

East meets West in Children's Literature

As is our custom, much of this issue of *IBBYlink* relates to the conference held at Roehampton in November. The 2004 theme, 'East meets West in Children's Literature,' encapsulated much of what IBBY is about – its founder, Jella Lepman, had a passionate belief in the power of children's literature to transcend cultural differences and further the cause of world peace. Certainly many of the books discussed in the plenary sessions and the workshops have the potential to increase the understanding of young people about unfamiliar places and cultures, though others also reveal some of the unsatisfactory attitudes about other cultures maintained by Western writers in the past.

It is almost impossible to state the conference title without being reminded of Kipling's lines: 'East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet, / Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great Judgment Seat' (though it should not be forgotten that a great deal of his poetry is spoken by personae who may not represent the poet's own point of view!). Inevitably Kipling, and the Empire, featured in several of the talks – notably that by Professor Uli Knoepfelmacher of which we have a summary here – but the wider interpretation of the theme encouraged participants to look further east than India, and also at the way in which people from other parts of the world are portrayed in contemporary British fiction for young people. We also have in this issue a report about children's literature in Iran, which unfortunately could not be given at the conference.

The conference also gave IBBY an opportunity to celebrate the seventieth birthday of the distinguished children's author, Diana Wynne Jones, whose fantasy consistently includes elements which make the reader feel like an alien in a strange land. In this 'bumper issue' of *IBBYlink*, we have several articles related

to her work, as well as including a piece about illustration which was unavoidably held over from the summer 2004 issue devoted to that topic.

And if your appetite is whetted by the summaries of the papers, don't forget that later this year, Pied Piper Publishing (80 Birmingham Rd., Shenstone, Lichfield, Staffs, WS14 0JU) plan to bring out a volume devoted to conference proceedings, with the full versions of many of them.

Pat Pinsent • Editor

East meets West

- 2 **The Bilingual Imagination of the Anglo-Indian Child** *U. C. Knoepfelmacher*
- 3 **A Hundred Years of Eastern Characters** *Mary Cadogan*
- 4 **Gulmohar Trees and Cream Teas** *Preetha Leela*
- 5 **New Meanings of Multiculturalism: Books from India** *Gita Wolf*
- 6 **Writing Singapore** *Sandra J. Williams*
- 6 **Jamila Gavin's *Surya* Trilogy** *Sophie Mackay*
- 7 **Other Plenary Sessions**
- 8 **Exoticism and Evangelism** *Pat Pinsent*
- 8 **Shaping a New China** *Marian Allsobrook*
- 10 **The Representation of Arabs in Children's Literature** *Ann Lazim*
- 11 **Walking a Tightrope** *Rehana Ahmed*
- 12 **Children's Literature in Iran** *Taraneh Matloob*

Diana Wynne Jones 70th birthday

- 13 **Recollections** *Nicholas Tucker*
- 14 **Denying the Exoticism of the Other** *Farah Mendlesohn*
- 16 **Japan's Studio Ghibli** *Lisa Sainsbury*
- 17 **The People's Diana Wynne Jones** *Charlie Butler*

19 **Reviews**

22 **News/Notes/Conferences etc**

The Bilingual Imagination of the Anglo-Indian Child

U. C. Knoepfelmacher

Although Knoepfelmacher examined 'Victorian and Edwardian figurations of English boys and girls' in the work of Kipling, Ewing, and Burnett, he considered Mary Norton's 1952 fantasy, *The Borrowers* at both the outset and the end of his talk. He pointed out that when Norton's unnamed boy first meets the Lilliputian Arrietty, he promptly asks her whether she can read. Knoepfelmacher quoted their exchange:

'Of course,' said Arrietty. 'Can't you?'

'No,' he stammered. 'I mean yes. I mean I've just come from India.'

'What's that got to do with it?' asked Arrietty.

'Well, if you're born in India, you're bilingual. And if you're bilingual, you can't read. Not so well.'

Arrietty stared up at him: what a monster, she thought, dark against the sky.

'Do you grow out of it?' she asked.

He moved a little and she felt the cold flick of his shadow.

'Oh yes,' he said, 'it wears off. My sisters were bilingual; now they aren't a bit. They could read any of those books upstairs in the schoolroom.'

'So could I,' said Arrietty quickly, 'if someone could hold them, and turn the pages. I'm not a bit bilingual. I can read anything.' (Penguin 1958:55-6)

Knoepfelmacher claimed that this exchange calls attention to the insecurities of a boy whose imperiled imperial identity makes him as much a 'vestigial figure' as the diminishing race of *Borrowers* who can no longer live off the productions of the 'vast multitudes who outnumber them.' The boy's immersion in an oral culture that relied on a rich mixture of Indian dialects may have retarded his development as a reader of English texts, but it has also allowed him to resist the limitations of 'the print culture his sisters have accepted.'

Thus, whereas both the boy and Arrietty seem to regard bilingualism as a handi-

cap, Mary Norton and Mrs. May (the narrator) seem to suggest that the boy's retardation is a decided asset. Indeed, his ability to 'see' tiny beings he may have invented to impress his sisters can actually be read, as Mrs. May slyly implies, as a tribute to the Indian nourishment of his English imagination.

Turning next to narratives written at a time when Victorian folklorists and ethnographers were busily tracing Western fairy tales to their Far Eastern sources, Knoepfelmacher looked at the writings of John Lockwood Kipling, Rudyard Kipling, Juliana Horatia Ewing and Frances Hodgson Burnett. The last three writers depict child-protagonists who, like the ten-year-old boy in *The Borrowers* must shed their regressive attachment to a lost 'aural paradise.' Knoepfelmacher's analysis of Kipling's self-presentations in 'Baa, Baa, Black Sheep,' 'The Potted Princess,' and *Something of Myself* was followed by a consideration of Ewing's *Six to Sixteen*, a book little Rudyard read at the age of seven, after his painful exile drove him to replace his ayah's oral tales with the 'priceless volumes' his parents sent him from India. It was a book the seventy-year old Kipling still claimed to know 'almost by heart.'

Knoepfelmacher suggested that much that Kipling and Burnett were to reprocess in their stories of Anglo-Indian children such as Punch and Kim or Sara Crewe and Mary Lennox is already embedded in the first-person narrative told by Ewing's Margaret Vandalour.

Returning to *The Borrowers* once again, Knoepfelmacher concluded that India persistently operated as an emblem for a 'universal traffic between opposites, between generational, sexual, and cultural binaries that would seem unsurmountable child and adult, girl and boy, native and foreign and yet continued to tease the rich "bilingual imagination" of the writers who dramatized their conflict.'

iBBYLink
The British IBBY
Newsletter
Spring 2005

Pat Pinsent
Editor

Kathleen Fedouloff
Design & Layout

To sponsor a future issue of
iBBYLink,
please contact Pat Pinsent
PatPinsent@aol.com

A Hundred Years of Eastern Characters

Mary Cadogan

Consideration of the role of Eastern characters in school fiction is inevitably linked with changes in society in twentieth century Britain. However, authors also realised early on that such characters could have an extremely enlivening effect on their stories, with or without social points being made. Eastern characters suggested fantasy elements but were often depicted realistically as well, because many well-to-do Indian families sent their sons to be educated at English public schools and universities.

There had been references to Asian and African characters in other genres (notably perhaps in Kipling's stories) but their potential for enriching plots and atmosphere became particularly evident in the Edwardian school stories of Charles Hamilton ('Frank Richards') and P.G. Wodehouse (for boys), and those of Henry St John Cooper, who, as 'Mabel St John,' wrote for girls. All these stories originally appeared in weekly papers rather than in hardback books.

Frank Richards introduced Hurree Jamset Ram Singh (the schoolboy Nabob of Bhanipur) into *Pluck* in 1906 and then, because of this character's popularity, transferred him into the *Magnet* soon after this began in 1908. Hurree then took his place in the Remove Form at Greyfriars where, until Frank Richards died in 1961, he remained near the centre of the action and ethos. Richards had felt that 'to create a coloured boy on equal terms' with the local manly heroes 'would have a good effect'. On the whole this was true, although there were elements of caricature from time to time in Hurree's personality and even more in Richards' Chinese schoolboy, Wun Lung. Editors of the *Magnet* and other papers soon realised that to include boys from different countries in the stories boosted circulation, so that there were plenty of characters from the colonies and dominions, and elsewhere.

P.G. Wodehouse, as 'Basil Windham', wrote *The Luck Stone* as a serial for the 1909 *Chums*. There is no doubt that, despite its school setting, this story was largely inspired by Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone* (1868). Since this was first published, tales of sacred jewels or other

relics stolen from Eastern shrines and taken to England have never ceased to appear. However, *The Luck Stone* is memorable for its introduction into the public school setting of Ram, an Indian pupil, who, like Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, is treated by his author (and fellow-pupils) sympathetically and with a robust lack of sentimentality or patronage.

Contemporaneously with Hurree and Ram, 'Mabel St John' (Cooper, who as 'Henry St John' had hitherto written boys' boarding-school tales) created Coosha, the daughter of a Zulu chief, as one of the main characters in the 'Pollie Green' serials which ran for several years in the *Girls' Friend*. Coosha's schoolgirl exploits, though *outré* and very much 'over the top', made many telling points about friendships which on the surface seemed unlikely but were actually very strong, and, particularly, about Coosha's refusal to be put down or patronized in any way.

The 1930s saw the proliferation of the boarding-school story and many further fictional embodiments of pupils from India, Africa and China. An example is Ram Dass, the cricketing schoolboy in T.H. Scott's *A Hit for Six* (1934) – a school story with a Moonstone theme, and Naoma Nakara, the teenage African Queen who was to adorn and enliven Morcove School for nearly two decades in the weekly *Schoolgirls' Own* stories by Horace Philips ('Marjorie Stanton').

