

# ANUARIO de INVESTIGACIÓN en LITERATURA INFANTIL y JUVENIL

Nº 0 , 2001

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# Anuario de Investigación en Literatura Infantil y Juvenil

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PRESENTACIÓN

La revista que aquí presentamos, *Anuario de Investigación en Literatura Infantil y Juvenil (AILIJ)*, es editada por la Asociación Nacional de Investigación de Literatura Infantil y Juvenil y tiene como objetivo difundir la investigación que se viene realizando en el campo de la literatura para niños y jóvenes no sólo a nivel nacional sino también internacional. Esta revista pretende fomentar la investigación de carácter interdisciplinar y contribuir razonablemente a la difusión del conocimiento, ofreciendo un foro más de reflexión sobre todas las cuestiones que ligan esta literatura con la sociedad y la cultura.

Este *Anuario de Investigación en Literatura Infantil y Juvenil (AILIJ)* se dirige a un público lector especializado, nacional e internacional. Consideramos esencial que consiga una amplia circulación entre los investigadores en los círculos internacionales. Somos conscientes de que este objetivo requiere una considerable presencia en la revista de la lengua de mayor circulación, el inglés, por lo que trataremos de respetar esta necesidad en cada uno de los números. Así, *AILIJ* publicará trabajos (artículos y reseñas) en español e inglés (a excepción del volumen 0 que, como ejemplar inaugural, presenta contribuciones de autores invitados realizadas en las lenguas de su preferencia).

Nuestra revista tendrá un único número anual, que podrá ser monográfico si así lo decide en asamblea la Asociación. También la Asociación tendrá la última palabra en el establecimiento final de las normas de edición (de ahí que tampoco hayamos sido estrictos en su aplicación en este primer número).

El *Anuario de Investigación en Literatura Infantil y Juvenil* dispone de un Comité Científico integrado por especialistas de distintos países en el que están representadas una gran diversidad de líneas de trabajo y de perspectivas. Los artículos recibidos en la secretaría de la revista serán evaluados al menos por dos miembros del Comité Científico especialistas en esa línea de trabajo. Se conservará siempre el

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Invitamos a los investigadores a colaborar con *ALLJ*, enviándonos artículos y reseñas, sugerencias o propuestas para la preparación de números monográficos, etc.

Esperamos que nuestro anuario se vaya haciendo un hueco en las estanterías de las bibliotecas y en las lecturas de los que se dedican a la investigación en Literatura Infantil y Juvenil.

Las editoras

Veljka Ruzicka Kenfel    Celia Vázquez García    Lourdes Lorenzo García

## EDITORIAL

The journal we present, *Anuario de Investigación en Literatura Infantil y Juvenil (ALLJ)*, is edited by the National Association of Children's Literature Researchers and its objective is to contribute to the divulging of national and international knowledge and research that scholars have been carrying out in the field of Children's Literature.

This new journal is to contribute to the interdisciplinary research and to contribute offering another forum for debates on key issues relating Children's Literature with culture and society. The journal *Anuario de Investigación en Literatura Infantil y Juvenil (ALLJ)* is directed at a national and international specialized reading public. We consider it essential for this journal to achieve a wide circulation among readers on the international level. We are conscious that this aim requires a considerable presence in our journal of the most widely spread international language, English. Thus, we will try to respect this requirement within each of the issues. So, *Anuario de Investigación en Literatura Infantil y Juvenil (ALLJ)* will admit and publish studies (papers and reviews) written in Spanish and in English (except for volume 0 which, being a tentative one, offers papers written in the languages chosen by the invited authors).

*ALLJ* will have one issue a year, which could be monographical if it is approved by the Association Assembly. The Association will also decide on the guidelines for contributors (therefore, we haven't been too strict on their application in this volume).

*ALLJ* has a Scientific Committee consisting of specialists from different countries which represent a diversity of perspectives and research orientations. The papers received by the secretary of this journal will be evaluated at least by two members of the Scientific Committee, specialists in the research line of the particular paper. We will always preserve the authors' anonymity. In the light of the Scientific Committee's reports, the Editorial Committee will decide about its

publication. This process aims to guarantee the quality of the journal contents.

The editors of *ALLIJ* would like to invite researchers to contribute to this journal, by sending us papers and reviews, suggestions or proposals to prepare monographical issues, etc.

We hope that our *Anuario de Investigación en Literatura Infantil y Juvenil* will make a place for itself in the library shelves and among researchers readings.

#### The Editors

Veljka Ruzicka Kenfel    Celia Vázquez García    Lourdes Lorenzo García

### **Unterhaltung – eine ernste Angelegenheit im Zeitalter Multimedialen Enterteinements. Eine Aufforderung, sich mit einem alten Reizthema der Literaturpädagogik neu zu befassen**

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Die Unterhaltung stellt ein altes Thema der Kinder- und Jugendliteraturdiskussion dar. Im „Vorbericht“ zu J.H. Campes „Robinson der Jüngere“ von 1779, dem wohl erfolgreichsten Titels der neuen, modernen Kinderliteratur in Deutschland, heißt es: „*Erstlich* wolte ich meine jungen Leser auf eine so angenehme Weise unterhalten, als es mir möglich wäre [...]“ (Campe 1981, 5). Campe ist das Thema freilich nur einen kurzen Absatz wert; der Rest der umfangreichen Vorrede ist den belehrenden Absichten gewidmet. Dieser Befund ist symptomatisch: So sehr das Vergnügen, das gerade die Kinder- und Jugendliteratur den jungen Lesern bereiten soll, seitdem auch in aller Munde ist, eine Theorie kinder- und jugendliterarischer Unterhaltung, die ihren Namen verdiente, liegt bis heute nicht vor. Der allgemeinen Literatur-, ja, selbst den aktuellen Medienwissenschaften geht es da nicht anders; was die „Medienpsychologie“ angeht, so wurde jüngst noch konstatiert, „ist die Unterhaltung als wissenschaftliches Problem ein ziemlich vernachlässigtes Thema“ (Winterhoff-Spurk 2000, 85).

Die jüngsten kulturellen Wandlungen setzen jedoch, so meine ich, das Thema ‚Unterhaltung‘ mit einer bislang nicht dagewesenen Dringlichkeit auf die Tagesordnung. Die 90er Jahre haben den Aufstieg der neuen Medien (unter Einschluß von Computer und Internet), die weitgehend als sog. „leichte Medien“ angesehen werden (Winterhoff-Spurk 2000, 90), zu den Leitmedien (nicht nur) der kindlichen und jugendlichen Freizeitkultur vollendet. Gleichzeitig sind Traditionsmedien wie das Kinder- und Jugendbuch in einem bislang nicht bekannten Ausmaß in unterhaltungsorientierte Medienverbundprojekte integriert worden (vgl. Ewers 2000, 10ff.). Dieser grundlegende Wandel der Medienordnung hat der Unterhaltungskultur einen erneuten ungeahnten Auftrieb verschafft. Deren Dominanz hat ein solches Ausmaß erreicht, daß die Kulturkritik sich genötigt sieht,

unter der Devise „Wir amüsieren uns zu Tode“ mit Untergangsvisionen zu kontern (Postmann 1992).

Dem medialen Wandel korrespondiert ein weitreichender Autoritätsverlust der traditionellen Hochkultur, wie ihn der Kultursoziologe Gerhard Schulze in einem bereits 1992 erschienenen epochemachenden Werk analysiert hat. Dessen Theorie der „Erlebnisgesellschaft“, deren Etablierung sich in (West-)Deutschland seit den 80er Jahren vollzogen hat (Schulze 1992), ist im Horizont der Kinder- und Jugendliteraturkritik bislang weitgehend unbeachtet geblieben. Letztere war im Gegenlauf zur tatsächlich stattfindenden Erosion des „Hochkulturschemas“ weitgehend damit beschäftigt, die definitive Ankunft der Kinder- und Jugendliteratur auf dem Niveau der Hochliteratur zu feiern (vgl. Ewers 2000, 4ff.). Freilich kündigt sich in den letzten anderthalb Jahren auch hier ein Umschwung an. In den Grundlagenwerken sucht man jedoch noch vergeblich nach Artikeln über neue Unterhaltungsgenres wie die Sitcom, den Fanroman, die Soap und Space Operas oder Grusel und Horror, von einem eigenen Artikel über Unterhaltung oder gar multimediales Entertainment ganz zu schweigen (vgl. Lange 2000).

### *Reine Unterhaltung – ein rotes Tuch für die Literaturpädagogik*

Geschichtlich gesehen bietet der kinder- und jugendliteraturkritische Diskurs (auf den detaillierter zurückzublicken sich hier aus Platzgründen verbietet) wenig Hilfreiches für eine unvoreingenommene Theorie literarischer Unterhaltung. Mehr geduldet als geschätzt, galt Unterhaltung überhaupt nur dann als zulässig, wenn sie mit Belehrung (im Sinne der Wissensvermittlung oder der moralischen Erziehung) verknüpft war und dabei letzterer als Vehikel diente. Auch hier hat Campe bereits Klartext gesprochen: Er wollte allein deshalb unterhalten, weil er „wußte, daß die Herzen der Kinder sich jedem nützlichen Unterrichte nicht lieber öffnen, als wenn sie vergnügt sind“ (Campe 1981, 5). Als *eigenständiges* Handlungsziel literarischer Kommunikation war Unterhaltung also selbst dann nicht vorstellbar, wenn sie mit Belehrung einher ging. Als *alleiniger* Zweck eines literarischen Werkes war sie schlechterdings untragbar; die *reine* Unterhaltungselektüre entlockt den Literaturpädagogen bis hinein ins frühe 20. Jahrhundert regelrechte Haßtiraden. Die argumentativen Frontlinien verschieben

sich von dem Moment an, wo mit Übernahme der klassisch-idealistischen Ästhetik die Horazsche Formel des ‚prodesse et delectare‘ verabschiedet wird: Dichtung und Kunst, so lehrt es um 1900 Heinrich Wolgast, sollen weder unterhalten noch belehren, sondern allein Objekte des Kunstgenusses sein. Die Abgrenzung des (wahren) Kunstgenusses von bloßer Unterhaltung ist jedoch eine knifflige Angelegenheit. Wolgast richtet nicht zufällig an sich selbst die Frage, ob er mit seiner „Forderung des literarischen Genusses“ nicht doch im „Verdacht“ stehe, „die bloße Unterhaltung als Zweck der Lektüre hin[zustelle(n)“. Um diesen Verdacht zu zerstreuen, setzt er alle Mühe daran, den „grundstürzenden Unterschied“ „zwischen Unterhaltung und Kunstgenuß“ herauszuarbeiten. „Das Entzücken mag im Grade gleich sein, in der Art ist es grundverschieden.“ (Wolgast 1910, 85)

Was bloß geduldet wird und darüber hinaus nicht als Wert und eigenständiger Zweck gilt, dem wird in der Regel auch keine begrifflich-analytische Anstrengung zuteil. Was mit Unterhaltung eigentlich gemeint ist und wie sie von einem literarischen Text konkret in Gang gesetzt wird, die aus der Vergangenheit überlieferten einschl. Vorreden und Abhandlungen geben darauf – von Ausnahmen abgesehen – so gut wie keine Antwort. So sei hier ein eigenständiger – vorläufiger und sicherlich auch unvollständiger – Versuch einer Begriffsbestimmung unternommen. Er stellt gewissermaßen ein Kondensat aus meinem Umgang mit der historischen und gegenwärtigen Kinder- und Jugendliteratur dar. Der Terminus ‚literarische Unterhaltung‘ ist recht besehen eine Sammelbezeichnung für eine Mehrzahl von Wirkungsweisen literarischer Texte. Ich möchte mich im folgenden auf drei denkbare Fälle beziehen, die ich der Praktikabilität halber das Zerstreuungsmodell, das Harmoniemodell und das Anspannungsmodell nennen möchte.

### *Das Zerstreuungsmodell*

Das erstgenannte Unterhaltungsmuster hat im kinderliterarischen Horizont frühzeitig einen prominenten Anhänger gefunden. Die Rede ist von Justin Bertuch (1747-1822), dem Herausgeber und Verleger des zwölfbändigen „Bilderbuchs für Kinder“ (1790-1830). Die Bilder eines jeden Bandes sind „ohne alles anscheinende

System und Ordnung mit möglicher Abwechslung und Mannigfaltigkeit“ angeordnet; der Herausgeber scheut sich nicht, von einem „bilderreichen Chaos“ zu sprechen (Bertuch 1979, 178).

Ein Kind, das so bald über einerley Gegenständen ermüdet, Minutenschnell in seinen Vergügungen wechselt, äusserst lebhaft ist, immer was neues und anderes sehen will, kann unmöglich eine systematische Folge [...] aushalten, ohne zu ermüden und das Vergnügen daran zu verliehren. Daher habe ich die krellste und bunte Mischung der Gegenstände gewählt, und bitte nur immer [...] zu bedenken, daß ich es mit Kindern zu thun habe, die ich bloß amüsieren will. (ebd.)

Was hier mit Blick allein auf Kinder entwickelt wird, mutiert im Verlauf des 19. Jahrhunderts zu einem generations übergreifenden Unterhaltungsmuster, das in den großen illustrierten Magazinen und Zeitschriften der zweiten Jahrhunderthälfte seine ideale Basis findet: Unterhaltung durch angenehme Zerstreuung.

Wir haben es mit einem als angenehm empfundenen Erregungszustand zu tun, den ich als Fesselung der Aufmerksamkeit durch äußere Phänomene charakterisieren möchte. Diese Aufmerksamkeit hat etwas Müheloses an sich, insofern sie sich ganz der Attraktivität des angeschauten Gegenstandes verdankt, seiner besonderen Reize, seiner Neuheit, Grellheit, Merkwürdigkeit, Kuriosität o.ä. Ein rascher Gegenstandswechsel ist deshalb erforderlich, weil die Anziehungskraft eines jeden Objektes mit der Zeit erlahmt; das Subjekt müßte, um in der Betrachtung des Gegenstandes fortzufahren, die Anstrengung der Konzentration auf sich nehmen, was als weniger angenehm empfunden wird. Das jeweils neu ins Spiel gebrachte Anschauungsobjekt muß zudem von dem vorausgegangenen Gegenstand hinreichend weit entfernt sein, soll es doch andere Saiten des Subjekts zum Klingen bringen; dies schließt eine systematische Anordnung der zu betrachtenden Gegenstände aus, die eine andere Art von Konzentration erfordern und somit ermüden würde. Der rasche und zugleich abrupte Gegenstandswechsel dient zugleich der Verhinderung einer gedanklichen Verarbeitung der Wahrnehmung, insbesondere einer Rückbeziehung des Wahrgenommenen auf das betrachtende Subjekt selbst. Letzteres soll vielmehr ganz außer sich bleiben, versunken in die flüchtige Anschauung äußerer Phänomene in bunter Abfolge.

Nun könnte dieses fortgesetzte Außer-sich-Sein durchaus in einen als *unangenehm* empfundenen Zustand umschlagen – dann nämlich, wenn Ängste ausgelöst werden. Es können dies Ängste vor einem denkbaren Orientierungsverlust sein, welcher in der Regel auch eine Diffusion des eigenen Ich zur Folge hat. Dem bei jeder Zerstreuung latent drohenden Orientierungs- und Ich-Verlust wird durch die unterschwellig stets mitgelieferte Versicherung entgegengearbeitet, daß die äußere Welt, in die das Subjekt sich zerstreut, geordnet, gutartig und sinnerfüllt sei. Nur wenn Gefahrlosigkeit zugesichert ist, kann Zerstreuung als lustvoll, als unterhaltend, als ein „psychischer Zustand positiver Valenz“ (Schulze 1995, 105) erfahren werden. Stellt man die Grundbedingungen modernen Wissens in Rechnung, dann ist diese Form von Unterhaltung zweifelsohne mit einer Selbsttäuschung, einer Illusion erkaufte: Ob die Welt geordnet und sinnhaft ist, vermögen wir mit Gewißheit nicht auszumachen. Mit dem modernen Subjektanspruch unvereinbar sind die gezielte Reflexionsunterbindung, die Sistierung jeglicher Verarbeitung des Wahrgenommenen. Es werden hierbei jedoch immerhin Eindrücke akkumuliert, und wer sagt, daß letztere bei einer *anderen* Gelegenheit nicht doch noch reflexiv durchdrungen werden können. Reflexion wäre dann nicht prinzipiell unterbunden, sondern bloß aufgeschoben.

Eine Variante dieses Unterhaltungsmusters sei hier nur angedeutet: Sie besteht darin, daß sich das Subjekt statt in die bunte Welt der äußeren Phänomene in eine imaginäre Welt lustvoll zerstreut, die aus frappanten und bizarren Ausgeburten der Phantasie besteht. Der Genuß besteht hier in der angstfreien Hingabe an einen durch nichts begrenzten Erfindungsreichtum, der die Aufmerksamkeit durch immer wieder neue Überraschungen fesselt.

#### *Das Harmoniemodell*

Bei diesem Unterhaltungsmuster werden desgleichen Weltzustände literarisch vergegenwärtigt – jedoch nicht in der Absicht, das rezipierende Subjekt in deren grelle Buntheit lustvoll sich verlieren zu lassen, sondern mit der Intention, bei diesem eine bestimmte Sorte von Emotionen auszulösen. Es handelt sich dabei nicht um heftige, aufwühlende Gefühle, sondern um ruhige „emotionale

Gestimmtheiten“, um sog. „Hintergrundemotionen“ (Winterhoff-Spurk 2000, 88). Konkret gesprochen geht es um das Gefühl der Geborgenheit und des Geschütztseins, um das Gefühl des bedingungslosen Akzeptiert- und Geliebtseins u.dgl.m. Erzeugt werden diese Emotionen durch eine Art der Welt Darstellung, die das Beunruhigende, Bedrohliche, Unglück- und Verderbenbringende nur aufscheinen läßt, um es auszugrenzen, zu einem Draußen zu erklären, dem gegenüber sich ein Raum der Zuflucht und Geborgenheit auftut: die Familie bzw. die Sippe, das eigene Heim, das Dorf, die vertraute Landschaft, die Heimat, das Vaterland o.ä. Desgleichen gilt die Kindheit als ein Zustand absoluter Geborgenheit und Sorgenlosigkeit, weshalb sie in Unterhaltungsangeboten dieses Musters besonders häufig vergegenwärtigt wird. Die Verächter dieser quietistischen Form von Unterhaltung prägen im späten 19. Jahrhundert hierfür den Begriff des Kitsches. Hatten wir es bei der Zerstreuung mit einem relativ emotionsneutralen Erregungszustand zu tun, so geht es jetzt um die Erzeugung von als angenehm empfundenen Basisemotionen. Unterhaltung erweist sich hier als „aktives ‚mood management‘ oder Stimmungsmanagement“, insofern sie sich in der Lage zeigt, „schlechte Stimmungen und Ärger“ abzubauen (Winterhoff-Spurk 2000, 91). Tatsächlich hat der literarische Kitsch des 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhunderts in erheblichem Maße der Abwehr sozialer und psychischer Verunsicherungen und der Bewältigung daraus resultierender Ängste gedient.

#### *Das Anspannungsmodell*

Auch das dritte Unterhaltungsmuster läuft auf eine Erzeugung von Emotionen, auf eine Gefühlserregung hinaus. Im Unterschied jedoch zum vorangegangenen Muster geht es jetzt um Vordergrundemotionen, um mehr oder weniger heftige Gefühlsbewegungen, die anders als die Basisemotionen nichts Zuständliches an sich haben, sondern zeitlich limitiert sind und eine mehr oder weniger ausgeprägte dramatische Verlaufskurve aufweisen. In den Unterhaltungsangeboten auch dieses Musters werden Weltzustände vergegenwärtigt – und zwar in noch ausgreifenderem Maße als im sog. Kitsch: Neben die nahen, vertrauten Schauplätze treten ferne Meere und Kontinente, exotische Welten und fremde Galaxien. Diese nahen oder fernen, teils realen, teils phantastisch-imaginären Räume fungieren hier jedoch in erster Linie als

Resonanzboden einer als lustvoll empfundenen Gefühlsaufwallung; sie bilden gleichsam den Bühnenraum für mehr oder weniger intensive Gemütsbewegungen auf Seiten des Rezipienten, die in einen Zustand wohliger Erschöpfung münden, das Gemüt in einen Zustand des Entspannt-, des Ausgeglichenenseins versetzen (weshalb genauso gut vom Entspannungsmodell die Rede sein könnte). Unterhaltung meint hier: Abfuhr von Spannungen mittels ihrer gezielten Anspannung, ihrer Erregung und Steigerung bis zur Klimax, die zu ihrer mehr oder weniger plötzlichen Auflösung führt.

Die Literaturpädagogik des frühen 20. Jahrhunderts, an deren wohl herausragendsten Vertreter ich mich hier halten möchte, hat das Gattungsspektrum dieses literarischen Unterhaltungsmusters annähernd bereits erfaßt: In der „Ponographie“ geht es um das Ausagieren sexueller Phantasien (Fronemann 1927, 148, 157ff.). Eine weitere Gruppe bilden die „Abenteurererien“, „Räuberromane“ sowie die „Detektiv- und Verbrechererien“ (ebd., 149ff.). Hier kann es um das Ausleben ganz unterschiedlicher Emotionen gehen: Das narcißtische Begehren kann sich in ichbezogenen Helden- und Grandiositätsphantasien ausagieren; es kann aggressiven und destruktiven bzw. sadistischen ebenso wie masochistischen Gefühlen ein Ventil verschafft werden. Auf das Ausleben von Ängsten aller Art ist die Schauer- und Horrorliteratur spezialisiert („Spuk- und Gespenstergeschichten“; vgl. ebd. 154f.). Neben dem lustvollen Ausagieren sog. negativer Emotionen findet sich jedoch auch das Auskosten sog. positiver Gefühle wie bspw. Mitleid oder (glückliches oder unglückliches) Verliebtsein mit unterschiedlich starker Beimischung erotischer Regungen. Fronemann spricht hier recht treffend von „Schmachtromanen“, welche „von der Ausbeutung der erotischen Gefühle nach der Richtung des Überschwenglichen und Sentimentalen hin (leben“ (ebd., 153). Zu einem gewissen Teil gehören hierhin auch die komische Literatur, insbesondere die Schelmendichtung: Die „Jugendstreich-Serien“ genießen, so Fronemann, „bei allen Lümmeln männlichen und weiblichen Geschlechts bis hinauf zu vornehmen Backfischen unbeschränkte Verehrung“ (ebd., 152). Im Lachen über – mehr oder weniger offen gutgeheißene – Normverletzungen befreien sich die Rezipienten von Frustrationen aller Art, die zumeist aus gesellschaftlich auferlegten Zwängen resultieren.



