

A Multifarious Collection of Children's Literature Mediations

Anna Kérchy and Björn Sundmark, eds. 2020. *Translating and Transmediating Children's Literature*. Cham: Palgrave MacMillan. 337 pp. ISBN 978-3-030-52527-9.

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The field of children's literature has been particularly open to authorial and artistic transformations, interventions, adaptations, and re-appropriations. Accordingly, the linguistic, artistic, cultural, and media treatments of children's texts have been the topic of ongoing academic discussions in the 21st century. The volume *Translating and Transmediating Children's Literature*, edited by Anna Kérchy and Björn Sundmark, is the result of vibrant academic research and collaboration on the translatability and adaptability of children's literature. More specifically, the book has drawn inspiration and insights from the editors' participation in the international children's literature translation project celebrating the 150th anniversary of the publication of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, as well as academic contributions at the 2012 IBBY (International Board on Books for Young People) congress *Crossing Boundaries: Translations and Migrations*, The Child and the Book Conference 2014, the interdisciplinary conference Children's Literature and Translation – Current Topics and Future Perspectives (Fall 2017; KU Leuven/University of Antwerp), From Morals to the Macabre in Translations for Children (Spring 2018; Krakow Pedagogical University), but mostly from the large number of submissions to the 2018 special issue of *Bookbird: A Journal of International Children's Literature* on translating and transmediating children's texts.

Principally, the editors focus on the interrelations between translation and transmediation as complementary and reciprocal practices that both involve “the telling of a story across media” (1). Equally, it is posited that both translation and transmediation include the “transition between semiotic systems” (3) and reflect the cultural and digital shifts of the postmillennial era. In translation studies, the editors credit seminal works in the field, such as Riitta Oittinen's *Translating for Children* (2000), Emer O'Sullivan's *Kinderliterarische Komparatistik* (2001), Jan Van Coillie and Walter P. Verschueren's *Children's Literature in Translation* (2006), and Gillian Lathey's *The Role of Translators in Children's Literature: Invisible Storytellers* (2010), and further compare the art and role of translation to the “participatory cultural performance of networked fan communities of rewriters and rereaders” (2) characteristic of transmedia storytelling. Sundmark and Kérchy highlight the changes in the reading experience of the “digimodernist” society with its digital natives, “prosumers” and “producers” of Generations Z and Alpha as crucial to the current investigations in their field. Drawing on Linda Hutcheon's theories of adaptation and Henry Jenkins's media convergence theories as well as academic discussions of children's adaptations in *Textual Transformations in Children's Literature: Adaptations, Translations, Reconsiderations*, edited by Benjamin Lefebvre (2013), *Adapting Canonical Texts in Children's Literature*, edited by Anja Müller (2013), and *Never-ending Stories: Adaptation, Canonisation and Ideology in Children's Literature*, edited by Sylvie Geerts and Sara Van den Bossche (2014), the key concepts in the book are connected to the multimodal,

collaborative, participatory, and creative enhancements in children's literature, as well as "unprecedented new media literacy and online interactive telepresence" (4). Finally, both translation and transmediation are observed as "creative derivative methods" (Venuti 2007: 29) which are connected to the practice of world-building, a narrative strategy characteristic of children's literature long before the advent of digital media. Following the more recent academic endeavours to relate the practices of translation and transmediation (O'Sullivan 2013; Kérchy 2016; Sundmark and Kérchy 2018; Waller 2019), the aim of the collection is to "contribute to the solidification of an emerging new research field by exploring the connections between translation *and* transmediation, covering a broad scope in terms of languages, dialects and intermedial aspects" (8).