After the boarding-school story declined (from the 1950s when the Empire began to break up and children were no longer being sent by their parents in far flung countries to be educated in England), the roles of Asians and Africans in children's stories underwent drastic changes as authors tried to reflect the realities of 'multi-cultural' Britain. The stories of the 1970s and '80s include Gillian Cross' *Save Our School* (1981), featuring Clipper, a West Indian girl who leads a small boy-gang, and Jan Needle's *My Mate Shofiq* (1978) which, describing the developing friendship between an English and a Pakistani boy, and how this was both threatened and strengthened by school-bullying, has carried the day-school story to new heights.

east
meets
west

Gulmohar Trees and Cream Teas

The Influence of British Children's Fiction upon the Indian Psyche

Preetha Leela

'We must do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern. A class of persons Indian in blood and colour but English in taste, opinions, words and intellect.' (Lord Macaulay, 1813)

Today, nearly 58 years after Independence, Lord Macaulay would find it impossible to find a class of young people in India who are totally English in taste, opinions, words and intellect. Independent Indians do not have imposed on them the doctrines that Lord Macaulay laid down for their forerunners. However, the dominance of English fiction over the English-medium school remains unchangingly strong and resolute. The popularity of British books has not dwindled, despite a sudden, deliberate, increase in the market for Indian fiction for children and young adults.

Today, English books are often read side by side with those of Indian writers, but this was not always the case. Not long ago, most of the reading material available to children in English-speaking schools had a kind of 'middle-class Englishness' about it. I grew up in that period in a metro then called Madras, now Chennai, famous in Britain for its colonial history as well as for Madras curry powder which became as an essential ingredient in British kitchen cupboards.

In my childhood, the dominance of Enid Blyton books in primary school usually conjured up not curry but images of cream teas, potted meat and egg sandwiches. The nuns and other teachers occasionally held classes under the orange flowered 'gulmohar' trees, reading practice would occur on extracts from Richmal Crompton, Enid Blyton, Frank Richards, Agatha Christie or even Charles Dickens. It was therefore not unreasonable that early compositions, as well as some later ones, contained few traces of Krishna, Fatima, rice and dhal, but rather were filled with Mary, Pauline and Julian. These amateur attempts usually came with all the trimmings of thatched cottages, men in tweeds, ladies in frocks and dialogues charmingly interspersed with 'Oh, how simply ripping!' If we at any point lapsed into our mother tongue to

discuss movies etc, we were firmly reprimanded and told that we were privileged to be attending an expensive English-speaking school, and must do our best to learn English properly.

As an adult, I find the logic somewhat baffling, as I know that it is perfectly possible to be bilingual. However, as a child, I immediately shut up when scolded for being my natural Indian self for a few snatched minutes in a day. The sentiment behind our well-stocked, albeit far removed from all things Indian, libraries was that in order for us to learn English properly, we had to read and behave as if we were English while at school. Old habits die hard and it was a while before we could break free from the moulds of reading, speaking, thinking and writing in a certain culturally artificial way that dominated us for years.

Since India is largely regional-language-based in its education, and less than five percent of the population is English speaking, it would be logical to ask how the influence of this education could extend beyond the few that attended these schools. Although this percentage is small, it amounts however to more than 25 million people, and these people are those who dominate the best jobs and in doing so very often impose their personal preferences.

Boarding school scenes frequently appear in Bollywood films (another irony is that these are usually shot in Switzerland), Indian ads often contain slightly displaced, subtle allusions to colonial lifestyles, not to mention the fact that several famous present-day Indian writers have spent a great deal of their childhoods reading very British books. Booker Prize winner Arundhati Roy famously claimed that, unlike other well-known Indian writers, she had never lived in any country other than India and yet even her books have many British references.

The question may be asked about the present generation of Indians growing up in a patriotic era where there is a definite tendency to extol the virtues of all things Indian. The bookshops

stock children's books that are both Indian and international. With the internet however, universally loved children's favourites like *Harry Potter* have been warmly embraced in India. Lord Macaulay's words may have been forgotten, but even in present-day India there is an undeniable Englishness about children's reading and writing patterns. As an Indian, I feel a sense of pride when

I see Indian children's books on the shelves in Indian bookshops. However, I sometimes lament the redundancy of some of my old favourites like Richmal Crompton's William (not that visible over here either). I am glad I grew up in India reading these books and blissfully forgetting my immediate environment, but I am equally glad to be free of those constraints now.

east
meets
west

New Meanings of Multiculturalism: Books from India

Gita Wolf – Tara Publishing, India

Point of view is all. As a publisher of children's books from India, I come to multicultural literature from a perspective that is likely to be different from the other participants of this conference. In one way or another, the books we publish have to do with India. Most children in the UK are unlikely to have read a book from India, or know more about the place than their geography lesson warrants. Children of Indian origin, though, probably do have a special relationship to the place: the India their parents or grandparents left behind is evoked at home through nostalgic tales or exotic customs. It is a distant – perhaps idealized – point of reference.

This is where books from India have a place. I wouldn't like to be misunderstood here: I don't mean to say that our books serve the purpose of handing out correct information about the country, or that the India we represent is 'truer' or more authentic than other versions. Obviously, all good literature mediates between the real and the imagined, and our books do this as well. Yet we do contribute something to the field of multiculturalism and its dialogue with questions of identity, and our contribution is unique. It has to do with something very simple – which is nonetheless surprisingly political. It is a question of point of view – the way in which a reader (almost unconsciously) accepts the centre from which a book is written. Our books are written from a position that takes itself for granted, and this simple shift in who is telling the tale, and about whom, can be far more radical in its effects than most conscious pedagogy.

Let me illustrate this negatively, with an unfortunate example: in the days before children's literature in India came into its own, we all grew up on a certain kind of English school story, dreaming of scones and suspecting 'darkies' as if it was the most natural thing in the world. We forgot for the moment that we, in fact, were 'darkies'. The point is that the converse works just as well: a good book from India, which children in the UK find as exciting as anything else they know, can achieve an unselfconscious shift in their perspective just as easily and playfully. This is a function of all good literature – it communicates effortlessly. Enforced political correctness is much harder going.

So the books that I would like to present from our publishing house are based on this premise: to change perspectives, it is vital to bring in many new ones. Thus our books are rooted in the Indian context but not exotic. We would like children everywhere just to enjoy reading them. Multiculturalism, for us, is the act of bringing in different voices into a homogenized world. It is not a niche, but a vital part of world children's literature.

Books presented from Tara Publishing:

The London Jungle Book
Hen Sparrow Turns Purple
Tiger on a Tree
Alphabets Are Amazing Animals
One, Two, Tree!
Toys and Tales with Everyday Materials

Writing Singapore

The Construction of Childhood
in Post Colonial Singapore

Sandra J. Williams –
University of Brighton

The research I conducted into children's literature in Singapore took place during my two year contract at the National Institute of Education between 2001 and 2003. The outcome has been the publication by the National Book Development Council, Singapore, of the first annotated bibliography of children's books in English since independence in 1965.

In the first part of the paper, I offered background information which served to contextualize the development of a distinct Singaporean literature for children. The multi-cultural population of four million includes Chinese, Malays, Indians and Eurasians. English is the language that binds everyone together, as it is the language of instruction in school, and is the language used in government, commerce and industry. Children's literature from English speaking countries is readily available in Singapore bookshops and the excellent public library system.

I then went on to discuss the challenges of developing a distinct children's literature in Singapore. These are as follows:

1. Post-colonialism: finding a distinct voice in the colonial language and building confidence in local literature.
2. Being serious about children's literature: in a materials society, built on hard work, the Arts in general are not seen as significant and literature is not a high priority.
3. Multi-cultural Singapore: How/Who to depict? Who has the right? A quotation from writer Catherine Lim sums up the dilemma 'Who is the Singaporean in Singapore literature – what are the colours and textures of the Singapore canvas?'

Three strands of development in children's literature were then identified which were:

- Materials from the Ministry of Education
- Folk Tales from the Oral Tradition
- Commercial publications.

Folk tales from both Singapore and S.E. Asia are the most common. A large number of reading scheme books are published by the Ministry of Education, surprisingly few of which have a distinct Singaporean setting. There are some interesting commercial titles which do reflect the Singapore landscape and it is these texts which form the basis for the bibliography. These books were discussed in more detail, with examples of text and illustration.

In conclusion I pointed out that while the construction of a distinct national identity is a concern for government and there is much focus on this through the large celebrations on National Day, currently children's literature is not a major site for such a construction. There appears to be little concern that children are more likely to read 'the other' than themselves. I hope that the publication of the bibliography will serve to raise interest in what has been written and give more focus to local books, so that Singapore children can read more about their own lives, culture and landscape.

Jamila Gavin's *Surya* Trilogy

Sophie Mackay

Through its characters, narrative-structure and language, Gavin's *Surya* trilogy (*The Wheel of Surya*, *The Eye of the Horse* and *The Track of the Wind*) explores the complex colonial and post-colonial relationship between Britain and India, the traumatic experience of migration and struggle of assimilation, and the confusing situation of being split between two different countries.

In a very obvious way this trilogy is all about East meets West – tracking the journey of a brother and sister from their village in the Punjab to London and back again. This relationship between east and west is also apparent in the narrative style and structure of

the books themselves. References to intertexts and movement between different locations disrupt the narrative style and structure of the texts, thereby expressing the often disrupting and dislocating experience of migration.

The Eye of the Horse (the second in the trilogy) is set in 1948, amidst the turmoil in India which followed the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi. This turmoil is reflected in the fragmented narrative of this text. The action is divided between three locations:

1. London, at the O'Grady's house;
2. Delhi, where the political situation leading up to Gandhi's assassination is explained;
3. In and around the village in India, where the survivors of the war between Sikhs and Muslims are attempting to rebuild their lives. In the forest outside the village Marvinder and Jaspal's mother (Jhoti) is living as a hermit.

