



Lucia Petrali Castaldi, *La piccola cuoca*. Vallardi, 1909.  
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## Food and/in Children's Culture Conference National, International and Transnational Perspectives



Università Ca' Foscari Venezia, 6-9 April 2021

**ABSTRACTS AND BIOGRAPHIES**

## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

### Swallowed but not Eaten: Images of the Totemic Meal and Children's Culture

Victoria de Rijke

Dr. Victoria de Rijke is Associate Professor in Arts & Education at Middlesex University in London and Co-Chief Editor of "Children's Literature in Education Journal". Her research and publication is transdisciplinary across the fields of literature and the arts, children's literature, media, play and animal studies, through the associations of metaphor.

Publications include a picturebook (as RebVik) "The A-Z of Dangerous Food", (2012), which draws on Russian constructivist design and a range of playfully risky foods humans eat or are eaten by. Her book Duck (2009) was developed out of work as Dr. Quack, recording ducks for research and exhibited audio material on ducks' regional dialects.

Chapters and journal articles on children's literature include 'Modernist and Avant-Garde Children's Books' (2021) with Guilherme Magri da Rocha, "in Revista de Letras Nortementos 13(34)" Brazil, 'Reading Children's Literature' (2020) in "Education 3-13 International Journal of Primary, Elementary and Secondary years Education (42)6", 'War-torn: a juxtaposition of signifiers, or radical collage in children's literature'(2018) "Journal of Literary Education", and 'The Values of Savagery: Pathologies of Child and Pet Play in Avant-Garde Visual Culture' (2017) for "Childhood and Pethood in Literature and Culture". Contrary to the popular warning, Victoria is always keen to work with animals and children.

### The Curiously Symbiotic History of Food in 20th Century British Children's Literature. From Mr McGregor's Garden to the Great Hall at Hogwarts

Peter Hunt

Peter Hunt is Professor Emeritus in English and Children's Literature at Cardiff University, UK. He has been a pioneer of the academic study of Children's Literature, and has lectured at over 150 universities, colleges and to learned societies in 23 countries, and has written or edited 36 books and more than 500 papers and reviews on the subject. His books have been translated into Arabic, Chinese, Danish, Greek, Japanese, Korean, Persian, Portuguese (Brazil) and Serbian. In 1995 he was awarded the Distinguished Scholarship Award from the International Society for the Fantastic in the Arts; in 2003 the Brothers Grimm Award for services to children's literature, from the International Institute for Children's Literature, Osaka; in 2018 the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Università degli Studi Suor Orsola Benincasa, Naples; and in 2020 the Anne Devereaux Jordan Award for Distinguished Service to Children's Literature from the Children's Literature Association. Over the past few years he has been a Visiting Professor at Trinity College Dublin, Università Ca'Foscari Venice, Newcastle University (UK), and Hollins University (USA). His most recent books include "The Making of Lewis Carroll's Alice" (2020), and he contributed to Laura Tosi's award-winning "The Fabulous Journeys of Alice and Pinocchio" (2018).

# The Chicken or the Egg?: Nourishing Animal Ontologies in Children's Literature

Zoe Jacques

Zoe Jaques is Fellow in Education at Homerton College, University of Cambridge, where she is the route co-ordinator for the MPhil / MEd in 'Critical Approaches to Children's Literature' and leads the Part II paper in Education on 'Children and Literature'. Her research interests focus on children's literature, particularly children's fantasy, and its engagement with what it means to be human. Her work covers a time-span between 1800 and the present and addresses a broad range of themes, from the sublime to Darwinism, ecocriticism, gender, cyborg theory, the history of the book, and animal studies. She is the author of "Children's Literature and the Posthuman" (Routledge, 2015) and co-author of "Lewis Carroll's Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking-Glass: A Publishing History" (Ashgate, 2013). She has received funding by the British Academy and the Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation, which allowed her to study Japanese appropriations of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland. She has received research fellowships from the Houghton Library, Harvard University, and the Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin.

# Hunger and Humanity: Food in the Works of Astrid Lindgren

Björn Sundmark

Björn Sundmark is professor of English literature at Malmö University, Sweden, where he teaches children's literature, English literature, and creative writing. With almost 100 articles and books in English and Swedish, Sundmark has published widely on children's literature as well as in the related areas of fantasy and the literary fairy tale. His monographs include the study "Alice in the Oral-Literary Continuum", and the two volumes "The Nation in Children's Literature" and "Child Autonomy and Child Governance in Children's Literature", both co-edited with Kit Kelen. These two collections explore the often complex relationship between childhood, nation and children's literature. In 2020 he published the collection "Translating and Transmediating Children's Literature" together with Anna Kérchy. Sundmark was the editor of "Bookbird – Journal of International Children's Literature" between 2014 and 2018, and is a long-standing member of the editorial board of both "Barnboken: Journal of International Children's Literature" and "Children's Literature in Education". Sundmark has, moreover, served on the children's literature committee of the Swedish Arts Council and was the chair of the August prize committee of children's literature 2016–2019. In 2019 he was one of the organizers of the Stockholm congress of the International Research Society for Children's Literature.

## PANEL SPEAKERS

### Professor Inkblot's edible Paints, Flowers, and Glass, or about Food in the canonical Polish book *Professor Inkblot's Academy* by Jan Brzechwa

Daria Banasiewicz

The article discusses the way of describing and the role of food in the Polish children's book *Professor Inkblot's Academy* by Jan Brzechwa. Even though Brzechwa's work occupies a canonical position in the context of Polish children's literature, in 2020 the book was translated into English for the first time after 74 years. In combination with the figure of a *trickster*, personified by Professor Inkblot, the process of preparing dishes becomes an act of trick itself. The ingredients from which the meals are made bear the hallmarks of the science fiction genre – food is made of vague, mysterious powders, edible paints, flowers, glass, and candle flames. Brzechwa also uses synesthesia, combining colors with taste sensations, for example defining blue as sour, red as bitter, etc. The author also makes colors the most important factor, describing it as the source of the taste of the dish. This is quite an interesting aspect of the piece, as usually smell and taste are the priority elements of the description of dishes.

Moreover, meals prepared by Professor Inkblot are also a clear sign of national identity – the boys eat traditional Polish dishes like tomato soup, gooseberry compote, cucumber salad, and dumplings. The article also highlights the fact that sweet delicacies also appear indirectly, thanks to the names of the streets – the Academy itself is located at Chocolate Street, dog's paradise at Biscuit Street, etc.

The article draws attention to the fact that consumption is an activity that belongs only to children and animals. The work's writing dates: 1945 (work on the book) and 1946 (first edition) make it difficult to release the book from the war context. In *Professor Inkblot's Academy*, it is mentioned that the food consists partly of air, so it does not fully satisfy the appetite of the students. This places the food and the act of eating in a new perspective – the ingredients in the field of fantasy and science fiction become in a way a reflection of non-literary reality.

### Biography

Daria Banasiewicz is a student of Polish philology in the MISHiS mode at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland. The author of the article: *Smutnaimała – gra z wizerunkiem Baby JaginapodstawiewierszydladzieciJoannyPapuzińskiejiMałgorzatyStrzałkowskiej* (*Sad and little – a play with the image of Baba Yaga based on poems by Joanna Papuzińska and Małgorzata Strzałkowska*) published in the volume *Wiersze-biedronki. Polskapoezjadladziecipisanaprzez kobiety* (*Poems-ladybugs. Polish poetry for children written by women*). Organizer of the National Film Festival "Zoom naMłodzież". Her interests include: Anglo-Saxon and American children's and youth literature, women's writing, pop culture and American youth cinema.

# Fantastical Images, Fantastic Food: The Ludic in Blanca Cotta's Recipes for Children

María Ignacia Barraza

Argentine cook, teacher, and illustrator Blanca Cotta (1925–2019) is best known for her illustrated recipe books. A lesser known fact is that she had worked in the 1960s as a scriptwriter for the popular television cooking show *Buenas tardes, mucho gusto* (*Good Afternoon, Pleased to Meet You*), which cemented the fame of emblematic Argentine chef Doña Petrona.

In this paper, I will concentrate on some of the illustrated recipes that Cotta created for the beloved children's magazine *Antejito*, which was published in Argentina from 1964–2001. Under the section entitled "Comiditas" ("Little Foods"), Cotta presented weekly recipes along with her unique illustrations which were oftentimes broken down into a step-by step process.

My main aim is to demonstrate how, via this medium, Cotta established an ongoing communication with her young audience by utilizing both image and text to relay complex messages concerning a unified idea of Argentine national identity, as well as gender norms and family relations. But beyond the underlying didactic intent –which is almost expected in a piece written for children–, something that set Cotta apart is the fact that she repeatedly cultivated the ludic by consciously eschewing purely prescriptive language in favour of narrative techniques that mimicked a child's language and worldview, and by creating whimsical and highly imaginative illustrations to accompany all her recipes.

If a recipe is embedded discourse (Leonardi), then we may ask ourselves: what is the relationship between Cotta's recipes and her illustrations? Is there an irresolvable contradiction in presenting recipes (prescriptive texts) framed by highly imaginative illustrations –which sometimes verge on the fantastical or illogical?

## Biography

María Ignacia Barraza, Ph.D., is a Term Lecturer in the Department of World Languages and Literatures at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, Canada. Her areas of research include the Spanish literary generations of 1898 and 1927, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century Latin American poetry and prose, as well as film and the visual arts. She has published articles on Manuel Ciges Aparicio and the visual arts, as well as on the theories of Gaston Bachelard. Her current research project and teaching explore our fascinatingly complex relationship with food through the study of female Argentine recipe developers/food writers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as well as the diverse culinary landscapes in modern world literature.