*Besser Kitsch als Schund?*

Während das Unterhaltungsmuster der Zerstreuung in der Kinder- und Jugendliteraturkritik wenig Beachtung findet, genießen die beiden anderen Modelle literarischer Unterhaltung eine große Aufmerksamkeit. Dabei zeigen die Literaturpädagogen gegenüber dem hier so genannten Harmoniemodell eine gewisse Nachsicht. Fronemann spricht mit Blick auf den Kitsch von einer zwar „unliterarischen“, weil „für die große Kunst ohne Belang“ seienden (ebd., 148), aber doch „anständigen Unterhaltungs-Literatur“ (ebd., 160), die zwar „nur der seichten geistigen Beschäftigung, dem geistigen Müßiggang“ diene, bei der aber „immerhin [...] ein geistiger Untergrund vorhanden“ sei (ebd., 148). Dem könnte ich insofern beipflichten, als es dem sog. Kitsch in der Regel nicht bloß um „mood management“, um Besänftigung und Tröstung des Gemüts geht. Er sucht ein Stück weit auch das Bedürfnis nach Sinngebung zu befriedigen; er bietet Antworten auf die Frage nach dem Sinn des Lebens, wie schal und verlogen diese auch immer sein mögen.

Den Unterhaltungsangeboten nach dem Anspannungsmodell dagegen sind der ‚wirkliche‘ Zustand der Welt und deren Sinnhaftigkeit bzw. Legitimität wenn überhaupt, dann von nachrangiger Bedeutung. Die Welt Darstellung steht hier nicht unter dem Postulat der Mimesis; sie ist vielmehr wirkungsästhetisch determiniert, bemißt sich in erster Linie nach den von ihr ausgehenden Effekten auf die Emotionen des Rezipienten. Es mag in einer Gruselgeschichte die Welt Darstellung noch so verschoben oder klischeehaft sein, sie hat ihren Zweck erfüllt, sofern sie eine hinreichend große Schauerwirkung erzielt. Daß diese Art Unterhaltungsliteratur vorrangig auf die Stimulation von Affekten aus ist, läßt sie für Fronemann „ohne geistigen Untergrund dasteh(n)“ und gänzlich „in das Gebiet des Triebmäßigen, der Instinkte und Begehrungen“, der „triebmäßigen Massenströmungen“ (ebd., 160) hinabreichen – ein Gebiet, das er mit dem Begriff des „Untergeistigen“ belegt. Es handelt sich um die von seinen Vorgängern als „Schund“ titulierte Unterhaltungsliteratur, für die Fronemann den seiner Auffassung nach präziseren – heute reichlich monströs klingenden – Begriff des „untergeistigen Schrifttums“ vorschlägt. Während der Kitsch noch geduldet werden könne, sei die primär auf die Erregung von Affekten zielende Unterhaltungsliteratur, eben weil sie „geistige und sittliche Schwächen der

ungefestigten Jugend“ und die „niedrigsten Triebe und Instinkte der Mitmenschen“ ausbeute (ebd., 148), restlos zu unterbinden.

*Unterhaltung als moderne Form der Entlastung des Subjekts*

So markig derlei Aussagen über die sog. Schundliteratur auch klingen mögen, in Sachen „Unterhaltungs-, Ermüdungs- und Entspannungslektüre“ ist Fronemanns Haltung durchaus pragmatisch.

Die Unterhaltung ist notwendig, weil unsere Nerven ständiger Beanspruchung nicht gewachsen sind. Es steht fest, daß der rasende Puls des heutigen Lebens, besonders in der Großstadt, den Organismus des heutigen Menschen ungeheuer in Anspruch nimmt. [...] Ganz rein tritt diese Entspannungslektüre da auf, wo der Mensch durch einseitige, nervenzerrende [!] Beschäftigung ohne geistigen Hintergrund nervös bis zum äußersten belastet wird. [...] Alle genannten Erscheinungen – Unterhaltungslektüre, Kino, Rundfunk - stellen für die seelische Welt des heutigen Menschen Ausgleichsventile dar, ohne die gefährliche Explosionen unausbleiblich wären. (ebd. 161f.)

Der moralisierende Schundkämpfer hat sich in einen um Verständnis bemühten Kultursoziologen der modernen Welt verwandelt. Tatsächlich weisen Sätze wie diese den Weg zu einer Beschäftigung mit unterhaltungskulturellen Phänomenen, die mehr als nur ein hochkulturelles Abwehrgeschehen darstellt. Ich möchte – in Fortsetzung solcher Überlegungen – den Versuch unternehmen, die historisch rezenten Unterhaltungsmuster als unter bestimmten Auflagen legitime Weisen der (zeitweiligen) Entlastung des Subjekts von den Ansprüchen der Moderne zu verstehen. Dabei soll zwischen Kindern, Jugendlichen und Erwachsenen kein Unterschied gemacht werden, sind doch die Zeiten vorüber, in denen Heranwachsende vor den Zumutungen der Moderne gefeit waren (vgl. Ewers 1995). Diese Zumutungen lauten: Rationalität, Bewußtheit und Reflexivität, Handlungsautonomie und Eigenverantwortlichkeit, Selbst- und Körperbeherrschung, unverwechselbare Identität, Originalität und Kreativität, um nur die wichtigsten zu nennen (vgl. v.d.Loo/v.Reijen 1997).

Wenn mit der Unterhaltung nun Verhaltensweisen ins Spiel gebracht werden, bei denen diese Normen teilweise außer Kraft gesetzt sind, dann soll dies keine implizite Kritik an den subjektbezogenen Prinzipien der Moderne darstellen. Die Selbstvergessenheit des Subjekts in der Zerstreuung bspw. oder seine Unterwerfung unter einen Affekt wie den der Spannung sollen nicht zu eigenständigen Werten, zu Prinzipien erhoben werden, die der Forderung nach Bewußtheit, Reflexivität und Selbstbeherrschung antipodisch gegenüberstehen. Es soll auch weiterhin gelten, daß das Subjekt in einer solchen Selbstvergessenheit oder einer solchen Leidenschaftsergriffenheit hinter seinem eigenen Anspruch zurückbleibt und sich nicht in einem *gleichwertigen* anderen Zustand befindet. Wer letzteres bejaht, erklärt die Unterhaltung zu einer *nicht-modernen* kulturellen Praxis; er macht sie zum *Anderen* der Moderne, zu etwas, das mit letzterer prinzipiell nicht einher gehen kann. Ich möchte demgegenüber die Unterhaltung als integralen Bestandteil einer modernen (d.h. den grundlegenden Prinzipien der Moderne verpflichteten) Kultur ansehen und sie als solche zu legitimieren suchen. Dies hat zugegebenermaßen gravierende Einschränkungen zur Folge: Unterhaltungskulturellen Verhaltensweisen (wie denen der Selbstvergessenheit oder der Leidenschaftlichkeit im o.g. Sinne) kann dann nämlich nur eine *relationale Wertigkeit* zugesprochen werden. Konkret heißt dies, daß sie nur *vorübergehend*, d.h. in *zeitlicher Begrenzung* toleriert werden können und allein damit zu rechtfertigen sind, daß sich *anschließend* das Subjekt den Zumutungen der Moderne mit noch größerem Erfolg zu stellen vermag.

Was aber soll man von einer Moderne halten, die ihren Subjekten immer wieder einen zeitweiligen Ausstieg gewähren muß, um sie bei der Stange zu halten? Sie verliert damit keinen Zacken aus der Krone; sie bleibt sich im Gegenteil ganz und gar treu, kommt nur einer eigenen Maßgabe nach: Sie ist nämlich grundsätzlich gehalten, bei der Durchsetzung ihrer Subjekt- und Identitätskonstrukte stets auch nach deren Zumutbarkeit zu fragen. Sollte es zutreffen, daß die moderne Subjektkonstruktion im psycho-physischen Substrat des Menschen nicht bloß eine Basis, sondern auch eine Schranke besitzt, dann liegt es in der grundlegenden Intention der Moderne selbst, dieser Schranke Rechnung zu tragen, selbst wenn sie damit den Geltungsbereich ihrer eigenen Prinzipien einschränken muß. Eine hinreichend reflexiv gewordene Moderne muß die starre Absolutsetzung moderner Subjektansprüche zugunsten einer *flexiblen*

*Subjektkonstruktion* hinter sich lassen und ein Subjekt entwerfen und propagieren, das zum Zwecke der Wahrung der eigenen grundlegenden Modernität bereit und in der Lage ist, Praxen der ModernitätSENTLASTUNG in seine Alltagskultur zu integrieren. Ein solch flexibles modernes Subjekt kann sich der Unterhaltungskultur anheim geben, ohne von der Angst des Selbstverlustes geplagt zu werden; es wird im Gegenteil von der Gewißheit getragen, bei der Rückkehr zu seiner modernen Rolle über ein größeres Maß an Ausgeglichenheit und Entspanntheit zu verfügen. Es wird schließlich solcherlei Ausflüge in die Wonnen der Zerstreuung oder der Gefühlsaufwallung nicht mehr als kompromittierend empfinden.

#### *Besser Schund als Kitsch?*

Eine solche Legitimation von Unterhaltung beinhaltet keineswegs eine pauschale Akzeptanz aller einschl. Verhaltensweisen; sie macht vielmehr eine kritische Beurteilung der Unterhaltungspraxen notwendig, an deren Ende ein selektiver Umgang mit diesen zu stehen hätte. Als zentrale Norm dieser Unterhaltungskritik wäre die Verträglichkeit mit der Moderne anzusehen: Deren grundlegende Prinzipien dürfen in der Unterhaltung lediglich zeitweise sistiert, nicht aber an sich in Frage gestellt oder gar negiert werden. Letzteres ist jedoch ein häufig anzutreffenders offenes oder verborgenes Element literarischer Unterhaltungsangebote in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart. Das zweifelsohne vorhandene, ja, mit fortschreitender Durchmodernisierung der Gesellschaft stetig anwachsende Bedürfnis nach literarischer Entspannung, das von den Apologeten der Moderne, insbesondere von den Agenten ihrer Hochkultur geflissentlich ignoriert wird, wird von deren Gegnern nur zu gerne ausgenutzt, um im Windschatten des Genußangebotes die Prinzipien der Moderne zu verteufeln und vormoderne Gesinnungen zu verbreiten. Deshalb muß der Grundsatz gelten: Je mehr die unterhaltende Wirkung eines Angebots von ideologischen Komponenten, die mit der Moderne unvereinbar sind, ja, einen regelrecht antimodernen Charakter aufweisen, abhängig ist, um so distanzierter wäre diesem Angebot zu begegnen.

Dies dürfte am ehesten bei dem Harmoniemodell der Fall sein: Die emotional beruhigende und tröstende Wirkung zahlreicher Angebote dieses

Untergaltungsmusters dürfte sich in entscheidendem Maße der von ihnen vermittelten antimodernen Weltanschauung verdanken. Ich möchte daraus nicht schon den Schluß ziehen, daß es sich hierbei um das ideologieträchtigste Unterhaltungsmuster handelt. Der entscheidende Punkt ist vielmehr, daß die unterhaltende Wirkung bei diesem Muster am stärksten ideologisch bedingt ist; d.h. sie tritt in vollem Umfang nur ein, wenn die ‚geistige‘ Botschaft ernst genommen wird. Der Kitsch war für einen Literaturpädagogen wie Fronemann deshalb hinnehmbar, weil er noch einen wie auch immer gearteten „geistigen Untergrund“ besitzt. Soweit sich letzterer als ein ideologisches Substrat antimodernen Charakters entpuppt, erweist sich der Kitsch vom Standpunkt der Moderne aus - eben des von Fronemann beschworenen „geistigen Untergrunds“ wegen - als inakzeptabel. Wir hätten es hierbei mit dem unmodernsten Unterhaltungsmuster zu tun, dessen Integration in eine den grundlegenden Werten der Moderne verpflichteten Kultur am wenigsten vorstellbar wäre.

Alle hier zur Sprache gebrachten Unterhaltungsmuster zielen auf die Beeinflussung von Subjektanteilen, die Fronemann (durchaus abschätzig) als „untergeistig“ bezeichnet. Es geht um die Herbeiführung von als angenehm und erholend empfundenen Erregungszuständen in wahrnehmungs- oder phantasiemäßiger Hinsicht (Zerstreuungsmodell) oder um die als entspannend erfahrene Stimulation von sei es Hintergrund-, sei es Vordergrundemotionen (Harmonie- und Anspannungsmodell). Es liegt nun im Sinn der oben bereits angesprochenen Konstruktion eines flexiblen modernen Subjekts, auch den sog. „untergeistigen“ Anteilen der Persönlichkeit Recht widerfahren zu lassen – allemal dann, wenn hierdurch die Subjektverträglichkeit der Moderne erhöht wird – ein Aspekt, der, wie oben gesehen, bereits von Fronemann anvisiert worden ist. Eine Literatur der leichten, unverbindlichen Erregung und eine der emotionalen Abreaktion und Triebbefriedigung verliert vom Standpunkt einer reflexiv gewordenen Moderne aus alles Anrühige und Schundhafte. Ja, sie wird um so akzeptabler, je weniger sie ihre wahrnehmungs-, phantasie- und gefühlserregenden Wirkungsabsicht mit (antimoderner) ideologischer Manipulation verknüpft. So ergibt sich, daß man – in Fronemanns Begriffen – eher den Schund als den Kitsch empfehlen möchte, was nichts geringeres als eine vollständige Umkehrung der Hierarchisierungen der herkömmlichen Literaturpädagogik bedeutet. Ein Blick in die Gegenwart zeigt, daß diese Umkehrung in der kulturellen Wirklichkeit längst

stattgefunden hat: Nahezu alle von Fronemann (und seinen Vorgängern und Nachfolgern) als „Schund“ titulierte Genres (Serien, Krimis, Action, Horror etc.) sind zu dominanten Formaten der modernen (multimedialen) Unterhaltungskultur aufgestiegen, während der Kitsch eher ein Nischendasein fristet. Der Schundkampf scheint seine definitive Niederlage eingesteckt zu haben – auf gegenständlicher wie auf normativer Ebene. Was er zu bannen suchte, hat sich durchgesetzt. Ein Sturmflug dagegen findet kaum noch Anhänger, weil im Zeitalter der sog. „zweiten Moderne“ die alten Wertmaßstäbe ihre Geltung eingebüßt haben.

Damit soll nicht gesagt sein, daß die anderen, die zerstreuen, phantasieanregenden und gefühlsanspannenden Unterhaltungsangebote frei von jeglicher antimodernistischen Ideologie wären. Doch muß man sich darob weniger Sorge machen. Für den spezifischen Unterhaltungseffekt dieser Angebote spielt nach meiner Auffassung ein evtl. mitgelieferte ideologischer Gehalt, von welcher Richtung er auch immer sein mag, eine vergleichsweise nebensächliche Rolle. Die vom Standpunkt des modernen Wissens aus illusionäre Annahme einer sinnhaften Geordnetheit der Welt bspw., die der lustvollen Zerstreuung in die bunte Welt der Phänomene zugrunde liegt, muß nicht wirklich ernst genommen werden; sie könnte vielmehr als Spielregel angesehen werden, die vorübergehend gilt und Angstfreiheit auf Zeit verschafft. Vergleichbares gilt für das Setting zahlloser auf die Erzeugung von Lachen, Spannung, Schauer, Horror o.ä. abzielender Unterhaltungsangebote: Daß die außermenschliche Natur nicht belebt ist, daß es keine Naturgeister, Wiedergänger, Gespenster, Zombies oder Aliens gibt, muß man heutigen Tags selbst kindlichen Rezipienten nicht mehr weismachen. Die mythischen oder mittelalterlich anmutenden Weltzustände, wie wir sie aus der Fantasie, aus Computer- und Kartenspielen („Magiccards“) kennen, werden ebenso wie die Weltraumszenarien aus den Space Operas für reine Spielwelten gehalten, die mit der Wirklichkeit nichts zu tun haben. Auf einem anderen Blatt steht freilich, ob auch die versteckt mitgelieferten Werte, die nicht selten einen antimodernen (antidemokratischen, frauenfeindlichen, militaristischen oder rassistischen) Charakter besitzen, erkannt und zurückgewiesen werden.

*Ansichten einer ‚mündigen‘ Unterhaltungskritik*

Die Rezipienten gegen solcherlei versteckte Botschaften zu immunisieren, sie vor heimlichen ideologischen Manipulationen zu warnen, wäre die Aufgabe einer auf Unterhaltungsangebote sich spezialisierenden Literatur- und Medienkritik, wie sie in einzelnen Fachöffentlichkeiten (wie etwa der der Kinder- und Jugendliteratur) durchaus schon praktiziert, in der allgemeinen kulturellen Öffentlichkeit aber noch nicht gebührend anerkannt wird. Eine solche Unterhaltungskritik macht nur Sinn, wenn sie sich aller fundamentalen Polemik gegen Unterhaltung enthält. Sie muß die Legitimität von Unterhaltung vorbehaltlos anerkennen, ihre unerläßliche Funktion in modernen Gesellschaften nüchtern in Rechnung stellen. Mehr noch: Sie muß auch die Unterhaltung in gewissem Sinne für eine Kunst halten, die gelernt sein will – und zwar sowohl auf Seiten der Produzenten wie der Rezipienten. Es gibt – ganz unabhängig von der Frage nach evtl. ideologischen Implikaten – schlechte und gute, stümperhafte und gekonnte Unterhaltung. Unterscheidungskriterien in dieser Hinsicht zu entwickeln, wäre die Aufgabe einer ‚mündig‘ gewordenen Theorie der Unterhaltung, die nicht mehr Dienerin der Hochkultur sein und keine Deklassierung ihres Gegenstandes mehr leisten möchte.

Eine solche Theorie der Unterhaltung müßte jedoch auch die Grenzen ihres Gegenstandes zu benennen in der Lage sein, ohne dabei gleichsam durch die Hintertür dessen Legitimität wieder in Frage zu stellen. Diese Grenze ist eine zweifache: Es handelt sich zum einen um eine Grenze zu anderen Zuständen bzw. Verhaltensweisen des Subjektes, zum anderen um eine Grenze zu nicht unterhaltenden, anspruchsvoll(er)en literarischen bzw. medialen Angeboten. Oben wurde die Legitimität von Unterhaltung darin gesehen, daß sie als zeitweilige Entlastung, als vorübergehende Unterschreitung des eigenen Anspruchsniveaus es dem Individuum leichter macht, den Anforderung der Moderne nachzukommen. Sie darf deshalb nur ein untergeordnetes Element der Lebenspraxis ausmachen und der Konzentration auf die zentralen Betätigungsfelder nicht abträglich sein. Sobald sie ein gewisses – jeweils nur im Einzelfall und selbst dort nur schwer fest zu legendes – Maß überschreitet, dürfte sie negative Effekte produzieren. Die Medienwirkungsforschung, insbesondere die „Vielseherforschung“ habe „Hinweise“ erbracht, so ein Vertreter dieser Disziplin, „nach denen eine

übermäßige Unterhaltungsorientierung zu unerwünschten sozialen Einstellungen führen kann“ (Winterhoff-Spurk 2000, 93). Unterhaltung stellt wohlgerne nicht per se, sondern nur unter bestimmten Bedingungen, nur in übermäßiger bzw. mißbräuchlicher Inanspruchnahme eine Vermeidungsstrategie, einen Eskapismus dar. Nur in bestimmten Fällen erweist sie sich als Flucht vor einem Lebensentwurf nach den Prinzipien der Moderne; ansonsten vermag sie einem solchen Entwurf durchaus zuzuarbeiten. Letzteres dürfen wir heutigentags, so meine ich allen kulturkritischen Untergangsprognosen zum Trotz, in wachsendem Maße als gegebenen (und durchaus wünschenswerten) Normalfall ansehen.

Den Bezugsrahmen für diese kritische Begrenzung des Unterhaltungskonsums stellt der Lebensentwurf eines Individuums in seiner Gesamtheit dar, nicht aber dessen isolierte Lese- und Medienbiographie. Die Erwartung an das Individuum geht dahin, daß es in erster Linie auf den seinem Lebensentwurf nach zentralen (beruflichen und privaten) Betätigungsfeldern den Zumutungen der Moderne sich gewachsen zeigt, welche Betätigungsfelder dies auch immer sein mögen. Es ist also denkbar, daß der Literatur- und Medienrezeption in einem solchen Lebensentwurf vorrangig oder gar ausschließlich eine entlastende Funktion zugesprochen wird. Ich halte es für nicht legitim, einen reinen Unterhaltungsleser von vornherein als jemanden zu brandmarken, der hinter der modernen Subjektnorm zurückbleibt; er kann dieser Norm auf anderen Betätigungsfeldern in durchaus hinreichender Weise nachkommen. Die Teilnahme an (anspruchsvoller) literarischer Kultur stellt kein ‚sine qua non‘ moderner Lebensführung mehr dar, und so muß eine kritische Begrenzung des Unterhaltungskonsums nicht automatisch darauf hinauslaufen, der Lektüre anspruchsvoller Literatur das Wort zu reden. Damit möchte ich mich von den z.Z. grassierenden Rechtfertigungen von Unterhaltungsliteratur allein als erfolgversprechender Hinführung zur Hochliteratur distanzieren. In modernen Gesellschaften macht die Unterhaltungsliteratur keineswegs nur als Vorschule einer wie immer definierten Hochliteratur einen Sinn – eine Einsicht übrigens, zu der bereits ein Wilhelm Fronemann gelangt ist –; wir haben es hierbei vielmehr mit einem Entlastungsmedium, einem „Ausgleichsventil“ von umfassenderer gesellschaftlicher Bedeutung zu tun.

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**An Apologia for a Scholar's Life****Jerry Griswold**

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For nearly a decade now, I have been examining how meanings are discovered in or imposed upon fairy tales. In particular, I have been studying how the classic story of "Beauty and the Beast" has acquired different meanings when, for example, it has been analyzed by psychologists or illustrated in picture books or made into a film or retold by contemporary writers. In his short story "Pierre Menard," Borges indicates how entirely different versions of Cervantes' *Don Quixote* emerge when the novel is read by different readers at different times even though the text remains the same, word-for-word. In a similar way, over the years, I have encountered Bruno Bettelheim's "Beauty and the Beast" and Jean Cocteau's and Angela Carter's and dozens of others.

My friends have worried about me and what they take to be my narrow interest in a single story, and they have urged me to explore more comprehensive subjects if I wish to meet with success as a writer. But my critics seem to have forgotten the wealth that can be found in depth and that entire books have been written on *Hamlet*, *the Book of Job*, and even the Declaration of Independence. Indeed, certain readers seek this experience of depth and for them bookstores provide works devoted to, for example, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Othello*, and Faulkner's short story "A Rose for Emily"—books with titles that begin "The Companion to" or "The Annotated," or books with titles that end with "Casebook" or "Handbook." In any event, in the contest between breadth and depth, I have kept repeating to myself this maxim: "What is the use of many shallow wells if you don't reach water?"

What, then, has been the wealth opened up to me by my sole-minded study of a single story? By reading about the life of Madame LePrince de Beaumont, the author of the most well known version of "Beauty and the Beast," I discovered how this story about a difficult courtship between a beautiful virgin and her beastly

suitor probably reflects the problems of arranged marriages, a custom which led to Beaumont's own disastrous marriage and divorce. By reading about French history at the time the story was written, I began to see how the account of Beauty's merchant family and the aristocratic Beast might be seen against the backdrop of the Eighteenth Century clash between the rising mercantile class and the bluebloods of the *ancien regime*.