Events in the main narrative of *The Eye of the Horse* are loosely paralleled by the story of Rama and Sita from the *Ramayana* (a sacred Hindu text). This intertext is integrated into the main body of the text in two ways: in the form of individual extracts from the *Ramayana*, and through a telepathic dialogue between Marvinder in London and her mother in India. This telepathy occurs intermittently throughout the text and links the London sections with those in the Indian village. The constant movement and disruption in Gavin's narrative reflects the liminal or in-between experience of her migrant characters. Liminality, a continual process of movement and interchange between different states, is a term often used to describe the split nature of the migrant's experience.

The movement between different locations and the use of intertexts in the Surya trilogy, together with the multi-voiced nature of the narrative, generate dialogic interaction between the differing cultural values of England and India at the time of Indian independence. The structural form of the narrative thus reflects the connection that Marvinder and Jaspal have with both cultures – and indeed Jamila Gavin's own connections.

Other Plenary Sessions

Author and TV executive, Farrukh Dhondy, whose work for young adults includes *East End at Your Feet* (1976) and *Come to Mecca* (1978), gave a lively account of his writing career. His contention that the two most important multi-cultural books in English are Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* and Rudyard Kipling's *Kim* challenged his audience; he claimed that the picaresque nature of both of these classics enabled their authors to explore the question 'What is America [or India] about?' Dhondy's own recent *Run* (2002) takes a similar format, moving through modern Britain. He asserted that too much Indian literature today, for instance, was addressing itself to the West rather than confronting major issues. Where are the modern writers who, like Dostoyevsky in his world, attempt to explain why society is producing disaffected youths who want to blow up society itself. The novel needs to deal with the conflict in values that exists in the modern world.

The next plenary session involved a panel of three authors. Tony Bradman gave an account of his compilation of a recent anthology of stories about racism, *Skin Deep: Stories that Cut to the Bone* (Puffin, 2004). He put this together in order to tackle the subject head on, believing fiction to be a very effective way of helping readers to understand why racism happens and what it does to people. Bali Rai, best known for his first novel, *(un)arranged marriage* (Corgi, 2001), discussed the difficulty felt by some British people of Asian background in being sure about their own cultural identity. He admitted his own concern about racist attitudes, including those felt within the Asian community itself. Tanuja Desai Hidier spoke about her novel *Born Confused* (Scholastic, 2003), which has won a range of awards. Without being an autobiography, it does explore some of the key ideas that she developed from her years in New York City, where she came into contact with a thriving South Asian community, quite unlike the relatively small numbers in Wilbraham, Massachusetts, where she grew up. Two themes she emphasises in her book are the nature of family, whether that of birth or that of choice, and the power of music to make people come together.

Exoticism and Evangelism: Mrs Sherwood and others

Pat Pinsent

Mary Martha Sherwood (1775-1851) is probably best known for her *History of the Fairchild Family*, which powerfully propounds her evangelical religious views. Also popular during much of the nineteenth century was the slightly earlier *Little Henry and his Bearer* (1814), a result of a stay in India as an army wife. Because of the negligence of his worldly foster-mother, who leaves him in the charge of his Hindu bearer, Boosy, the little boy is brought up without knowledge of Christianity. A pious young lady from England is the agent of conversion for Henry, and at the end, he dies a holy death, having led his foster-mother to change her ways and brought Boosy to the verge of Christianity; the bearer becomes a Christian after Henry's death and dies himself two years later.

The book provides an interesting blend between pious didacticism, aimed at both English and Indian readers, and a response to the exotic elements of Indian life which both fascinated and horrified Sherwood. Her descriptions of the scenery and customs reveal perhaps the earliest instance

in British children's literature of the 'orientalism' which Edward Said analyses in his book of that title (1978). Sherwood undoubtedly portrays the East as inferior to the West, characterised by many of the worst aspects of humanity, symbolised particularly by the dirt and squalor she found around her. At the same time, through the gaze of Henry, she idealises what the country might become if it became Christian.

Later writers also display similar traits. Sherwood's evangelical successor, Charlotte Tucker (*A Lady of England, or A.L.O.E.*) was equally fervent in her desire for the conversion of the Indians, but more prepared to recognise that they did not have to take on European dress and manners at the same time as Christianity. Even as late as the middle of the twentieth century, Gerard Scriven, a Catholic missionary in Africa, saw nothing good in the religion or culture of the 'natives'. All these writers display a high degree of cultural imperialism, but it would be wrong to expect them totally to transcend the pre-conceptions of their own periods and societies.

Shaping a New China

Fables for Children by Ye Shengtao (1894-1988)

Marian Allsobrook

Ye Shengtao's contribution to the drive for a new children's literature in China during the inter-war years of the last century was far-reaching and significant. He was active during the New Cultural Movement after 1918, which is now receiving renewed attention by scholars.

He started teaching and writing for adults, then increasingly wrote for children; he also edited magazines for child readers. In 1935 there were apparently twelve magazines specifically published for children in Shanghai alone. Later, at the Ministry of Education, he became highly influential as a literary critic, debating the role of children's literature as a tool for social change.

He adapted the short story form to the specifically Marxist content which from 1927 dominated the children's story under Maoist rule. Recent scholars have recognised the significance of his work: Lijun Bi notes renewed critical interest in the New Cultural Movement while Mary Ann Farquhar has acknowledged his debt to Andersen and Wilde. Although she defines his stories as fairy tales, they keep better company with fables, explaining society in an accessible way to young readers. Acknowledging his literary debt to the West, he re-worked 'The Emperor's New Clothes', replacing the clear-sighted child with the masses, who thus confront and diminish their ruler.

During the New Culture Movement, educationists and critics sought to establish a canon of Chinese literature for children. The so-called fairy tale became a vehicle for active militarism, featuring heroic workers, whose role was to rouse the sleeping people of China. Influenced by Soviet authors such as Gorky, Chinese writers produced children's songs on subjects such as the power of the peasant class. Children's literature became politicised, depicting the anguish of the poor and their latent power. Farquhar argues that it is this new sensibility that distinguishes Ye Shengtao; he was writing at a time when a new urban literature was developing in the vernacular and the memorising of classical Confucian texts in schools was yielding to a more modern curriculum. The traditional examination system, which supported hierarchical social structures, was dispensed with, as intellectuals pressed for scientific and democratic elements in education.

Between 1927 and 1937, critical preoccupation shifted from the special nature of childhood and the child's consciousness to a collective endeavour to harness the potential of future citizens. During this decade Mao Zedong was gaining power. Much of the debate about a new children's literature had been concentrated in Shanghai and the major cities; indeed, the bulk of the audience was urban. By 1937, children's literature was mobilised as part of China's war effort targeting Shanghai (where the publishing industry was based) and rural areas. Writers consciously sought the rural masses as their audience. Farquhar argues that the war had a dramatic impact on Chinese children's literature.

The new sensibility noted by Farquhar is evident in Ye Shengtao's two collections of short stories, *The Scarecrow* (1923), reflecting rural despair and famine, and *The Statue of the Ancient Hero* (1931), arguing for peasant solidarity and warning against a leader's vanity. In these collections, he depicts characters who note the conditions of the labouring poor and their struggles for reform. The title story of the latter collection was published in the first issue of *The Juvenile Student*, with an editorial note on the richness of Ye Shengtao's satire. Like the inanimate scarecrow, the statue is given an inner life – here of vanity – until his fall, thus providing a sceptical comment about the notion of heroic status. In his preface, Ye Shengtao speaks of the 'Mussolini men',

whose power is only kept in check by vigilance. Myth and reality can blur; citizens are as likely to worship nonentities as genuine heroes. The shattered statue's fragments are used to create a symbolic new road stretching into the future.

Ye Shengtao's appropriation of Andersen's 'The Emperor's New Clothes' contains grotesquely ludic elements, heightening the absurdity of a brutal imperialism. When the emperor is eventually challenged, he appears ridiculous, like a bruised chicken caught out in the rain, the author comments. The crowd's ribald mockery is used for dialogue.

The critic Prusek sees Ye Shengtao's early writings for children as film-like sequences of shots from real life, distinctive for their atmosphere and situation. Certainly, light and dark are exploited to enhance meaning.

A later story, 'The Experiences of a Locomotive,' was published in 1936, in a new magazine, *The New Adolescents*, which Ye Shengtao edited with others. This story, just before the Japanese invasion of China, calls for military activism. The mood is very different from that of *The Scarecrow*, with its anguished main character. The locomotive itself demonstrates the virtues of united response, dedication and selflessness, and is, in effect, another protagonist given life by the author to struggle against oppressive hierarchical factions. The first person narrative is delivered by the zestful voice of the locomotive, made in England and shipped to China, and intent on serving the people. He carries student activists to a protest, sharing their sense of mission. They are directly compared with the brave soldiers who fought in Shanghai in 1932 against Japan. When they find that rails have been removed, they search for and re-lay the missing sections of track, such is the sense of national danger. Throughout the story, the wind of revolutionary change blows strongly. The students sing 'The Song of the Road Builders', as they overcome problems. As in *The Statue of the Ancient Hero*, the story ends with a (literal) route of opportunity stretching ahead.

Ye Shengtao worked for decades with others to develop a canon of Chinese children's literature, though this was not formally achieved until the post-Mao assessment, after 1976. He was identified as a pioneer in children's lit-

erature, heading the list of Outstanding Revolutionary Children's Stories for the period 1930-36, with his story *The Ancient Stone Hero*. He again heads the list for the period 1954-79 of prize-winning writers, this time for *The Scarecrow* as a work representative of his achievement. It was at this point, in 1981, that concepts in children's literature from the two most flourishing periods, the New Culture Movement (or May 4th movement) and the 1950s, were reinstated. Major works were anthologised and literature awards honoured Ye Shengtao and others. This was a recognition that future developments in Chinese children's literature would build upon the foundation of what had been achieved during the New Cultural Movement.