## Fruit, Poetry and Art

Celia Abicalil Belmiro; Marcus Vinicius Rodrigues Martins; and Cristiene de Souza Leite Galvão

The present work studies visual representations of food in nonfiction books aimed at early childhood. The frequency of fruit selection is due to the fact that, in general, they are the first types of food offered to children after the breastfeeding period. There is also the choice of different fruits in books, which recognize food as a local, or even regional, aspect of each culture. The dynamics of languages and styles found in these productions have resulted in a variety of forms with significant changes, both in the format and in the approach to the themes. The texts often mix the expository structure with the narrative structure, which thus facilitates the entry of

an informative content with a poetic character into a non-fictional work. In addition, children's previous knowledge is triggered by experience and interaction with the world around them. Therefore, this work proposes to analyze two books in different Latin America contexts, in which images and poetic texts organize information about fruit: the Brazilian work *Mamão, melancia, fruta e poesia* (*Papaya, watermelon, fruit and poetry*) and the Chilean work *Frutarte* (*Fruitart*). It is observed that the visual representation of these foods dialogues with works of art, or with children's drawings, which denotes different starting points for reading the works. The verbal texts are written in the form of a poetic-literary inventory, playing with the characteristics of each fruit, their names and flavors with an informative purpose. The theoretical perspectives of Robine (1982), Held (1983) and Von Merveldt (2018) discuss the hybridism of nonfiction and fiction in the structuring of nonfiction texts for children; Kelling and Pollard (2009, 2018) approach a critical perspective of food in children's literature; Kummerling-Meibauer (2011, 2018) and Galvão (2016) expand the discussion of concept books for young children. In addition, Nodelman (1988) and Belmiro (2014) highlight questions about the relationship between image and verbal text in picture books. Furthermore, Hunt (1996), Everett (2009) and Nikolaveja (2000) combine children's literature with food studies. The results indicate that the use of different styles for the representation of food is crossed by the presence of social, literary and cultural markers from each country, such as the choice of cherry, fig, apple and peach, mainly in Chile, and papaya, cashew, persimmon, star fruit, watermelon, pineapple and various types of banana, especially in Brazil. Multicultural cultural and artistic references, through music, proverbs, and paintings are also present. The analysis of the representation of food in texts for children highlights the involvement of multidisciplinary practices and areas such as studies of food studies, visual arts, literature, and design.

## Biographies

Celia Abicalil Belmiro, professor at the Federal University of Minas Gerais, Brazil, post-doctorate at University of Cambridge (UK), researcher at Centre of Literacy, Reading and Writing (CEALE/UFGM), that comprises studies on literary reading, reader development, and education teachers' competence to form readers. She coordinates a research group on literary literacy, has published several articles and book chapters on picturebooks for children and young readers. She is an editor of books of literary education and coeditor on *The Routledge Companion International Children's Literature*. Her current area of investigation is the relationship between visual and verbal texts in picture books, incorporating interdisciplinary studies.

Marcus Vinicius Rodrigues Matins is a Librarian, with a Master's in information science from the School of Information Science of the Federal University of Minas Gerais and PhD in Education from the Federal University of Minas Gerais. He participated in the "Reading and Writing in Early Childhood" research group and the "Bebeteca" project, focusing on children's studies and languages with emphasis on non-fiction books, children's literature and children's libraries.

Cristiene de Souza Leite Galvão is Master's in education by the Faculty of Education of UFGM-Brazil, with the research "Is there literature for babies?". PhD student in Education at the Faculty of Education at UFGM. Member of the research projects: Literary Literacy in Early Childhood; Reading and Writing in Early Childhood; Verbal images and texts in children's literature books; Bebeteca; book evaluator for the National Foundation for Child and Youth Literature, Brazil.



# Remembering | Cooking | Consuming Childhoods in fictional Cookbooks

## Natalie Borsy

Cookbooks, which are based on fictional works of literature, film and TV series, have become a popular by-product of franchises and fandoms. Fictional cookbooks cover literary classics, cult movies, TV-series, computer games and also works from children's literature. The recipes usually refer to dishes which are either explicitly mentioned and shown, or extrapolated from the fictive background presented in the text. In the case of fictional cookbooks based on children's literature, the illustrations play a pivotal role in the selection and configuration of the recipes. Often written by fans, or more generally, enthusiastic consumers of the respective media, these hypertexts promise a physical gateway to fictive worlds through culinary means and transform the texts on which they are based into threshold objects (cf. Genette 2015, Lötscher 2014, 59). They blur the boundaries between fact and fiction, inner/imagined and materialized objects. Following the tradition of doll's kitchen cookbooks, cookbooks based on children's literature often adapt a pedagogic tone, revealing historical and socio-cultural backgrounds of the authors and their conceptions of childhood. In the same vein, individual reader biographies and their culture-specific value attributions emerge between baking instructions and serving suggestions. There are, however, fictional cookbooks from the ranks of children's literature that do not address children at all; rather they create a nostalgic product for grown-ups, who wish to recreate remembered reading experiences by cooking and consuming dishes that materialize sensual memories from their childhoods.

In that way, fictive worlds and (remembered) childhoods are both produced and consumed in a literary, but also material manner. On the one hand, the recipes and accompanying paratexts raise fundamental questions about genre, authorship, fictionality and reader response. What manifests in the recipes is the dialectic between implied recipients, the hypotexts, and the producers of the latter. On the other hand, fictive worlds extend from page and screen into kitchens and bellies of the cookbook users and they physically incorporate texts (cf. Tippen 2018, 19) and to some degree the social and biophysical systems and ideologies that are represented in them (cf. Tigner/Carruth 2018, 1).

## Biography

Natalie Borsy is teaching and research assistant for the professorship of Popular Literature and Media with focus on Children's and Youth Media at the Department of Social Anthropology and Cultural Studies – Popular Culture Studies, University of Zurich. She studied Popular Culture Studies, English Literature, Film Studies and Culture Analysis at the University of Zurich. In her dissertation project she examines cookbooks based on fictional works from literature, film and TV-series. In her master's thesis she analysed material-aesthetic dimensions of Steampunk media. Her main research interests encompass nostalgia, and popular genres such as Fantasy and Adventure.

Profile (in English): <https://www.isek.uzh.ch/en/culturestudies/staff/staff/borsy.html>

# Decadent Fairy Tales and Abnormal Consumptions: A Comparative Investigation of Excessive Eating/Drinking in Boito's *Re Orso* and Anorexia Nervosa in Mendès's 'Le Mauvais convive'

Alessandrp Cabiati

In many ways, Arrigo Boito's *Re Orso* and Catulle Mendès's 'Le Mauvais convive' are two very different fairy tales. *Re Orso* is a long poem published by Boito in four versions between 1864 and 1902; subtitled 'fairy tale', its playful language jokingly addresses children as its target readership at various points in the text, but it was clearly intended for an adult audience. Featuring fairy-tale figures such as giants, dwarfs, and magical knights, *Re Orso* tells the story of a sadistic king devoted to nothing else but feasting, compulsive drinking, and violence, who is tormented by a refrain concerning the bite of worms. Excessive consumption of food and alcohol serves to represent a world characterised by gluttony and moral perversion where poetry and beauty are forsaken, but also to blur the boundaries between the domains of the marvellous and of the psychological. The voice heard (only) by the king constantly reminds him of his excessive eating and drinking, depicting an atmosphere of uncertainty and terror where the difference between apparitions and hallucinations, spirits and phantoms of the mind, is not always clear. The setting, the tone, and the protagonist of 'Le Mauvais convive' cannot be more different. A short story published in 1885, this is, on the surface, a more conventional fairy tale. A young prince wants to escape from his father's kingdom to join the fairies, who live in a nearby forest. Unlike his father and the other knights of the realm, he does not like to fight battles and kill men, preferring to gather flowers, read, and play music instead. He is sensitive and, in his appearance and in the way he dresses, resembles a young girl. Most notably, he is depriving himself of food, a voluntary abstinence that is classified by the prince's doctors as solely psychological in nature. Despite the lavish feasts with the most appetising food and being near death, the prince continuously maintains that he is not hungry and that the only food he fancies is the food of the fairies – a fact considered by his father as a symptom of his 'madness'. In this paper, I will investigate comparatively the imaginary of food in these two fairy tales that belong respectively to the Italian and French Decadent traditions. I will analyse their psychological representations of abnormal eating and drinking, juxtaposing them with 19<sup>th</sup>-century medical conceptions of mental disorders such as monomania, delirium tremens, and anorexia nervosa; as well as the figurative meanings of food deprivation and overconsumption, which in both fairy tales serve to portray allegorically the declining importance of poetry and beauty in a modern, materialistic world.

## Biography

Dr Alessandro Cabiati is a researcher in comparative literature. In recent years, he undertook research at King's College London and at the Universities of Oxford and Edinburgh. He has recently been awarded a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Global Fellowship at Ca' Foscari/Brown University, where he will investigate how 19th-century literary fairy tales reflected, incorporated, and questioned medical interpretations of psychological deviance and of abnormal behaviour in the US, UK, and France. In 2019, his essay on monomania and refrains in Arrigo Boito's *Re Orso* was awarded the Jamie Bishop Memorial Award by the International Association for the Fantastic in the Arts.