Turning to illustrated versions of the story, I encountered entirely different Beauties and Beasts. Walter Crane's pictures, in his *Toy Book* (1875), are full of sexual innuendoes as his boar-in-squire's-clothing meets a reserved (but later blushing) Beauty. Mercer Mayer's impressive *Beauty and the Beast* (1978) is full of visual allusions and takes on the difficult task of showing perceptual error or how people see things differently. Looking at dozens of other illustrated texts, I concluded that "Beauty and the Beast" must be the ideal topic for an artist since illustrating it is something like a rohrsach test in reverse: What does a woman named "Beauty" look like? How can a man be made into a beast, of what kind and to what degree?

Other treasures were opened when I looked at older versions of the story. "Cupid and Psyche" is generally regarded as the source for Beaumont's tale and that myth presents the problem of exogamy or "marrying out." Thinking of the two together, it became easier to understand how "Beauty and the Beast" reveals the difficulties of a maiden leaving her family or clan and entering into a new situation with her spouse and his family or clan. Madame de Villeneuve's "Beauty and the Beast" appeared fifteen years before Beaumont's and differs considerably: for example, in Beaumont's version the Beast nightly asks Beauty, "Will you marry me?" but in Villeneuve's version he asks, "Will you go to bed with me?" At first an erotic story told in the adult circles of the salon, in the hands of Beaumont the tale came to be rewritten and offered as one of the very first entries in what was then the new genre of children's literature.

Rewriting the tale in other ways, contemporary writers have given the story a different spin. In "The Tiger's Bride" (from *The Bloody Chamber*), feminist Angela Carter makes the story into a woman's walk on the wild side and an encounter with her own beastly self. In "Beauty" (from *Red as Blood*), sci-fi writer

Tanith Lee turns the story into a racial allegory: Beauty is undone by her encounter with a strikingly beautiful black male.

But perhaps the most interesting takes on the story have occurred in films where homosexual moviemakers have had their say. In the gothic atmosphere of his "Beauty and the Beast," Jean Cocteau essentially presents the Nightmare of Heterosexuality; and the title of the film may, in fact, refer to Cocteau's lover Jean Marais who played both the handsome Avenant and the Beast. Gay writers of the Disney film took a more positive approach: condemning homophobic machismo by means of the hyper-masculine character called Gaston and advocating more tolerant attitudes towards "difference" in the movie's story and songs.

This is only the beginning of an explanation of what can be yielded by a soleminded and in-depth study of a single story. Equally remarkable is the contagious effect this has on one's thinking, so that at one point it seemed to me that I was encountering incarnations of "Beauty and the Beast" everywhere. On MTV, there was Michael Jackson becoming a beast in "Thriller" or Snoop Doggy Dogg in "What's My Name" morphing into the same. At the movies, "Planet of the Apes," "Elephant Man," "Roxanne," "Phantom of the Opera," "Hunchback of Notre Dame," and more. Even encountering a couple at the store and wondering, "What does she see in him?"

This, then, is an apologia of a scholar to his friends for his soleminded obsession with a single story. To them I would say that in the scholar's life, the experience of depth, when it is thorough and genuine, does eventually give way to an awakened breadth.

## **Partner Reading: Engaging English- and Spanish-speaking Adolescent Readers**

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If reading is to become a thinking-reasoning process, we must provide second-language learners with strategies that promote interactive reading as they bridge the gap between what is known and what is new. Reading for the purpose of sharing information with a partner provides students cognitive as well as social benefits (Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 1993; Kagan, 1995; Marcos & Peyton, 2000). The purpose of this article is to address the process of partner reading and to suggest practical ways to implement it with adolescent readers. Interactive structures provide learners opportunities for developing language proficiency within relevant, functional, communicative, and supportive environments.

### **Partner Reading: An Approach To Enhance English-Language Learning**

Empirical evidence demonstrates the acquisitional and literacy related benefits of partner reading (Carr, 1999; Klingner, Vaughn, Hughes, and Arguelles, 1999; Madden, 1986). According to Knapp and Winsor (1999), reading comprehension and attitudes toward reading were significantly improved when second and third grade delayed readers participated in a 10-week cognitive apprenticeship in reading involving an adult volunteer reading partner. Tutors scaffolded the reading material to enable the student to accomplish the authentic task of reading a personally interesting book beyond their independent capabilities. In addition, a study involving thirty-two children with language delays, investigating the effectiveness of interactive dialogues, demonstrated students' increased production of words, longer utterances, and enhanced participation in shared book reading (Crain-Thoreson and Dale, 1999). Interaction that occurs among children who read together, asserted Moore (1998), extends understanding of language as well as strategies involved in fluent reading.

### The Benefits of Partner Reading for the L2 Learner

1. Students engage in discussions through meaningful, functional communicative contexts.
2. English language learners can benefit from both written and oral language modeling.
3. Metacognitive factors such as access to prior knowledge based on materials in students' primary language as well as familiarity of themes can provide a basis for transition to reading materials in English.
4. Sheltered strategies, such as scaffolding, word study, paraphrasing, organizing concepts, and summarizing can be incorporated.
5. Affective issues such as levels of anxiety, motivation, and interest can be addressed as students engage in authentic social communicative activity.

### Implementing Partner Reading

The benefits that support cognitive as well as affective factors provide a pedagogical premise for the strategies that can be implemented to enhance language proficiency, to practice literacy skills, as well as to experience positive interdependence with classmates. The first strategy describes an interactive approach that can be incorporated prior to reading a text. The second strategy can be initiated during, and continue after reading periods have concluded. The final suggestion we present describes a dual language approach, designed to foster communicative exchange as well as to develop conceptual foundations through analogous themes.

#### *I. Prereading with a Partner*

Because second-language acquisition reflects, to a large extent, an individual's first language development, second-language instruction must foster

purposeful, meaningful activity. Engaging in prereading activities, discussing new words, and sharing perspectives about themes, plots, and characters provide students authentic contexts within which to analyze and relate ideas. Moreover, the development of students' literacy skills will progress through opportunities for increased engagement with text and resulting intraskills transfer through connections with writing and speaking.

The following are activities designed to help students predict the theme or topic of a story, to access prior knowledge related to the concept, and to relate the personal connection to his or her reading partner.

### Prereading Partner Interview

1. What my partner already knows or thinks about the genre, topic, or theme:  
Example: My partner knows that this author has written other books about fantasy. She likes stories about princesses and princes.
2. A personal experience my partner has had related to the genre or theme:  
Example: My partner wrote a poem about a princess and the magical powers of a fairy who became her friend.
3. Comparing and / or contrasting my partner's knowledge and experience with my own, I would state that:  
Example: I have not read as many books about fantasy as my partner, but I remember reading some children's fairy tales such as *La Cenicienta/Cinderella* and *El enano saltarin/Rumpelstiltskin* when I was younger. I enjoy reading about magic and how it is used to help the characters in the story.
4. I predict that a theme I will encounter in this story will be \_\_\_\_\_, because \_\_\_\_\_.  
Example: Persistence, because this books like a story where young people live in a mysterious place long ago, and they will experience many challenges.



*II. Responding with a Partner*

Concurrent as well as postreading exercises provide students an opportunity to check comprehension and then direct students to a deeper analysis of the text (Stein, 2000). Because general goals of real world reading include an ability to recognize diverse points of view, strategies used with second-language learners must also encourage students to analyze information and discern a specific theme. Strategies can include asking students to express their own perceptions related to the topic as well as to demonstrate an understanding of the author's or classmates' perspectives (Barnett, 1988).

Researchers have found that in addition to the reader's topical and linguistic prior knowledge, factors such as personal experience, attitude, and perspective determine how information is perceived, understood, valued, and stored (Holbrook, 1987; Pearson and Tierney, 1984). Literature response journals provide students the opportunity to write about the stories they are reading, including their feelings and personal reactions to themes, characters, plots, and other facets of the story.

**Sample Student Journal Entry**

<p>Today I read pages _____.</p> <p>I would describe the main idea of these pages by explaining that:</p>
<p>My personal response to today's reading is:</p>
<p>My partner is reading about:</p>
<p>A common theme the stories share is _____ because:</p>

*III. A Dual Language Approach*

Swain (1996) explained that English-language learners face a language gap that must be bridged within academic contexts. Furthermore, asserted Swain, the threshold levels of second-language skills required for successful participation may vary across content areas. Studies of second-language development indicate that an incorporation of the student's native language 1) promotes cognitive development (Tucker, 1999), 2) provides the basis for learning academic concepts in a second language (Dutcher and Tucker, 1994), and 3) 'facilitates the transfer of basic literacy as well as numeracy concepts in one language to a second or third language (Gonzalez, 1998; Hakuta, 1986). Dual language programs, according to Howard (2001), are implemented by schools and districts in order to strengthen and develop the language resources of all learners. The approach, she explains, provides integrated instruction for native English speakers and native speakers of another language. The goals of an additive bilingual environment, asserts Howard, include promoting high academic achievement, first- and second-language development, and cross-cultural understanding for all students.

Universal themes, such as perseverance, loyalty, collaboration, and challenges in life, are relevant and can be powerful catalysts for learning (Stevens, 1982). The concepts, explained Stevens, are common to the human condition and provide opportunity to form core connections with literature. Additionally, both personal as well as cultural development can be fostered as students grasp concepts and respond to the stories they read.

Common themes between reading material in a student's native language and English can provide a framework within which students become familiar with topics. Engagement with native language text material permits students to grasp concepts and vocabulary used by an author, as well as to generate the vocabulary to express the ideas they wish to convey. Content area themes are therefore presented and validated within familiar cultural and linguistic contexts.

The following are suggested texts in both Spanish and English that share common themes. Although the books presented are narrative texts, the dual language approach can be incorporated throughout all content areas with informational texts as well.

*Spanish*

*English*

1. Angelou, Maya. *Encontraos en mi nombre. (Gather Together in My Name)* Durbin, William. *The Journal of Otto Peltonen, A Finnish Immigrant*

Common Themes: Assimilation, Acculturation

This second volume of Maya Angelou's powerful autobiography maintains the heartbreak, passion, and wisdom in this eloquent Spanish rendition. With Angelou's characteristic pride and dignity, she tells about her life as a teenager and single mother, her unfortunate love affairs, her efforts as a dancer, and work in a house of prostitution. Spanish-speaking adolescents will rejoice in this honest testament to the dreams and struggles of a talented artist

Translated by Néstor Busquets. (Series: My Name Is America) New Barcelona: Editorial Lumen, 2000. 299p. ISBN: 84-264-4955-7. Grades 9-adult.

2. Cisneros, Sandra. *La casa en Mango Street* Cisneros, Sandra. *The House on Mango Street*

Common Theme: Fortitude

Elena Poniatowska's talents as a writer and as a translator make a difficult job seem easy. Translating Told in a series of vignettes, *The House on Mango Street* is a novel of a young girl growing up in the Latino

Cisneros's vignettes from her Chicago neighborhood in which she tells about the poverty, racism, and tribulations experienced by her family and friends is certainly not an easy task. Yet Poniatowska has managed to capture Cisneros's humorous and piercing descriptions in this fluid translation with a masterful command of the vernacular of Mexico. It must be emphasized that translating colloquialisms is the bane of most translators; hence, this Poniatowska translation could be used as an efficient model when translating English colloquialisms of Hispanic America. Spanish speakers, especially those from Mexico, will enjoy it.

Translated by Elena Poniatowska. New York: Vintage Books, 1994. 112p. ISBN: 0-679-73477-5. Grades 6-12.

3. Conrad, Joseph. *El agente secreto. (The Secret Agent, a Simple Tale)* Love, D. Anne. *Three Against the Tide*

Common Theme: Irony

First published serially in New York in 1906-07, Conrad's popular novel is now available in this flowing Spanish rendition that maintains Conrad's rich, long sentences, melodramatic irony, and psychological intrigue. Like readers worldwide, The U.S. Civil War is the setting for this suspenseful tale of a young girl's search for her father, after he was called away to help the Confederate Army. When Yankee soldiers approach, Susanna and her two younger brothers, Neddie and Samuel,

Spanish-speaking adolescents will be intrigued by Verloc, a secret agent posing as a disheveled shopkeeper with anarchist leanings, and his efforts to satisfy the terrorists who demand that he blow up the Greenwich Observatory. Gatagan's black-and-white illustrations subtly convey the brooding atmosphere, conspiracy, and tragic results. A well-written appendix and bibliography add further to the readers' understanding of this novel.

Illustrated by Tino Gatagán. Translated by Fernando Santos. Madrid: Anaya, 2000. 304p. ISBN: 84-207-0026-6. Grades 9-adult.

4. Disher, Garry. *Cara de rata*. (Ratface) New York: Dell Yearling, 1998. 162p. ISBN: 0-440-41634-5. Grades 7-adult.

Common Themes: Optimism, Danger, Suspense, Family Unity

Max and Cristina are captives of the *Liga Blanca*, a white supremacist cult community. They are constantly indoctrinated and kept completely isolated from the outside world. When they realize that they and a younger victim, Esteban, have been kidnapped from their natural parents by the cultists, the teens hatch a daring escape plan and find themselves relentlessly pursued by the cult deputy, *Cara de rata*. Despite some weak characterizations, this

are forced to escape to a second family home in Charleston. When the house is destroyed by a fire, Susanna becomes increasingly committed to finding her father. Through the dangerous journey, readers will experience Susanna's ingenuity as well as her skepticism toward the acceptance and support of slavery.

New York: Dell Yearling, 1998. 162p. ISBN: 0-440-41634-5. Grades 7-adult.

Frank, Anne. *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl*.

suspenseful novel includes a daring escape, an impudent, audacious female protagonist, and compelling psychological issues. First published by HarperCollins, Australia, and written by an award-winning Australian author, this smooth Spanish rendition maintains the tension of the original English edition.

Bogotá: Grupo Editorial Norma, 1998. New York: Bantam Books, 1967. 283p. 206p. ISBN: 958-04-4901-5. Grades 5-9.

\**The Diary of Anne Frank* is also available in Spanish. *Ana Frank: El diario de una adolescente*. (The Diary of an Adolescent, Anne Frank). Translated by Diego Puls. Barcelona: Plaza and Janés, 1998. 297p. ISBN: 84-01-35198-7. Grades 9-12. This is a moving translation of the deeply touching *Diary of Anne Frank*.

5. Gisbert, Joan Manuel. *La maldición del arquero*. (The Curse of the Archer) Garland, Mark A. *Rescue Party*

Common Themes: Bravery, Fantasy

Set in the 1200s in the kingdom of Turania, this fantasy highlights the adventures of thirteen-year-old Arno, a brave archer, who encounters murderers, a powerful sorcerer, and a sacred bird in his attempts to serve the King. Gisbert's fast pace and vivid imagery are sure to appeal to lovers of fantasy. Some readers, however, may object to strong religious implications

constant threat of discovery and death. In her diary, Anne Frank recorded vivid impressions of her experiences. The entries provide the reader a fascinating commentary on human courage and frailty, and a compelling self-portrait of a sensitive and spirited young woman.

New York: Bantam Books, 1967. 283p. ISBN: 0-553-29698-1. Grades 7-12.

Garland, Mark A. *Rescue Party* incorporates the themes of bravery, fantasy, and altruism. Set on a hidden island, intelligent dinosaurs and shipwrecked humans have joined together to help all to survive the devastations caused by deadly storms. When a hot air balloon crashes in the jungle, Loro and his young friends unite to rescue the survivors.

and admonitions. But readers in search of fantasy with adventure in castles filled with lords and vassals will enjoy.

Illustrated by Francisco Solé. Madrid: Editorial Espasa Calpe, 1999. 141 p. ISBN: 84-239-9051-6. Grades 5-8. (Series: Dinotopia) New York: Random House, 1999. 108p. ISBN: 0-679-89107-2. Grades 6-10.

6. Huidobro, Norma. *¿Quién conoce a Greta Garbo? (Who Knows Greta Garbo?)* William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Retold by Bruce Coville.

Common Theme: Tragedy

Fourteen-year-old Greta is an only child. This fast-paced mystery with an intrepid protagonist is certainly a fast read. Sophisticated readers will question the unlikely coincidences that result in fortuitous events and actions, but the strong characterizations and the easy-to-read dialogue that resonates with the vernacular of Argentina, make this an enjoyable mystery, especially for Spanish-speaking adolescents who prefer the special flavor of Latin American cities and customs.

Young readers will enjoy the universal appeal of young love thwarted by misunderstandings and uncontrollable circumstances. Another aspect of the story that contributes to its appeal to youth is the theme of friendship as depicted through the caring and supportive relationships between Romeo and his friends. Geared toward young audiences that may be encountering Shakespeare for the first time, this abridged version of *Romeo and Juliet* provides access to the original story. The illustrations are rich, romantic scenes, including a stunning vertical gatefold of the famous balcony scene in Verona, Italy, where the story is set.

Bogotá: Grupo Editorial Norma, 2000. 235p. ISBN: 987-9334-53-1. Grades 8-10. Illustrated by Dennis Nolan. New York: Dial Books, 1999. 38p. ISBN: 0-8037-2462-4. Grades 8-11.

7. Kay, Guy Gavriel. *El árbol del verano. (Summer Tree)* Vande Velde, Vivian. *A Hidden Magic.*

Common Themes: Values, Morality, Ethics

Maintaining the fast pace and excitement survive the wrath of Rakoth Maugrim, the powerful and malignant god. Spanish-speaking fantasy buffs will enjoy.

This is an original and delightful parody of the classic fairy-tale genre. A story of the quite ordinary but spirited princess-heroine Jennifer, finds herself in the position of saving the life of a spoiled prince and contending with an evil young sorcerer. Comprehension will be facilitated through crisp dialogue and illustrations.

(Series: Tapiz de Fionavar) Translated by Teófilo de Lozoya. Barcelona: Timun Mas, 2000. 419p. ISBN: 84-480-3192-X. Grades 9-adult. Illustrated by Trina Schart Hyman. San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1997. ISBN: 0-15-201200-1. Grades 7-12.

Learning a second language through meaningful and purposeful reading experiences provides learners with opportunities to contemplate and synthesize information during the acquisitional process. When second-language students are provided opportunities to summarize, evaluate, apply, and reflect on information, each learner may begin a journey of connecting learning events and acquired skills to new opportunities for acquisitional development and cognitive growth.

Through the partner reading experience, English-language learners are provided opportunities to increase language proficiency, to build literacy and critical thinking skills, and to practice communication within authentic contexts. The approach allows students to observe successful reading and writing behaviors, and to monitor language as it is being modeled by a peer. Through partnership formations, students can compare and contrast their personal perspectives as they share their impressions of story or text elements.

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### What can we learn from narratology?

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Children's literature scholarship is a relatively recent academic discipline, more or less comparable in its status with feminist criticism. The first serious studies on children's literature in the West appeared in the 1960s. They were primarily historical and thematic surveys, with a strong pedagogical bias. Among the very first to bring forward the formal aspects of children's literature was a Swedish study: Vivi Edström's *Barn bo ken form* ("Form in Children's Literature", 1980). Since then, a number of narratological studies of children's literature have been published, focused on the specific features of plot, characterization, perspective and other narrative elements in children's literature as opposed to the mainstream.

In what way is a narratological approach different from conventional approaches to children's literature? (I am not using the word "conventional" in a pejorative sense). The decisive question for a literary historian is, for instance, "What makes *Alice in Wonderland* an outstanding children's book?" The question for a narratologist is: "What makes *Alice in Wonderland* a children's book?" The former question has been successfully answered by many critics, who have examined the portrayal of the child and the society, the linguistic acrobatics, the philosophical implications, and so on. The latter question has given those who have cared to pose it at all a lot of headache. We know by intuition that it is a children's book, but it does not match any conventional definitions. It is not uncommon to interrogate books that do not match our preconceived opinions about children's literature. We have heard critics say that *Alice in Wonderland* or *Winnie the Pooh* are great books because they in actual fact are not children's books.

Very often such statements are made without further reflections, based on assumptions like: "It is too difficult for children, children don't understand it" In doing so, critics apply readerresponse ideas and construct an abstract, ideal picture

of a "child" who can or cannot enjoy the particular book. They also apply pedagogical criteria and judge the books on the basis of their own opinions about pedagogical values (which may be educational, moral or ideological). Not seldom people also trust what authors say about their books ("I write for children" or "I do not write for children") or how publishers and library services classify them. All these are arbitrary criteria, which in addition change throughout history. The narratological question: "What characterizes a children's book, as distinct from all other text types?" presupposes a totally different methodology.

I am not sure that the international children's literature scholarly community will in the near future agree on a common ground about what exactly makes a children's book. Still, narratology offers a number of other, less metaphysical questions which can be used as points of departure for exciting studies.

Some conventional questions about a literary text as a whole may be: "What is the book about, superficially and on a deeper level? What is its message and the author's intention? What ideology and values does it convey?" This is what most studies of children's literature, both surveys and studies focused on individual authors and works, have so far been concerned about. This is of course fully legitimate and can sometimes produce brilliant results. The questions for a narratologist are: "What constitutes a narrative? What elements is a narrative made of?" The concept of narrativity implies the sum of all features in a narrative that make it a narrative. The study object of narratology is thus narrativity, and not the narrative as such. This study object demand other analytical tools than other critical theories and methods. I am in no way claiming that narratology yields *better* results than other methods, merely different results.

Most scholars who have examined narrativity agree about the distinction between the content of the narrative, the story ("what is being told"), and its form, the discourse ("how it is told"). The majority of studies in children's literature have only concentrated on the story level, analyzing it from many different angles. Concerning plot, the conventional questions are: "What happens in the book? Who does what, when, where, how and why?" These questions can be dealt with by a variety of methods. We can examine how the story reflects the time and society within which it was written. We can investigate the author's overt or covert

opinions. We can see how the story is relevant for its readers. Within children's literature research much discussion has concerned what subjects and themes are suitable or not suitable for young readers.

The narratologist's question is: "What are the constituents of a plot?" The early formalist and structuralist studies were often focused on the grammar of story, its morphology (classification of narrative elements) and its syntax (rules for how narrative elements can be combined into a meaningful whole). Since the structure of children's books is generally more rigid than in modern, especially modernist and postmodernist literature, it may be quite fruitful to start a narratological analysis of children's literature with surface structures, but we must remember that we will not come further than to a very general picture of plot and character gallery. Formulaic fiction, such as adventure, crime and mystery novels, is especially suitable for structural studies. But also in quality literature we can discern what events constitute a plot and how they are related to each other. For instance, a recurrent element in children's literature is the protagonist's physical dislocation, a transportation to a new, unknown territory, which allows the freedom to explore the world without the adult supervision. This element, corresponding to Vladimir Propp's initial function of "absence" in folktales, is a morphological structure typical for children's literature. From syntactical point of view, it must necessarily appear in the beginning of the story. This is just a very primitive example of how the grammar of narrative can be applied to children's literature.