References

- Farquhar, M. (1999) *Children's Literature in China*, New York and London: M.E. Sharpe Armonk
- Lijun Bi (2003) 'Capitalist Bears and Social Modernisation: Chinese Children's Literature in the Post-Mao Period,' *Children's Literature in Education*, vol. 34, no. 1, pp. 57-73
- Scott, D.H. (1980) *Chinese Popular Literature and the Child*, Chicago: American Library Association
- Yang, J.P. (1998) 'A Change in the Family: The Image of the Family in Contemporary Chinese Children's Literature, 1949-1993', in *Children's Literature*, 26, pp. 86-104
- Ye Shengtao (1949) *The Scarecrow & The Statue of the Ancient Hero*, Shanghai: K'ai-ming Book Co.

The Representation of Arabs in Children's Literature

Ann Lazim

I have been interested in how Arabs are represented in children's literature since the 1970s when I met my Iraqi husband. Fiction featuring Arabs was difficult to find at that time, particularly contemporary stories. There were some historical novels and, as now, retellings and variants on the 'Arabian Nights'.

During the 1970s and 1980s librarians, teachers and parents became more aware of the racist stereotyping and/or absence of various cultural groups in British children's literature. Attention focused on the most visible ethnic minorities in the UK, mainly from Africa, the Caribbean and Asia (specifically India, Pakistan and Bangladesh). Arabs were a hidden community.

This is still largely so, although a few recent novels feature well-rounded and interesting Arab characters. *A Little Piece of Ground* (Macmillan), by Elizabeth Laird and Sonia Nimr, is set in occupied Palestine; daily life is seen through the eyes of 12-year-old Karim as he and his friends try to lead a normal life by claiming a piece of ground where they can play football in peace. The humiliations the Palestinians suffer are made explicit and this has led some critics to suggest that the book should have made clear that there are some Israelis who do not agree with the oppression of the Palestinians (see 'Children's author faces Jewish wrath' *The Guardian* 23/8/03, and the author's article in *IBBYLink* Spring

2004). However, this book was written to portray life on a day-to-day basis as it is for Karim and many others like him. Sadly, the experiences of such children rarely include contact with Israeli peacemakers.

Sisterland (Red Fox) by Linda Newbery has several themes. Reviewers have emphasised the discovery by the main character Hilly of her Jewish ancestry, and her grandmother's Alzheimer's disease. However, a significant strand in the novel is the developing relationship between Hilly and Rashid, a young Palestinian man, when Hilly decides to visit Israel to seek out relatives. The two young people have a very forthright conversation, which gives clear insight into the difficulties of Rashid's situation.

In addition to books which deal with the conflicts in the Middle East, there is a need for stories which give non-stereotyped pictures of everyday life. *Benny and Omar* (O'Brien Press) by Eoin Colfer, set in Tunisia, is a humorous story about friendship between an Irish boy and a Tunisian boy, although there is sadness in Omar's life. They find ways to communicate using slogans from advertising, TV and films.

In historical novels, the new interest in the Crusades is probably not coincidental. Catherine Jinks' *Pagan's Crusade* (Collins) was first published in 1992, close to the time of the Gulf War, and reissued in 2003. Events are related by a young squire, in a

humorous tone and short staccato sentences. References to the 'infidel' are much fewer than in G A Henty's *Winning His Spurs: A Tale of the Crusades* (1882) but still there.

A more thoughtful approach is evident in both *Blood Red Horse* (Puffin) by K.M. Grant and *Arthur: King of the Middle March* (Orion) by Kevin Crossley-Holland; the latter in particular questions the necessity for the crusades. The press release indicates that the author 'has been inevitably influenced by world events, as obvious comparisons have cropped up between the current political climate and that of Arthur's world.'

Another genre which repays deeper investigation is fantasy. A clear link with the 'Arabian Nights' is woven into many fantasies. More than this, though, names and cultural references which suggest an

Orientalist attitude often occur. This is quite overt in the much hyped *Children of the Lamp* (Scholastic) by P. B. Kerr (described by Nicholas Tucker in *The Independent* (29/11/04) as 'An arch, patronising, xenophobic yarn'). Some of the names used for Egyptian characters have racist overtones: Baksheesh, Huamai, Toeragh, and Creemy as a nickname for Karim.

There is a need for authors and illustrators of Arab origin to be published in English, but it is hard to find any, while those there are do not always remain long in print. Arab-American Naomi Shihab Nye's picture book *Sitti's Secrets* was published in the UK by Hamish Hamilton but did not make it to paperback before vanishing. *A Handful of Stars* (Gollancz), a novel by Rafik Schami, a Syrian writing in German, was published in English but is now out of print. More are much needed!

Walking a Tightrope

Representing 'Asian Britain' in a Collection of Short Stories for Teenagers

Rehana Ahmed

Walking a Tightrope: New Writing from Asian Britain is my edited anthology of new short stories for teenage readers by South Asian writers based in Britain (Young Picador, May 2004). Bali Rai contributed a story 'Beaten'; the other contributors are Rukhsana Ahmad, Debjani Chatterjee, Farrukh Dhondy, Jamila Gavin, Romesh Gunsekera, Aamer Hussein, Preethi Nair, Shyama Perera and Adam Zameenzad.

Focusing on my anthology, and 'Beaten' in particular, Bali and I debated the politics of representing 'Asian Britain' for a teenage readership. Our discussion centred on the following questions:

- To what extent should writers or editors prioritise a challenge to, or refusal of, representations of 'Asian Britain' that could be interpreted as negative and stereotyping and consequently manipulated into a racist, 'them-and-us' discourse?
- Could, and indeed should, a refusal of such representations lead to a degree of self-censorship and a reluctance to speak out about – for example – structures of oppression that might be operating within sectors of the Asian community?

- Or should we, rather, speak freely, undeterred by considerations of how our stories might be distorted and co-opted into media or state discourses and made to figure as 'proof' of the stereotypes that circulate about the Asian community?

These questions arose when I was editing Bali's story and were a preoccupation for me throughout the process of putting together *Walking a Tightrope*. While keen to avoid the role of prescriptive editor, and to enable a diversity of representations which might destabilise a construction of 'Asian Britain' as a homogeneous collective, I also felt it necessary that the anthology should counter the hegemonic 'script' that is written for Asians in Britain by the media and at the level of the state. In the case of 'Beaten', situated in a Sikh Punjabi community in the Midlands, these aims came into conflict where I felt aspects of the story seemed tacitly to endorse stereotypes of 'British Asian' identities, such as the abusive patriarch or the passive female victim of abuse.

While Bali felt it imperative to expose problems that he believed to be present

yet silenced within this community, I felt it important that an awareness of how representations of a minority culture might be interpreted and consumed by a majority readership should inflect creative practice. I argued that the minority artist's 'burden of representation' is imposed not (or not only) by policing tendencies within their own community but first and foremost by negative hegemonic discourses that reduce Asian (particularly Muslim Asian) culture to a series of damaging clichés which must be challenged.

Also important, however, is a challenge to the hegemony of the acceptable, consumable face of 'Asian Britain,' mapped out by the media through the exclusion of those elements of difference that cannot be comfortably incorporated into normative British culture and institutions. Focusing on the front cover of the book and my introduction, I discussed how my aim that the anthology should diverge from legitimised representations of 'Asian chic' was in tension with an awareness that its effective dissemination would to an extent depend on such representations.

Children's Literature in Iran

Taraneh Matloob

A greater understanding of literature and its role in the lives of children can be acquired by studying both the history of childhood¹ and the history of children's literature². Identifying images of childhood as revealed in culture and society over time offers clear evidence of children's status in Iranian society, illustrating such aspects as:

- when Iranian society started considering children as different from adults;
- how thinkers have defined the child and the special needs of children;
- when children's literature began; and
- the historical period in which the first books were produced.

From the study of historical resources, it appears that the concept of childhood goes as far back as three thousand years ago. The analysis of oral literature, myths, old Zoroastrian documents, illustrations, and manuscripts reflects the life of an Iranian child in different periods. Some objects dating to ancient times address different aspects of childhood in Iran; there are many images of children's lives depicted on archaeological artifacts. These include the image of a mother giving a bird to her child as a toy, engraved on an Achaemenid seal and a terracotta bust of a mother holding a child in her arms.

Research in post-Islamic works also makes it clear that there are texts and illustrations that are directly or indirectly addressed to children. An illustrated ver-

sion of GhaaboosNaameh showing pupils studying in old fashioned primary schools (MaktabKhanehs) and images of children in old miniatures are examples of this.

In documents from the Islamic era, Avicenna's views about raising children are notable. In an invaluable thousand-year-old document about lullabies, Avicenna says that for the proper nurturing of healthy newborns, two things besides feeding are essential; one is gently rocking the baby and the other is regularly singing a soft lullaby to put the child to sleep. The more children are rocked and hear music the more they will develop physically and mentally.

The History of Children's Literature in Iran (HCLI) is a research project of the Institute for Research on the History of Children's Literature in Iran (IRHCLI). Started in 1997, the project will be spread over 10 volumes. Volumes 1 to 6 are already published and work continues on the others. The HCLI project includes such issues as: the appearance of culture and literature in Iran; the formation of oral literature and its components, followed by the appearance of children's literature in ancient times; after Islam, in the early part of the 20th century, and its development up to the Islamic Revolution in 1979.

Research into pre-Islamic and Islamic works makes it clear that there are very few texts addressed directly to children. However, many passages can be found in the general literary works that are written for children and are clearly addressed

to the young reader. This has been discussed extensively in volumes 1 and 2 of the HCLI. The turning point occurs in the late 19th century and early 20th century, when additional factors enter the scene, such as new educational concepts, continuity of oral literature and folklore, development of simpler Persian prose, the advent of translations from the West, the start of the printing industry in Iran, establishment of new schools, the study of child psychology, and the rise of pioneering personalities as early publishers of books for children.