# Food in Irish Children's Literature: Addressing the Critical Gap

Siobhán Callaghan

In the foreword to *Tickling the Palate: Gastronomy in Irish Literature and Culture* (2014), Darra Goldstein writes: "Here, at last, is a serious consideration of Ireland through its food, drink, and language: a corrective to the false impression that Irish foodways are unworthy of attention."<sup>1</sup> The edited collection is indeed a first and much needed attempt at a comprehensive examination of the representation of food and eating in Irish literature and culture. The chapter exploring food in literature for children, however, focuses primarily upon canonical British children's literature and popular fairytales, justified under the premise that such texts "would have been read widely in Ireland."<sup>2</sup> Given the purpose of *Tickling the Palate* – to celebrate and analyse the many ways in which food appears in Irish literature and culture – the omission of texts written about Irish childhood or by Irish children's authors suggests that the representation of food is not significant in these texts, nor is it worthy of discussion. In this light, this paper seeks to address representations of gastronomy in Irish children's literature as an understudied area of research. It will do so by examining the role of food and eating in two prominent works of Irish children's literature, Eilís Dillon's *The Island of Ghosts* (1990) and Marita Conlon McKenna's *Under the Hawthorn Tree* (1990). Published in the same year as one another, both novels were released during a time of renaissance in Irish children's literature that coincided with a period of economic growth and social change in Ireland, often referred to as the Celtic Tiger. Both novels explore the legacy of hunger and scarcity in their representation of food and Irish childhood. While there has been some critical discussion of the representation of the Great Famine in *Under the Hawthorn Tree*, there have been no attempts to connect the novel to broader representations of food in Irish children's literature. Drawing upon Roland Barthes conceptualisation of food as a psychosociological "system of communication" as a framework for analysis, this paper will consider and compare how both novels present food and eating as markers of Irish culture and identity to the implied child reader. The paper will conclude by considering the implications of this analysis for further avenues of research in Irish children's literature studies.

## Biography

Siobhán is a PhD candidate at Trinity College, Dublin. Her research examines the representation of childhood displacement in contemporary historical fiction for children about the Second World War and is funded by the Irish Research Council. Siobhán has been an Early Career Fellow at the Trinity Long Room Hub and was awarded the 2019/20 Yale TCD Bursary for Children's Literature. She is a book reviewer for Children's Books Ireland and RTE RadioOne, Arena.

## "Toad in the Hole": Food and Foodways in Sue Townsend's *Adrian Mole's Diaries*

Marco Canani

Adrian Mole is the protagonist of a book series by Sue Townsend that holds a liminal place within young adult's literature. The first three novels, *The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole, Aged 13½* (1982), *The Growing Pains of Adrian Mole* (1984), and *The True Confessions of Adrian Albert Mole* (1989) introduce readers to the everyday difficulties, and the ambitions and expectations of a teenager

<sup>1</sup> Darra Goldstein, "Foreword", in *Tickling the Palate: Gastronomy in Irish Literature and Culture*, edited by Máirtín Mac Con Iomaire and Eamon Maher (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2014), xiii–xiv.

<sup>2</sup> Máirtín Mac Con Iomaire, "Introduction", in *Tickling the Palate*, 5.

from the 1980s. BBC Arts has listed Adrian's *Secret Diary* among the 100 "Novels that Shaped Our World (BBC 2019), and indeed the enthusiastic response of the public convinced Townsend to expand the series to portray Adrian's transition into adulthood. The readers grow up with the eponymous hero, and a central feature of almost all of Adrian's stories is the ubiquitous presence of food. Food accompanies several moments and stages in his coming of age in the first three novels, and in the later episodes it is crucial to his emancipation as he finds employment at a restaurant in Soho. Food is the object of constant memorialization in Adrian's diaries, and I suggest that his recollections testify to his individual growth as well as to the changes occurring in society. Adrian's distaste for the processed, "lousy food" that his family buys at Saintsbury's, and his praise of the "proper food" (Townsend 1985, 62; 219) prepared by his grandmother foreground Townsend's interest in foodways and eating rituals. Adrian's memories tell of an average teenager from a lower middle-class family, who timidly woos a girl in the school canteen and participates in goliardic scenes during meals. Yet when one reads such multiple references to food and food rituals as "signifying units" of a complex identarian system (Barthes 2008), or as a "formal device" to be decoded ekphrastically (Shani 2018, 3), Adrian's recollections also bear witness to the changes that transformed Britain between the 1980s and the 1990s. And in so doing, they reveal Townsend's criticism of Thatcher's social and welfare politics (Townsend 1989).

## Biography

Marco Canani is Lecturer in English at the "Gabriele D'Annunzio" University of Chieti-Pescara. In 2015 he received his PhD from the University of Milan with the dissertation *Vernon Lee and the Italian Renaissance: Plasticity, Gender, Genre*. His research interests include Romantic poetry, fin de siècle literature, and Anglo-Italian studies. In addition to various articles on John Keats, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Vernon Lee, Judith Kerr, and A. J. Cronin, he has published the monograph *Ellenismi britannici. L'ellenismo nella poesia, nelle arti e nella cultura britannica dagli augustei al Romanticismo* (2014).

## The Representation of Children Baby Food Advertisements in Britain from the late 1880s to the 1940s: multimodal Analysis and socio-cultural Implications

Daniela Cesiri

Baby food is a commercial category that includes products such as baby formula for infants and purée food for weaning babies. The industrialised production of baby food in the United Kingdom started in the second half of the nineteenth century, in particular after 1855 when the first patent for powdered/dried milk was granted to "an Englishman named Grimwade" (Broomfield, 2007, p. xvi).

Commercialisation of baby food corresponded to a dramatic increase in the mass production of canned food in the country (*ibid.*). Naturally, this mass commercialisation contributed to a flourishing of advertisements aimed at promoting these products to potential customers. Two of the most popular British brands of the period are Allenbury and Mellin. Allenbury was the commercial name of the pharmaceutical manufacturer 'Allen and Hanburys Ltd'. The business was established in 1715 and lasted until the 1950s, when it was absorbed by Glaxo Laboratories. It produced infant food, medicated pastilles and galenic preparations (Cope, 1955). Mellin's Food Company, on the other hand, was founded in 1866 in England. Their instant food formula soon became popular in the US, determining its international success. Mellin's Food is a brand that is

still in operation today and is internationally known for products such as several kinds of infant formula and baby food (Smith & Kraig, 2013).

The study analyses a sample of baby food advertisements commissioned by Allenbury and Mellin at the early stages of their business, namely from the late 1880s to the 1940s. More specifically, a multimodal analysis is conducted to see how children are characterised, both visually and verbally, in these advertisements. Moreover, the socio-cultural implications of this characterisation are considered in order to examine the way in which children and their nourishment were seen and represented in the British society of the time.

The representation of children and childhood in British culture depends on the time period considered. For instance, in the early nineteenth century children were considered miniature adults, while in later decades children were seen as “immature and developing” (Krips, 2000, p. 39). A changed view that induced deep changes into the ways in which society and institutions looked at children and oversaw their growth, education, and personal development. Changes also involved the industry of products aimed at children, including dietary products, and how these products were advertised. In this regard, the aim of the study is to understand the extent to which baby food advertisements in the period under consideration (1880s–1940s) are indeed a reflection of the changing role of children in British society.

## Biography

Daniela Cesiri is Associate Professor of English Language and Translation in the Department of Linguistics and Comparative Cultural Studies, “Ca’ Foscari” University of Venice. She has published several articles on the history and varieties of English, on English for Specific/English for Academic Purposes as well as studies in corpus linguistics, discourse analysis, Computer-Mediated Communication, and pragmatics. Her book-length publications include two monographs *Nineteenth-Century Irish English: A Corpus-Based Linguistic and Discursive Analysis* (2012, Mellen Press) and *The Discourse of Food Blogs: Multidisciplinary Perspectives* (2020, Routledge) and the textbook *Variation in English Across Time, Space and Discourse* (2015, Carocci).

## Nurture and Negligence: Child Malnutrition, Addiction and Poisoning in Ellen Wood

### Mariaconcetta Costantini

The Victorian age was characterized by increasing preoccupations about child nutrition and rearing. Their relevance grew after the mid-century, as evidenced by the popular *Mrs. Beeton's Book of Household Management* (1861). In Chapter 72, Isabella Beeton deals with various aspects of nursery management, devoting much attention to the duties of mothers, governesses and nurses. Conceived as an exclusive female responsibility, child nurture is a central concern of the chapter, which offers detailed indications about kinds of food, times of meals and the process of digestion. Most indications reveal the fear of malnutrition, of serving harmful food that could negatively affect children's health. In order to avoid this danger, the role of servants in nurturing children should be significantly limited. In Beeton's view, although a governess could be in charge of her pupils at meals, it should primarily be the mother's duty to ensure that her children ingest nutritious and health substances. In a similar way, Beeton objected to hiring wet nurses. “Unless prevented by illness or inability, a mother [...] should not shrink from performing this most natural of maternal functions, no matter to what rank she belongs, for by not doing so she certainly risks the child's health, and perhaps her own”. Her objections reflected growing anxieties about the health of infants. Around the mid-century, Victorians became increasingly suspicious of “suckling nurses or foster-mothers”, who might endanger babies by feeding on “injurious aliments”,

drinking excessively or making “a secret use of narcotics”. As a result, Victorian mothers were strongly encouraged to breast-feed their newborns and, generally, to devote more time and energies to nurture their offspring.

My paper examines the extent to which such indications and concerns were expressed in Victorian literature, and particularly in works by Ellen Wood, who laid much emphasis on the contrast between child nurture and negligence. As will be shown, Wood’s novels and short stories gave voice to circulating anxieties about children’s ingestion of harmful foods, drinks and other substances which, mostly due to the negligence of maternal figures, resulted in domestic tragedies. After mentioning a few positive models of nurturers like Jane Hallibourton, I will focus on the negative characterization of biological and foster-mothers, whose neglect of duties results in their children’s illness, addiction and, often, death. By analysing narratives as diverse as *Danesbury House* (1860), “Hester Reed’s Pills” and its sequel “Abel Crew” (1874), and *Court Netherleigh* (1881), I intend to show that Wood represented a variety of social and medical problems of her age (i.e., alcoholism, drug consumption, women’s rebellion against gender models) by concocting dangerous images of ingestion (of foods, drinks, drugs) that had lethal effects upon children.