In speaking about literary characters, the traditional questions are: "What do characters represent? Who or what are they?" An interpretation of a character can be done from the text itself and not uncommonly from our extra-textual experiences. For instance, we can discuss how boys and girls, parents and teachers, immigrants and minorities are portrayed in children's literature of any given period. We can also analyze concrete characters, such as Pippi Longstocking, Anne of Green Gables, or the Moomintroll. We have a variety of tools for such analyses: we can treat characters from a socio-historical viewpoint, as representatives of their time and social group; or from a psychological, even psychoanalytical viewpoint, as bearers of certain psychological features; or from a biographical viewpoints, as reflections of their authors' lives and opinions. The gender aspect has become a significant point of departure for looking at texts. For a narratologist, the essential

question is: "How are characters constructed by authors? How are they revealed for readers?"

One of the most profound problems in dealing with literary characters is their ontological status: are we to treat them as real people, with psychologically credible traits, or merely as textual constructions? In narratology, a distinction is made between mimetic and semiotic approach to characters. With a mimetic approach, we view them as real people and ascribe them a background which may not have any support in the text. The semiotic approach treats characters, as all other textual elements, merely as a number of words, without any substance. I believe, like many other scholars, that a reasonable attitude is somewhere in between; but I will gladly admit that I lean toward the semiotic end of the spectrum.

The ontological question is highly relevant for children's literature research. There is a still stronger tendency to treat and judge characters in children's books as if they were real people. When schoolteachers ask questions like: "With whom would you like to be friends in this book?", it presupposes an understanding of characters as real people, likewise statements such as: "If Tom Sawyer lived today he would be an ecological activist, or a neofascist, or a juvenile delinquent" However, literary characters do not exist outside their texts, and all questions that cannot find support in the text are pointless. Yet, we have read many articles and student papers about literary characters that are reminiscent of medical case records, ascribing them psychological qualities from real life, not from the texts. There is nothing wrong about employing analytical tools from other disciplines, but we must remember that literary character need not behave according to patterns described in psychology textbooks.

Instead, narratology offers a number of epistemological questions, that is, questions about how we as readers can understand characters we meet in books. For many critics, the appeal of literature is exactly the fact that we can more easily understand literary figures than we can ever learn to understand real people. Characters are transparent in a way real people can never be. However, far from all means of characterization allows this transparency. In children's literature, characters are usually less transparent than in the mainstream, because children's writers have a tendency to use external rather than internal characterization

devices. This is an interesting paradox. On the one hand, children's literature is supposed to be simple and easy to understand. We can then expect writers to employ narrative devices that would enable readers to come closer to characters and understand them better. But on the other hand, such devices are the most complex and therefore are used only sparsely in children's literature.

External description is the simplest device: readers get a direct portrait of the character: Pippi Longstocking has red hair and a nose like a small potato. Illustrations in children's books contribute to our immediate perception of characters. They can both complement textual descriptions or wholly substitute for them. Writers are free to give us many details about the characters' looks or omit them altogether. Being an authorial narrative form, external description is tangibly didactic.

Narrator's statements are of course also didactic; they manipulate readers toward a certain interpretation of character. For instance, the text says explicitly that Pippi's friends Tommy and Annika are nice and well-behaved children. There is not much left for the reader to do than accept these statements. Characters' actions present them in a more indirect way. For instance: Pippi repeatedly treats her friends to nice food and gives them presents. We understand that she is generous. Repetition of actions can thus emphasize character traits. Reactions to events can also reveal character properties: Pippi reacts strongly when she encounters injustice and violence. She does not hesitate to save two small children from a fire. The narrator can comment the character's actions and reactions or allow readers to draw their own conclusions. When the narrator explains and comments too much, we usually say that the book is over-didactic.

Characters' direct speech presents them immediately, through what they say as well as through how they say it. Pippi is extremely verbal and witty, but we cannot really trust everything she says. Indirect speech is mediated through the narrator. We no longer hear the characters' voices, but a report of their statements, which may have been manipulated by the narrator. It is sufficient that a comment is added, such as "he said with irritation" or "she said resentfully", to affect our understanding of the character.

Mental representation is, as already hinted, the most sophisticated



characterization device. It allows us to penetrate the characters' mind. This device is uncommon in *Pippi Longstocking*, but it is all the more important in books by many contemporary writers, where the reader is allowed to take part of the innermost thoughts and mental states of characters. Characters become fully transparent, in a way that real people can never be. On the other hand, even the most complex character can never be as multidimensional as a real living person.

The fact that mental representation is uncommon in children's literature depends on its implied readers. We need certain life experience to be able to interpret characters' thoughts, and still more their unarticulated emotions, such as fear, anxiety, longing or joy. Of course, a writer can simply say "He was anxious" or "She was scared" But the words "anxious" or "scared" are very simple labels for complex and contradictory mental states. Not even a long description can necessarily convey all the shades of a person's feelings.

Narratology discerns a number of artistic devices to depict inner life or consciousness. The simplest is quoted monologue, corresponding to direct speech, when a person's thoughts are rendered literally, with tags such as "he thought". Since our thoughts are seldom as ordered and structured as spoken sentences, quoted monologue does not really reflect consciousness, but a rather organized picture of it. However, since quoted monologue is the easiest device to understand, it is used most frequently in children's literature. In this form, the character's discourse is clearly distinct from the narrator's discourse. In more complex forms, such as the interior monologue, the free indirect discourse and so on, it is not always possible to discern the source of utterance. Complex mental representation is in children's literature often used to manipulate readers, to create an illusion that the text reflects a character's mind, while it is in fact a narrator's comments about a character's mind. The specific feature of children's literature is that the narrative voice most often is that of an adult, while the character is a child. The difference in cognitive level between the two demands a delicate balance. The best contemporary children's writers have managed to keep this balance.

Mental representation brings about the question of narrative perspective. Of all narratological questions, this one has been discussed most. Conventional research is content with the question: "Who is telling the story?" The answer is usually simple and unambiguous. Narratology examines instead how the narrative

is manipulated through an interaction of the author's, the narrator's, the character's and the reader's point of view.

The conventional way of treating narrative perspective is to state that the story is either told in the third person, with an omniscient perspective, or in the first person. It is theoretically possible to have second-person perspective in a story, but narratology views second-person narratives as highly unusual and experimental. There is, however, a very well-known example in children's literature, the first chapter of *Winnie-the-Pooh*. Christopher Robin, who is a character in the story, is referred to in second person, as "you".

Narratology offers us much more precise tools to examine perspective. We must discern between the narrative voice we hear and the point of view, that is, through whose eyes we see the events. These do not necessarily coincide, and in children's literature they seldom coincide, since the narrative voice belongs to an adult, while the perspective lies with a child. Narratology forces us to differentiate who speaks (the narrator), who sees (focalizer) and who is seen (the focalized character).

Let us first take a closer look at the narrative voice, who speaks. An essential question is the distance between the narrator and the narrative. Irrespective of whether the narrator is covert or refers to himself in the first person, he can either tell the story in retrospect, after the events, or more or less simultaneously, as the events unfold. Even an adult first-person narrator telling about his own childhood has a distance to the narrated events and can restructure them, and comment his own actions from a vaster life experience. The difference between first- and third-person perspective is in this case less important than the distance between the narrator and the story.

As far as the narrator's presence in the narrative is concerned, there are several possibilities. Sometimes the narrator is a character, even the main character in his own story. In other cases, the narrator is an outsider, telling the story from a superior, omniscient position. The picture becomes still more complicated when we add point of view, that is, not only examine who speaks, but also who sees. The

concept of the point of view is used in narratology both in literal and transferred sense. When we share a child's point of view, it is mostly the literal perspective: we see what the child sees. The transferred point of view, that is, the child's understanding of what he sees, the child's thoughts and opinions, can be problematic. How can an adult writer render a child's thoughts without sounding false? Narratologists often use Henry James's *What Maisie Knew* as a unique example of a description of a child's naïve and innocent perception. In this novel, we share both Maisie's literal and transferred point of view. As adult readers, we can liberate ourselves from the imposed point of view of the text and understand that things are not really like Maisie sees them. Since narratologists seldom know anything about children's literature, they have no idea that this supposedly unique device is a rule rather than an exception in children's books. On the other hand, young readers are mostly just as naïve and inexperienced as the child protagonists. The interaction of the various points of view becomes extremely intricate.

The concept of focalization helps us to examine the relationship between the narrator and the character or characters through whose eyes we see the events. Once again: since the narrator in a children's book is most often an adult, while the character is a child, if writers want to create an illusion of an authentic child perspective, they must pretend that the narrator does not know or understand more than the focalized character. In this case, too, the difference between first- and third-person narration is of less importance. In internal focalization, we take part of the character's thoughts and feelings in the same way that in a first-person narrative, and sometimes even better. It can work better, because a first-person narrator who is a child lacks both verbal and cognitive skills to articulate his emotions. An adult narrative agency who focalizes young characters can verbalize their thoughts and feelings for them.

However, children's literature does have its limitations, dependant on its implied readers. Not even every adult reader is capable of and will enjoy reading *Ulysses* or *Finnegans Wake*, and an attempt to directly convey a child's flow of thoughts in a children's book would probably result in an artistic failure. Just as children in real life need adults to survive, it is part of poetics of children's literature to use an adult narrative agency to provide young readers with at least some guidance. When this convention is abandoned, then either we are not dealing

with children's literature any more, or it is indeed an artistic failure. It would feel alien for me to propagate for a return to a conventional, authoritative narrative voice. Yet narratological studies of perspective in children's literature reveal how writers manage to achieve something that narratologists have judges as impossible: a rendering of a naïve perspective without losing psychological depth or verbal richness. Most narratologists make use of the same example: Benjy in *The Sound and the Fury*. If they read some children's books, they would not lack examples.

Last but not least, let us have a look at temporality. The usual question concerning time in fiction is "When does the action take place?" At best, it can also be "How long does the story take?" The narratological question is: "How are the temporal structures of the discourse organized in relation to the temporal structures of the story?" The three components of temporality are duration, order and frequency. All the three acquire a special significance in children's literature.

It is self-evident that the plot of a children's book cannot take many years, as is the case of *David Copperfield* or *Great Expectations*, which follow their characters from early childhood into adulthood. Such a long plot would lie beyond a young reader's comprehension. The beginning of *Mansfield Park* is not unlike some famous children's books, such as *Heidi* or *Anne of Green Gables*: a poor girl comes to stay with relatives or foster parents. However, while *Mansfield Park* immediately presents a gap of five years in Fanny Price's life, until she is grown up and marriageable and therefore can participate in the adult issues, half of *Anne of Green Gables* depicts Anne's first weeks in her new home, whereby each event is described in detail, since it is important for the young protagonist. Thereafter, the plot is accelerated; the speed of the story is varied; some episodes are described minutely, while long periods can be dismissed in just one sentence: "A year has passed" Speed and duration in a children's book are essential aesthetic elements. In *Ulysses*, the story takes merely one day, time is stretched, since the novel depicts characters in a critical moment of their lives. It has become more common for children's books to have short duration, as compared to classic books such as *Anne of Green Gables* or *Heidi*, which take several years. Studies of duration point at the changing aesthetics of children's literature. It is apparently more important for today's authors to catch a turning points in a young person's life than to follow him or her during many years. We would not notice such changes in children's

literature with conventional methods.

Most children's books are told in chronological order, but it has also become common (not so say banal) to make use of flashbacks, interplay of different temporal levels and other complex temporal patterns. Finally, concerning frequency, we can observe that the iterative frequency, telling once about events that take place regularly, which narratologists present as unique for Proust, is one of the most common devices in children's literature. Thus, by studying temporality, we can once again demonstrate in what ways children's literature is different from general literature.

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Every new theoretical direction is only legitimate if it allows us to disclose such dimensions in literary texts that we would not be able to discover with other methods. We have recently seen how children's literature research has reached new depth as it has borrowed analytical tools from two separate, but in some respects resembling areas: the feminist and the postcolonial criticism. Both directions have taught us to read literary texts from the point of view of a marginalized social group. Children in our society are also marginalized and oppressed. With tools from feminist and postcolonial theories, we have learned to discern between conservative and subversive elements in children's books, classic as well as modern.

In its turn, narrative theory has given us tools to analyze in detail how texts are constructed and to understand why certain devices work well in children's books while other do not. It has also facilitated a historical comparison, which not only pinpoints changes in themes and values, but the profound changes in the aesthetic form of children's literature. Perhaps eventually we will be able to answer the tantalizing question of exactly what makes *Alice in Wonderland* a great children's book.

## The weight of a Butterfly's Wing

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Let us begin by taking up the attitude of the 'Philosopher watching two butterflies', a painting by Hokusai from 1814 or 1819<sup>1</sup>. What is of interest to us here in the image of this man's contemplating the mating dance of insects, is the scene of meditation on the mystery of life: the mystery of delicate life exalted as two white forms meet each other. The butterflies' wings evoke motion in the air, but they hover above the figure's head more like two enigmatic ideograms than two living forms. The silence of their fluttering allows, above all else, for the very essence of representation, for a depiction that is free of any artifice, which the portrayal of squawking birds would require.

And it is the meaning of these visual messages addressed to the children in the world, and to readers in general, that I wish to consider in this celebration. The union of word and image has made reading a complex process; the contemporary book, the conveyor of writing and the "product of screen thought", as described by Anne-Marie Christin<sup>2</sup>, is full of surprises, and is aimed at those who, in my book *Jeux et enjeux du livre d'enfance et de jeunesse*, I term "children of the videosphere", e.g. our children that use the world network of digitalised images and read these in picture-books, comics or films, but also in computers and video-games.

These can go to museums, and then witness on their "game boys" the fight between Starmie, the Pokémon, "that has a jewel at its center glowing like the seven colours of the rainbow", against Butterfree, the Pokémon-Butterfly, that

<sup>1</sup> See Matthi Forrer, *Hokusai*, translation by Catherine Bednaereck, Bibliothèque de l'image, Paris: 1996, p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> Anne-Marie Christin, *L'image écrite*, Paris: Flammarion, coll. Idées et Recherche, 1995, p.6.

"makes most of its ability to fly and fills the air with toxic dust", if one stands by the Nintendo 2000 Pokémon Official Annual "Gotta catch 'em all!"...<sup>3</sup>

In this analysis, the butterfly will appear as a very revealing object, shedding light on various systems of thought, in the same way as the cloud in Eastern and Western painting, if we follow the investigations of the critic Hubert Damisch in his "Theory of the cloud"<sup>4</sup>. This piece of work has already helped me to compose a "short treatise on the rainbow" in a past investigation on baroque trends in children's literature<sup>5</sup>. As is the case for the cloud or for the rainbow, the pursuit for the butterfly's presence is not an impressionist search for themes, but rather a pointer (an "index") allowing the investigation of a culture in its entirety. Returning to the print "Peony and butterfly in the breeze" from the series "Great Flowers" of 1831-1832, by the same painter Hokusai<sup>6</sup>, is the butterfly in the breeze the symbol of the fragility or the strength of life? Does its form suggest a relationship with the plant that is bent in the force of the blowing wind? Or, did the painter simply want to record a "being in the world"? As far as existence is concerned, the butterfly is a sign of nuance and of immeasurably small distinction. The contemporary Italian novelist Roberto Puimini would agree, as in his book *Lo Stralisco*, recently translated into French as *La verluisette*, he asks: "And do you think the butterfly knows he exists as he rests on the moss, light green like him?"<sup>7</sup>.

In children's books, as we will realize, this insect brings two perspectives together: the first relates to its symbolic meaning and which often identifies it with the young reader. Again, agreement here comes from the German poet and pedagogue Jean Paul writing in 1807 in his treatise on education *Levana* : "What are children then? Our daily habits and preoccupations alone conceal the charm of these angelic figures for whom we can not think of more beautiful names; flowers,

<sup>3</sup> Jean Perrot, *Jeux et enjeux du livre d'enfance et de jeunesse*, Paris: Edition du Cercle de la Librairie, 1999. The Pokémon Official Annual is published by Pedigree, Pedigree Books limited, The Old Rectory, Matford lane, Exeter, Devon EX2 4PS, England, 2000.

<sup>4</sup> Hubert Damisch, *Théorie du nuage*, Paris: Seuil, 1972.

<sup>5</sup> Jean Perrot, "Petit traité de l'arc-en-ciel" in *Art d'enfance art baroque*, Presses Universitaires, Nancy, 1991.

<sup>6</sup> Matthi Forrer, Edmond de Goncourt, *Hokusai*, Paris: Flammarion, 1988, p. 279.

<sup>7</sup> From 1807 quoted by Gilles Brougère in *Jeu et éducation*, Paris: L'Harmattan, Série Références, 1995, p. 83.

dew drops, small star, butterfly"<sup>8</sup>. Is this a romantic perspective or an archetypal attitude founding the reality of childhood in a perception transformed by myth? We are dealing here with the hidden power of the image that knows no confines. In this way a child presented in the form of a butterfly's chrysalis ready to hatch can be found in the frontispiece of the work of another poet, painter and engraver, the English romantic William Blake, in his poem *The Gates of Paradise* (1793). We can see the child beneath a leaf, which is itself carrying a caterpillar, with the caption: "What is Man?" The text emphasizes the vigour of the artist who produced it: "The Sun's Light, when he unfolds it, depends on the Organ that beholds it."<sup>9</sup>.

The second perspective concerns the scientific knowledge of the object in question: what do we really know about the nature of butterflies? The mystery surrounding their metamorphoses and their life cycle has always avoided scientists' eyes, as shown in the documentary *From caterpillar to butterfly* (Gallimard Jeunesse, 1988), and in which we also learn that the national butterfly of Japan is the *Sasakia charonda*. In the domain of children's culture, the problem in transmitting knowledge is this: what is concealed behind the beauty of things that we want to pass on to children? And how? Will butterflies not just remain magnificent devices to be used in the science of learning numbers, and in providing a final bedazzlement of colour, as is the case in the Australian book *1,2,3 of Australian Wildlife*<sup>10</sup>? In this picture-book, the child-reader first meets "One dolphin dashing across the water", then "2 echidnas...". Further on, he beholds "Three mice munching in the moonlight", and so, up to "Nineteen fish fluttering their fins" and to the last "Twenty brilliant butterflies bringing beauty to the bush." These insects then shine as the ultimate glory of collected learning, hinting at the sensuous elevation that fosters and screens belief at the same time in a baroque apprehension of the world. Yet science nowadays means other requirements.

And so we shall tackle such matters from a historical point of view by bringing together the conception of the child from a specific period and the

<sup>8</sup> Roberto Puimini, *Lo Stralisco*, French translation, *La verluisette*, Paris : Hachette Jeunesse 1992, p. 59.

<sup>9</sup> For more on this subject, refer to the book *William Blake* by the English poet Kathleen Raine, London: Thames and Hudson, 1970, Reprint, 1999, pp.36-37.

<sup>10</sup> Steve Parish, *123 of Australian Wildlife*, Nature Kids Australian Learning Collection, Steve Parish Publishing : Acherfield BC, Queensland, Australia, 1998.

teaching of the sciences that correspond to it, thereby adding a modest complement to research undertaken, after Philippe Aries, by the team of Egle Becchi and Dominique Julia in *History of Western Childhood*<sup>11</sup>. In doing so we shall see how the silkworm acted as a catalyst for exchanges between France and Japan.

In this recalling of the past, we will also take into account the aesthetic creations of several contemporary artists and the positive features of our "museographic society", described by Catherine Millet in the context of the globalisation of culture affecting the children of industrialised countries<sup>12</sup>. Never have these children had such easy access to a museum. Never has popular culture been so influenced by art, as the Japanese film *Pokemon 2* testifies, where the image of a baroque dome taken from Italian architecture makes an appearance! Would the butterfly's wing taking flight towards the light, whether in splendour or in simplicity, represent the taking flight of the spirit? Permanency or transformation, could butterflies' life-cycles suggest a model analogous to the hatching of future "citizens of the world"?

### The trivial and the useful: from story to fable

There is one point on which Charles Perrault's *Little Red Riding Hood* differs from the version that the Brothers Grimm used in their *Märchen*, which were well documented by Jack Zipes, the last recipient of the Brother Grimm's Prize awarded by the Osaka International Institute and to whom I pay homage. The detail can be found in the episode in the woods that shows how the young wandering child is tricked by the wolf, who arrives before her at her grandmother's home in order to eat her. The reasons behind this flightiness are presented using distinct images. In Charles Perrault's *Stories or Tales from Bygone Times*, the founding text for young people's literature from 1697, the story recounts: "And the little girl took the longest route, enjoying herself as she gathered nuts, chased butterflies and made bunches of flowers"<sup>13</sup>. The sophisticated storyteller went

<sup>11</sup> Egle Becchi, Dominique Julia *Histoire de l'enfance en Occident, De l'Antiquité à nos jours*, Paris: Seuil, 2 volumes, 1998.

<sup>12</sup> Catherine Millet, *L'art contemporain en France*, Flammarion, 1995.

<sup>13</sup> Charles Perrault, *Contes*, edition G. Rougier, Paris: Garnier Frères, 1967, p. 114.

beyond the popular French version, which made do with the bland contrast of "the way with the needles" that the little girl took, and the "way with the pins" that the wolf took"<sup>14</sup>. If gathering nuts is part of the foundation of social realism, which dominates one aspect of Perrault's tales, the butterfly would appear, at first sight, to be a redundant feature in comparison to the collecting of flowers which was the only aspect to be retained in the German version where it reads: "She wandered off the path and into the woods to gather flowers: plucking them every here and there, but the prettiest ones were always that little bit further and further away in the forest"<sup>15</sup>.

The coupling of the flower and the butterfly confirms the distinct touch of baroque aesthetics, the aesthetics of decorative excess, which is linked to the idea of childhood unruliness that must be pacified. Michel Fauron's exuberant illustrations that were tended in 1982 for the adaptation of *Little Red Riding Hood*<sup>16</sup>, show the split in the point of view that has existed since 1697. According to 17<sup>th</sup> century motifs, childhood is associated with frivolity and with the absence of the reason that would become the principle of classic vision: a fable by Edme Boursault called *The Lark and the Butterfly*, that had much success in the same year as Charles Perrault's small volume, reminds us, if at all we needed reminding, that this symbolic system was very much ingrained in the consciousness of contemporary high society, as can be seen in numerous pictures<sup>17</sup>.

Similar to the cicada in Jean de la Fontaine's fable, the butterfly represents a graceful form, devoid of social purpose. Bishop Fénelon was strongly opposed to this parasitic function. Fénelon was the private tutor to the Duke of Burgundy, Louis XIV's grandson, whom he looked after from 1689 to 1695. This great teacher is renowned for his work, *The Education of Girls* from 1687, and above all for *The Adventures of Telemachus* written from 1694-1695 to educate the future

<sup>14</sup> Claude de la Genardière, *Encore un conte? Le Petit Chaperon rouge à l'usage des adultes*, Nancy: Presses Universitaires, 1993, p. 16.

<sup>15</sup> Refer to my conclusion "Contes et chocolat; Plaisirs de Versailles/Plaisirs d'Eaubonne", in *Tricentenaire Charles Perrault: Les grands contes du XIIème siècle et leur fortune littéraire*, Paris: In Press, 1998, pp. 377-387. See *La Guirlande de Julie* by Charles de Montausier(1641), presented by Irène Frain, Paris: Robert Lafont, 1991.