The broader socio-economic and cultural situations will also be reviewed in

the light of historical developments. Sample text illustrations from the different periods will complete the discussions and provide a unique anthology. As an extensive research project, the HCLI will also review the children's literature of Iran's minorities such as the Azaris, the Kurds, Zoroastrians, Christians and Jews.

www.chlhistory.org

Footnotes

- 1 www.scils.rutgers.edu/~kvander/HistoryofChildLit/childhood.html
- 2 www.scils.rutgers.edu/~kvander/HistoryofChildLit/readhis.html

Recollections of Diana Wynne Jones

Nicholas Tucker

I first encountered Diana when I was four and she was two years older. We were both members of families that had been invited in 1941 to live in Lanehead, a vast house on the borders of Lake Coniston that had formerly been occupied by Ruskin's secretary W.G. Collingwood. Later on, it was taken over by the Altounyan family, whose children were the inspiration for Arthur Ransome's famous story *Swallows and Amazons*. Ransome's house was just down the lake, and one evening he visited Lanehead ostensibly to meet the children. It was not a great success; I just remember clouds of pipe smoke and a general air of grumpy taciturnity.

Diana and I both came from slightly eccentric, leftwards leaning families, who were thought by the Quaker owner of the house as likely to fit in to what was something of a social experiment. Children ate separately from parents, and decisions were arrived at communally. But it was not a happy experience, with husbands away during the week and wives, missing home, sometimes quarreling during the day. Some of the children there were also disturbed, and this too led to complications. Diana herself spent a few happy hours embellishing with her own crayons some drawings she found upstairs that turned out to be by Ruskin himself. Other children, allowed to play unsupervised by the lakeside, occasionally pushed each other in or, in my case, out into the lake itself on a raft. An Arthur Ransome story it was not. The lake looked dark and

dreary during the winter we spent there, and our own resourcefulness for co-operative and creative self-entertainment was not a patch on the brave and uncomplaining young characters thronging his novels.

I wonder now how important this whole experience was to Diana by way of pushing her in the direction of becoming a novelist herself. Here, after all, were a group of children living in storyland scenery but behaving in very different ways. Around them was a collection of adults, some of them distinctly odd. One couple, for example, liked to talk in German because they thought this language better suited to spiritual values – not an obviously popular belief at the height of the war. But when I read Diana's stories now, with their mixture of reality and fantasy, hopes and fears, parental control and that total freedom associated in her case with magic, I wonder if she sometimes remembers that very strange time in our young lives. When ordinary domestic life is suddenly turned on its head in so many different and unexpected ways, a child has to respond with a mixture of acceptance and imagination to try to make sense of what is happening. In her own books, children are often faced by equal challenges. The way they survive and indeed thrive always reminds me of Diana herself as a child, a dark, elfin presence fascinated both by what is going on around her and by her own inner world of fantasy and humour laced by her sharp intelligence.

Denying the Exoticism of the Other

Construction of the immersive fantasy in Diana Wynne Jones' *Dalemark* Quartet

Farah Mendlesohn

Suzanne Rahn wrote of historical novels for children that they had the power to reveal 'whole new worlds' and to throw the reader's own world into a 'new perspective'. This is eminently true of the novels of Diana Wynne Jones; she rejects the frequently encountered fantasy idea that the reader is an alien in the story, visiting a strange world and constructs instead an irony of mimesis in which both protagonist and reader are treated as if they are at home. This is a form of fantasy which I have taken to calling immersive.¹

The immersive fantasy is the fantasy told as if from within that world: the protagonist is intimately familiar with that world and their expressions of surprise or naïveté have to be consistent with what they can be expected to know. One of the best examples is from *Howl's Moving Castle*; when Sophie meets Calcifer for the first time the description happens in her own head, in the context of her own thoughts and imaginings. It is not a description for us, but an attempt to make sense in her own mind of the space around her. She stares into the fire, thinking that she is imagining a fire demon, who then appears. As we will later learn that Sophie can talk life into things, there is just a chance that her speculation forced Calcifer into the open. But the real issue is that Sophie is not an outsider in this fantasyland. Indigenous to it, she is in dialogue with the world around her and it is in this dialogue with the fantastic that Jones constructs the immersion. Sophie may be surprised to meet Calcifer, but she is not surprised to meet *something like him*. Jones has written the kind of meeting that takes place in a cocktail party. Too often, this kind of meeting in fantasyland would include a statement which, if transferred into the real world would be the equivalent of remarking to one of one's own species: 'My, you're a *human*.'

The immersion that Jones constructs is often many layered. Both *Howl's Moving Castle* and its sequel, *Castle in the Air* move our perspective away from

that of the tourist in the quest fantasy, marvelling at the exotic, and position us instead inside the head of a person for whom all that we regard as exotic is normal.

I want to go on consider the *Dalemark* sequence, focusing on how in these books Jones succeeds in (1) creating a sense of the present, (2) making other pasts, and (3) destabilising both past and present.

The convention in otherworld fantasies, whether fully immersive or the shallow stagesets of the portal quest fantasy, is that they be set in a world that is somehow similar to one of our pasts. Jones follows this convention in all of the books except *The Crown of Dalemark*, some of which is set in a place and time that looks a lot like our present. But Jones creates her sense of place and time in two different ways. One of these is that most of her characters are absolutely of that place, and they describe it in limited ways that allow us only to see what they see; things unknown to them are described in metaphors of what they find familiar. Furthermore, in *The Crown of Dalemark*, Dalemark is moving through different stages – some places are still agrarian, some in process of industrialising, and some in an artisan culture. Jones rejects the orientalist historical stasis so common to fantasy.

Jones also has something to say about how thoroughly or otherwise anyone can be absorbed into a culture not their own. One of the conventions in fantasy is that the protagonist can take on the clothing of another culture and become part of that culture, and this is an assertion, in part, that *time* is merely another part of the shopping mall of life. Jones jolts us out of that in several ways. For instance, when Mitt in *Drowned Ammet* dresses as a palace boy, he is suddenly confronted by the traces of poverty on his own body. This is a portrayal of a political world, not a fantasy land in which poverty happens to caricatures whose role is to provoke pity in the hearts of the truly noble or

to demonstrate the true worthiness of the child of destiny.

The result of all this is that the present becomes somewhere rather complex. One might argue that each of the characters in the *Dalemark* sequence lives in a different present, constructed through their sex, their gender and their class. One of the most disorienting aspects of the sequence but also one of its strengths, is that Jones has built the world's history and prehistory and then distilled it out, leaving us with only the trace elements that its inhabitants might know. The past really is a foreign country and we catch it through glimpses here and there. In *Cart and Cwiddler*, the first of the novels, Clennan the singer tells his children the legends of Osfameron and the Adon, but because they've heard them before, they are not filtered through to us. *The Spellcoats* is perhaps the most radical book of all in these terms. First, we slowly realise that we are in the pre-history of the Dalemark we met in *Cart and Cwiddler*, but then we discover that perhaps this is the root of some of the legends, that the people we are meeting will go on to be gods. Part way through we discover that the first coat is an unreliable narrative, and that it forms the history on which the second coat comments – communicated in part through a shift in tenses. Eventually we learn that this 'historical' place has both a pre-history and a future. What we have been reading is not 'the past' but 'history' mediated both by the coats themselves and the process and context of translation. This is a remarkably powerful point to make in a novel intended for young teens.

Last in the sequence we have *The Crown of Dalemark*, which does something very simple but startlingly original. It starts and selects its protagonist from Mitt and Moril's future. Suddenly we have to ask which element of this tale is in 'the present.' Is this a science fiction story set in the present with a vision of the future appended? Or is it a time-travel historical in which the protagonist's world is the present?

Jones' novella, 'The True State of Affairs' was written long before the

Dalemark books, but it is nevertheless a Dalemark story. A young woman, Emily, has stumbled from what might or might not be our world into a Dalemark that is in the middle of a war. Emily finds herself on the banks of an unknown river where she is persuaded to swap clothes with another woman, who moves off. Emily is captured and imprisoned, at first because she is thought to be the woman with whom she exchanged clothes, later because no-one knows what to do with her. The story is then about Emily's imprisonment, the relationships she builds with her jailors, the picture of the world and its civil war that she constructs, and her growing friendship with the prisoner in the other tower. What is interesting here is how Emily constructs her world. Not for her the unravelling of the world, carefully explained by a guide as she travels through it. Instead she is forced to piece the world together through glimpses restricted by both physical and linguistic barriers.

Jones uses Emily's descriptions to emphasise the constricted (and constructed) view of the stranger, relying on glimpses through prison bars to build the pattern of the world. Emily's narrative is itself a translation, rendering words and phrases by other characters into her own English, while she is seduced by her confidence in how she translates. Her romance with another prisoner, Asgrim, does not precisely prove false, but it is based on their different understandings of the word 'romance'. At the end, Emily has to acknowledge that Asgrim's concept of their relationship is far more abstract than hers.

By the end of this story, as elsewhere in her writing, Jones has demonstrated that the past is not a picture window but a truly foreign country. She writes it through the continual juxtaposition of the familiar and the foreign, forcing the reader to translate and then manipulating our misperception in order to estrange us.

Footnotes

- 1 "Towards a Taxonomy of Fantasy", *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts*, 13.2 (2002), pp.173-87.

An Introduction to Japan's Studio Ghibli

Lisa Sainsbury

This workshop came about when the NCRCL team discovered that Studio Ghibli, the Japanese animation company behind *My Neighbour Totoro* (1988) and *Spirited Away* (2001), was producing a version of Diana Wynne Jones' *Howl's Moving Castle* (1986), thus offering a fusion of the conference theme and the celebration of Diana's 70th birthday. I originally hoped that this version would be widely available, but its UK release date is yet to be confirmed. My emphasis therefore was mostly on earlier Ghibli films.