Quite orthodox in their implications, these fictional portraits of neglectful mothers and victimized children are evidence of the author’s uneasy wavering between antifeminist and protofeminist ideas. Without ever questioning the sacredness of women’s maternal roles, which were normativized by Beeton and other manual authors, Wood cast doubt on their naturalness, as she portrayed recalcitrant and erring mothers who failed to embody proper nurturing functions.

## Biography

Mariaconcetta Costantini is full professor of English Literature at G. D’Annunzio University of Chieti-Pescara, Italy. Her research mainly focuses on Victorian literature and culture, with a special interest in sensation fiction and the Gothic. She is the author of six volumes, has edited collections and published numerous journal articles and book chapters. Her publications on Victorian sensation novelists include the following monographs: *Venturing into Unknown Waters: Wilkie Collins and the Challenge of Modernity* (2008), *Sensation and Professionalism in the Victorian Novel* (2015), *Mrs Henry Wood* (2020). Since 2019, she has co-edited the online journal *Victorian Popular Fictions*.

## The Sorrows of the Plants. Food and Ethics in Contemporary Polish Picture Books

Anna Maria Czernow

[P]osthumanism, as a discourse, both exposes and ironically establishes boundaries between the human and the non-human, to facilitate a dialogue as to how those very borders might become more fluid (Jaques 2014: 2–3).

In this paper, I am going to discuss three works by Polish artist Emilia Dziubak: the painting from 2013 called “Pear” and two picture books: “Gratka dla małego niejadka” [A Goody for Little Fussy Eaters] and “Horror” (text Madlena Szeliga, 2018). With the help of posthuman philosophy and theory, I will analyze the figures of plants and ingredients pictured by the artist according to the rules typical for children’s literature personification. Smiling, crying, running, drowning, sleeping, and dying, the characters of Dziubak’s works are so obviously human that the reader almost automatically identifies with them, encouraged to this act by the long tradition of children’s literature. However, forgetting the fact that these characters belong to the broad concept of food and thus are always edible is impossible, since all of them: bananas, cucumbers, flour powder,

nuts, beans, carrots, and others are put in the cooking and eating context: ready to be cut ("Pear"), in the middle of processing ("Gratka dla małego niejadka"), already processed and waiting to be devoured ("Horror"). All the portraits of human-like figures that are about to "perish in a soup" – as Jan Brzechwa concluded his well known Polish children's poem about vegetables quarreling in the market place ("Na straganie" [In the Market Place], 1937), force the reader to ask questions not about the ethics of eating animals but about the ethics of eating in general. If pineapple slices are the cuts of the Pineapple's body and juice is the blood of berries, what does it make humans? Are we vampires as "Horror" is suggesting? If eating is always killing, is it possible to eat and remain a moral person? Inspiring these questions Dziubak's plant-inspired works embody the radical potential of children's literature (Reynolds 2007). At the same time, expanding the conventional strategies of constructing literary elements, they support Zoe Jaques' statement that "[c]hildren's literature and posthumanism is [...] a 'natural' pairing" (2014: 6). The abovementioned issues will be discussed with the aid of among others Zoe Jaques' *Children's Literature and the Posthuman*, Caroline Daniel's *Voracious Children: Who Eats Whom in Children's Literature* and Kimberly Reynold's *Radical Children's Literature: Future Visions and Aesthetic Transformations in Juvenile Fiction*.

## Biography

Anna Maria Czernow is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Warsaw (the defense scheduled for January 2021). She specializes in theory and history of literature for young readers. She has authored over 30 articles and book chapters (one of the recent in English is "The King of Misrule." In *Child Autonomy and Child Governance in Children's Literature*. Eds. C. Kelen and B. Sundmark. London, New York: Routledge, 2017). She has edited the English translation of Janusz Korczak's works entitled *How to Love a Child and Other Selected Works*. London, Chicago: VM, 2018.

## The Portrayal of Food in Arabic Children's Literature

### Nadia El Kholy

Food also plays a specific role in children's literature. This can be seen for instance in Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* or Roald Dahl's *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. Children's literature is peppered with food and social occasions related to it. This paper examines the portrayal of food and its rituals in Arabic children's literature ranging from the exotic world of *A Thousand and One Nights* to contemporary works.

Whether food tempts or excites, punishes or rewards, it will remain a fixture of literature, and especially of children's literature. Within its literature, each culture portrays its characteristic cuisine, as well as its peculiar traditional rules and habits in the act of eating. Food offers a means of powerful imagery and plays an important part in ritualized ceremonies in society. When sharing a meal together people observe the certain rituals. And it has been happening since the beginning of a mankind because rituals bring warmth to the domestic hearth. Eating habits and rituals help the better understanding of human society. Finally, the theme of food also refers to society's structure and world vision. Events of food preparing, serving and sharing help to determine the social organization. Therefore, it helps a better identification within culture. Since meals have always been an essential ritual in family life and focus on the socialization of the family members, they also provide a significant psychological support. Eating is a daily concern for children, a part of their lives that looms large in their memory, but that concern also reaches to adulthood, both as a part of everyday life and as part of nostalgia for childhood. This nostalgia, as well as the strong connection to daily life, makes food not only a common motif in children's

literature, but also a transformative one, capable of communicating both didactic lessons and rallying cries of independence.

## Biography

Nadia El Kholy is Professor of English Language & Literature at Cairo University. She is the current President of the Egyptian IBBY Section. Her research interests include writing and translation for children, Comparative and Postcolonial Literature, and Gender Studies. She has contributed to the *Oxford Encyclopaedia of Children's Literature*, was co-editor of the *Women Writing Africa* series published by the Feminist Press in New York, and the ASTENE publication *Egypt in the Eyes of Travellers*. She has published a number of articles on the modern Arabic and English novel and has translated *Alice in Wonderland* into Arabic.

## *Chi ha mai sentito russare una banana?* Migration and food in Italian postcolonial Literature for Children

Anna Finozzi

*Tu proverai sì come sa di sale/lo pane altrui [...]*

Dante Alighieri, XVII Canto, Paradiso

Food is a “cultural marker” as it represents the belonging to a determinate community (Horn 2010). For this reason, food metaphors are largely employed by Italian postcolonial writers<sup>3</sup> to explore the migrant's assimilation/refusal of his/her new country. Some examples can be found, for instance, in “Salsicce” (2005) by Igiaba Scego, where the Muslim female protagonist tries to eat a sausage in order to “feel Italian”, or in *Scontro di civiltà per un ascensore a Piazza Vittorio* (2012) by Amara Lakhous, where Parviz tries to convince Amedeo that eating pizza is as dangerous as smoking cigarettes. Although the link food-migration has been extensively explored by scholars in Italian Studies (Horn 2010; Lavagnino 2011), especially in connection to the body (Bond 2019), there has been a lack of interest in looking at how food is depicted in Italian postcolonial fiction for children.

The aim of my paper is twofold: on the one hand, I wish to describe how food is treated in Italian postcolonial literature for children; on the other, I shall determine whether or not there is a development over its short but significant history. For the first purpose, I will provide a close reading of several examples drawn from a corpus of children's book written between 1990 and 2020 in Italian by migrants and second-generation migrants (Luatti 2010). Concerning the second purpose, my hypothesis is that in Italian postcolonial literature *tout-court* culinary and dietary references are very present in the first decades of its circulation (1990-2010) as part of that exotic “ornamentalismo” that facilitated the circulation in the Italian market (Julien 2003); I will investigate whether or not the same is true for postcolonial children's literature as well. My theoretical framework relies on Postcolonial Children's Literary Studies (Nodelman 1992, Khorana et al. 1998, Bradford 2001/2007, McGillis 2013, Grzegorzczuk 2014) and Translation and Paratextual Studies (Yuste Frias 2018, Batchelor 2018).

## Biography

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<sup>3</sup> As for the definition, Italian postcolonial literature refers to all literature written in Italian by migrants or second-generation migrants coming from the Global South, with the distinction between “direct colonialism” (Italian ex-colonies) and “indirect colonialism” (all other European ex-colonies) (Romeo 2017).



I am Anna Finozzi, PhD candidate at Stockholm University (Dep. of Romance Studies and Classics). My doctoral thesis is a study on Italian postcolonial literature, both for an adult's readership and for children. Through Translation Studies and Paratextual Studies, my aim is to provide an analysis of the circulation, transmission and reception of postcolonial literature written in Italian. I graduated in Comparative Literary Studies (ReMA) at Utrecht University with the thesis: "Trans-nationality and Postcolonialism Through Education and Cultural Agency: Revisiting the Canon of Italian Literature" (2016). My other academic interests are connected to Italian diaspora studies, memory studies, orality, and world literatures.