<sup>16</sup> M. Fauron, ill., *Le Petit Chaperon rouge*, Paris: Ruyant publications, 1982.

<sup>17</sup> See the fable of Boursault in Norman R. Shapiro, *The Fabulists French, Verse Fables of Nine Centuries*, Urbana & Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1992, p. 51.

king. It was an educational fictitious account based on the adventures of Ulysses. It was published in 1699, but underwent over a hundred reprints in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Fénelon's thought was defined by the utilitarian tradition of John Locke and by the economic pragmatism of Colbert, Louis XIV's minister, some time a patron for Charles Perrault: the moralist would present the educative fables to his pupil, fables that retain each one of their functions, even today. Their purpose, of course, involved cultivating a catholic king's personality in view of the Counter-Reform that was inextricably linked to the baroque aesthetics that reigned in the court of Versailles, as was emphasized at the three-hundredth anniversary of the publishing of Perrault's *Contes* in 1997<sup>18</sup>.

One of these fables entitled "The bees and the silkworms" is very instructive. It describes the debates of the bees and the silkworms, both of whom claim to have the favour of the Gods. Whereas the bees are defended by Jupiter, the silkworms are protected by the Goddess Minerva, who "presides over the arts" (16). Defending his arguments against those of the aggressive insects, in spite of their civilized society and the sweetness of their nectar, the "haranguer from the silkworms" states, "...each one of us displays the wonders of nature and uses himself in a useful way. We have the virtue of changing form..." (Ibid.).

And of describing the many states of the animal, initially visible in the form of "small worms composed of eleven intertwining little rings with the most dashing display of colours that people admire in a flower bed..." These creatures have the privilege and sense of being distinct: "We can spin material to dress the best men, even kings" Again, the one with the liveliest sympathies says: "Finally, we turn ourselves into beans, but into beans that can feel, that can shed their skin and that show they are alive" The final argument claiming to clinch the advantage is that of their apotheosis: "And following these wonders, we suddenly turn into butterflies, glowing with the brightest of colours. This is why we will no longer give in to the bees and will daringly fly up to Olympus." (Ibid.)

Linked to the image of the flower and to the adoration of gardens, as in the precious poetry of the time, and a veneration in religious iconography from the

<sup>18</sup> Fénelon, "Les abeilles et les vers à soie", in *Oeuvres 1*, Published by Jacques Le Brun, Paris : Gallimard, La Pléiade, NRF, 1983, p. 225.

beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, as in *Les Grandes Heures d'Anne de Bretagne*<sup>19</sup>, the butterfly is the state that concludes an epic vision of life by an elevation towards the realm of the Gods. A baroque dynamic, if that is what it was, and the fable turns into a moral lesson. Fénelon, who assiduously attended the salons of Colbert's three daughters in the 1680s<sup>20</sup>, was in full knowledge of the man whose intentions were to re-launch the culture of silk and the silk butterfly in France, as shown in a documentary in 1993, *The Silk Worm*, broadcast as part of the 'BT Nature' series (Bibliothèques du Travail) from the Publications of the Modern French School founded by the famous teacher Célestin Freinet<sup>21</sup>. This documentary allowed anyone to access the elements of knowledge that Fénelon, in his time, intended only for the Prince. It presented images taken from the 1602 edition called *A brief discourse on the raising of the silkworm* and mentions all the most whimsical of superstitions which related to the subject: in fact, the female workers had to literally hatch the eggs, which they would put next to their skin or keep warm with hot water bottles. A very strong maternal relation connected insect to human, nourishing the worm and instituting an exemplary reciprocity to that which bonded the pupil to his teacher in Fénelon's system. On an international scale, the volume still refers to all the types of silk that wonderful Asian butterflies can produce today.

### The Butterfly ball: Awakening the Subject and the scientific point of view

When Hokusai was meditating on "the peony and the butterfly" bending in the wind, an exceptional female writer, George Sand, whose love affair with Musset had been widely talked about, was putting together her novel *Le secrétaire intime* (1834). She presented the symbolically named scholarly entomologist Cantharide, describing a sophisticated game inspired by "the strangest and wildest of Princess Cavalcanti's creations: the insect ball". The guests had to dress themselves to form "a huge gathering of butterflies and insects". Having "consulted twenty scholars and read many pieces of work", George Sand could pride herself

<sup>19</sup> *Les Grandes Heures d'Anne de Bretagne* illustrated by Jean Bourdichon (1500-1508).

<sup>20</sup> See the introduction by Jeanne-Lydie Goré, for *Les aventures de Télémaque*, Paris : Classiques Garnier, 1987, p.18.

<sup>21</sup> BT Nature, no author's name, *Le ver à soie*, PEMF, Mouans-Sartoux, 06 France, 1993.

on the precise nature of her description. Concerning a young lady with a "long black velvet body" sporting "large black and yellow striped taffeta wings", she wrote: "With her long pale face, the slits in her wings and her slightly lively gait, she could have been mistaken for Podalyre, the big butterfly that is so embarrassed about its long stature that swallows deign not to follow him, leaving him to struggle against the wind any old how with the perforated yellow leaves of the sycamore"<sup>22</sup>.

This is romantic flight towards Hokusai's vision and burlesque mockery! The same process involving carnival-like dressing-up and science, the physiognomy forging human personality and animal appearance, directs the narrative view in *Contes d'une Grand-mère* written thirty years later for the novelist's grandchildren between 1872 and 1876. At the time, George Sand was very interested in education and had just published *Les idées d'un maître d'école*<sup>23</sup>, and she was a follower of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. She read his *Botaniste sans maître* (1773) and wrote the preface to Jules Neyraud's *La botanique de l'enfance* (1847) that Jules Hetzel the editor of *Magasin d'Education et de Récréation* had republished in 1866. One of her tales "The big-eyed fairy" illustrates a wonderful character whose eyes were "two microscope lenses that were forever revealing wonders to her, wonders that others could not see"<sup>24</sup>. As Max Milner showed in *La fantasmagorie*<sup>25</sup>, literary make-believe became more refined as scientific discoveries were made. In this uncanny Hoffmannesque story, "the big-eyed fairy" organizes an "insect ball" with real moths. Each moth is introduced by its Latin name, its physical features and the plants it eats. The story ends with the storyteller being lit up by "the fantastic dance about my flowers by the little fairies of the night".

In this way, Jean-Jacque Rousseau's pupil manages to go beyond her 'teacher', as he remained studying plants, but Sand took the veneration of life a

<sup>22</sup> See extract from Philippe Berthier in George Sand, *Contes d'une grand-mère*, 2ème série, Meylan, Les éditions de l'Aurore, 1983, p. 30.

<sup>23</sup> See our study on "George Sand et la propagation des Lumières sous le signe de la lumière" in *Le livre d'enfance et de jeunesse en France*, Bordeaux: Société des Bibliophiles de Guyenne, 1994, pp. 177-211.

<sup>24</sup> George Sand, *Contes d'une grand-mère*, op. cit., note 21, p. 180.

<sup>25</sup> Max Milner, *La fantasmagorie*, Paris : PUF, écriture, 1982.

step further, rising up a notch into the dimension of living beings. The theories of evolutionism in J. B. Lamarck's *Zoological Philosophy* (1809) and of transformism in *The Origin of Species* (1859) by Charles Darwin have quite a pronounced effect on her writing. In one of her stories, "The Dog and the Sacred Flower" the main character Mr. Dog claims to have been a dog in a former life, and when he is asked, "Were you a frog, lizard or butterfly too?", he replies of having been first of all "a pretty white flower". He adds:

"One morning I detached myself from the stem, I floated as the breeze carried me. I had wings, I was free and I was alive. Butterflies are but flowers that took flight one special day when nature was inspired with creation and fruitfulness"<sup>26</sup>.

"The power of desire"? The metaphor of such a coming into being, which we find in another of grandmother's stories, "What Roses Say" that is wonderfully illustrated by Nicole Claveloux under the title *Rose Breeze* and published by 'Editions des Femmes' in 1977, is the poetic illustration of the history of science as it existed in the mind of feminist George Sand. This writer's itinerary was typical of the changes in educational ideas that took place in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the first half of this century, the discoveries that one book, an authentic "documentary" of the late 1830s that was illustrated with beautiful colours and called *Butterflies*, terms "natural history", led educationalists towards lepidopterous insects to "provide entertainment" for young readers. In fact, these insects that were classed as moths and butterflies were also exceptional teaching material. "The beauty of their colours and the rich and varied aspect they provide for collections explain the predilection of which they are the object"<sup>27</sup>. At the end of the century, this reasoning became part of utopian views.

Influenced by Orientalism and a Zen-like philosophy, *A grandmother's stories* is based on a conception of childhood that leads, with "ecological" inspiration (even before the term had been coined!), to the defence of nature and

<sup>26</sup> George Sand, op. cit., p. 125.

<sup>27</sup> Anonymous, *Les papillons*, Description of their nature, their customs and their habits. Dedicated to young people, decorated with various images of nature painted, and engraved in steel. Paris: Amédée Bedelet, libraire, éditeur de livres à gravures destinés aux enfants 20 rue des Grands Augustins, vers 1840.

butterflies. As a writer and a teacher, George Sand devoted herself to the education of her granddaughters, as the "little girl" belonging to "the lady of Akashi" is educated in *Le dit de Genji* by Murasaki-shikibu, of which an illustration has recently appeared in France<sup>28</sup>, but the socialist-idealist wished to address all the children in the world.

*Scopic impulse: impulse for life, impulse for death*

The butterfly appears naturally in the first of Father Castor's Atelier books. He revolutionized children's illustration from the early 1930s onwards and transcribed into practice the educational ideas from Bakulé and from the 'Education Nouvelle'. The small book from 1932 *Magic Album*<sup>29</sup> makes use of a playful piece of material: "a sort of magic telescope" made out of a red square of plastic and a blue square of plastic, and through which the reader can successively make out two different aspects of the same image. "Baroque machinery" made possible by plastic, that summons up themes and animals, also baroque, like Circe's emblematic animal the peacock, according to Jean Rousset<sup>30</sup>, or the opposition of night and day. The plate featuring the butterfly, close by that of the peacock in this book, plays on the "secret" of metamorphosis: the blue square reveals the caterpillar, "not a very pretty animal", and the red square allows the reader to see a "big colourful butterfly that looks just like a flying flower". As the eyes switch from one image of the metamorphosis to the other, it is the butterfly's job to reveal the forces of life that bring along beauty and illumination. The preamble that Father Castor gives his work emphasizes that it originates from the "magic wand" and the "flying carpet", wonderful supports that belong to the "King of Time", and whose use by the young reader puts him in charge of all development. The same incitements can be found in *The Butterfly* (1995) from the

<sup>28</sup> Extract translated by René Sieffert in Murasaki-shikibu, *La branche du prunier*, illustr. Soryu Uésugi, Paris : Editions Alternatives, Coll. Grand Pollen, 1998.

<sup>29</sup> Rose Celli, images from Nathalie Parrain and Hélène Guertik, *Album magique*, Paris : Flammarion, Le Père Castor, 1932.

<sup>30</sup> Jean Rousset, *La littérature de l'âge baroque en France, Circé et le paon*, Paris : Librairie José Corti, 1985.

collection "Mes Premières Découvertes" by Gallimard editions, where the illusion is produced by moving a clear screen of plastic.

A perfect symbol of harmonious private life, the metamorphosis of the child returns with force in the poetry of the politically involved poet Paul Eluard, when in 1951 he asks the illustrator Jacqueline Duhème to illustrate *Grain d'Aile*, a story showing the changes that take place with a little girl whose name is the transposition of the real name belonging to Paul Grindel. Light and pretty, 'Grain d'aile' grows like a plant and wants to have wings so that she can fly. "But what she liked the most were butterflies. She was jealous of them when she saw them zigzagging around as happy as fish in water"<sup>31</sup>. Her wish comes true, like the zephyr in George Sand's story, but without any arms, the girl wishes to find land and her friend Pierre with whom she can play! The principle of reality is reached only once the principle of pleasure, which corresponds to the fantastic, has been worn out. As she goes beyond this stage of infantile narcissism 'Grain d'aile' will find herself "with the others, all the others, those who are light, and those who are less light, those who walk looking down at the pebbles and those who look up at the sky" Jacqueline Duhème illustrated this story three times (again in 1977 and 1988), and it is interesting to look at how she scattered images of butterflies among her illustrations, according to her mood at the time. An obvious artistic effort that also lies in the two versions she presented for Maurice Druon's *Tistou Green-thumbs*, an ecological tale whose illustration she handled in 1957 following the success of the first book, and also Jacques Prévert's *L'opéra de la lune* that she illustrated in 1953, all of which have been translated into Japanese.

That the butterfly is associated with the instant testifies to its privileged inscription in Impressionist aestheticism, in particular Japanese-inspired Impressionism in France, where Monet's house at Giverny, decorated with pictures by Hiroshige and others has encouraged the practice of this style, especially for children, with the gap that characterizes children's culture. A collection of prints in New York's Metropolitan Museum shows that this feature is shared by Englishman Richard Doyle's illustrations for the Fairy Queen in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, like the pieces of lacquerware from the Japanese Shibbata Zeshin (1807-1891). One of our finest female illustrators, Michelle Daufresne, let her fantasy and spirit roam freely when

<sup>31</sup> Paul Eluard, *Grain d'aile*, Paris: Raisons d'être, Raisins d'enfance, 1951.



she published *Blue butterfly* at the Ecole de Loisirs in 1984. To the music of a children's song that praises the beauty of a red flower, the poppy, she added a little dramatic piece with a distich rhythm: "Nice dream butterfly, nice blue butterfly" The small child who is sleeping in the grass is awoken by an insect inviting him to come "play, dance and fly" The myth of the child that is "having fun" is presented in such a way, bringing with it the regret of a moment that does not last long enough, as the butterfly flies away. The motif of a dangerous chase is depicted with the appearance of a blackbird, but finishes with a turnaround: "On my hand it came to rest, gave me a gentle kiss" And the book ends with the butterfly flying off into the freedom of the flowers, floating on the breeze. The delicate touch of pastel colours and the gentleness of watercolours create a wonderful moment of happiness in, as Baudelaire stated, the "green paradise of childlike loves": the colours reinforce the area of contrasts between the pink of a face and fluttering traces of blue.

Impulses of life and love, impulses of death; the latter is rarely brought up directly in children's books. However, it is worth noting the publication of Kafka's *The Bridge* by Enfantimages de Gallimard in 1981, with illustrations by Henri Galeron. In this fearsome text, the feeling of horror belonging to the character of the bridge who is afraid of collapsing into the abyss of the raging water beneath him is represented graphically by the depiction of a trout jumping up to devour a very pretty butterfly. The latter is bright red and black, whose union presides over sado-masochistic rituals...

However, it is in the work of Frédéric Clément that we find the greatest exploitation of the forms and colours, and of the metamorphoses of butterflies, from which he draws the most surprising aesthetic effects. The artist's fascination had already burst out in *Soleil O*, a graphic rhapsody published by Magnard in 1986, in a collection created by Frédéric Clément himself for the occasion and called *Atelier Nuaginaire*, no doubt to register the mannered antithesis contrasting it to Father Castor's *Atelier*. This wordless picture book begins by showing the sun springing up out of the cone of an erupting volcano, which vaguely recalls Mount Fuji, but seems to be adorned with a pearl on top of it. Next, the mountain splits open and releases a twisted form that turns into a magnificent butterfly. Successive changes transform the butterfly into the figure of a woman entirely veiled, then into

a flower, which on folding up becomes a chrysalis, which in turn becomes a butterfly. Finally, the latter transforms into the image of the volcano cone once again. This is the cycle uniting earthly fire and heavenly fire, the butterfly, the woman and the flower, in a refinement of colours and of material effects taken to the extreme. This book was republished in 2000 by Albin Michel Jeunesse beginning the collection of "Instants Cléments" (Sweet spells) in a new version called *Minium, rêve rare de 1 minute*, and the accompanying text informs us that this reverie took place by the Louvre on Saturday April 26 1986. Images of small pebbles, twigs and feathers were added to the original illustrations, which accentuated the solid properties of materials. As we shall see, these effects will bring us back to Japan in an instant...

These unpublished investigations were transposed and transformed into two major pieces of work. First of all, in *Dreams of Sleeping Beauty* (Casterman, 1997), Frédéric Clément thought of portraying the dreams of Charles Perrault's heroine who sleeps for a hundred years. Her dreams are invaded by an extraordinary creature: an ephemeral, nocturnal and predatory moth, which relates its impressions and revels in her beauty. In a magnificent dreamlike landscape, which is that of Venice revisited through the technique of a sombre post-impressionism, Clément plays on indistinct aspects and on the infatuation of a voyeur calling to mind the hero of Kawabata's *Sleeping Beauties*: drinking the "dew" from the corner of the eyes of beautiful women, the night-time visitor confuses oral drunkenness with the intoxication of sight. The illustrations highlight the root of pleasure in the quality of materials, the fabric of décor, and the moiré of waters. The scopic impulse culminates on the Klimt-like portrayal of a double image of a sleeping woman surrounding Saint Marc square, on which the dusky figures of fantastic beings sport coats that are the wings of giant moths. Their ocelli are inordinately large like the eyes in the following plate, whereas the Beauty appears naked, floating on a flooded Saint Marc square. A dream of death or of pleasure, the book is the layman's unexpected version of a sensual Visitation.

An even more ambitious piece of work by Frédéric Clément called *Museum* (Ipomée Albin Michel Jeunesse 1999), is the fictitious notebook of an entomologist who left for Brazil to study butterflies. He also receives specimens from many different countries. Each of the twelve chapters is devoted to one

particular species associated to a story and to illustrations. The book claims to pay homage to Vladimir Nabokov, the entomologist who discovered and gave his name to a butterfly and whose passion as a collector is shared by Clément: it concludes with extracts from the writer's real notebooks presenting the gradual invasion of the literary imagination by this phantasmagoria. A card from Saint Petersburg even suggests that the ornamental ponds in the Winter Garden where Nabokov first fell in love take the shape of butterfly wings (p. 156).

Having opened up his own artist notebooks to the public, and published extracts from them in the study I recently published<sup>32</sup>, and having resorted to several young Japanese girls as models in his many books, Frédéric Clément is a fine connoisseur of painting and calligraphy. The Japanese butterfly he chose to study is rather interesting because its name is "Actias selene (the Attacidae family), the moon-butterfly" (p. 64).

It is no surprise that the chapter dedicated to this butterfly stresses moonlight effects and describes a "procession, following the cherry trees: twelve delightfully pale young ladies walking with short calculated steps" Not an "insect ball" as George Sand would have it, but a majestic "procession", a baroque parade giving rhythm to the "litany of a Utamaro's whites" There is the extraordinary vision of the fifth girl with the "silver white of the wing of a firefly clung to the bark of a birch tree behind Ishimuka theatre at Edo, in the age of the Dragon, overcast sky" (p.70). Or the eighth girl with the pinkish white ochre of the silk butterfly, the powdered Kaiko, resting on the neckline of Morokoshi's kimono as she sleeps, a summer evening in the faint light of a red lantern" (Ibid.).

And with this sensual evocation the silk butterfly completes the journey we began with Fénelon. Here however, description turns to poetry. It is not the value of market use that is claimed here, but the value of prestige: the whole of Japan has its prestige increased and is taken into the ranks of the artistic model. These are truly inspired "sweet moments" shared with us by the artist Frédéric Clément who has moved away from pure impressionism, and who still scatters twigs, shells, bird feathers and coded ideograms on the pages of his books. And the central plate of *Muséum* (p. 72) is a formation of collage, a palimpsest of what the artist terms

<sup>32</sup> Jean Perrot, *Carnets d'illustrateurs*, Paris: Les éditions du Cercle de la Librairie, 2000.

"traces and remains": butterfly wings, dried leaves and flowers that half conceal a face. The blank in the middle of the picture signifies the exhaustion of human landscape as it brings to mind the atmosphere in the *Exhausted Book* by the same author. Life thus triumphs through the shadows of eclipse and the pure nature of visions.

#### *Apotheosis: the butterfly's happy medium*

Frédéric Clément achieved integrating entomological science into his fiction; his montages of pieces of wings or his depiction of ocelli recall the scientific documentaries on butterflies that today use the scanner to illustrate a butterfly's scale cover, as is the case for the surprising venomous Monarch butterfly in an animated book on our subject<sup>33</sup>. The difficulty with this genre of work is to find the balance between information and alluring illustration, so that the role of image and anecdote do not take precedence over science. The classification and the description of cycles and surroundings are complex, so it is worth highlighting the beautiful documentary made by Una Jacobs, *The Year of the Butterflies*<sup>34</sup>. It unites wonderful plates and proven didactics: the important side of the image is shown, for example, on a double page displaying the metamorphosis, like an enormous cornucopia freeing the energy of these superb creatures – the swallowtail butterflies (p. 8). Further on, the plate "the butterfly in its natural habitat" presents the animal in its baroque glory (p.11). Finally the plate that links the insect to the image of the plant on which it feeds looks like a radiant wheel (p. 16-17). The alternation between the explosions of energy and phases of contemplation is concentrated around a vision, which, especially in the plate summing up the cycles of the year, expresses the contour of life as both a descent and as a rising up, and as the emblem of directed totality. And this is where we find the aestheticism dear to Fénelon once again.

<sup>33</sup> Maria M. Mudd et Wendy Smith-Griswold, French translation, *Les papillons*, Paris: Albin Michel Jeunesse, 1991.

<sup>34</sup> Jules Renard, *Le sourire de Jules*, Paris: Editions Alternatives, 1999. p.23.

The butterfly also spreads into the pages of “natural history” books, like those by Jules Renard written “to make people smile”, and illustrated by Michelle Daufresne from these lines:

“The butterfly

This billet doux folded into two looks for an address with the flowers”.

This is the aesthetic of haiku, and in opposition to the frivolity of *Blue Butterfly*, is attributed dark, dusky hues by Michelle Daufresne’s representation. The butterfly is the light antithesis to the cow in *Mona the Cow*, the story of the big animal that is “in love” but she does not know with whom, and she finds happiness and love in the butterfly’s colours, “for Mona the cow loves colours”, “Mona the cow is an artist” And in a paradoxical self portrait she gives her the features of Mona Lisa!<sup>35</sup>

Here we find ourselves in the tradition of the humour that is a reflection on growth in *Alice in Wonderland*, a central piece of work in children’s literature. The blue caterpillar who smokes his hookah and rejects Alice’s arguments that turning from a caterpillar into a butterfly is indeed an odd thing. But the child, following the consumption of the mushroom, sees her neck grow and is mistaken by the pigeon for a snake. The indecision over identity that preys on young minds has been brilliantly expressed by Alain Gauthier in the image that illustrates this fanciful metamorphosis. Alice rolls herself up around the pigeon like a snake, but is displaying the magnificent wings of a butterfly<sup>36</sup>.