Hayao Miyazaki, the co-founder of Studio Ghibli, has either worked on or directed some of the most influential animated films in Japan, and his work displays the influences of European culture. I speculated on some of the reasons why he chose *Howl's Moving Castle* as his next project, and came out of retirement for it. I looked at evidence of European influence in some of his early *anime* (the Japanese term for 'animated film'). While an undergraduate in the 1960s, Miyazaki joined the children's literature research society and explored a wide range of European children's books. Helen McCarthy (2002:30) reveals:

The young Miyazaki was exposed to a wide range of storytellers who used fantasy and legend in different ways. British writers like Rosemary Sutcliff, Phillipa Pearce, and Eleanor Farjeon, and Europeans such as Antoine de Saint-Exupery, played their part in forming his views of storytelling and character development.

He was one of the first Japanese animators to travel to Europe for artistic inspiration, and his choices of locations suggest an interest in a cultural fusion of East and West. The early *anime* he was involved with reveal numerous references to European Literature: *Gulliver's Space Travels* (1964); *The Little Norse Prince* (1968); *Puss in Boots* (1969); *Moomins* (1970); *Animal Treasure Island* (1971); *Pippi Longstocking* (1971, a project eventually abandoned); *Alpine Girl Heidi* (1974); *Anne of Green Gables* (1979); *Great Detective Holmes* (1984).

Some of the key themes at work in Miyazaki's anime are:

- The detailed **landscapes** in Miyazaki's anime are often breathtaking; the slowing down to take in scenery really distin-

guishes Japanese Anime from Western Animation.

- Related to the interest in landscape is a political **concern for the environment**, sometimes a little heavy-handed.
- Some critics have suggested that Miyazaki is anti-technology, but I would suggest that it is more a question of the use to which **technology** is put. In *Castle in the Sky* (1986), for example, he approves technology for benevolent purposes is fine, but shows how it can be destructive if used for power.
- **Realism and Fantasy**: A positive theme in Miyazaki's films is the potential for the spiritual or magical in everyday life, frequently attributed to childhood and early adolescence or to artists with spiritual/magical powers. Miyazaki's worlds are also often given depth in time through the operation of legend.
- **Flight** is often seen as a special gift of Miyazaki's central characters.
- **Childhood** is explored from a range of perspectives, particularly rites of passage to adulthood, which are often figured in terms of fantasy..
- The elderly are usually endowed with **wisdom** and positive relationships exist between the young and old in his films. In *Castle in the Sky*, Ma Dola, the Pirate Mother, is given the role of wise observer, despite her moral ambiguity.
- The high number of strong female leads, and an interest in exploring girlhood and the passage into maturity for women, means that the nature of **femininity** is explored on several levels.
- The promise of **love and/or marriage** provides closure in many of Miyazaki's films, sometimes undermining the feminist drive operating in his work.
- The proximity between life and **death** is explored in ways appropriate to the audience.
- **Conflict**, explored in terms of human relationships, lies at the heart of many of Miyazaki's films. Several of his heroines look for alternatives to violence and war.
- Miyazaki's films are very playful as he refers, self-reflexively, to his own work and to a wide range of cultural sources.

This workshop involved the screening of scenes from a selection of Miyazaki's films, looking particularly at *Nausicaä Valley of the Wind* (1984); *Laputa: Castle*

in the Sky (1986); *Grave of the Fireflies* (1988 – directed by Miyazaki’s colleague, Isao Takahata); and *My Neighbour Totoro* (1988). We closed with a speculative consideration of the forthcoming *Howl’s Moving Castle*. Jones’ original book provides the opportunity for Miyazaki to develop many of the themes that interest him. For example, part of the story is set in Wales, a landscape that Miyazaki represented in his depiction of the mining community in *Castle in the Sky*. It also has the potential to explore relationships between the young and old in Sophie Hatter’s transformation from young girl to old woman, and the fact that it deals with a transitional period in a young girl’s life was surely attractive to Miyazaki. Finally, I cited extracts from an interview with Diana Wynne Jones (Nausicaa web-

site) which revealed her admiration for Miyazaki’s work, particularly his use of beautiful backgrounds and landscapes.

Bibliography

- McCarthy, Helen (2002) *Hayao Miyazaki: Master of Japanese Animation*, Stone Bridge Press: Berkeley, CA (first published in 1999)
- Nausicaa Website: translation of interview with Diana Wynne Jones from the *Yomiuri* Newspaper: <http://www.nausicaa.net/miyazaki/howl/impressions.html> (accessed 7.11.04)
- Schodt, Frederik L. (1996) *Dreamland Japan: Writings on Modern Manga*, Stone Bridge Press: Berkeley, CA
- Studio Ghibli, ed. (2002) *The Art of Miyazaki’s Spirited Away*, tr. Yuji Oniki, Viz: San Francisco, CA

The People’s Diana Wynne Jones: A Nation Decides

The concluding session of the conference was devoted to celebrating the 70th Birthday of Diana Wynne Jones. This is a shortened version of a talk modelled on a radio ‘phone-in’

Charlie Butler

Well, the phone lines have closed, the votes are in, and now all we have to do is find out the results of the first nationwide poll to discover the People’s Diana Wynne Jones. Which of her many qualities have YOU picked out as your particular favourite? I will, as is customary, be announcing the results in reverse order. If you’ve read Diana’s books you’ll probably have your own ideas about what should be on this list. If you haven’t read her books – should there be any such benighted souls in this audience – then I trust you will rectify that situation forthwith.

10 Range. Diana has produced some 40 books in thirty years or so, and the amazing thing is that they’ve all been different. They include fantasy, science fiction, non-fiction, satire and farce, written for an audience ranging from the very young to adults. In some cases she has even invented or reinvented whole genres. E. Nesbit wrote urban fantasy but never one like *Archer’s Goon*. C.S Lewis wrote about alternative worlds, but not like the Chrestomanci books. And even Tolkien

would never have come up with the complex interlocking plot of *Hexwood*.

9 Re-readability. The first novel by Diana I read was *Charmed Life*. With its mysterious Edwardian-but-not-quite milieu it hooked me immediately, and as soon as I could I sought out the other books in the Chrestomanci series. But I also loved rereading them, each time with new pleasures, and new insights – not only because Diana Wynne Jones is so abundant she really does reward re-reading in a way not many authors do, but because to read (say) *Charmed Life* after its ‘prequel’, *The Lives of Christopher Chant* is to find one’s sense of all the characters subtly but profoundly augmented.

8 Magic. Diana Wynne Jones knows a rather frightening amount about the technicalities of magic, and has an instinct for how it works: totem magic, persuasion magic, transformation magic, the lot. She always knows how much to say, how explicit to be. Some of her spells are grand, formal affairs, others are almost casual, and sometimes she keeps

you guessing as to whether any magic has actually taken place at all.

7 Segues. Fantasy writers are always having to deal with the question of how to move from the ordinary to the fantastic and back. Diana has given us some striking ways of moving between worlds, but she is also brilliant at depicting the fantastic in this world, from *Fire and Hemlock's* artful reticence about where magic ends and ordinary reality begins to the multiply-split and pleated realities of *Hexwood*. My particular favourite segue is the transformation of the goddess Monigan into a bandaged foot in *The Time of the Ghost*, where in the space of a paragraph Diana straddles seven years and two modes of being, and still finds time to scare us silly.

6 Humour. I love the farcical situations that still somehow manage to make sense: the conga of witches and alien magicians in *A Sudden Wild Magic*; the giant sentient toffee bars that drape themselves over the radiators in *The Ogre Downstairs*, and the satire of *The Tough Guide to Fantasyland*. But Diana's humour is never just for laughs – she's always out to show us new ways of seeing the world, or snap us out of old ones.

5 Place and worlds. Diana has invented not only new worlds but new multiverses: the worlds of Chrestomanci; the ayewards and naywards universes of *Deep Secret* and *The Merlin Conspiracy*; the universes of *The Homeward Bounders* and of *A Sudden Wild Magic*. Each has its own ecology, its own politics and fashion, its own rules of physics, its own magic. Some of them are linked to our own world through having split off from it at earlier points of history; others are connected in different ways, or (in the case of the Dalemark books) not at all. Nor are we necessarily talking on an intergalactic or multiversal scale, here: some of Diana's worlds are no bigger than a village or small town. This could be forbiddingly complicated, but Diana never bores us with swathes of expository history: the coherence of the parts of the world we see convinces us of the rest, because we trust her to have thought through even those things she doesn't actually tell us.

4 Three Dimensional Characters. She must have created several hundred characters – and there really isn't a repeat. She gives the impression that whatever she tells us about a person is only a small

proportion of what she *could* tell. Diana is always helpful in providing her readers with waymarks, which help us navigate our route through her books. What reader of *Fire and Hemlock* will forget that Polly's granny's house smells of biscuits, for example, or how this smell comes to symbolize the homely, reliable, sweet but fibre-enriched nature of granny herself? How potent a symbol is Chrestomanci's flamboyant dressing gown, denoting sophistication, wildness and yet a certain physical indolence? How irritated we all are with helpful people who, like Joris in *The Homeward Bounders*, are always ready to reach into their jerkins to find some desired item with a 'Why, as to *that!*' But none of these people is a caricature or simply a collection of catch-phrases. It's a tough trick to pull off.

3 Empowerment. Diana has an affection for put-upon officials, for adults swept up (against their will perhaps) in the tide of daily affairs and responsibility. Their need for respect, or at least to feel that they are not being positively laughed at, is one she treats with sympathy: one thinks of the anguished Sempitern Walker in *A Tale of Time City*, the rather uptight Rupert Venables from *Deep Secret*, the harrassed Corkoran in *Year of the Griffin*. But if it's a question of sides, there's never any doubt which one Diana is on: she's on the side of the powerless, the ones who have decisions taken for them and imposed upon them by others. And this, of course, often means in effect that she is on the side of children.

2 Influence. Diana Wynne Jones is held in awe by many children's writers I know, especially those who work in fantasy. As Neil Gaiman has pointed out, nothing is more difficult than to make what she does look easy, as her fellow writers know from experience; while for Garth Nix she is 'a great mistress of magic.'

... But what the People most admire about Diana Wynne Jones is...