## "I'm so hungry I could almost eat you!" Child nutrition, degeneration, and national health in Frances Hodgson Burnett's *A Little Princess*

Anna Gasperini

Frances Hodgson Burnett's 1905 novel *A Little Princess* has not enjoyed as much critical attention as other Burnett's works, despite its being considered a "classic" of Victorian and Edwardian children's literature and having inspired numerous adaptations. Recent and less recent studies of this text have focused on its treatment of gender and colonial themes; so far, however, its discussion of food and nutrition in relation to childhood has escaped scholarly attention. This paper uses medical history and discourse theory to explore this under-researched theme. *A Little Princess* pays considerable attention to food and states of hunger and satiety in children, paying keen, almost medical, attention to the physical and psychological changes these two states provoke in the character. From a close observation, it is possible to detect a pattern in situations involving critical states of hunger in the story: from the scene where Sara, the eponymous little princess, feeds the "savagely" beggar girl, to the little scullery drudge Becky eating from the trash can to survive, to Sara herself confessing to be harbouring cannibalistic impulses, so overwhelming is her hunger, the message is that hunger and malnutrition deprive a child of their humanity. Severe malnutrition diminishes and weakens the girls' bodies, but also chips away at their minds, provoking a regression to a primal state where food and survival are the only concern. In my paper, I study this representational pattern in *A Little Princess*. My analysis considers images of hungry and well-fed children in the light of the British child malnutrition debate, developed between the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century, which combined medical research, concerns about racial degeneration, and the child protection discourse.

### Biography

Dr Anna Gasperini is a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow at Ca' Foscari University of Venice (Italy). She researches intersections between nineteenth-century literature and medical history, and her current research project is a transnational comparison of nineteenth-century children's literatures as related to child nutrition. She received her PhD in 2017 from the National University of Ireland Galway and she is the author of *Nineteenth Century Popular Fiction, Medicine and Anatomy – The Victorian Penny Blood and the 1832 Anatomy Act* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2019).

# Sad ol' mush': The Poetics and Politics of Porridge in Residential Schools in Canada

L. Sasha Gora

In his memoir *Indian School Days*, Basil H. Johnston remembers having to eat bowls of watered-down porridge, what he calls “sad ol' mush.”<sup>4</sup> Born in 1929 into the Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation, Johnston lived with his family along the rocky shores of the southern part of Georgian Bay until he was ten years old. Then, an Indian agent took him and his sister from their parents, forcing them to attend residential schools run by Jesuits in Spanish, Ontario, in the northern part of the Bay. Removed from his family and his culture, it was at St. Peter Claver School for Boys where he was fed “sad ol' mush.” Priscilla Hewitt, who was forced to attend a different school, the Brantford Mohawk Institute, called the school itself “the Mush Hole.”<sup>5</sup> A collaboration between the federal government and Christian churches in an effort to assimilate Indigenous children into Canadian society, the first residential school opened in 1831 and the last one closed in 1996. These schools served food that aligned with their overall mission of forced assimilation, to “kill the Indian to save the [child].”<sup>6</sup> Zooming in on the history of the poetics and politics (and violence) of porridge in residential schools in Canada, my paper proposes to contribute a consideration of the relationship between food and the child body for the conference “Food and/in Children's Culture: National, International and Transnational Perspectives.” Studying how food cultures children's bodies, the paper will also look at issues related to rejected and accepted foodstuffs. In dialogue with the topic of eating in institutions, it will weave together a study of the foods residential schools served to children—and those they did not—with passages from memoirs penned by survivors, in addition to the more recent genre of children's literature about residential schools.

## Biography

L. Sasha Gora is a cultural historian and writer with a focus on food studies and contemporary art. She received a PhD from Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich and the Rachel Carson Center on the subject of Indigenous restaurants in Canada, and is currently working on her first book, titled *Culinary Claims*. She spent spring 2019 as a visiting scholar in the Department of Ethnic Studies at UC Berkeley and taught at the LMU's Amerika-Institut before joining the Center for the Humanities and Social Change at Ca' Foscari University of Venice in 2020.

# The Cannibalistic Pleasures and Gluttonous Appetites of Edward Lear and Laura Richards' Nonsense Poems

Etti Gordon Ginzburg

Victorian nonsense, known for its eerie balance between violent content and restrained form, is replete with scenes of unrestrained consumption and wild feasting. This is true for the nonsense poems of Edward Lear (1812–1888), as well as for the nonsense verses of his American female counterpart, Laura Richards (1850–1943).

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<sup>4</sup> Basil H. Johnston, *Indian School Days* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988), 58.

<sup>5</sup> Priscilla Hewitt, “Educating Priscilla,” *Canadian Woman Studies/Les Cahier de la Femme* 9, no. 3–4 (1988): 12–13.

<sup>6</sup> Monica Bodirsky and Jon Johnson, “Decolonizing Diet: Healing by Reclaiming Traditional Indigenous Foodways,” *Cuizine: The Journal of Canadian Food Cultures/Cuizine: Revue des Cultures Culinaires au Canada* 1 (2008).

Grotesque deaths caused by excessive feasting are ubiquitous in Lear's poems. Lear's lot of social outcasts, his lonely and isolated Old Men (and women), either eat or are eaten, hunted, or baked, usually to death. The Old Man of Calcutta chokes over a muffin; The Old Man of Leghorn is devoured by a puppy; and the Old Man of Peru is baked in a stove by his wife. Even when food and drink are said to cure and relieve in Lear's poems, his accompanying illustrations suggest otherwise: If bitter ale is said to refresh the Old Man with an owl, the illustration implies the contrary (Ede 1975). Similarly, the illustration to "There was an Old Person of Rheims" who suffers "horrible dreams" and is fed with cake to be "amused," reveals the act of feeding as a forced torture rather than as entertainment.

Although Laura Richards' violent food poems are disguised as anthropomorphic, they nevertheless stir a similar sense of discomfort. Not least because of the violent retributions their author, an American role-model of Victorian motherhood, inflicts on her anthropomorphic young victims. Thus, the stability of the kitchen turns nightmarish in "The Seven Little Tigers," and the tea ritual in "The Three Little Chickens" becomes fatal. In these poems, key symbols of safety and domesticity turn out to be the loci of violence.

Such outrageous representations of food are not common in children's literature (Daniel 2006) and may be dismissed as nonsense (in the denotative sense of the word), in accordance with the Victorians' association of Lear and Richards' verses with silly humor and juvenile fun. However, the poems disturbing (ab)uses of the traditional roles of food (as a source of nourishment, warmth, and joy, among others) also reveal carnivalesque notions that undermine the long-established role of children's literature in supporting a bourgeoisie sense of order and morality. Instead, the poems destabilize social and parental authority, or challenge ingrained Victorian concepts such as maternal devotion.

Accordingly, this paper will attempt to account for the pervasiveness of violent food representations in these poems (in light of their classification as children's literature). I will do so by examining the poems both within the literary framework of Victorian Nonsense, a deceptively rebellious genre, and in the context of their writers' specific social concerns and gender differences. Paying close attention to associations of food with extreme violence and death in both Lear and Richards' verses, and in nonsense poetry in general, challenges these poems' classification as children's literature altogether.

## Biography

Dr. Etti Gordon Ginzburg is a lecturer of English and Hebrew Literature at Oranim and Gordon colleges of education in the north of Israel. Her research interests span nineteenth-century American children's literature, Victorian nonsense poetry, children and childhood in literature, genre and canonicity, and more recently contemporary Israeli children's literature and queer theory. In 2018 she was awarded the *Children's Literature in Education* Emerging Scholar Award for her article "Queering the Victorian Nursery: Laura Richards's 'My Japanese Fan'".

## The Metaphor of Food and Gluttony in the Fairy Tale by Yu. Olesha *The Three Fat Men*

Anastasiia N. Gubaidullina and Rosa Comparelli

*The Three Fat Men*, a fairy tale written in 1924 by the Russian writer Yuri Olesha, reflects his perception of the world during the first post-revolutionary years, with the categorical divide into "good" and "evil" and utopian ideas of a perfect society of equal opportunities. However, the artistic value of the fairy tale was highly appreciated among Olesha's contemporaries and readers throughout the twentieth century. Having gone through many reprints, *The Three Fat Men*

has been illustrated by the most famous Russian artists and is still very popular as Russian family reading.

Manifesting itself in the semantics of the title so far, the motif of food and gluttony helps to express the writer's thought about the nature of spirituality. In contrast to the traditional mythological ideas about food as the basics for life, Olesha uses food as a metaphor of decay and destruction. The main images associated with food are those of the country's rulers, three fat men, compared to "sacks full of wheat", who devour both edible and inedible things (up to cannibalism). The motif of eating is closely related to the motif of an ugly, impotent corporeality. In the fairy tale, only the rich and corrupted characters have unhealthy complexion and are shown as constantly eating to suffer from indigestion and other illnesses. The images of three fat men can be compared to the folklore three-headed Serpent, or Dragon (Zmey Gorynych). In mythology, the Dragon-Devourer is associated with the rite of swallowing and later disgorging of a person, which is viewed by some researchers (V. Propp) as part of ancient initiation. Unlike negative characters, positive personages are constantly deprived of food (Dr. Gaspar cannot find a place for dinner; the dancing girl Suok cannot eat, playing the role of a doll; a mouse eats stocks of marmalade at the elderly Aunt Ganymede's house). Poor people are beautiful physically (their bodily beauty is realized through the circus plot and the images of flexible trapeze artists). Material food is opposed to spiritual food – impressions, experiences, sensations.

Any appearance of food in the fairy tale works at the level of images and metaphors and denotes a critical moment, a moment of danger (the transformation of a human head into a cabbage; the appearance of a beautiful cake before the upcoming execution of a revolutionary).

In this presentation, food images will be interpreted with the help of motivational and semiotic analysis, drawing on the historical and cultural context and with reference to the works of other Russian children's writers of the early 20th century, such as V. Mayakovsky, D. Kharms, E. Schwartz.

## Biographies

Anastasiia N. Gubaidullina is Assistant Professor in the Department of Modern Russian Literature, Faculty of Philology, National Research Tomsk State University, and also a senior researcher at the Institute of Childhood of the The Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia (Herzen University), Russia. Her principal research interests are in young adult literature, crossover fiction, cross-writing and cross-reading. Anastasiia has published widely in the area of postmodern literature studies with particular focus on trends in contemporary children's literature.

