the illustrations. These offer a lot of cultural references: face expressions, pictures on tee-shirts, books, biscuits, school name, cat, etc. Right from their first appearance, the reader is aware of their ethnic differences. Emily is a blue-eyed and brown-haired girl, her mum has got a fair hair and clear eyes too; however, her new friend is obviously from the north with very dark hair, slit eyes, etc.

The presence of the cat at home is another cultural characteristic. We all know that typically North-American fondness of pets. When one reads the author's biography, one is slightly surprised to see that he lives in Saskatchewan with his wife Linda, his three children and his two cats Zero and M.T.

The English books on the shelves and Emily's desk are all famous tales, most of them English or American: *Matilda*, *Charlotte's Web*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Anne of the Green Gables*, *The Secret Garden*, etc. The name of the school is also a clear reference: "Sir Alexandre Mackenzie School".

The wooden houses, the snow, the girls' clothes, the dark sky, the toys (the ice skates and the sledge), all these are elements deeply rooted in the girl's background and culture, nothing to do with the girl's home country, its blue sky and desert landscapes. All these cultural elements must be put to good use, not only from the point of view of translation but also from that of interculturalism, the aim of this project.

#### 4. Conclusion

After translating these and other multicultural stories, I believe that, in the end, it matters little if an image is common place in China, Palestine or Tanzania, or if it is included in the idiolect of a Turkish author who writes in German or in Spanish. What is really important is that the image *is there*, and should function in the target language, Spanish in this case. I believe that strategies used in translating cultural references within multicultural texts should take into account the reader and the reader's response. Secondly, it is important to consider why these texts are translated and what is the purpose of the translators. Together with the other members of the project in which I am involved, I hope that in translating these texts we can help to fill some cultural gaps and create a new polisystem, which have not existed clearly in Spanish children's literature. We also believe that these and other translations will encourage Spanish or immigrant authors to write original multicultural stories in Spanish, following the experiences of Canada and other European countries.

Taking these multicultural translations into Spanish schools provides the children with a intercultural understanding, so we, as translators, are constructing bridges while dismantling barriers between different peoples and their cultures. Our children will learn more about what the "others" are like and get to know them better. Literature is the language of the heart; multicultural literature opens the hearts of the peoples of the world to the hearts of the readers "showing their joy and grief, love and hatred, hope and despair, expectations and frustrations, and perhaps more importantly, the effects of living in a racist society. Voices from the heart can change other hearts" (Cai, 1994).

**Bibliographical references**

- Cai, M. & Bishop, R. 1994. "Multicultural Literature for Children: Towards a Clarification of the Concept", in A. Haas Dyson & C. Genishi (eds.). *The Need for Story. Cultural Diversity in Classroom*. United States: NCTE. Chapter 5.
- Jobe, R. 1995. "Seeing others as ourselves: Teaching Multicultural Children's Literature", *The Literature Base*, vol. 6/4, 4-9.
- Oittinen, R. (Forthcoming). *Traducir para niños*. (Trans. I. Pascua, G. Marcelo). Las Palmas de Gran Canaria: Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria.
- Pascua Febles, I. 1998. *La adaptación en la traducción de la literatura infantil*. Las Palmas de Gran Canaria: Universidad de Las Palmas.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2001. "Problems of Translating Canonized Texts in Children's Literature: The Case of Alice", *Translation and Meaning*, 5, 299-307.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2003. "Translation and Intercultural Education", *META*, 48/1-2, 276-284.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2004. "La literatura infantil canadiense. Espejo de multiculturalidad", *CLIJ*, 168, 44-51.
- Pascua, I. & Marcelo, G. 2000. "La traducción de la LIJ", *CLIJ*, 123, 30-36.
- Saltman, J. (n.p.) "A Mosaic, not a Melting Pot". Article presented in the I International Interdisciplinary Conference (University of Reading, April 2001).

**Multicultural stories**

- Eyvindson, P. 1993. *The Missing Sun*. Manitoba: Pemmican Publications.
- Howard, I. B. & Faruk, J. 1999. *Peace. Shalom. Salaam*. New York: CCAR Press.
- Rogers, V. 1993. *A Multicultural Story Book. The Tale of a Silly Goose and Other Multicultural Stories*. UBC: Pacific Educational Press.
- Sadiq, N. 1985. *Camels Can Make You Homesick*. Toronto: James Lorimer & Company Pub.
- Shihab Nye, N. 1997. *Sitti's Secrets*. New York: Aladdin Paperbacks.
- Trottier, M. 1998. *The Walking Stick*. Toronto: Stoddart Kids.

ISLAS Y PARAÍOS PERDIDOS EN LA LITERATURA INFANTIL FRANCESA:  
LA SOLEDAD BUSCADA

M<sup>a</sup> del Carmen Ramón Díaz  
Universidad de Alicante  
[MC.Ramon@ua.es](mailto:MC.Ramon@ua.es)

**Resumen**

Los parajes aislados en la literatura son espacios de libertad para la imaginación y la proyección de los sueños, deseos y temores humanos. Así, el viaje real o imaginario a lugares solitarios y de difícil acceso ha favorecido la creación de microcosmos que han venido a paliar la frustración humana respecto a la vida social y han canalizado el anhelo de libertad y felicidad de los hombres. Asimismo, en estos receptáculos de los secretos más íntimos de la naturaleza ha cristalizado el énfasis en lo enigmático, lo oculto, lo diferente, respondiendo así al ansia de explorar, descubrir y vivir la aventura que el hombre ha tenido desde siempre y que ha proyectado en la literatura. Es nuestra intención poner de manifiesto estas inquietudes humanas tal y como se han reflejado en la literatura infantil francesa, aportando algunos ejemplos de obras literarias y autores significativos en ese sentido.

**Palabras clave:** soledad, pureza, yo, orígenes, naturaleza, literatura infantil francesa

**Abstract**

The isolated places in literature are spaces of liberty for the imagination and the projection of human dreams, desires and fears. Imaginary or real voyages to desolate landscapes have always been a pretext to create little worlds in order to mitigate human frustration in relation to social life; these little worlds have also allowed the possibility of being free and happy.

In islands and other kinds of remote places men can live adventures and explore or discover different and enigmatic things, creatures or ways of life. All these worries are present in French children's literature. Nature and loneliness are many times together in lots of short stories, novels and poetry that show how men have always wanted to know themselves better and how they have always been looking for freedom and childhood.

**Key words:** loneliness, purity, self, origins, nature, French Children's Literature