Alain Gauthier is an artist who was at the centre of the aesthetic revolution accomplished in France in the 1970s by François Ruy-Vidal and Harlin Quist. *Pimpernickel’s Butterflies*, a collection of nursery rhymes and little expressions gathered and prefaced by François Ruy-Vidal<sup>37</sup> is the first piece of work that allowed him to pass from painting to children’s illustration. This collection is

<sup>35</sup> Claude Bonnin, *Mona la vache*, Paris: Thierry Magnier, 2000.

<sup>36</sup> Lewis Carroll, Alain Gauthier, *Alice aux pays des merveilles*, Paris: Rageot éditeur, 1991. p. 35.

<sup>37</sup> François Ruy-Vidal, *Les papillons de Pimpanicaille, Comptines et formulettes d’ici, de là-bas et d’ailleurs*, illustrated by Alain Gauthier, Paris : Editions de l’Amitié/G.T. Rageot, 1980.

typical of the publishing that rejects the difference between “art for children” and “art for adults”, and it is based on all-round good humour (“Pimpernickel, king of the butterflies, whilst shaving, cut his chin...”), and on an imagination that unites jokes, sensuality and naïve romantic rhetoric (“The rose is so beautiful that we shall pluck it”). There is no surprise that the corresponding plate groups the rose, the image of the woman and the butterfly together (p.11).

The result is that the alternative in the artistic handling of the butterfly can be defined between these discerning investigations and a guided decorative naivety, approaching a “childlike spirit”, which is often identified with popular imagery. Jacqueline Duhème embodies this trend, and with this in mind, an interesting comparison can be found in the different versions tended by the illustratress for three editions of *Grain d’aile* at the various stages of its progress. The 1951 version<sup>38</sup> from the beginnings of a self-taught person looking for identity (Jacqueline Duhème was 24 years old), but who enjoyed the security of renowned authors, the stroke is gentle and the colours, constrained by the means of printing at the time, are limited to a range of greens, pinks and faint ochre. The images show just a few dragonflies and mayflies with clear slender wings, like the contemporary childlike heroes, such as the child in *L’opéra de la lune* by Jacques Prevert, Tistou, etc. By the 1977 version the tone had changed; it was now the time of fieriness and maturity (the artist had just reached fifty, like the wise Hokusai at the beginning of the presentation). Having illustrated various works by Miguel Angel Asturias, such as *The Talking Machine, The Man who had Everything*<sup>39</sup>, Jacqueline Duhème gives in to the charm held by the flaming colours of the South American jungle: her images burn with reds and yellows in a violent contrast with greens. There are many butterflies, they have glowing red wings dotted or outlined in black, and powerful solid appearances. They are enlivened by blood and unrest in life, and they flutter around exceptional bunches of flowers. In a symbolic way, the period comes to an end with Paul Eluard’s *The Child who did not want to grow up* from 1980 published by G.P., a text bringing together war, the destitution of the poor

<sup>38</sup> Paul Eluard, illustrated by Jacqueline Duhème, *Grain d’aile*, Paris: Raisons d’être, coll. Raisins d’enfance, 1951.

<sup>39</sup> Miguel Angel Asturias, *The Talking Machine*, Double day & Company, New York, 1971; *Souvenir d’enfance*, Paris: Harlin Quist-Ruy-Vidal, 1972; *L’homme qui savait tout, tout*, Paris: G.P., 1973.

and the saving beauty of idealised childhood, its position close to nature. The illustration leads Caroline “the child who did not want to grow up” from the yellow butterfly of a first bouquet bathing in the blue vase beneath which she was sitting, to a rainbow dominated by yellow, red and orange, supporting “the disorder of insects in the stars of the dew” We see the child prevailing as she waves to us to point out his victory and a butterfly, in the top right hand side of the page, shows by its heavy shape, the diagonal rise towards hope... Here we have the first sketch of the rainbow that will crown the hero of Prévert’s *Dunce* (Folio Benjamin Gallimard) in 1989.

Jacqueline Duhème’s third period was marked by her passing over to Gallimard publications. A subtlety worth mentioning: *Grain d’aile* in Folio Junior in 1988 is surrounded by a ring of three butterflies on the book’s cover. They are the result of a change: they are more slender and puffy like children’s clothes, they replaced the hawkmoth’s skull from the first two pages and once again found the transparency of blues and the delicate touches of grey. This development is all the more palpable if we compare the two versions of *Tistou Green Thumbs*, the one from G.P. in 1977 and the other from Gallimard in 1993. In the first we find stunning flowers, beautiful bouquets with high decorative value, and bronze butterflies as if to counter the horrors of war. And in the second, the contrast between the reds and the greens was replaced by the bringing together of oranges, blues, greys and purples. The butterflies’ wings become lighter and are torn to pieces, combining delicacy and a new serenity. As a liberated woman, Jacqueline Duhème flies the flag of controlled sobriety. She is not far from the age when Hokusai obtained wisdom and she has reached the happy medium of the butterfly.

*Epilogue: Vision of the white fox and the fireflies*

We can only finish this presentation by recalling the work presented to us by Professor Keiichi Hatanaka who came to France and presented the techniques of some of the great contemporary masters, Akaba, etc. The story he chose to bring to us, *A Fox transformed into a bonze* by Miyoko Matsutani and illustrated by Tadao

Miyamoto<sup>40</sup>, seemed destined to provide food for our thought concerning powers of representation. Perhaps we can remember that in this story the Prince has a white fox with which he plays as a child. The animal turns into Zeian, a handsome boy, after the king is massacred and his castle burned. In search of his young master, Zeian turns into a fox again when he learns that his master has become a bonze and is in the Kozenji temple. To enter the holy place, he resumes his previous appearance. The master nonetheless recognizes his old playmate, but the latter gets killed by a hunter whose house he stays out one night, even if he was carrying a letter concerning his employer’s mother confirming his origins. All that remains for the grieving prince to do is mourn the death of his loyal animal.

The striking point here is the importance of the repeated metamorphosis which makes the fox, the messenger of the gods in Japanese tradition, the double expiatory of his master. Zeian dies allowing the original legitimacy of his master to be recognized. The first illustration that seals this recognition is also that of remembering games from the past: the child, wearing flower coloured clothes, would play ball (Froebel would be delighted!) with his fox. It is a surprise to see that in this illustration, and for the only time in the book, a pair of white butterflies preside over the childhood games. Jules Renard (baroque coincidence!) wrote that, “the butterfly is a billet doux, folded in two” who “looks for an address with flowers” But further on in the book, flowers, butterflies, snowflakes, fox and ideograms seem confused in the same indistinct shapes on the very plate where we see the master mourning the animal that died in the night. The snowflakes are like the fireflies, like the ones that shine in the tragic children’s film *The Fireflies’ tomb* by Isao Takahata (1988) depicting the drama of Japanese children threatened by death. This is a little like the hero of *La verluisette* by Roberto Puimini, whose title indicates a “plant-firefly” that lights up the night sky. Isn’t the children’s picture book a billet doux that the artist, following the bloody loss of initial happiness, addresses to the legitimacy of his own past? As Frédéric Clément writes in his notebooks for *Museum*, butterflies are “souls” And with this idea often comes a glimmer of hope. As Professor Hatanaka, citing the works of the “Doyos” poets from the 1920s, concluded his presentation in February 2000 at the Charles

<sup>40</sup> Miyoko Matsutani, Tadao Miyamoto, *Kitsune no Bousama*, Tokyô, Popura-sha, October 1999.

Perrault International Institute he referred to this haiku by a twelve year old Japanese child, Noboru Tooyama:

“In the blazing sky

A butterfly

Turned red and flew on...”

If, according to the principles of “chaos theory” the fluttering of a butterfly’s wing off the coast of Brazil is capable of triggering off an earthquake in Texas, then we must assume that the brightness of the Japanese butterfly wing will have effects on our conception of children’s illustration, as a whole.

## Children’s Literature and the Crisis of Childhood

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*Childhood, placed at a tangent to adulthood, perceived as special and magical, precious and dangerous at once, has turned into some volatile stuff – hydrogen, or mercury, which has to be contained. The separate condition of the child has never been so bounded by thinking, so established in law as it is today. This mythology is not fallacious, or merely repressive – myths are not only delusions – chimeras – but also tell stories which can give shape and substance to practical, social measures. How we treat children really tests who we are, fundamentally conveys who we hope to be. (Marina Warner, *Managing Monsters*, 1994, 35-36)*

*There is a growing consciousness of children at risk. But...there is also a growing sense of children themselves as the risk – and thus of some children as people out of place and excess populations to be eliminated, while others must be controlled, reshaped, and harnessed to changing social ends. Hence, the centrality of children, both as symbolic figures and objects of contested forms of socialization, in the contemporary politics of culture. (Sharon Stephens in H.A. Giroux, *Stealing Innocence*, 2000, 9)*

Scholars of children’s literature have long understood that the images of children and childhood contained in the texts we study are constructs which both reflect the observed real lives of children and seek to mould those same children – the implied readers of the books, magazines and other reading matter created with a juvenile audience in mind. Since its beginnings, children’s literature studies has also identified a tendency for writing for children to vacillate between dichotomous images of childhood – the demonised and the idealised – and equally divided theories about how to deal with children in society. The images and attitudes to children in children’s literature have, of course, been closely linked to those

prevailing in society at the time texts were created, and one of the things which makes our field so rich is the potential it provides for documenting changing social attitudes to children, childhood, education, gender, play, adult-child relationships and many other areas over time.

Recently, debates about the condition of childhood in the west have been occupying disciplines other than our own. Looking at a range of current studies, it is as if the foundations which underpin much of the historical research into children's literature are being discovered by others for the first time, and the realisation that children and childhood are more complex and ambivalent than many adults had previously recognised is proving to be disconcerting to many. The consensus is that childhood is in crisis. For instance, art historian Anne Higonnet (*Pictures of Innocence: The History and Crisis of Ideal Childhood*, 1998) has argued that childhood – not adolescence, which has long been recognised as a time of tension and instability, but the developmental stage before puberty and adolescence – is in crisis because western culture clings on to an overarching, out-moded and impossibly idealised construction of childhood based on ideas developed in the eighteenth century as part of the Romantic movement. This socially, sexually and psychically innocent child-construct, which Higonnet terms the Romantic Child, is at odds with the equally pervasive view of childhood encountered in films, on television, in advertisements, on the streets and in most manifestations of popular culture. While the Romantic Child is presented as effectively sexless, since the body is rendered unimportant and unavailable as a source of sensual arousal, its opposite, a contemporary phenomenon which Higonnet terms the Knowing Child, not only displays her/his body, but does so in a suggestive way, which problematizes the notion of childhood innocence. The body may be childish in size and form, but the pose, attitude and gaze suggest consciousness and therefore an implicit invitation.

When looking at the kinds of images Higonnet brings together to illustrate what she means by the term 'Knowing Child', it is important to separate the effect created by the artist, the response of the viewer, and the child who is represented. Whether an image of an actual child or a textual/visual evocation of a fictional child persona, the Knowing Child may in fact be no more worldly – may be no

more knowledgeable or experienced – than the Romantic Child. The 'knowledge' is likely to be ascribed – or repressed – by adult creators and viewers.

Blake Morrison makes precisely this point in *As If* (1998). In the chapter called 'Sex Marks', he gives an account of what appears to be the seduction of an adult woman. The narrator describes placing her on the bedroom floor as he removes her shoes, unbuttons her blouse, pulls off her knickers. As she lies naked on the floor he writes, 'I want to move her to the bed...I think of hoisting her on top of me, to ride and jockey me...' (182). In fact, it quickly becomes apparent that the female in question is his young daughter, who he leaves tucked up in bed with warm milk after their nightly bedtime story. The discovery that the 'woman' is in fact child and daughter makes this a powerfully disturbing account: it discloses assumptions and forces us to recognise the complex webs of desire (including desire for the child to be asleep and the parent's evening to begin) involved in interactions between children and adults. The boundary between perverse and parental pleasures is deliberately made to seem flimsy, forcing each reader to recognise how easily behaviour can be misconstrued / reinterpreted from different vantage points and contexts. We like the comfortable boundaries that separate children and adults, good and bad, moral and immoral, decent and indecent. In children's books, and especially those aimed at a prepubescent audience, these boundaries are for the most part in place and strongly defended, but elsewhere, they have been transgressed. Higonnet's study insists that we investigate the nature of such transgressions and their consequences for adult-child relationships. She is particularly alert to the role played by consumer society in reshaping our image of childhood. The Knowing Child, she says, is 'not a fringe phenomenon inflicted by perverts on a protesting society, but a fundamental change furthered by legitimate industries and millions of satisfied customers.' (Higonnet, 153).

Another recent study, educational theorist Henry Giroux's *Stealing Innocence: Corporate Culture's War on Children* (2000), offers a similar critique of the effects of consumer culture on childhood, noting particularly the way the experience of being a child in America (and to varying degrees the west generally) differs according to wealth, race, ethnicity, and educational opportunity. Ultimately, he concludes, childhood – especially for some groups of children – is

in danger of being effaced; not least by legislation which takes away rights, safety nets and supports and, by ascribing responsibility even to children under ten years old, legitimates punitive regimes.

What most concerns Giroux is the slight of hand which systematically reduces opportunities for the young during the phase traditionally referred to as 'childhood' while simultaneously generating public furore over the threat to childhood innocence from paedophiles, single parents, popular culture – virtually anything the dominant culture (and corporate capitalism) suspects. What is being mourned, he says, is not really the loss of childhood or the victimisation of children, but 'a mythical view of nationhood, citizenship, and community that is largely projected onto another time when white middle-class values were protected...' (Giroux, 22).

Like Higonnet and Giroux, many of the contributors to *Children in Society: Contemporary Theory, Policy and Practice* (2001) believe that childhood is under threat from the pressures of commercialisation, the mass media, new technologies, and changing patterns of family life. This book deliberately offers contrasting interpretations of contemporary childhood, and rightly points out that the past was not necessarily a better place in which to be a child. However, several of the essays call attention to the fact that today, children's lives and well-being are often at risk, while society often seems to construct children themselves as threatening, brutish, out of control and responsible for social disorder. Since the 1990s, following widespread media coverage of juvenile crime reaching a crescendo surrounding the murder by two young boys (ages 8 and 9) of toddler James Bulger in 1993, there has evolved what has been described as 'a "widespread belief" that children and young people "are in some way turning feral" (in Foley et al, 34 – 35). The result is a culture in which children and childhood are frequently demonised and made to stand not for natural goodness but its opposite. In her 1994 Reith Lectures, Marina Warner summed up this feeling: 'The child has never been seen as such a menacing enemy as today. Never before have children been so saturated with all the power of projected monstrousness to excite repulsion – and even terror.' (43) This attitude is not unique to the UK; according to sociologist Mike Males, the 1990s represent 'the most anti-youth period in American history.' (in Giroux, 23).

My final example of a text that debates current constructions of childhood is *Sticks and Stones* (2001) by Jack Zipes. Zipes, whose work on children's literature is informed by a long-standing interest in the culture of childhood and the processes of socialisation, explains why he is concerned about the current condition of childhood. Over the past twenty five years, he says, he has witnessed 'a growing regulation and standardization of children's lives' (x) and has come to recognise that, 'Everything we do to, with, and for our children is influenced by capitalist market conditions and the hegemonic interests of ruling corporate élites.' (xi) As part of a wide-ranging analysis of the treatment of children and the management of childhood Zipes claims that too many fundamental problems in society are laid at the collective door of childhood, and that the eruption of 'desk rage', tragically epitomised in the succession of shootings in American schools, is one of the many consequences of this practice. 'Children are expected to sort out the contradictions that are inevitable and intolerable in our society, and our vested interests drive them forward into hysteria, violence and bewilderment.' (xi)

While there is considerable agreement in all these studies about the pervading sense of crisis around childhood and adult-child relations, only Zipes considers the role of children's literature in the social construction of childhood and the socialisation of children. This is significant for a number of reasons. Perhaps the most important of these is the fact that children's literature represents a uniquely focused lens through which children are asked to look at images of themselves. Especially in the case of the under 10s, most images of childhood and children are created by adults for a general audience (viewers of mainstream films, television, magazines, greetings cards, and so on), or for an audience consisting primarily of adults (for instance parents, gallery goers, and collectors). While much children's literature – especially visual texts aimed at very young readers – is created to be shared by adults and children, by definition the implied reader is a child. Children's literature, then, is a primary forum in which children confront the ways adults think about and visualise them, and as a result, it must have consequences for the way they think about themselves; not least because children's reading is fundamentally linked to the education system and the socialisation process. Finally, texts for children are also one of the few areas where visual and textual images of childhood converge.

For all these reasons, it seems acceptable to assume that as a body of work, children's literature – and especially that aimed at younger readers – will encapsulate adult ideas about and anxieties and aspirations for childhood. In fact, the range of images of childhood contained in British books for this age group seems singularly divorced from the most strongly felt concerns about childhood contained in the studies discussed above. There is a significant silence in books for younger children about the problems and contradictions which infuse current constructions of childhood. There *have* been changes to certain aspects of the way children are asked to look at themselves in children's books; for instance, consistent efforts have been made to make writing and illustration for children reflect the ethos of equal opportunities and the virtues of multiculturalism. However, a survey of images of children and childhood typical of British children's literature over the last century would show that the image of childhood given to children in British children's texts is effectively a monolithic and unreconstructed version of the Romantic Child Higgonnet places at the centre of the crisis of childhood. With very few exceptions, irrespective of the colour, country of origin, class, ability, health, sex, family composition, or religion of the children (or the characters such as animals and toys who represent children) in children's texts for the under 10s, they are innocent, well-intentioned, obedient, educable, appreciative, receptive, loving and loveable.

For Zipes, this is a virtue and a defining characteristics of children's literature. Time and again in *Sticks and Stones* he points to the way children's literature as a body of work and an academic discipline instils social values, encourages recognition of hegemonic structures, and lays down attitudes to taste in its implied audience (see particularly chapter 4) The purpose of this exercise is not to disagree with this view or to insist that it is necessary to change the orthodoxy. However, it is important to think about the discrepancy between adult debates about childhood and the images of childhood adults construct in children's texts. For instance, we should at least *consider* whether this image of childhood – simultaneously dominant and residual – is appropriate for children's literature in the twenty-first century, and also to think about what it currently signifies. It is with these aims in mind that I set out at some length the arguments about children and childhood taking place outside Children's Literature Studies. Given that evocations and explorations of childhood are the very stuff of children's literature,

it seems important to be alert to how other disciplines are thinking about it and to consider both how Children's Literature Studies and children's literature itself fit into current thinking and the discourses being generated.

Broadly speaking, there are four key areas of concern about childhood:

- The loss of traditional childhood
- The victimisation of children
- The demonisation of children and childhood
- The commercialisation of childhood

Contemporary British children's literature has very little to say about the final three areas in this list, though it takes a very clear, broadly conservative, line on the subject of traditional childhood. The relationship between children's literature and real childhood as set out in these new studies is revealing, as the following summary shows.

#### *The loss of traditional childhood*

'Traditional' childhood is usually associated with living at a fixed address in a two-parent family, with siblings, supported by a work-related income. Family life is based around an established routine including shared meals, holidays, homework support, time and space for play, and interest in extracurricular activities such as team sports, ballet, riding and music. This refers back to a 'golden age' of childhood which often features in children's literature in the form of the 'Beautiful Child' – morally good, generally well-behaved, interesting and insightful child characters (traditionally also attractive, white and middle-class). Zipes identifies these as representing the goal of the bourgeois civilising process, though others are more inclined to question the cumulative effects of such images. Giroux, for instance, points to the practice of 'innocence profiling' prevalent in the American social system. Children whose lives and images correspond most closely



to the ideal typified in much children's literature are likely to be constructed as innocent and to be privileged in legislative, economic and social systems, while those whose lives demonstrably depart from it (especially if their appearance does as well), tend to be ranked lower on the innocence scale. The effects of this, he says, are clear. In extreme cases of misconduct, for instance, the white, middle-class child from a family environment (Romantic Child) will be treated leniently and will often be diagnosed as ill and needing special support, while the poor child whose parents are not white and irrespective of family ties will be presumed to be a Knowing Child and treated as both perverse and accountable.

In the UK, children's literature has done much to challenge stereotypical views about family life in recent decades. Many books validate the experiences of children living in lone parent families, only children, children from a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds, children of divorced parents who live in reconstituted families and/or move between parental homes on a regular basis, children whose families have migrated to a new culture, children who have terminal diseases and so on. However, very few books (especially for younger readers) reflect the life experiences of the many children who live at the 'margins' of society: those, for instance, who have no fixed address, who have a parent[s] in prison, whose parents are mentally or emotionally unbalanced, or who live in 'alternative' communities.

Despite the progress made in this area, there remains a tendency to present younger children with images of family life and childhood that hark back to and reinforce the values of an earlier era, before microwave meals, televisions/PCs in bedrooms, and the trend towards two working parents. Childhood is often portrayed as leisurely, idyllic, middle-class, rural, and meaningful while in real life it is experienced as hectic, urban, consumer-driven, fragmented and confusing.

#### *The victimisation of children*

Children as victims (of, for example, famine, sexual abuse, neglect, disease, domestic violence, homelessness, and war) tend to be associated with charitable appeals. Through the association of childhood and innocence, they

become powerful signifiers for what's wrong in the world. Children's literature tends not to dwell on these areas, but when children are presented as victims, it is usually in these terms. By contrast, the media – where children are bombarded with images of childhood victims – tends to offer more complex and ambivalent views of child-victims. This largely stems from the fact that the media presents highly contradictory images of childhood: from the innocent children of family situation comedies through the 'knowing', sexualised children of beauty pageants, soap operas, commercials and music videos, to the 'evil' children accused of being 'crooks in short trousers', mini-bandits, hooligans and even murderers. The way particular images of childhood are constructed is determined to a large extent by an unconscious process of innocence profiling, creating a strong link between constructions of the child as victim and as villain. The same could be said of children's texts, which, almost without exception, offer only images of 'good' victims – in other words, those who score high on the innocence index.

But children do not read children's books in a vacuum, and at some level they must wonder why the children they see around them, the children they know, in some cases children like themselves are almost entirely absent from the pages of children's literature. Neither do the books they are offered always help them to understand the reasons why young people who are clearly ill and damaged are treated as reprobates rather than victims. Again, it comes down to the fact that a substantial section of children's literature (books for the pre-teenage reader comprise the majority of works published in the UK) largely refuses to give space to images of the Knowing Child, and so its pages are almost entirely free from images of children who are anorexic, physically abused, and paralysed from substance abuse.

Another kind of child-victim who rarely features in children's literature but who can be seen in all parts of the world is the over-burdened, over-responsible child. Occasionally children's books take a (usually comic) look at situations in which the parent-child roles appear to be reversed, but this situation is usually happily resolved and the protagonist's childhood restored. In real life, however, many children are trapped between the competing pressures of home, school, the need to work, and the law.