The volume consists of five parts, or thematic sections, on translating and transmediating children's literature: "Inter-/Intra-Cultural Transformations", "Image-Textual Interactions", "Metapictorial Potentialities", "Digital Media Transitions", and "Intergenerational Transmissions". The five parts encompass seventeen chapters with contributions from the UK, Germany, Ireland, Canada, Poland, USA, Hungary, Italy, Brazil, Sweden, and Greece, and include studies on the Brazilian, French, German, Italian, Swedish, Swiss, Hungarian, Polish, Romanian, Korean, Greek, and Latin languages. Likewise, the chapters cover a diverse range of topics, from ideological and ethical issues to globalisation/localisation/glocalisation, reconceptualisations, intergenerational and intergeneric aspects, and verbal and visual representations involved in the translation and transmediation of children's texts, with special emphasis on the "multimodal, crosslinguistic, iconotextual, meta-narrative/-pictorial, and intergenerational dynamics" (11), as well as the potential of these practices for "education by fantasy" (10). The editors further emphasise the overlapping of the sections and a certain flexibility in approaching the individual chapters through the "creative act of compilation" (11).

In the first part, "Inter-/Intra-Cultural Transformations", the authors explore mediation from one culture to another in the translation-transmediation process by examining the relations between lingua franca and minority languages, regional dialects as well as discourses influenced by ideology and political correctness. Clémentine Beauvais discusses the status of European children's literature in the United Kingdom in the Brexit period by introducing François Jullien's concept of the *écart* and analysing Sarah Ardizzone's translation of Timothée de Fombelle's *Tobie Lolness* (2007; *Toby Alone*, 2008), arguing against ethnocentric shortsightedness and for the possibility of readers' intra- and inter-cultural explorations. A case study by Hannah Felce delves into the intra-cultural transformations and multilingual processes of Selina Chönz's Swiss national classic *Uorsin* (1945; *A Bell for Ursli: A Story from the Engadine in Switzerland*, 2007) which was originally written in Ladin, one of the dialects of the fourth national language of Switzerland, Romansh, while also discussing the role of illustrations by the Andersen Award winner Alois Carigiet in the translation process of the book and its sequels. Drawing on the theories of translation studies, children's literature, adaptation studies, and children's literature translation studies, Felce suggests that translating children's literature in minority and multilingual settings can "both broaden the definition of translation and provide answers to wider questions concerning translation, language, meaning, and the history of publishing practices" (66). Examining an even

earlier children's classic, Joanna Dybiec-Gajer observes the intercultural transformations of Heinrich Hoffmann's *Der Struwwelpeter* (1845) through an overview of Polish editions and its spin-offs (struwwelpetriades) by using Emer O'Sullivan's narratological approach to translation to detect the modifications of the narrator's voice that lead to a more didactic tone and further aspects of intercultural transition. In the chapter on the Soviet influence on Korean children's literature, and by looking at the genres of science fiction and travel writing, Dafna Zur discusses "a translation of the world in both a literal and figurative sense" (88) through a cultural-historical analysis of North Korea's efforts to recreate their society after the Korean War, revealing translations that went beyond "imitation" and towards constructive ideas (e.g. on gender and science) that were an important part of early North Korean literary developments.

The second part deals with image-textual interactions "with the aim to explore the synergy of words and pictures in translation in (re)illustrated children's literature" (14). Aneesh Barai considers "foreignizing domestications and drawing bridges in James Joyce's *The Cat and the Devil* and its French illustrations" (103), originally a trilingual letter written to Joyce's grandson in 1936 and turned into a picturebook that was translated into thirteen languages. The chapter discusses the foreignisation of the domesticated folk legend of Beaugency, the translation of modernist narratological devices of polyglotism and neologisms, as well as the role of "tongue-in cheek" illustrations when translating the verbal into the visual. Björn Sundmark's contribution analyses the treatment of a prime example of transmedia storytelling, J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit* (1937), in light of its translation and visualisation in Sweden, particularly under the influence of Tolkien's illustrations and his texts on the aesthetics of fantasy, and possible reinterpretations of Tolkien's work based on its early translation and transmediation. Sundmark especially focuses on the illustrative work of the Swedish artist Tove Jansson in the 1962 edition of *The Hobbit* and suggests a reinstatement of her work as a way of recovering "some of the original openness and imaginative potential that Tolkien invested in his creation" (130). In the final chapter of part two, Anna Kérchy discusses the challenges of translating literary nonsense by looking at the Hungarian domestications of Lewis Carroll's "Jabberwocky" (1871). Using the theories of Jean-Jacques Lecercle and Julia Kristeva, as well as Jenkinsian transmedia terminology, Kérchy explores "how the interaction between verbal narrative and visual illustration, between oral performance and written transcription, and between source text and translation can be regarded as vital constituents of the complex signification process called transmedia storytelling" (135) that results in "an exciting, polysemic, multimodal Wonderland experience" (151).