Rosa Comparelli, PhD at the Department of Modern Russian Literature, Faculty of Philology, National Research Tomsk State University. Her principal research interests the study of metaphors, motifs, key images and poetical plots in B. Iu. Poplavsky's lyrics. In her works are explained some aspects of the image system in Poplavsky's poetry and are clarified the coordinates of the poetic representation of poet's world, his aesthetic reference point in the intersection between tradition and contemporary culture, is determined the position of the poet in the context of Russian emigration literature.

# Gargantuan Appetites

Tzina Kalogirou

M. M. Bakhtin studied the Medieval Carnival as a social celebration with subversive and populist character, that turns the class domination upside down, challenging and disintegrating at the same time the solemnity of those who are possessed by its spirit. Central to all aspects of the carnival is the material bodily principle with emphasis on the lower stratum of the body which is manifested through the reckless and excessive consumption of food. In *Rabelais and his World* Bakhtin points out that the open, unfinished nature of the body is revealed more fully and completely in the act of eating, because the "body transgresses here its own limits(...). Here man tastes the world, introduces it into his body, makes it part of himself" (*Rabelais and his World*, 281).

In this paper we rely upon Bakhtin's theory of the Medieval Carnival to investigate in what ways the so called 'Gargantua script' (the giant endowed with enormous strength and insatiable appetites in François Rabelais' *La vie de Gargantua et de Pantagruel*) is appropriated in some contemporary children's picturebooks. However, the lineage of this carnivalesque creature, under several metamorphoses or disguises, can be traced in several artistic works and products of childhood culture such as in folktales, illustrations of Gustave Doré, novels by Charles Dickens, Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose*, etc. The line of the argument is also enriched with particular references to food paintings by various artists and over the centuries.

## Biography

Dr. Tzina Kalogirou is Professor of *Modern Greek Literature and Literature Teaching* in the School of Education/ Department of Primary Education at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens in Greece, and Director of the Postgraduate Programme "Rhetoric, Humanities and Education". She is the author, editor or co-editor of 16 academic books (in Greek and English) and numerous chapters/papers (in Greek, English and French) in edited volumes, international and national refereed journals, and conference proceedings. She is a member of the steering committee of The Child and the Book International Conference and the co-editor of the international academic *Journal of Literary Education*. She is also an official partner of the international research project TALIS and member of the Scientific Committee of the editorial series 'Laboratorio Children's Books', for Anicia Edizioni - Rome.

# Food Representations in Arab Children Literature in the Middle East

Kawthar Jabir Kassoum

Children's literature, both classic and modern, is full of food; such as magic food, poor food, rich food, religious food, healthy food, modern food, and much more. Modern Children's literature uses food in completely different ways compared to classic books. Modern children's books focus primarily on food as a health, ideological, or social values, whereas classic children's books, have often used food for various purposes as a way of providing advice (if you don't obey your parents, the wolf will eat you or the dog will bite you).

In other words, the images through which food is processed in children's literature make it possible to present social, ideological, economic and human questions from a new perspective. My paper reviews the relationship between food and children's literature through this modern view, and the referral to society and sexuality through Palestinian and Arab children's stories.

Some of the themes that I will cover in my paper:

- The importance of food as a representative of national identity, and belonging to homeland and Arabism.
- The importance of food as an indication of the changing role of women in the family and society at large.
- Food image as a major tool of criticism and change.
- Using food as metaphors for the emotional and social development of characters.
- The emergence of food in Arab children's literature illustrations as a more comprehensive tool generating meanings not mentioned in the text.

In my paper, I will present examples of Palestinian, Jordanian, Lebanese and Syrian stories.

## Biography

Kawthar Jabir Kassoum (PhD) is a lecturer of modern Arabic literature at Haifa University and Sakhnin College in Israel. She is the head of the Arabic Department in Sakhnin College. She worked as the Chief Inspector of Arabic language in the Ministry of Education. She is a member in the Arabic Language Academy in Israel. Her research interests include Modern Arabic Literature, Palestinian Literature, Children's literature and Creative writing. She has six compositions between research books and teaching books.

## **"A pinch of worm fat, urine of a horsefly, buttered fingers, three coins from a dead man's pocket, and two teaspoons of wishful thinking." Gastronomic Translations of Literary Nonsense in *Alice in Wonderland* and its postmodern transmedia Adaptations**

### Anna Kérchy

The 'eat me' cake and the 'drink me' potion indubitably belong to iconic markers of Alice's adventures, as the most memorable specimen of the many surprising, sensorially stimulating oddities of Wonderland. Besides contributing to the heroine's magical metamorphosis, making her shrink or grow, they constitute curious culinary composites, gustatory equivalents of the unstable signifiers of literary nonsense which impose a challenge for any interpretive attempts at meaning-fixation. In Carroll's original novel the 'drink me!' potion is described as an unusual assortment of flavors of "cherry-tart, custard, pineapple, roast turkey, toffy and hot buttered toast," that Alice finds truly tasty and finishes off in one gulp, while the 'Eat me!' cake is referred to as interchangeable with pebbles.

My paper explores how for Victorian audiences, Carroll's twisted treatment of food and drink offered delight because of the carnivalesque breaking of bourgeois table manners prescribed by the era's popular conduct books (as in the mad tea parties' systematic violation of dinner etiquette), a release of anxieties concerning food adulteration that became a public health concern of the 1850s' lived realities (fictionalized by the Duchess' contaminating her dishes with sneeze-inducing ground pepper), and concerns about child Alice's trust and fantasmatic agency in her appreciation of culinary delights (her readiness to drink a bottle of unidentifiable liquid and her imaginativeness in describing its curious taste).

I also examine how contemporary readers likely identify Alice's consumption practices with omnivorous delights characteristic of the oral phase of the Freudian account of psychosexual development where the mouth of the infant is her primary erogenous zone; or on the contrary



with a natural gourmet's "discriminating palate" a spontaneously 'acquired taste' able to distinguish different layers of flavors and appreciate radically unfamiliar gustatory sensations which are first considered unpleasant by most and usually need substantial exposure to learn to enjoy – very much like nonsense language games playing with the destabilization of meanings. Culinary translations of literary nonsense, a genre distinguished by the foregrounding of acoustic layers of significations, takes an impressive variety of forms throughout transmedia storytelling practices recycling the Wonderland theme. I shall focus on humorous and horrific extension of Carroll's nonsensical universe for gourmets, including August Imholtz's and Alison Tannenbaum's *Alice Eats Wonderland. An Irreverent Annotated Cookbook Adventure in which a Gluttonous Alice Devours Many of the Wonderland Characters*; British celebrity chef Heston Blumenthal's Wonderland-themed experimental culinary art-projects which transform eating into a surprising adventure through multisensory cooking, food pairing, flavor encapsulation, and a new scientific attitude to cuisine called "molecular gastronomy;" Tim Burton's 2010 3D CGI cinematic adventure fuelled by a synaesthetic combination of visual and gustatory nonsensical delights (in which the White Queen performs a spectacular recipe of the so-called Pishsalver curiously described with the words quoted in my title); and Jan Švankmajer's stop-motion animation adaptation that makes menacing meals reach surrealist extremes, as Alice slurps viscous jam filled with nails and needles to provoke viewers' gut reactions of food loathing and evoke the "decay at the heart of Wonderland" to mock the 'bad taste' of the cineaste's provocative anti-aesthetic agenda.

## Biography

Anna Kérchy is Associate Professor of English literature at the University of Szeged in Hungary. She authored the monographs *Alice in Transmedia Wonderland* (2016) which won the HUSSE book award, *Body-Texts in the Novels of Angela Carter* (2008), and *Essays in Feminist Aesthetics, Narratology, and Body Studies* (in Hungarian, 2018). She (co)edited nine essay collections including *The Fairy-Tale Vanguard* (with Stijn Praet, 2019) and *Translating and Transmediating Children's Literature* (with Björn Sundmark, 2020). Her recent publications include "The Acoustics of Nonsense in Lewis Carroll's Alice Tales" published in *IRCL* in July 2020.

## The Magic of Abundance: Food as a Means of Characterising Fairy-Tale Spaces

### Nada Kujundžić

Food holds a prominent place in fairy tales, with many a magic pot, enchanted tablecloth, or helpful animal providing nourishment for famished protagonists. Enchanted food often has transformative powers, while the act of sharing one's meal serves to gain allies and demonstrate positive character traits, thus earning magical assistance. However, fairy-tale foods serve as more than just a source of danger (the threat of cannibalism, poisoned food) or camaraderie, and a means of meting out rewards or punishments (food which transforms its consumers into animals). As this presentation argues, they also present an important means of indirectly characterising fairy-tale spaces. While spatial elements in (classical or traditional) fairy tales are typically not described and are often not even explicitly identified, the absence or presence of food within a given space effectively identifies it as a space of lack/poverty or abundance/wealth, as nonmagical or magical. Thus, the poverty of the home the protagonist departs from is often indicated through the lack of daily bread, while the abundance of royal and/or magical spaces is communicated through (among other elements) the rich and often inexhaustible selection of food they provide. The presentation also argues that it is not only the amount of food that serves to establish space, but also its type. Thus, (poverty-stricken) domestic spaces are typically linked

with ordinary food, such as bread, while royal and magical spaces provide treats such as cake, sugar, and meat. In its exploration of food as a means of spatial characterisation, the presentation relies on a textual analysis of the fairy tales published in Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm's *Children's and Household Tales* (1857).