1 DWJ herself. It's really good to have the real Diana Wynne Jones here today, despite her travel jinx and the fact that she doesn't enjoy perfect health. She's not only a wonderful writer, she's also one of the most generous and thoughtful and wisest of people. And, best of all, she's giving me a lift back to Bristol tonight. So – I give you the nation's choice: Diana Wynne Jones!

Drawing for the Artistically Undiscovered

Quentin Blake & John Cassidy, Klutz, 1999. ISBN 1-57054-320-8

In his seminal manifesto, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* (*Über das Geistige in der Kunst*, 1912), Wassily Kandinsky insisted that “‘Good drawing’ is drawing that cannot be altered without destruction of [its] inner value, quite irrespective of its correctness as anatomy, botany or any other science. This is not a question of a violation of natural form, but of the need of the artist for such a form.’

Nearly a century later, I have come across *Drawing for the Artistically Undiscovered*, Blake and Cassidy’s significantly titled, unpretentious and deceptively simple little book and find it to be in many ways a profound restatement of the axioms of the founders of modern art, among whom Kandinsky was such a prominent protagonist. For all the seriousness of its central message, the whole approach of this inspirational book is light-hearted and even irreverent. Apart from the fact that all the drawings are quintessentially Blake’s, it is not clear how the collaboration of the two authors was organised. But to know this hardly matters, such is the harmony of drawing and text.

The authors state their aspiration ‘to give [readers] the ability to sneak into the heart of [a] subject by going into it direct,’ claim that they don’t aim to impart ‘the skills to imitate the accurate surface of something,’ and describe a successful drawing as ‘one which captures something interesting or essential about the subject.’ In these statements, they are proposing in the simplest terms sophisticated ideas about draughtsmanship that have engaged (whether fully consciously or not) all serious makers of representational (as distinct from imitative) art throughout the ages. John Constable made the point succinctly when he maintained that ‘art pleases by *reminding* rather than by *deceiving*’ (my italics) and Oscar Wilde did so even more pithily with ‘Art begins where Nature leaves off.’ The authors put it this way: ‘One can spend weeks on a marvellous painting of a rabbit, accurate to the tiniest detail, and still miss its essential rabbit-ness.’ And anyone who knows Blake’s apparently casual style will realise that the corollary, an encouragement to ‘...dash off a funny little sketch in a few lines – and pin that bunny’s soul to the paper,’ needs the accompaniment of one of his beautifully urgent drawings.

Blake teaches by example, thus debunking the myth that children should simply be left to ‘use their imaginations’: in fact, he uses his drawings to feed the imagination. He presents, for example, drawings of persons of different shapes and sizes sheltering from the rain and spread along the lower third of a double spread; arms are raised, hands holding invisible umbrellas, and there is a blank expanse of page above. The invitation to the reader is to add umbrellas of shapes and sizes to suit the characters of the shelterers and to supply rain and clouds. There is a terse but perfectly adequate piece of advice to the effect that ‘rain clouds are darker than rain.’

Incorporated is technical guidance, too: there is a plastic pouch attached to the book’s spiral binding and it contains a drawing pen and a black and a red water soluble pencil. This simple range of implements offers the possibility of a rich variety of qualities of line and of soft tonal passages, the latter achieved by scribbling with the pencils and smearing and washing ‘through a world of pinks and greys with nothing but a wet finger.’ Buckets, candles, spectacles, birds, dogs, horses (with a helpful hint: ‘the back legs on a horse are a bit odd. The front legs are straight enough’); humans and their postures and gestures are all explored in similar absorbing ways. Also presented are the principles of perspective, light and shade, anatomy (‘our way’ say the authors, ‘the anatomy we show here is not right - but it’s not wrong either’), the illusion of solid form and observational as well as memory drawing.

It is generally true that from a very early age children enjoy drawing. They may begin by making rhythmic marks but eventually produce representational images of people, animals, houses - quite unselfconsciously and often of startling expressive power. Small wonder that Picasso has claimed that whilst he could draw ‘like an angel’ by the time he was twelve he was preoccupied in his maturity by trying to recapture the power and directness of juvenile drawing. It is observable that by about the age of nine children somehow absorb the idea that art should mimic the real world and

they become dissatisfied or at least diffident about their ability to draw. Sheila Paine has written illuminatingly (in *Artists Emerging*, Ashgate, 2000) about the gifted few who seem able effortlessly to modulate from immature to sophisticated draughtsmanship without losing that precious capacity for penetrating to the heart of a subject. Tellingly, for our present purpose, her book is subtitled 'Sustaining Expression through Drawing'; and it is in this respect that the highly entertaining yet deeply serious *Drawing for the Artistically Undiscovered* makes such a potentially important contribution to art education. It aims to nurture the delight taken by very young children in image-making and invites the prolongation of this delight in those who, developing a sense of inadequacy, might become dazzled by unattainable techniques which may in fact have very little to do with artistic expression.

This beautiful, wise book is so dependent on Blake's marvellous draughtmanship that it is practically impossible to describe it without illustration. But any child, teacher, interested adult and even art student would find in it much to learn and enjoy.

Anthony Dyson

Tales told in Tents: Stories from Central Asia

Sally Pomme Clayton & Sophie Herxheimer, London: Frances Lincoln, 2004.

The author and the illustrator of this vivid collection of tales from a relatively unfamiliar part of the world share a conviction about the transforming power of stories. Sally Pomme Clayton, internationally renowned as a storyteller, presents here the results of her travels through a number of central Asian countries, including Afghanistan, while Sophie Herxheimer interprets these with portrayal of a rich blend of scenery, costumes, decor and animals of the region, and helpfully provides a colourful map.

The stories are varied in theme. Some give fictional explanations for places and behaviour: 'The Girl who Cried a Lake' from Kyrgyzstan, about a geographical feature, and 'The Secret of Felt' from Turkmenistan. 'The Bag of Trickness' from Kazakhstan is an instance of the worldwide genre of the trickster tale. The importance of trees, sheep and wool, and particularly horses – a Kyrgyz saying is 'Horses are a hero's wings' – is evident throughout. There is also a reverential attitude to nature which recalls that of the Native Americans: 'The sky is your father, the earth is your mother' is a central Asian saying. Riddles, poems and a glossary combine with the stories to provide an illuminating experience of an area that can all too easily be forgotten (when it is not featured in all too often negative news items!).

Pat Pinsent

Books and Boundaries: Writers and their Audiences

Edited by Pat Pinsent (Pied Piper Publishing, Lichfield, 2004; ISBN 0 9546383 3 3)

This handsomely packaged volume is devoted to the boundaries of children's literature: the historical phenomenon of adults reading children's texts, dual address, and the crossing of cultural and political boundaries. By providing accounts of panel discussion and plenaries as well as reproducing workshop papers, the book takes us steadily through the whirlwind of a packed and highly varied day. From Ann Thwaite and Penelope Lively's opening discussion of the days when children's literature was not so rigidly segregated (witness Prime Minister Gladstone's enthusiasm for *Little Lord Fauntleroy*), to Neil Gaiman's lively take on the 'crossover' factor in his current work, the contrasts and highlights of the conference feature in these pages.

The presence of children's authors is always a draw at NCRCL/IBBY conferences, and 2003 was a bumper year in this respect. Summaries record the conversations between Theresa Breslin and Linda Newbery and their desire to communicate on historically

significant and controversial subjects with audiences of all ages. Elizabeth Laird's subject, the difficult decision to write about Ramallah during the intifada, adds a welcome international dimension to these proceedings, as does Gaby Thomson's painstakingly researched paper on dual address in the socialist society of the former East German state. Indeed, the whole of the third section of the book moves across Europe to review the reception of 'kiddult' fiction (Spain), or the potential audience for the work of Daniel Pennac (France) and Jostein Gaarder (Norway). In the first section on picture books, too, there's a crossing of borders, as Penni Cotton draws attention to the adult challenges of the European picture book, and Mieke Desmet introduces the postmodern qualities of Taiwanese artist Jimmy Liao.

As for searching questions on audience and address in particular texts or genres, these can be found in section two. Contributors interrogate the work of Melvin Burgess and William Mayne according to the conference theme, or take a closer look at historical changes to the audience of the epic, historical and popular fiction and autobiographical narratives.

The last words are left to those involved in the publishing and dissemination of children's books: critics, publishers, booksellers and the inimitable and familiar voice of broadcaster James Naughtie from the BBC's 'Big Read'. Julia Eccleshare's reminder of the dangers of the 'crossover' label, and her advice that children's writers should maintain their unique talent for writing from the child's perspective, is timely. Like so much in this book, it should cause readers to ponder the changing position and definition of children's literature in the UK and across the world. All our thanks are due to Pat Pinsent for her efforts in putting this volume together.

Gillian Lathey

Long-Long's New Year

Catherine Gower & He Zhihong, London: Frances Lincoln, 2005

Both the text and the art-work of this picture book are ideally designed to introduce children to the unfamiliar world of rural China by letting them share the problems of a boy and his grandfather trying to raise enough money to celebrate the festival. A lovely book!

MARSH AWARD

This prestigious prize, awarded every two years, for the best translation of a children's book, was given on Thursday January 20th 2005 to Sarah Adams for her translation of Daniel Pennac's *The Eye of the Wolf* (Walker Books 2002; first published in French in 1982). In his speech announcing the winner, Aidan Chambers, who for some years was himself involved in publishing translated foreign children's books, gave many examples of the contribution of texts from overseas to our culture, starting with the Bible and Aesop. Recognising the nature of his audience, he appealed to publishers to produce more translations, to writers to review and feature books from other countries, and to translators to speak about their work to teachers and those in training. Sarah Adams, in her acceptance speech, remarked on the twenty years which have elapsed between the publication of the winning book in French and in English, describing it as 'a universal fable.' She told how she had striven to recapture the 'spokenness' of Pennac's language – an objective which those who have read the book will surely agree that she has attained.