Part three, "Metapictorial Potentialities", contains two chapters on the translation of and dialogue between pictures, emphasising the self-referentiality and self-commentary involved in the process. Petros Panaou and Tasoula Tsilimeni provide a comparison between source-text book covers and those of their Greek translations by analysing the corpus of sixty-eight children's books published by Greek children's literature publishers Patakis and Psychogios in the previous ten years. Based on their own earlier research and Serafini, Kachorsky and Goff's Multimodal Ensemble Analytical Instrument (MEAI), the authors stress the impact and importance of imported children's literature translations and reflect on the transfer,

reception, and trends in Greek children's and young adult literature. Karolina Rybicka-Tomala explores re-illustrations using the example of John Tenniel's artistic depiction of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865), and its subsequent impact on translators and illustrators of the novel. Her case study of the Polish illustrator Olga Siemaszko reveals four distinct period versions in various editions published over thirty years – in 1955 and 1969 two distinctly different sets of illustrations for the translation by Antoni Marianowicz, in 1964 a set of postcards for the centenary celebration, and in 1975 a vinyl cover for the radio-play based on Marianowicz's translation. In her study, Rybicka-Tomala proposes criteria for detecting “author traces” and analyses Siemaszko's “illustration strategy” of domestication in the interlingual translation.

The section on “Digital Media Transitions” takes into consideration a wide array of modern technologies and the issues involved in translating texts into digital formats, digital reading experiences, online translations, and translations of major transmedia storyworld franchises. Cheryl Cowdy responds to collective concerns over how digital media might debilitate the human ability to empathise. By discussing interactivity and trans-sensory storytelling using the example of Jessica Anthony's and Rodrigo Corral's *Chopsticks* (2012), and employing the ethnographic reader-response methodology, Cowdy combines transmedia studies and affective narratology, with possible impact on trauma studies. Dana Cocargeanu discusses double mediation and online Romanian translations of Beatrix Potter's stories, focusing on the factors that contributed to this phenomenon in Romania, and the effect of transmediation on the translations. By using the analytical tools in children's literature studies, translation studies and literary studies to analyse the impact of the medium on the translations and to compare them to the print versions, Cocargeanu concludes that online translations contribute to the popularity and accessibility of a particular author and result as well in a more informal literary expression. Cybelle Saffa Soares's and Domingos Soares's study of the *Star Wars* transmedia storyworld franchise and its Brazilian translations of the ethical issues involved in the franchise focuses on the Brazilian Portuguese translations of the terms *light* and *dark* “as a vital organizing principle” (262) of Lucas's fictional universe, symbolic of the struggle between good and evil in comics, television shows, novels, animations and games for children. The authors consider how language, media-specificity, target audience, and transmedia strategy affect the translation, which also reveals the complexity and multiplicity of organising and recreating storyworlds.