## Biography

Nada Kujundžić holds a joint doctoral degree from the University of Turku (Department of Folkloristics) and the University of Zagreb (Department of Comparative Literature). Her doctoral dissertation examines narrative space and spatial transference in Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm's fairy tales. Her research interests include fairy tales and their adaptations, children's literature, popular culture, narrative space, and oral narrative genres. She has published a number of articles and book reviews in international journals, and co-edited (with Matúš Mišík) a volume on energy humanities (*Energy Humanities. Current State and Future Directions*, Springer, 2021).

## Our Daily Bread: East German production Stories for Children in the postwar Years

### Bettina Kümmerling-Meibauer and Jörg Meibauer

After the end of World War II, Germany faced a starvation crisis due to the devastation of cities and farms, the influx of refugees, the dismantling of industrial plants, and the isolationist policy of the four occupation zones. As a result, food was strongly rationed. People did forage trips or traded on the black market in order to get food. Although the supply situation slightly improved in the years that followed, the dream of having enough food, particularly for the young generation, still lingered above all political decisions. The idea of raising the life standard by providing enough basic foodstuffs was a prime claim on the political agenda of the German Democratic Republic (GDR), founded in 1949. The GDR was constituted as a socialist state modelled after the rules of Soviet governance. Therefore, the new government executed a land reform by ushering the establishment of agricultural cooperatives. This collectivization process also stretched to the fishing industry, which played a major role in the food supply of the population. In 1951, the first five-year plan was officially launched as an instrument of socialist planned economy (Wolle 2013). A fixed goal of this plan consisted in increasing the production of staple foods, such as bread, milk, potatoes, and fish. Publishers supported this endeavor by releasing informational children's books which elaborated on the benefits of the five-year plan.

In our talk, we will focus on three informational picturebooks (von Merveldt 2018) explaining the production of staple foods: *Brotfibel* (Bread Primer) (1952) by Ursula Wendorf, *Frisch gefangen kommt der Fisch* (The Fish Comes Freshly Caught) (1952) by Hilde Peschel, and *Das Milchbächlein* (The Milk Stream) (1955) by Vilmos Korn and Hans Mau. These 'production stories' illustrate how bread, fish, and milk are produced (Hoiem 2020). Apart from providing information on the production of food from ancient times to the present, the picturebooks emphasize the achievements of the five-year plan with respect to the provision of food for the citizens of the GDR. This combination of information and propagandistic messages served to encourage the readers' identification with the agenda of the socialist state (Kümmerling-Meibauer and Meibauer 2017). Hence, the presumptive role of the child reader as a naive consumer merges with the idea of the politically engaged child.

## Biographies

Bettina Kümmerling-Meibauer is Professor in the German Department at the University of Tübingen, Germany. Her research focuses on international children's literature, picturebook

research, children's films, Avantgarde children's literature, and canon processes in children's literature. She is the editor of *The Routledge Companion to Picturebooks* (Routledge, 2018).

Jörg Meibauer is Professor Emeritus of German Language and Linguistics at the Johannes Gutenberg Universität in Mainz, Germany. His research focuses on the linguistics of children's literature, pejoration and hate speech, as well as lying and deception. He is the editor of *The Oxford Handbook of Lying* (Oxford University Press, 2019).

## Hunger, Wars, Conflicts in 20 and 21th Century History. An international Study on contemporary Picture Books

Corina Laasch

Hunger "has accompanied humanity since its very beginnings" (Ziegler, 1999: 15) because it's a daily threat to the survival of humans, even today. In fact, 1 person out of 9 in the world is suffering from hunger and the world is not on track to achieve Zero Hunger, the second global goal of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development defined by the United Nations. Ziegler states that despite of the drama of this fact there is a substantial removal of hunger in the contemporary social, cultural and political debate (1999: 58). Is this phenomenon of cultural removal also present in children's literature? If so, what are the forms of its representation? The aim of my paper is to investigate the connections that exist between food, nutrition and hunger in the contemporary international production of children's literature. One of the main causes of famine is the war (Campagnaro 2015, Schneider 2014, Tomkowiak 2013). Armed conflicts undermine the food and nutrition security of people in many respects. For this purpose, 26 contemporary international Picturebooks has been selected and will be analyzed. The selection includes only picturebooks that narrate hunger during wars and conflicts all over the world beginning from the World War I until the present days: Europe (1914-1918, 1939-1945), Vietnam (1955-75), China (1966-1976), Syria (2011-), Sudan (2013-2020) and others.

The research hypothesis that seems to emerge from this study is that the representation of hunger has in fact undergone a sort of removal in the narrative of the most recent wars and that the narrator's gaze has shifted more on other aspects, such as psychological or relational ones.

### Biography

Corina Laasch, graduated in pedagogy, is member of the research group on children's literature at the University of Padua. Her research interests include literacy, comparative and global literature and second language acquisition with visual narratives. She took part in the national research project *Un fiore per Rodari, letteratura delle piccolo cose* and participated at the organization of the International Conference "Fostering Dialogue. Teaching Children's literature at University".

Recent publication: «Il burro nell'opera rodariana» in Todaro L., (edited by), Gianni Rodari. *Incontri e riflessioni a un secolo dalla nascita*, Roma, Anicia, 2020.

# Cultures, Contexts, and Cuisines: Food and Name Associations in Multicultural Chapter Books

Katy Lewis

Food is an inescapable aspect of our lives, histories, and cultures, and texts for young audiences commonly use food to represent cultural diversity. In such texts, food becomes tied to protagonists' identity through eating and cooking scenes with family members and friends. While not always the main focus of the book, food in a selection of chapter books *is* the main topic of the narrative, raising important questions about the role food plays in cultural identity. In particular, the titles of Jennifer Torres's *Stef Soto, Taco Queen* (2017), Angela Ahn's *Krista Kim-Bap* (2018), and Debbi Michiko Florence's *Jasmine Toguchi, Mochi Queen* (2017) all associate traditional foods with the main character's name. In each of these chapter books, the narrator-protagonists work through conflicts relating to these traditional foods, from learning to make the food to worrying about how ties to that food make other people think about them. Through these conflicts, the chapter books articulate how so-called traditional foods become tied to and/or signify identity. In this paper, I analyze these chapter books and how these food and name associations manifest throughout the novel, examining how authors label and explain the traditional foods that they use in their novels. Since children's literature, as a genre, is inherently about education and teaching children about the world that they live in, problems can arise when reading texts that tie together food and cultural identity. One such problem occurs if readers take up the aforementioned texts to learn about culinary authenticity (along with its ties to cultural authenticity) without seeking to understand the cultures, contexts, and cuisines that these foods develop from. Readers must be critical of how they read these foods so as to avoid narrowly defining culinary authenticity or reifying reductive ideologies about identity. As such, I also consider how the paratextual elements of the books (glossary, covers, recipes, author's notes, reviews, and so forth) frame the way readers are encouraged to explore and understand the cultures and foods presented in the books.

## Biography

Katy Lewis is a doctoral student at Illinois State University where she studies and teaches children's and young adult literature. She focuses on the ideological implications of narrative forms and theories, researching researches portrayals of rape culture ideologies in YA texts as well as how food is tied to diversity in children's and young adult literature.

# Augustus' Soup to Augustus Gloop: Punishing Bad Eaters in Children's Literature

Sara Lodge

This paper will explore the relationship between early nineteenth-century texts intended to warn children away from eating badly (picky eating, stealing food, gluttony) and later texts that create dark humour by imagining hyperbolically punitive fates for such children. Along the way, I will consider the moral value of food in children's literature.

*The Amusing Alphabet for Young Children Beginning to Read* (1812) is typical of many early nineteenth-century works for children in beginning with 'A' for apple. In this text, a boy takes the apple without Mamma's leave. It is confiscated by her and fed to a pig. The moral of the alphabet – recollecting the Biblical story of Genesis – is that stolen fruit cannot be enjoyed. Similarly, in other primers, children are warned that they should not eat more than is polite, or waste food.

Ann Taylor's poem 'The Notorious Glutton' In *Original Poems for Infant Minds* (1827) features a duck who cannot resist overeating. She expires while being treated by the doctor and her tombstone becomes a lesson to the young:

And all the young ducklings are brought by their friends,  
To learn the disgrace in which gluttony ends.

Jane's poem, 'Greedy Richard' in the same collection, reflects on how over-consumption leaves the protagonist unable to help a hungry beggar:

"I shan't take any more," said Dick:

"Dear me, I feel extremely sick:

The child is encouraged to feel disgust, as pleasure turns to guilt and nausea when the moral value of satiety and contentment is ignored.

Such didactic poetry produced many parodic responses in the course of the nineteenth century. Augustus, a child in Heinrich Hoffmann's *Der Struwwelpeter* (1845), refuses to eat his soup and expires in five days after his perversity causes him to shrink and finally evaporate. In Edward Lear's nonsense story 'The History of the Seven Families of Lake Pipple-Popple' (1865), the children of various animals expire horribly after ignoring advice in pursuing their favourite foods. Grotesquerie also infuses the blackly comic *Cautionary Tales* (1907) of Hilaire Belloc, where Henry King expires as a result of 'chewing little bits of string'.

We tend to celebrate the turn in children's literature from didactic texts to playful ones, which accompanies a shift in middle-class homes from eating being no laughing matter to food itself becoming more playful. Yet food does not lose its moral value in the twentieth-century children's text. In Roald Dahl's *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (1964), Wonka's chocolate factory becomes an emblem of capitalism. Charlie Bucket's family are literally starving: his emptiness suggested by his name. His route to ownership of the means of production is blocked by various spoiled children who over-consume. Among them is Augustus Gloop, a classic glutton; Gloop is swept away by the chocolate river and, like the other bad children, is ejected from the bowels of the factory. Augustus's bad eating recalls that of Hoffmann's Augustus. It is punished by a story that (in common with Dahl's other works *James and the Giant Peach* and *Fantastic Mr Fox*) celebrates the redistribution of rich food to the hungry. Chocolate in this tale represents not only money but imaginative fulfilment; the greedy and self-absorbed are 'bad eaters' who do not deserve these rewards.