*The demonisation of children*

One of the most passionate areas of debate in Childhood Studies is the tendency to construct children as evil and the cause of social disorder. In mass media young people see themselves demonised in a variety of forums – including literally in popular films and television series such as *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. Perhaps understandably – especially given fears about copycat behaviour – those creating texts for young readers have rarely ventured into this contentious area. When they do, as John Stephens (1992) has pointed out, the mode they take tends to be a transgressive version of the carnivalesque rather than a realistic study of the psychology and imperatives underpinning 'evil' acts. One notable exception is Anne Fine's *The Tulip Touch* (1996), published in the wake of the James Bulger murder; significantly, this is a novel with an intended audience of ten and up rather than younger readers.

The question at issue here is *should* children's literature and those of us who work on it be doing more to reconcile the contradictions between widespread social attitudes which construct children as key to social problems/discourses which demonise young people and the images they are given in the books they read? Are we abnegating our responsibility in some way by effectively denying that such images and attitudes exist and so failing to help children negotiate the conflicting attitudes to childhood they are likely to encounter? Or, by presenting predominantly Romantic views of childhood, is children's literature providing both a safe-house for children and a source of positive role models as defined by adults? Does the silence about negative attitudes to childhood undermine the credibility of children's literature as a domain and collude in the effacing of childhood? Or are childhood wrong-doers and the significance of recent policies affecting children actually more present in children's literature than is usually realised, but disguised or rendered invisible in some way? How do texts about 'little monsters/beasts/horrors/Wild Things' fit into this discussion?

*The commercialisation of childhood*

One way in which many children experience themselves as wrong and frequently arouse anger and antipathy in adults is in their desire for material possessions – often associated with lifestyles older than their years. Children's desire to consume and tendency to identify with manifestations of corporate culture (brand names, products) is regarded by many adults as a sign of degeneration. Modern children are often accused of being spoiled and avaricious, whereas in fact they are living out the roles required of them by societies organised around the principles of corporate capitalism. As Giroux observes, 'In a postmodern world, consumption rather than production drives the capitalist economy... Culture and commodity become indistinguishable, and social identities are shaped almost exclusively within the ideology of consumerism.' (67-68)

*Where is the writing for younger readers that deals with the contradictory pressures on children to consume, to fit in, to engage with the modern world, and to adjust their desires to a level the adults who deal with them on an individual basis (as distinct from the adult culture that urges them to want and to buy products) will find acceptable? As a body of work, children's literature turns its back on consumerism and the drives that fuel it. The Romantic Child is a child of nature. S/he needs no Nike trainers or fast food or Ennem CDs. S/he has no hormones, gets no spots, grows no hair, and is content with the condition of childhood rather than restless to leave it behind.*

The children's texts that do engage with consumerist fantasies tend to do so in a comic and exaggerated form with a very clear underlying message. An example is Hunter Davies' *Snotty Bumstead*, (1992) a 'home-alone' fantasy about a boy whose mother decides to take herself off for an unannounced, extended holiday leaving him with a large reserve of cash and her various credit cards. After a few deliriously indulgent weeks, of course, the joys of unlimited Coca-Cola, takeaway meals and no bedtime pall, and Snotty is more than ready for a return to regulation and routine.

There is an implicit assumption in the juvenile publishing world that the ostensibly less materialistic values of the past offer an antidote to the future; that by reillustrating *Milly Molly Mandy* or re-presenting *The Secret Garden* we are

offering children the kind of resource they need to step outside consumer culture and reinvent themselves as Romantic (or Beautiful) Children. But this is disingenuous on several counts. First, children's literature itself is not outside the consumer nexus. As publishing for children has evolved from a small and opportunistic, obviously value-laden body of work which few took seriously to a lucrative and often highly creative field that attracts fine writers and illustrators, and research and scholarship across a range of disciplines, its modus operandi has become less visible. Unlike many of their eighteenth and nineteenth-century predecessors, children's texts today now almost invariably present themselves as being on the side of the child, freedom, the imagination, and creativity. They seem to celebrate the potential for progressive change independent of market forces (if such a thing were possible). But are they really so different from other commodities, and especially those commodities specifically linked to childhood? According to Henry Giroux, '...childhood is being reinvented, in part through the interests of corporate capital... Capital has proven powerful enough to both to renegotiate what it means to be a child and to make innocence a commercial and sexual category.' (14-15) As critics (and consumers!) of children's literature, we need to think about what this means for the texts on which we work and the children who read them.

Through the insistently cosy – what Freud would call the heimlich – images of childhood they offer, aren't children's texts too selling a lifestyle and encouraging aspirations in harmony with the dominant ideology? How often do children's texts for this age group overtly offer critiques of society or a vision of other possibilities? What will the future look like, according to children's literature? Rather like the past I suspect.

The question is, does any of this matter? Should we be concerned that as a body of literature, writing for children offers its readers images of themselves that are often out of date and do not accord with their own experiences and observations? Is it appropriate to try to relate children's books and cultural constructions of childhood? Mitzi Myers (1988) argues that the dynamic between extraliterary cultural formations and literary practices

make[s] things happen – by shaping the psychic and moral consciousness of young readers but also performing many more diverse kinds of cultural work, from

satisfying authorial fantasies to legitimating or subverting dominant class and gender ideologies, from mediating social inequalities to propagandising for causes, from popularising new knowledges and discoveries to addressing the live issues like slavery and the condition of the working class. (in Zipes, 77)

For these reasons we, as adult readers and critics, *must* be alert to the interactions between children's literature and childhood as it is experienced, constructed and imaged. It seems to me that to do otherwise is to consign children's literature to an increasingly torpid backwater and to do children a disservice by pretending their lives are as we want them to be rather than as they are. This does not mean that it is necessary or desirable to impose an unrelieved diet of bleak and realistic images of childhood on our children, but that we should step back and think about how and why we offer them the images we do.

This is an area ripe for comparative investigation. Is the situation different outside the UK? Do the Internet and other child-operated media act like texts and if so, are they telling different stories from those found in mainstream children's literature? What role does children's publishing, with its current preoccupation with international co-editions, play in the globalisation of childhood? Are texts for children just another opportunity to consume? These are some of the questions that children's literature scholars may want to explore in the future.

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**Still shocking after all these years?**

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Junior Arsonist Burned to Death! Anorexic Child Dies Five Days after refusing to Eat! Young Thumb-Sucker Cruelly Maimed! These are not recent headlines concerning the darker side of childhood, but summaries of three stories from a classic children's picture book first published in 1845 and still in print today. It is of course Dr Heinrich Hoffmann's *Struwwelpeter*, known over here by its translated title *Shockheaded Peter*. In Germany it remains as popular and respected as Grimm's *Fairy Tales*. Opinion in Britain has always been more divided; at a time when there were far fewer picture books to choose from, some adults remember reading it when young as a terrifying experience while others will still hear nothing against it. In 1955, during the parliamentary debates that led to the banning of American Horror Comics, *Struwwelpeter* was mentioned three times as rivalling the lurid imports in question. After reading a leader in *The Times* referring to this by now infamous picture book, the Earl of Jowitt told the House of Lords that when his secretary went to buy a copy he was told the book was in heavy demand.

'The rush is on because many people imagine that the publication of *Struwwelpeter* will be stopped after the Bill becomes an Act.' This extraordinary work was once again in the news with the revival on the London stage of *Shockheaded Peter*, the brilliant 'Junk opera' adapted from it. Ostensibly aimed at children over ten years old, this show followed the original text in all its gory detail. Here, once again, were the stories of Cruel Frederick (eventually savaged by his own dog), Harriet and the Matches (who ends her tale as a pile of smoking ashes), Fidgety Phil (buried underneath the loaded table cloth he pulls off while falling from his chair) and Johnny Head-in Air (almost drowned because he never looks where he is going).

Most notorious of all, whether on the stage or within the original book, is *The Story of Little Suck-a-Thumb*, in which Freud himself is said to have taken a

professional interest. It concerns young Conrad, warned by his mother not to suck his thumb when she was out. Otherwise 'The great tall tailor always comes! To little boys that suck their thumbs! And ere they dream what he's about! He takes his great strong scissors out. And cuts their thumbs clean off and then! You know, they never grow again.' Despite this warning, immediately Mamma quits the house 'The thumb was in, Alack! Alack!' Next moment, in one of children's literature's most heart-stopping illustrations, in bursts the 'Long, red-legged scissor-man' bearing huge, pantomime shears. With a quick snip, snap, snip both thumbs are off, with blood dripping from the stumps on to the floor. Mother's response, when she returns, is low key to the point of downright sinister. 'Ah!' said Mamma 'I knew he'd come! To naughty little Suck-a-Thumb.'

This story went on to fascinate horrify and intrigue generation after generation of young readers. W. H. Auden included it in his published commonplace book *A Certain World*. As he writes himself, 'Reading this poem today, I say to myself, 'Of course, it's not about thumb-sucking at all, but about masturbation, which is punished by castration!' But if so, why did I enjoy the poem as a child? Why was I not frightened? In so far as it did arouse fear, it was a wholly pleasing fictional fear. It so happened that I was a nail-biter, but I knew perfectly well that Suck-a-Thumb's fate would not be mine, because the scissor-man was a figure in a poem, not a real person.'

But at other moments, Auden took a different line, recalling a horrifying childhood nightmare in which he was pursued by this very same scissor-man. Walter Allen, his friend and contemporary, believed that the influence of *Struwwelpeter* on Auden was never far away throughout his life. The same scissor-man, along with 'the hooded women, the hump-backed surgeon,' also features as an ever-present background threat in Auden's menacing poem *The Witnesses* with its final injunction, 'Be careful what you say and do.'

Biographers mention how the poet's late, traumatic circumcision at the age of seven coincided with starting off at boarding school while his father went to war. Snip, snap, snip indeed - could this be an additional reason for the way Auden kept returning to the scissor-man image in later life? Be that as it may, there must have been many other children as well as the poet equally influenced one way or another as children by this sinister, unforgettable character, so memorably

illustrated flying across the room, huge shears at the ready.

But *Struwwelpeter* is not merely a nineteenth century shocker. Hoffmann was also a compassionate and understanding father and doctor. He detested the type of boring picture-book available for children in the 1840s within which, in his own words, 'a bench, a chair, a jug, and many other things were drawn and under each picture neatly written 'half, a third, or a tenth of the natural size.' He got into the habit of drawing lively pictures for young patients and for his own son, and these - plus some cautionary verses - were eventually collected into one book. Privately printed, it was soon taken up by a publishing house to become the best seller it remained for many years until the explosion in children's picture book publishing in the 1960s finally turned it into something of a museum piece.

Looking at the book now, its overall appeal at the time is no mystery. Pictures are brightly coloured, and there are plenty of visual jokes. On one page cats with black crape bows tied to their tails weep waterfalls into big, yellow handkerchiefs over the fate of burned up Harriet. On others, fish stick their heads out of the river to laugh at Johnny Head-in-Air, and Cruel Frederick's dog eats at table with a napkin round his neck while his young master lies upstairs on his sick bed. In the German but not the English version, a chamber pot stands under the invalid table. Not exactly subtle humour perhaps, but still most welcome at a time in the children's literary world where any sort of humour was in short supply.

*Struwwelpeter* also manages to have it both ways by ostensibly cautioning naughty, rebellious children while quietly celebrating them at the same time. The character of that erstwhile hippie Shockheaded Peter himself is typical of this general ambiguity. Standing proudly on the book's cover, he comes over as a sturdy, clean and smartly dressed child. His only departure from normality is his abundant hair and long talons. While the accompanying verse thoroughly disapproves of him, many young readers must have felt some lingering admiration for a child who not only rebels but also appears to be unashamedly getting away with it.

Other stories deal more exclusively with juvenile crime and subsequent punishment. Yet unlike other contemporary writers, Hoffmann seldom labours the moral point. Pious parent characters putting a lengthy case for the importance of

good behaviour are absent from his book. Its naughty children largely punish themselves, and to that extent stay gratifyingly centre-stage throughout. The only story that does not feature children as main characters pokes fun instead at an inept, shortsighted middle-aged hunter who ends up headfirst down a well, shot at by the very hare he is hunting. This reversal of the normal order is particularly satisfying to children who, like animals, also often find themselves at the wrong end of adult power relationships. For a young audience, the sight of a pompous patriarch ending up in such an undignified position has all the immemorial satisfaction of any story showing the defeat of the big and strong by the small and weak.

The specific warnings found in *Struwwelpeter* are also often quite sensible and on occasions ahead of their time. Sulphur matches, only on sale from 1829, were indeed a potential danger in children's hands. If that particular lesson was ever learned from the example here of poor, incinerated Harriet, so much the better. Mocking a black child for his colour is repellent, and Hoffmann was right to make this an issue in *The Story of the Inky Boys*. The young thugs who are shown mocking the 'woolly-headed black-a-moor' richly deserve their punishment. This lesson in tolerance continued to offer a valuable alternative to the Nazi-inspired racism found in other German children's picture books years later. The actual picture of the little black boy, carrying his blue umbrella as he struts out so confidently, went on to provide the inspiration for the cover illustration on Helen Bannerman's *The Story of Little Black Sambo* – another nineteenth century picture book that has since proved problematic for some critics.

The nearest equivalent to *Struwwelpeter* today is Roald Dahl's famous collection *Revolting Rhymes*. Here was another author sometimes considered too violent for the young readers who flocked to his writing in such numbers. But certain children's books have always proved more frightening to parents than they seem to be to most children. Those grown-ups who now remember *Struwwelpeter* with loathing may indeed wish that they had not come across this book at an early age. For other adults however, this was sometimes their very favourite book when young. Exactly the same could also have been true of the current show in London – horrific for some children and adults, but wonderfully entertaining for others. You paid your money, but after that it would have been your own personal psychology and temperament that finally made the difference between enjoyment or disgust.

Those admittedly older children around me on the day I saw the show certainly seemed to be enjoying themselves. Whether some of the quieter and younger ones were having an equally good time was however less certain.

## RESEÑAS / REVIEWS

**Schafer, Elizabeth D. (2000) *Exploring Harry Potter*. London: Ebury Press. (Margarita Carretero González. Departamento de Filología Inglesa. Universidad de Granada).**

*Exploring Harry Potter*, de Elizabeth D. Schafer, es el primer libro de la colección *Beacham's Sourcebooks for Exploring Young Adult Fiction*, una serie dedicada, tal y como su nombre indica, a ofrecer a padres, educadores y profesionales de la literatura infantil y juvenil un conjunto de libros llenos de recursos que les permitan sacar el mayor partido posible de obras populares destinadas a los más jóvenes. Hasta el momento, la colección cuenta con dos volúmenes: éste inaugural, centrado en el estudio de las tres primeras obras de la escritora J.K. Rowling, y un segundo libro dedicado a *The Chronicles of Narnia*, de C.S. Lewis.

A juzgar por esta primera entrega, podemos aventurar que la colección cumplirá con los objetivos perseguidos por el editor, Walton Beacham, tal y como éste los expone en su introducción al volumen: “to expand readers’ enjoyment and knowledge of the novels by providing insights into the creative process that have made them unique” (p. 1). Dado el amplio espectro de posibles interesados en el estudio de la literatura infantil y juvenil – padres, profesores, estudiantes, bibliotecarios o investigadores – Beacham proporciona unos breves consejos sobre el modo en que cada uno de estos grupos puede utilizar el libro.

Centrándonos en el estudio de Schafer, su propósito es ofrecer a los lectores de las aventuras de Harry Potter una guía que les permita mejorar su apreciación de la calidad literaria de los libros (p. 7). En mi opinión, la autora cumple firmemente este propósito, a pesar de algunas irregularidades desafortunadas.

*Exploring Harry Potter* está dividido en seis secciones. La primera, *Beginnings*, ofrece una interesante presentación del fenómeno de la “Pottermanía” y una breve biografía crítica de Joanne K. Rowling. Dado el carácter introductorio

de esta primera parte, al estudiar el “fenómeno Harry Potter”, Schafer se centra en la recepción positiva que los libros han experimentado tanto en países de habla inglesa como en aquellos otros a cuyas lenguas ha sido traducido, y deja la controversia desatada entre católicos conservadores americanos para el capítulo número quince, donde estudia los códigos morales y sociales presentes en la obra de Rowling.

La segunda sección, *Reading Harry*, es una de las más interesantes, al tiempo que la más irregular en lo que al análisis de personajes se refiere. Schafer analiza exhaustivamente todos los aspectos del mundo en el que se desarrollan las aventuras de Harry: personajes, temas, localización, vida escolar, comida, deportes, y bucea en las fuentes legendarias, geográficas e históricas que han alimentado la imaginación de la escritora escocesa. De especial interés son los capítulos noveno y décimo, donde la autora rastrea la deuda de Rowling con relatos bíblicos, mitología clásica, leyendas británicas y cuentos de hadas. Por otra parte, el ya mencionado capítulo quince ofrece un breve pero interesante examen de la controversia desatada sobre el posible contenido subversivo de los cuentos de Harry Potter y su supuesta invitación a realizar prácticas ocultistas.

No obstante, algunas de las irregularidades a las que me he referido con anterioridad son consecuencia de las, en ocasiones, desacertadas interpretaciones de la autora, que la llevan a realizar apreciaciones carentes de fundamento o, simplemente, irrelevantes. Sirva como ejemplo el siguiente comentario en relación con el temor manifiesto por casi todos los personajes a pronunciar el nombre de Voldemort, el diabólico mago enemigo de Harry, y a la sustitución de su nombre por eufemismos del tipo *You-Know-Who* o *He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named*. A este respecto, Schafer (2000: 43) apostilla:

*Not speaking the names of dark forces is a common strategy used by good characters to pretend evil villains do not exist. In Cuba today, many people are afraid to speak Fidel Castro's name aloud in fear that the government might take punitive action against them for being so bold, so instead, when with friends they move their fingers across their chin as if stroking a beard to indicate that they are talking about Castro.*

El miedo a pronunciar el nombre de un representante de las fuerzas del mal es lugar común en numerosas leyendas, y parte de la creencia de que, al pronunciar el nombre, el ser no deseado pueda aparecer tras la invocación. Esta creencia no tiene nada que ver con el motivo que pueda llevar a un grupo de personas a no mencionar el nombre de un determinado dictador por miedo a levantar sospechas sobre cualquier tipo de conspiración. Por otra parte, no se nos puede escapar el objetivo que Schafer persigue con este comentario, pues establece una conexión directa y gratuita entre el dictador cubano y la figura del “villano malvado” o “las fuerzas oscuras” a las que se refiere al principio de la cita. Igualmente peregrina e irrelevante me parece la comparación que Schafer establece entre Harry y sus supuestos semejantes (utiliza el término *peers*) los príncipes Guillermo y Enrique de Inglaterra (p. 48). No alcanzo a comprender los motivos que la llevan a situar a los príncipes y al aprendiz de mago en un mismo nivel.

También es irregular el estudio realizado sobre los nombres propios de ciertos personajes. Algunos análisis etimológicos son muy acertados, tales como la conexión establecida entre el profesor Lupin y su condición de licántropo, o el “vuelo de la muerte” que asocia con el nombre del malvado Voldemort. Sin embargo, la similitud fonética que apunta entre el nombre de Hermione y las palabras *heroine*, *harmony*, o *hormone*, sólo conduce a la peregrina conclusión de que las dos últimas aluden a “her feminine tendencies to be sisterly and motherly to her friends” (p. 54). Especialmente desafortunada es la asociación del apellido del mago Albus Dumbledore con un abejorro (*bumblebee*), justificando tal conexión con el hecho de que “the headmaster displays the helpful, cooperative traits of those communal dwellers” (p. 57).

Comentarios de este tipo pueden resultar ciertamente irritantes, pero sería injusto permitir que estas máculas empañasen la totalidad del conjunto. Schafer es una buena conocedora de las tradiciones mitológicas, legendarias y de la literatura infantil y juvenil; el libro está muy bien documentado y la autora incluye al final de cada capítulo una serie de referencias bibliográficas y de fuentes electrónicas que invitan a los lectores a profundizar en la materia que ha tratado. Asimismo, cuando lo cree necesario, incluye un glosario explicando aquellos términos que puedan resultar ajenos al lector profano; de este modo, se asegura de que el libro no es sólo



accesible a especialistas en la materia, sino que también puede ser leído por los más jóvenes.

De especial enhorabuena están los educadores interesados en la explotación didáctica de las obras de Rowling. La tercera sección, *Teaching Harry*, ofrece una sugerente variedad de material docente que Schafer distribuye en tres capítulos, uno para cada libro de los publicados hasta junio del 2000. Cada capítulo proporciona un resumen del libro, un análisis detallado por capítulos y una serie de proyectos y actividades para realizar en clase, preguntas que pueden fomentar interesantes discusiones y ejercicios para desarrollar las destrezas críticas y de escritura. Las actividades pueden ser utilizadas perfectamente para trabajar con las traducciones de las obras al castellano; para los interesados en trabajar con los originales ingleses es recomendable que lo hagan con estudiantes de nivel intermedio-avanzado.

Las actividades incluidas en la sección cuarta, *While You Are Waiting for the Next Harry Potter Novel*, pueden constituir una ayuda inestimable para estimular la imaginación, ya que invitan a los lectores a tratar de pronosticar qué sucederá en las próximas entregas, opiniones que deben estar basadas en los datos proporcionados por la lectura de los tres primeros libros. Además, el primer capítulo de esta primera parte ofrece una visión de conjunto de aquellas obras de la literatura infantil y juvenil que han influido en la concepción del personaje de Harry Potter y de sus aventuras. Ya que las obras de J.K. Rowling parecen fomentar el interés por la lectura entre niños poco aficionados a los libros, este capítulo resulta especialmente útil para padres, bibliotecarios o educadores que quieran consolidar este interés dirigiendo la atención del lector hacia libros que puedan satisfacer sus expectativas.

Cualquiera que trabaje en el ámbito de la literatura infantil o juvenil – esté o no interesado en la producción de J.K. Rowling – agradecerá especialmente la existencia de las secciones cinco y sexta, *Bibliography and Appendices* y *Online Resources*, respectivamente. Además de las ya mencionadas referencias bibliográficas que Schafer incluye al final de cada capítulo, en la sección quinta incluye una amplia lista de referencias bibliográficas en relación con la literatura infantil y juvenil: publicaciones periódicas, obras de referencia, monografías y fuentes electrónicas. En lo que a la sección sexta se refiere, podemos decir que está

creciendo constantemente, puesto que una de las principales originalidades del libro de Schafer es que no finaliza en la página 479, sino que continúa en la página web de la editorial ([www.beachampublishing.com](http://www.beachampublishing.com)) donde la información se actualiza en documentos PDF que pueden consultarse gratuitamente. Esta sección – desarrollada íntegramente en la red – incluye un capítulo sobre el éxito de Harry Potter en países de habla no inglesa, una bibliografía general agrupada por materias, nuevas actividades para realizar en clase, y un estudio sobre el cuarto libro de la serie, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, que aún no había salido a la venta cuando fue publicado el libro de Schafer.