The final part of the book is dedicated to “intergenerational transmissions” and pays “special attention to the cross-audience multiplication of voices and visualizations in texts, adaptations, and transmediations that address a variety of different age groups” (19). Annalisa Sezzi explores the different voices in the first Italian 1969 translation of Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are* (1963), and its retranslation in 2018, as interpreted through words and pictures as well as adults' reading performance and voices in translation and retranslation, which have spurred both public and academic discussions. Agnes Blümer deals with the translation of ambiguity, and particularly dual address, in children's fantasy in the 1950s and 1960s by analysing children's literature with a crossover appeal, namely American, English, and French children's literature with dual appeal translated into German in the post-World War II period: Mary Norton's *The Borrowers* (1952), Maurice Druon's

Tistou les pouces verts (1957), Philippa Pearce's *Tom's Midnight Garden* (1958), Madeleine L'Engle's *A Wrinkle in Time* (1962), Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are* (1963), and Eugène Ionesco's *Conte numéro 1* (1967). By combining children's literature studies and translation studies, Blümer coins the terms *generic affiliation* for less ambiguous works of children's literature that were adapted to generic models in West Germany at that time, and *visual context adaptation* for those in which there is visual localisation in illustrated texts, revealing the influence of the dominant ideas of the period on translation. Carl F. Miller proposes an intriguing topic of translating modern children's literature into Latin, a 150-year-old tradition that has included the translation of works from Comenius's *Orbis Pictus* (1658) to Rowling's *Harry Potter* (1997–2007), even including unexpected translations, such as those of *Walter the Farting Dog* (2001) or *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* (2007). Miller proposes that “[a]t its most dynamic, such mediation affirms the contemporary relevance of both Latin and children's literature – a language ostensibly situated in the past and a literature presumably oriented toward the future – with a translational overlap that is as potentially significant and productive as it is surprising” (315). In the final chapter of the book, Casey D. Gailey discusses the translation of scientific knowledge, such as Newtonian and Quantum Physics, in three board books for babies and toddlers. By looking at the intended audience of the *Baby Loves Science!* and *Science for Babies* books and the cognitive requirements of science, picturebooks and literacy, visual and linguistic design elements, as well as the “pre-science and future-looking potential of these books” (322), the author argues that the books serve as inspiration for the target audience to seek out science as they mature, rather than attempt to relate complex scientific theories at a young age.

With its international scope, multimodality, and its diverse and contemporary topics, such as language change and verbal meaning related to cultural transition and transmediation, trans-sensory new media storytelling, adaptations of picturebook covers, or the toddlerisation of science, *Translating and Transmediating Children's Literature* is a valuable addition to academic discussions on children's literature of the past and the present. While we may not yet be able to fully grasp the changes that are taking place in modern-day media environments, publications such as this showcase a variety of studies coming from different cultural backgrounds that build on existing literary and media theories, and contribute to academic research on children's literature in the digital era. Additionally, the importance of such contributions is that adaptations, as Robyn McCallum suggests in *Screen Adaptations and the Politics of Childhood* (2018), “play a crucial role in the cultural reproduction and transformation of childhood and youth and hence provide a rich resource for the examination of the transmission and adaptation of cultural values and ideologies” (1). Because media transformations and elaborations of children's texts often provide crucial information about the priorities, values, and ideologies of culture, transmedia storytelling, as Sundmark and Kérchy observe, “has proved to be one of the most influential notions for the critical analysis of postmillennial cultural production” (6). Accordingly, the editors and authors in this collection have engaged in dialogue with the classic and modern practices of translation, adaptation, and mediation, their multiple modalities, different media formats and platforms, as well as the intriguing aspects of the reception and production of children's literature.

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The Hundred Acre Wood Revisited

Jennifer Harrison, ed. 2021. *Positioning Pooh: Edward Bear after 100 Years*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi. 218 pp. ISBN 978-1-4968-3411-9.

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As Jennifer Harrison, the editor of *Positioning Pooh*, states in the introduction to this collection of essays, the available scholarship on the *Pooh* books by A.A. Milne is “sparse compared to other classics from the ‘golden age’ of children’s literature”, perhaps because Milne’s stories “were traditionally considered simplistic and datedly nostalgic” (x). Abandoning such a stance and aiming at filling “a decades-long leanness in concentrated