New IBBY Director

IBBY has a new IBBY Director of Communications and Project Development. María Candelaria Posada began work on 1 January 2005. She has just moved to Europe from Colombia and will be based at the IBBY Secretariat in Basel for three months, working alongside Liz Page, the Administrative Director. She then plans to live in France, within commuting distance of Basel. The new Director's main focus will be: IBBY's public relations with governments, agencies, the international publishing industry and corporate donors; communication with members, press and friendly associations; project development in coordination with the EC and the National Sections; and fundraising.

Between 1990 and 2003 María Candelaria Posada was Editorial Director of the publishing house Norma in Bogotá, and before that she worked for various other publishing houses in Colombia. After studies in Bogotá and Washington D.C. she held the position of Lecturer in Latin American Literature at the National and Los Andes Universities in Bogotá. More recently, she served on the 2004 Hans Christian Andersen Jury.

Sad News

Max Velthuijs, 2004 winner of the Hans Christian Andersen Illustrator Award, died in January 2005 at his home in the Netherlands. Most famous for his books about Frog and his friends, he dealt with profound issues in a way simple enough to be attractive to small children. He will be much missed.

Bookbird

IBBY's international journal is now edited from Ireland by Valerie Coghlan and Siobhan Parkinson. The first issue for 2005 has a strong focus on picture books including an article on German illustrator Wolf Erlbruch. Elizabeth Laird writes about collecting stories in Ethiopia. Short book reviews which are presented as though they were written on postcards make an interesting new feature.

To subscribe to Bookbird, contact:

Anne Marie Corrigan, Bookbird Subscriptions, University of Toronto Press,
5201 Dufferin Street, North York, Ontario, Canada M3H 5T8
Email: journals@utpress.utoronto.ca

Events 2005

April 2 **International Children's Book Day**. India is the sponsoring country for the poster this year, illustrated by Jagdish Joshi with a message by writer Manorama Jafa. To order copies, please email awicbooks@yahoo.com

April 13 – 16 **Bologna Children's Book Fair**

April 19 – 20 **National Convention for Children's Libraries**, New Delhi, India
Information from: awicbooks@yahoo.com

April 23 – May 2 **Kuala Lumpur Book Fair**: Kuala Lumpur Trade Fair, Malaysia
Information from: IBBY Malaysia: mbkm@po.jaring.my

May 20 – 22 **Iberian Children's Literature Congress**, Valencia, Spain
Information from: oepli@oepli.org

July 31 – August 3 **IRA: 14th European Conference on Reading**, Zagreb, Croatia. Literacy Without Boundaries, including IBBY seminar. Information from: congress@event.hr

September 19 – 21 **Asian Conference on Storytelling** at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, India organised by the Association of Writers and Illustrators for Children (AWIC) which represents the Indian Section of IBBY. Email awicbooks@yahoo.com

September 20 – 30 **ASSITEJ: 15th World Conference and Festival of the Arts for Young Audiences**, Montreal, Canada (International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People) Information: www.montreal-2005.com

October 19 – 24 **Frankfurt Book Fair** with IBBY participation at the stand of the German Section of IBBY (Arbeitskreis für Jugendliteratur)

October 28 – 30 6th **USBBY Regional Conference**, Callaway Gardens, Pine Mountain, Georgia Children's Books: Messengers of Peace Information from: usbbby@reading.org

CONFERENCES

Adolescence and Childhood in Literature and Film • University College London, March 18th, 2005. Contact comingofage.conference@gmail.com

Windows on the World • Federation of Children's Book Groups Conference, University of Hertfordshire, April 1st-3rd, 2005. Speakers include Anthony Horowitz, Chris D'Lacey, Jonathan Stroud, Jamila Gavin, Alan Gibbons, and many other authors and publishers. For details contact Jayne Truran, 29 Queens Cresenct, Marshalswick, St Albans, Herts, AL4 9QG, jaynetruran@hotmail.com

Fiction for Children Comes of Age • Conference at the new University of Cambridge Faculty of Education building, Shaftesbury Rd., Cambridge, CB2 2BX (01223 366525, fax 01223 24421) Speakers include Julia Eccleshare, Geoff Fox, Nikki Gamble, Peter Hunt, Jan Mark, Philippa Pearce, Kim Reynolds, Margaret Meek Spencer, Nick Tucker and Victor Watson.

Children's Literature International Summer School (CLISS) • 3rd to 8th August 2005, National Centre for Research in Children's Literature, University of Roehampton. Speakers include Anthea Bell, Malorie Blackman, Ruth Bottigheimer, Clare Bradford, Lynne Vallone. This is not a conference but a concentrated period of study, during which it is possible to attend sessions on several of the modules for the Roehampton MA in Children's Literature. Contact Laura Atkins, national Centre for Research in Children's Literature, Froebel College, University of Roehampton, Roehampton Lane, SW15 5PJ (L.Atkins@roehampton.ac.uk) for details.

Hans Andersen Bi-centenary • 8-10 August, 2005. A conference in celebration and reappraisal at the British Library, in conjunction with an exhibition. Speakers include Ruth Bottigheimer, Dag Heede, Johan de Mylius, Maria Tatar and Marina Warner. More details from Professor Kim Reynolds, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 7RU, KimReynolds@ncl.ac.uk

Adventures in the Real World • A Conference on Children's Nonfiction probably to be held in Swansea in October 2005. Contact nicola.davies@btinternet.com

For a Culture of Peace: Cuba • The IBBY Cuba committee and their sponsors are planning a conference in Havana, October 24th-29th, 2005, with the theme 'For a culture of peace,' and celebrating the Hans Christian Andersen bi-centenary, the centenary of Jules Verne, and the 110th anniversary of José Martí who said, 'Books serve to close up the wounds opened by wars'. There will be a wide range of seminars and workshops, and talks by well-known authors and illustrators. Official languages Spanish and English. Deadline for submission of proposals for papers 30th April 2005; deadline for registration July 30th 2005. For further information contact Emilia Gallego (emyga@cubarte.cult.cu) or Aimée Vega Belmonte (aimee@icaic.inf.cu).

No Child is an Island: The Case for Children's Books in Translation • The annual IBBY British Section/MA conference will be held at Froebel College, University of Roehampton, on Saturday November 12th 2005. More details to come – and see enclosed flyer about Call for Papers.

OTHER INFORMATION

The Lion and the Unicorn • The April 2005 number will be devoted to papers from sessions at the CLISS summer school in 2003. Articles include Marie Derrien on French picture books, Gillian Lathey on the marketing and translation of the Harry Potter books, Emer O'Sullivan on Rose Blanche, Lissa Paul on Sex and the Children's Book, Lynne Vallone on Reading Girlhood in Victorian Photographs, and Jill Paton Walsh on Aristotle as a practical guide for writers.

O'Brien Press in Britain • In October there was a well-attended launch at the Irish Embassy of the six books chosen to launch the British list of this very popular and children's literature friendly Irish publisher. Titles are by Eoin Colfer, Marita Conlon McKenna, Oisín McGann, Jan Michael, and Aubrey Flegg. For further details contact books@obrien.ie

Picturebook Learning • A successful conference on 'Learning English through Picturebooks' was held at the International Youth Library in Munich in November 2004. A further one may take place in 2006. See www.picturebooks.org .

Apology

The last sentence, and acknowledgement, from Elizabeth Laird's article on story collecting in Ethiopia were inadvertently omitted from the last issue of *IBBYLink*. She concluded by stating that the stories which lingered in the mind, often philosophic in nature, continued to inform and delight long after they have been told. Her article was based on a longer one, now in the January 2005 of *Bookbird*. Twenty stories collected by Elizabeth Laird in Ethiopia have been published by Oxford University Press in a collection entitled *When the World Began*.

HELP THE CHILDREN HIT BY THE TSUNAMI DISASTER

NEWS RELEASE from M.C. Posada, January 2004

The International Board on Books for Young People is initiating a worldwide voluntary collection among its National Sections to support children's literature projects in the Asian countries that were affected by the tsunami following the seaquake in the Indian Ocean on 26 December 2004.

The starting point will be an existing project in Aceh (Sumatra) where donations will be used to purchase books and set up libraries – both static and portable. The project includes training in reading animation for the support workers. Further funds will be directed to other areas of the affected region that require particular help. The projects will run under the direction of the IBBY members in India, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia: the IBBY Executive Committee will oversee all projects.

Though this is only a small token, IBBY's membership believe that reading and children's books are very effective in alleviating children's sorrows after tragedy, and that the best way for IBBY to achieve this objective is by stressing its main objective: to bring children and books together. While the most urgent needs of the people, such as food, water and medical services, are being met by many organizations, governments and individuals, the children need special attention if they are to recover from this trauma.

Please mark all donations with the phrase 'Help for children in the tsunami region.'

Donations should be sent to: Basler Kantonalbank, Postfach, CH-4002 Basel, Switzerland

Account: IBBY (International Board on Books for Young People)

For donations in Swiss Francs:
Bank Account number 16 566.242.46
IBAN: CH38 0077 0016 0566 2424 6
BIC (SWIFT address): BKBBCHBB

For donations in Euros:
Bank Account number 16 5.414.137.37
IBAN: CH66 0077 0016 5414 1373 7
BIC (SWIFT address): BKBBCHBB

For donations in US Dollars:
Bank Account number 16 5.401.382.71
IBAN: CH29 0077 0016 5401 3827 1
BIC (SWIFT address) BKBBCHBB

The Society for Storytelling
www.sfs.org.uk
PO Box 2344,
Reading, RG6 7FG
are selling a small collection of short stories,
Tales from the Tsunami Trail
on behalf of victims of the disaster, available from them and costing £2.50

Summer issue of IBBYLink (copydate 30th April) – Poetry for Children
Autumn issue (copydate 31st July) – Science Fiction and Dystopias.
Contributions would be welcome on both of these subjects.
Pat Pinsent, 23 Burcott Rd., Purley, CR8 4AD, PatPinsent@aol.com