El completísimo estudio realizado por E.D. Schafer constituye una buena tarjeta de presentación de la serie *Beacham Sourcebooks for Teaching Young Adult Fiction*. Si debemos juzgar a partir de este primer volumen, creo acertado aventurar que los títulos publicados en esta colección ofrecerán un atractivo y cabal punto de partida para aquéllos que comiencen una investigación sobre cualquiera de las obras que se analicen. Serán, indudablemente, una herramienta útil para explorar algunos de los títulos más populares de la literatura infantil y juvenil.



**Sylveira, Carlos (2001). Canto rodado. La literatura oral de los chicos Buenos Aires: Santillana. (Antonio Moreno Vertulla. Departamento de Didáctica de la Lengua y la Literatura. Universidad de Cádiz).**

Carlos Silveyra es profesor en Buenos Aires y lleva más de 20 años recopilando y estudiando el folclore de los chicos. En este estudio de la literatura de tradición oral infantil se conjugan varias virtudes: la sencillez de la explicación, la amplitud del espacio geográfico tratado y sus múltiples apuestas para futuros estudios.

Carlos Silveyra expone con claridad su acertado concepto de la literatura infantil de tradición oral y argumenta con su propio trabajo su preferencia por el estudio sincrónico de la tradición oral infantil de un modo sistemático. El análisis

del folclore infantil que ha recogido en Argentina se completa con la nómina de las publicaciones de 18 naciones hispanoamericanas (incluida España) y los Estados Unidos, que se dedican al estudio del mismo.

El libro, dividido en cuatro partes más la introducción, comienza con los planteamientos y las consideraciones previas de todo estudio folclórico, desarrolla su clasificación del folclore infantil y concluye con el anexo ya comentado, tras dedicar un amplio capítulo, no menos didáctico, a la presencia del folclore infantil en las escuelas, que será de gran utilidad a maestros y estudiantes de magisterio.

Estamos sin duda ante un magnífico libro que destaca por su claridad, por sus análisis rigurosos y por la valentía de sus propuestas, muy conveniente para todos los expertos en LIJ e imprescindible para los que se inician.



**Oittinen, Riitta (2000) *Translating for Children*. New York & London: Garland Pub. (Carmen Valero Garcés. Departamento de Filología Moderna. Universidad de Alcalá).**

La autora de la obra *Translating for Children*, Riitta Oittinen, es una experta no sólo en traducción de literatura infantil y juvenil (LIJ) sino también en la investigación en torno a la traducción de literatura para niños. El libro al que hace referencia esta reseña se basa precisamente en tres de sus obras anteriores que, sin duda, constituyen una fuente importante de material en el campo de la traducción para niños y jóvenes. Estos son: su tesis doctoral publicada en Finlandia en 1993 bajo el título de *I Am Me- I Am Other: On the Dialogics of Translating for Children* (Tampere: Tampere University), el artículo publicado en la revista *Comparison: An International Journal of Comparative Literature* en 1996 bajo el título "The Verbal and the Visual. On the Carnivalism and Dialogics of Translating for Children" y su trabajo en torno a las traducciones al finlandés de la obra de

Lewis Carroll *Alicia en el país de las maravillas* (*Liisa, Liisa ja Alice*, 1997, Tampere: Tampere University Press).

En esta obra la autora toma como punto de partida la concepción de los estudios de traducción como estudios interdisciplinarios y a lo largo de unas doscientas páginas va proporcionando información y perfilando su teoría sobre la traducción de LIJ. Parte de la idea de que el traductor debe producir un texto para los lectores de la cultura meta, aplicando así la teoría del eskopos desarrollada por Nord a la traducción de la LIJ.

El libro se halla estructurado en seis capítulos cada uno de los cuales trata un tema concreto de la LIJ, siendo en los dos últimos capítulos en los que realmente profundiza en la traducción. En el primer capítulo (*Beginning*, pp. 3-14) la autora expone el panorama de la literatura infantil y juvenil y perfila su teoría ante la traducción de literatura para niños y jóvenes a partir de la definición de los conceptos de equivalencia y adaptación teniendo siempre en cuenta el contexto en el que se produce el nuevo texto. Este contexto incluye para la autora no solo los textos (palabras y/o imágenes) y los diferentes creadores y lectores que pueda tener la obra, sino también las diferentes situaciones en las que pueda ocurrir incluyendo el propio mundo de los niños y las imágenes que los adultos o creadores puedan tener de ellos.

En el capítulo dos (*Readers Reading*, pp. 15-40), la autora trata de cuestiones relacionadas con los diferentes lectores y tipo de lecturas que ofrecen la LIJ y toca el tema de la capacidad de comprensión que tiene, por un lado, el niño y, por otro lado, el adulto o traductor apoyándose en varios estudios sobre el tema. Con respecto al traductor, parte de la idea de que la traducción se basa en su experiencia en esa doble transacción que debe realizar primero como lector y luego como autor del texto traducido. Llama así mismo la atención sobre la situación bipolar con la que se enfrenta al tener que decidir si su obra va orientada hacia el texto original o hacia el nuevo lector. A continuación, en el segundo apartado presenta un análisis más profundo de esa realidad con la que se enfrenta el traductor. Este lee y escribe en una lengua para una audiencia en otra lengua y cultura. En palabras de la autora: "Translation is always based on the translator's reading experience, on the dialogic transaction between the reader and the author (of the book) (p. 25)". Oittinen ve la traducción como "a two-way street:

Transaction between a reader and a text". Termina el capítulo llamando la atención sobre el hecho de que muchas veces los libros son leídos en voz alta por los padres o elegidos por ellos y, a su vez, esta lectura puede hacerse de formas también diferentes con diversas influencias que, sin duda, van a afectar a la traducción.

En el capítulo tres (*For Whom?*, pp. 41-53) se plantea una pregunta fundamental: ¿para quién se traduce? Para dar respuesta a dicha pregunta recurre a la psicología y desde la perspectiva del adulto. Comienza el capítulo con un recorrido por diferentes concepciones sobre el niño y su desarrollo. Discute las teorías de Piaget y Vygostsky sobre el carácter egoísta y social del niño, para inclinarse por las teorías del segundo para descifrar el mundo mágico de los niños a través de la exposición de diferentes posiciones con relación a la permisibilidad o censura de actitudes o materiales. Sigue otro apartado en el que plantea el tema tan debatido de quién elige los textos para los niños, lo cual implica también quien decide qué libros se deben traducir. Es por ello por lo que considera más apropiado hablar de traducir LIJ. Ofrece un repaso de teorías sobre la autoridad de los adultos sobre el niño y aboga por dejar al niño libertad para hablar o preguntar sin que sea el padre o tutor el que imponga sus normas. Ello implica admitir que el niño posee un mundo propio que no es el oficial y por lo tanto carece de autoridad. Ante estas teorías que ven el mundo de los niños como antagónico al de los adultos propone al adulto /traductor el ver el mundo de los niños no como ingenuo, ilógico o equivocado, sino como simplemente diferente, místico y lógico.

En el capítulo cuatro (*Children's Literature and Literature for Children*, pp. 61-72) en las primeras páginas plantea cuestiones que atañen directamente a la traducción tales como el estilo o el vocabulario. Advierte sobre la posibilidad de ser tratados desde dos perspectivas: la del niño que lee la historia o la del adulto. A continuación la autora revisa distintas definiciones de LIJ así como la cuestión de si ésta constituye un género aparte y las funciones que dicha literatura cumple: didáctica, creativa, de entretenimiento, etc. cuestiones importantes para entender y acometer el proceso de la traducción como una doble acción más que como un objeto inerte. Considera como LIJ cualquier texto que los niños o jóvenes lean y, en consecuencia, traducir para niños implica traducir cualquier texto que éstos lean. Propone, en definitiva, respetar a la audiencia y critica la poca consideración que

se le da a la LIJ con respecto a la literatura para adultos y aún menos a la LIJ traducida.

En el capítulo 5 (*Translating Children's Literature and Translating for Children*, pp. 73-158) la autora aborda cuestiones directamente relacionadas con la traducción tales como definir el concepto de "adaptación" proporcionando diferentes teorías que van desde hablar de la invisibilidad del traductor hasta acabar defendiendo la postura de que el traductor debe llevar a cabo su tarea teniendo en cuenta la cultura meta, incluso si ello implica ser visible. En el apartado siguiente, tomando como referencia a Zohar Shavit y Göte Klingberg, autores reconocidos en el mundo de la traducción de LIJ, expone sus teorías sobre la dicotomía tradicional de considerar a la traducción como buena y a la adaptación como mala, o dicho de otro modo, traducción significa invisibilidad del traductor y la adaptación refleja visibilidad del autor, aspecto que Oittinen critica porque piensa que se aplica un punto de vista restrictivo con respecto a la adaptación al considerarla negativa en sí misma, lo cual constituye un signo de falta de respeto a los niños. Está de acuerdo con Klingberg en que las adaptaciones no deben ser invisibles ya que el lector tienen derecho a saber que está leyendo y cómo es en realidad el TO así como quién es el responsable de los resultados. Sin embargo está en desacuerdo con dicho autor cuando éste defiende que los traductores son mensajeros invisibles del autor original. Oittinen cree que ello resulta imposible. El traductor trae consigo ideas, formación y propósitos que quedarán en su obra porque la traducción es un diálogo, un proceso colaborador entre el traductor y sus lectores. Según las palabras de la autora (2000: 161):

*As I see it, no translation "produces sameness"; instead it creates texts for different purposes, different situations, different audiences. Translation is not a carryover of text A into text B, but an interpretation of, in, and for different situations, which means that translators never translate texts (in words) alone. [...] Translation (is) a process where different voices meet, where, in every word, we can hear the "you" and the "I". As readers we are directed toward new texts, new situations- thus we, as readers, always play a renewing role in the interpretations of texts.*

Para la autora la traducción es también una copia del original pero critica que con frecuencia se olvida que toda traducción es una adaptación que

implica cierta domesticación. Llegados a este punto habla de otro factor presente en muchos libros de LIJ: la ilustración, aspecto a menudo olvidado. La ilustración forma un diálogo con el texto y palabras e imágenes construyen en la mente del lector un mundo que ayuda a visualizar la realidad que el autor quiso plasmar. El traductor, como lector, debe captar ese mundo para luego poder reproducirlo, teniendo en cuenta que puede incluir claves culturales también diferentes. La autora ilustra sus ideas proporcionando ejemplos prácticos de otros autores y suyos propios pero siempre buscando la adaptación del texto a los nuevos lectores. Incluye asimismo comentarios sobre otros elementos tales como la rima y el movimiento. La última parte del capítulo está dedicada a autores que son traductores de sus propias obras, ya sean versiones diferentes o adaptaciones para diferentes audiencias. Roald Dahl, Lewis Carroll y Tove Jansson son elegidos como ejemplo. Termina el capítulo con la revisión de la trayectoria de la obra de Lewis Carroll *Alicia en el país de las maravillas* y su traducción en Finlandia, país de Riitta Oittinen.

El capítulo 6 (*A never-Ending Story*; pp. 159-172) constituye una conclusión de los capítulos anteriores y una reafirmación de la teoría de la autora del libro de que el texto debe traducirse para los nuevos lectores. Vuelve a enfatizar la colaboración que debe existir a lo largo del proceso de factores internos y externos al hecho mismo del traslado de información. Llama especialmente la atención sobre los editores, y sobre todo cuando se trata de libros ilustrados y crítica, basándose en su experiencia, la tendencia a pensar que la traducción de un libro para niños con ilustraciones es más fácil que la traducción de un libro para jóvenes sin dibujos. Compara, partiendo de la base de que se requieren habilidades diferentes, el proceso de la traducción con el de la ilustración porque en ambos casos hay que interpretar el texto: ilustrar es traducir dibujos en lugar de palabras. Aboga por la colaboración con el editor para progresar en este campo y critica su tendencia a publicar libros traducidos que han recibido premios en ferias internacionales o son récords de ventas sin investigar sobre la realidad de cada país ni de establecer contactos. Propone, pues, que se incluya al editor dentro del proceso de colaboración que supone la actividad de traducir.

La autora termina lamentándose de la poca investigación disponible sobre LIJ y especialmente sobre la traducción de LIJ y plantea una pregunta clave: ¿qué

áreas específicas deberían investigarse en la traducción? Y las ideas fluyen de la mano de Klingberg: Estudios empíricos sobre las tendencias en la traducción de LIJ; problemas técnicos y económicos relacionados con la producción de obras traducidas de LIJ; estudios sobre modos de seleccionar obras para niños y jóvenes con el fin de ser traducidas; análisis de traducciones sobre LIJ; definición de los problemas que los traductores de LIJ encuentran y recomendaciones para solventarlos; recepción e influencia de obras traducidas en la cultura meta; aplicación de los métodos desarrollados dentro de los Estudios de Traducción a la LIJ; estudios sobre el papel del lector en el proceso de la traducción; estudios empíricos sobre la relación entre las palabras y las ilustraciones en libros traducidos; influencia de la lectura en la traducción; o estudio de los diferentes roles que asume el traductor y/o el niño en el proceso de traducción. Son, pues, muchas las propuestas y deja abierta una puerta para la investigación aludiendo que no hay traducción inocente pero tampoco investigación inocente.

El libro incluye una bibliografía extensa así como un índice de autores y de materias. En definitiva, se trata de un libro bien documentado y útil para el traductor de literatura infantil y juvenil en un ámbito en el que escasean la investigación.

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**Hunt, Peter (2001) *Children's Literature*. London: Blackwell. 334 pp. ISBN: 0-631-21141-1. (Carmen Valero Garcés. Departamento de Filología Moderna. Universidad de Alcalá).**

*Children's Literature* es la última obra de Peter Hunt, autor conocido en el área de la LIJ. Ha escrito más de once libros y 200 artículos sobre el tema. Sus publicaciones más recientes incluyen *International Companion Encyclopedia of Children's Literature* (1996), *Children's Literature: An Illustrated History* (1995) y *Children's Literature: An Anthology 1801-1902* (2000). El libro que ahora reseñamos es una guía práctica de introducción a la LIJ en lengua inglesa con referencias desde el siglo XVIII hasta el año 2000 y puede considerarse como una antología que incluye autores seleccionados no sólo por su reconocimiento personal sino también por su significación dentro del desarrollo de la LIJ en los diferentes países de habla inglesa.

La obra comienza con una discusión sobre el controvertido tema de la definición y consideración de la LIJ como literatura. El segundo capítulo incluye la historia de la LIJ centrada en temas concretos tales como la audiencia, la evolución de ciertos contenidos, el tema de género, la influencia de la política o el carácter internacional de la LIJ. Sigue la guía propiamente dicha que incluye varios apartados:

- Ensayos críticos sobre 40 autores que van desde Mary M. Sherwood a J.K. Rowling, Louisa May Alcott y Dr. Seuss o Quentin Blake y Ted Hughes, todos ellos escritores reconocidos.
- Estudios sobre 20 textos fundamentales en el desarrollo de la LIJ en diferentes momentos o géneros como son, por ejemplo, el pionero *A Little Pretty Pocket Book* (144) junto a la serie de libros de *Harry Potter* (1997, 1998, 1999, 2000) o clásicos modernos como *The Hobbit* (1937) o libros traducidos que han tenido una influencia clara como *Emil and the Detectives* (1929, traducido en 1931). Al final de cada uno de ellos se incluye una bibliografía crítica.
- Bibliografía general y de recursos actualizada.
- Índice de autores y de obras.

El libro pretende ser una guía no sólo para los amantes y estudiosos de la LIJ sino también una herramienta útil para otras disciplinas como la literatura, historia, educación o estudios culturales.



**Cortizas, Antón (2001) *Chirlosmirlos. Enciclopedia dos xogos populares*. Vigo: Edicións Xerais de Galicia. 452 pp. (Manuel F. Vieites. Universidade de Vigo).**

*O meu home vai no mar, chirlosmirlos foi buscar*. En Galicia, los *chirlosmirlos* son esas pequeñas burbujas que crea la marea en la arena, cuando el agua inicia el reflujo y el oxígeno se libera, creando un suave susurro como de granos a la carrera, pero también puede ser sinónimo de *calandraca* o *gambusino*, seres fantásticos que todavía habitan el imaginario popular, cada uno con sus características y cualidades propias.

Y es que, al final, todo radica en la capacidad para jugar, para crear, en aprender a ser. Hagamos la prueba del algodón y emprendamos una lectura activa, comprometida en la práctica, de un libro todavía (o cada día más) necesario: la *Gramática de la fantasía*, de Gianni Rodari. Exploremos sus diversas propuestas de una forma dinámica (con papel, tijeras, pegamento, folios, revistas, rotuladores, lápices...), y comprobemos hasta donde llegan nuestros deseos de fabular, nuestra capacidad de ser otros, nuestras competencias, destrezas y habilidades expresivas, creativas..., lúdicas. Tal vez para entonces, nos habremos dado cuenta de las lagunas que presenta nuestra formación.

Es tiempo de volver a la escuela, pero no para culpabilizar a los que allí trabajan de las carencias de nuestros alumnos y alumnas, sino para imaginar una escuela diferente, capaz de hacer de la consigna "aprender a ser" algo más que un lugar común. Muchas de las enmiendas que se proponen a la LOGSE no tienen como objetivo transformar y mejorar la escuela sino que obedecen a criterios

corporativistas basados en el aumento de docencia de un área determinada. Así, la supuesta reforma de la enseñanza de las humanidades no era otra cosa que aumentar el número de horas de asignaturas como Latín, Historia o Filosofía. Y la mayoría de las críticas que la LOGSE suscita, sobre todo las más ácidas, se realizan desde una considerable distancia, sin haber puesto un pie en la escuela, sin haber analizado desde la base, con la tiza de cada día en la mano, las múltiples contradicciones que dificultaron y condicionan aún su puesta en marcha, sobre todo en el campo de las infraestructuras y los recursos o en el de la formación inicial del profesorado. La reforma de los planes de estudio de las titulaciones de Magisterio dejó tanto que desear como la financiación con la que se implantó la reforma. Habría que haber comenzado por ahí.

Se hablaba de una escuela diferente, en la cual el aprendizaje de contenidos no se limitase a la transmisión de hechos, conceptos o principios, sino que también potenciase la adquisición de procedimientos, la promoción de actitudes, valores y normas. He ahí algunas de las virtudes innegables de la LOGSE y del modelo constructivista que la sustenta. Sin embargo, una buena parte de los problemas fundamentales de la LOGSE también hay que buscarlos en la propia sociedad, que apuesta con la transmisión del conocimiento, no por su construcción, que potencia el saber, no el hacer, que valora mucho más el tener y desprecia el ser. Denuncias formuladas en su día por Erich Fromm o Carl Rogers y todavía vigentes. Y todavía hay tertulianos que abogan por volver al bachillerato preconstitucional.

Los problemas de la Literatura Infantil y Juvenil son muchos, pero entre los más substanciales están aquellos que derivan de la situación de partida del receptor. Hace ya algunos años Miguel Ángel Almodóvar publicaba un trabajo incendiario, *El autor y las temáticas en el teatro para niños*, en el que denunciaba la escasa consideración que los autores de textos dramáticos mostraban ante sus posibles receptores y presentaba un catálogo de despropósitos en la selección y tratamiento de las temáticas. Algunos de los títulos que en estos momentos llenan la sección de éxitos en el campo de la Literatura Infantil y Juvenil presentan idénticas problemáticas y parten de supuestos similares: el público lector es tonto y cualquier cosa vale. Lo importante, en consecuencia, es el mercado editorial y mientras éste funcione...

Y es que se ha establecido un énfasis excesivo en la recepción frente a la necesidad, previa y fundamentadora, de la creación. ¿Cómo podemos pedir a nuestros alumnos y alumnas que hablen con corrección, que se expresen con rigor y lógica o que reciten sin titubeos un soneto, si jamás se han establecido pautas que favorezcan esos contenidos, o las actitudes favorables hacia los mismos? Pero miremos a nuestra clase política, supuestos ejemplos de ciudadanos de pro, y veamos cuáles son sus competencias comunicativas, también en lo que tiene que ver con el diálogo, la tolerancia o la simple aceptación de la existencia del otro y sus circunstancias (la necesidad del otro, incluso).

Los tiempos que la escuela dedica a la creación, a la expresión y a la comunicación son tan escasos como inadecuados, pues aprender a trabajar en grupo implica mucho más que hacer un trabajo colectivo de cortar y pegar un día de cada quince. Otro tanto ocurre con la creatividad o la espontaneidad, tan relacionadas con la improvisación y la resolución de problemas y tan abandonadas. Por eso un número creciente de empresas ha comenzado a organizar cursos para ejecutivos y empleados varios en los que el juego se convierte en la metodología estrella. Claro está: fomento del pensamiento divergente, de la capacidad de buscar respuestas no estereotipadas ni tópicas a problemas comunes. Es entonces cuando el “¿qué pasaría si...?” o los célebres binómios fantásticos, cobran especial relevancia y significación, también para una lectura crítica de la realidad.

Pero el juego, tan importante en el desarrollo del pensamiento divergente y de la creatividad, nace de la curiosidad, de una actitud de exploración y de experimentación, de la capacidad de sorpresa y búsqueda, de la necesidad de preguntas y respuestas para todo y ante todo. Lo explicaba de manera ejemplar Manuel Ballester en un trabajo en el que presentaba y analizaba la investigación científica por dentro e incluido en el volumen colectivo *Horizonte científico de España: logros, carencias, perspectivas* (1989). Y el juego es tan fundamental en la investigación como en la creación artística pero sobre todo, y ante todo, en la expresión artística. Por eso no queremos dejar de insistir en la interdependencia entre creación y recepción. Y no se trata de convertir a los alumnos y alumnas en escritores potenciales, sino, justamente, de potenciar sus capacidades creativas, expresivas y comunicativas, para que lean mucho, y lo hagan con espíritu crítico y excelencia prosódica, para que se expresen con rigor y brillantez o para que

escriban bien, con claridad e incluso con estilo (a ser posible propio). Y aquí es cuando el juego, los juegos de expresión oral y/o escrita, cobran especial transcendencia.

Este libro de Antón Cortizas (animador cultural, escritor inteligente y docente comprometido) supone una invitación al juego, que se genera a partir de la recuperación de juegos populares y tradicionales, labor que ha venido desarrollando en los últimos veinte años, fundamentalmente entre Ferrol y Carnota (provincia de La Coruña), a través de diversas iniciativas de animación y de trabajo de campo. Un trabajo en el que encontramos un sinfín de propuestas de fácil aplicación en cualquier contexto educativo y que nos pueden permitir establecer dinámicas de preparación o adecuación (*warming up*) para el desarrollo de otras actividades más centradas en el fomento de las capacidades, habilidades y destrezas relacionadas con la creatividad y la expresión oral y escrita. Propuestas entre las que también encontraremos “juegos de regazo”, tan importantes en la primera infancia. Todo un acierto.

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1. *Anuario de Investigación en Literatura Infantil y Juvenil* admite trabajos inéditos (artículos y reseñas) que versen sobre temas relacionados con la Literatura Infantil y Juvenil en todos sus ámbitos.
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    - Lefevere, A. 1997. *Traducción, reescritura y la manipulación del canon literario*. Traducción española de C. África Vidal y R. Álvarez. Salamanca: Ediciones Colegio de España.
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