## Biography

I am a Senior Lecturer in English, specialising in Nineteenth-century Literature and Culture, at the University of St Andrews in Scotland. I am the author of three books and over sixty published articles and chapters in the field of literary studies. I have published in leading journals including *Victorian Poetry*, *Studies in Romanticism*, *Essays in Romanticism*, and the *Rivista di Studi Vittoriani*. My most recent book, *Inventing Edward Lear* (Harvard University Press, 2018) is an interdisciplinary account of Edward Lear as a children's author, but also a musician, composer, artist and contributor to the natural sciences. Reviewers describe it as 'a dazzling book, certainly the best study of Lear yet written' (Prof. Richard Cronin, University of Glasgow); 'Brilliantly original and deeply researched' (Prof. Dinah Birch, University of Liverpool); 'Sets the standard for future work' (Anna Barton, *Times Literary Supplement*); 'deeply knowledgable and sharply written...rich and sensitive' (Prof. Seamus Perry, *Literary Review*); 'Lodge's exquisite writing bristles with insights...the only book likely to be indispensable for future study of Lear' (Prof Tom Dilworth, *Review of English Studies*).

# What will We eat in Future? – Food Culture and Food System in Cli-fi Novels for young Adults

Corina Löwe and Sabine Planka

When reading fiction about the future, food may not be the first thing that comes to our mind. Cli-fi novels as a special genre, focusses on (man-made) climate change and its devastating effects on nature and society. The reader will be mentally drawn in to follow the protagonists' intrigues and power relations, explore society building or astonishing technical solutions. But somehow the protagonists in the novels need to manage their everyday lives. As a result, food and eating often become an important aspect of the narrations and serve as a marker for climate change too. In this paper we examine three young adult novels describing the future (1) Daniel Höra's *Das Ende der Welt* (2011) [The End of the World] (2) Ursula Poznanski's *Cryptos* (2020), and (3) David Moitet's *New Earth Project: Tödliche Hoffnung* (2020) [New Earth Project: Deadly Hope].

The novels depict different stages of a changed but interrelated world: in Höra's novel the complete destruction of society due to climate collapse throws its members back into a Germany that can't be recognized as such anymore. Survivors in Poznanski's novel create virtual worlds to make the people forget the emptiness and destruction of the real world. The population in Moitet's novel is separated into those who are rich and, therefore, privileged enough to live under glass domes while those who are not privileged enough have to handle a life outside of these glass domes and have to struggle with the results of the climate change. In all three novels the processes of ecological and social transformation have important implications on food production and consumption.

Based on the culinary triangle – framework by Claude Levi-Strauss, which highlights the importance of cultural practices – we want to analyse (1) the food systems as established in the young adult novels and (2) the food culture, its social function, and what food and eating habits tell the readers about society in general.

With food practices at the heart of our social and cultural identities, the ways the authors describe food in their novels might not give an answer to what we will eat in future, but at least raise the question and bring it to the young reader's mind.

## Biographies

Dr. phil. Corina Löwe is associate professor in German Language and Literature at the Language Department of Linnaeus University, Sweden. In 2011 she defended her thesis on East-German detective novels for children. She has published widely about East-German children's literature and intermedial aspects of Berlin in texts and films, and the didactics of literature and language teaching. As a member of the Linnaeus University Centre for Intermedial and Multimodal Studies (IMS) she works in the research project: "Temporalities of the Anthropocene". Löwe is also a member of the Centre ChiLLL (Children's Literature, Language and Learning) at LNU.

Dr. phil. Sabine Planka is a literary scholar working in the field of literature/media for children and young adults from 19th to 21st century under consideration of art historical and filmic aspects. She has published various articles, has (co-)edited essay collections and has presented lectures in the above named fields. She works as a subject librarian for the humanities at the university library of Fern Universität Hagen (Germany) and as a visiting lecturer at University of Bielefeld (Germany). Additionally she works as a reviewer for various magazines such as *Buch&Maus*, *kjl:m*, and *Green Letters* and has published her first fictional novel for children in October 2020. A list of publications can be found here: <https://www.sabine-planka.de/s/Wissenschaft.html>



## *What food do we feed girls as artists upon?* Food, artistic and gender Equality in Children's Literature

Chiara Malpezzi

«What food do we feed women as artists upon?» Virginia Woolf asks herself in *A room of one's own* (2016: 108) building a strong connection between food and the material conditions of women artists, in particular writers. It is assumed that «giving, providing, serving, enjoying food are just some of the functions women have widely covered in social history [...]. Those functions have reflected cultural roles that women have suffered at first, then accepted and finally fought» (Muzzarelli & Tarozzi, 2003: 103).

These assumptions shed a new light on food as a metaphor for the achievement of both artistic and gender equality. Hence, my paper aims to outline the relevance of this under-investigated topic in children's literature. I will focus on coming-of-age stories, analyzing six contemporary biographical works of outstanding female writers: Virginia Woolf (Alkayat & Cosford, 2016; Ballista & Carrer, 2017), Emily Dickinson (Bonfiglioli, 2017), Louisa May Alcott (Masini, 2019) and two modern young heroines in a literary apprenticeship (Almond, 2012; Huizing, 2014).

Drawing from the methodology of Nodelman (2008), I will investigate two opposite narrative situations (Carrington & Arding, 2014): famine and feast. In the first situation, the lack of food represents the struggle in the artistic development: girls are affected by poverty and deprivation or are forced to starvation like in Dickinson's biography (Bonfiglioli, 2017). Writers need more than pen and paper, as May states: «There are days it seems to me I don't need anything [...] besides paper, pen and books, while there are others when I dream of Mrs Tidmans' scones» (Masini, 2019: 39). In the second one, nourishment can be interpreted as a sustainment for body and soul. Typically, it is shaped as a table prepared for tea (Ballista & Carrer, 2017), through which the artist realizes a balance between independence (a room of her own) and social realization (sharing a meal). Food is also a vital element that surrounds the enriching environment in which Mina grows up (Almond, 2012): in many pages of her diary bananas, toasted bread, *spaghetti* symbolize the taste for life that fosters her artistic writing. My hypothesis seeks to underline how, despite different literary forms, children's literature shows a connection between food and girls' development as women and artists, figuring out a possible answer to Woolf's question.

### Biography

Chiara Malpezzi is a member of the research group on children's literature at the University of Padua. Main research interests: biographies, gender studies, materiality and diversity studies. Her dissertation «The little girl writer in children's literature: autobiography and *Bildung*» received a nomination at the 2nd edition of Carla Poesio Award. She took part in the national research project *Un fiore per Rodari, letteratura delle piccole cose*. She has actively participated at the organization of the International Conference "Fostering Dialogue. Teaching Children's literature at University".

## Race and Food in a Children's Story by William Faulkner

Rosella Mamoli Zorzi

William Faulkner (1897-1962) is not especially known for his children's stories (story), or expected to have written one, but he did write a lovely story, in different versions, having a real child as addressee, like most XX century great American writers who wrote one or several stories for (real) children.

Faulkner brought into this children's tale some characters belonging to his great novels, his own "Yoknapatawpha" land mirroring the South of the USA, and some themes and metaphoric situations he was to develop in his great future novels.

In *The Wishing Tree* (1927), a little girl wakes up (to a dream) on her birthday, when all wishes can come true. At the end of the story she wakes up to reality.

The passage to the realm of imagination is marked by the crossing of a river, covered with "soft wisteria scented mist", just as in *Absalom, Absalom* (1936) the "sweet and oversweet" "wisteria perfume signals the passage from the present to the past.

Dulcie, the little girl, joins her young brother Dicky, her friend George, and her nanny Alice, thanks to a (white) "magic helper" blowing up a ladder as high as her window. The 'magic helper' will be active through the story of an adventure that takes the children out of the house and into an unknown world, where repetitions (3 times) occur often. The adventure consists in looking for the "wishing tree".

The characters in the story are four white children, a white old man, and two black adults; they are all characterized by their language, by the way they behave, by their psychological reactions, but also by the food they wish for: they can express wishes – à la *Alice in Wonderland* – such as becoming tiny or bigger, or to have some food. It is at this point that food becomes a racial sign: while the white children wish for food typical of their (white) families, such as a sandwich, candy, cookies, a chocolate malted milk, strawberries and chocolate cake and the like, the black nanny wants to have typically southern black food, such as ham and gravy and cornbread.

"The Wishing Tree" turns out to be an ecological tale, as we will see, but at the same time a tale heavily marked by the South of the USA and Faulkner's mixed attitudes as regards race.

## Biography

Rosella Mamoli Zorzi is prof. em. of American literature at the University of Venice Ca' Foscari. She has translated children's stories by Gertrude Stein, Randall Jarrell, Ford Madox Ford, Ernest Hemingway, and has worked on stories by these and other authors (N. Hawthorne, Joel Chandler Harris, e.e.cummings, Eudora Welty,). Her work has been on XX century (Faulkner, Hemingway) and XIX century American writers (recently mostly on Henry James).

## From Sardines to Sponge Cake: Culinary Nationalism and Cultural Heritage Preservation in Anna James' *Tilly and the Bookwanderers* (2019) and Laura Walter's *Mistica Maëva e l'anello di Venezia* (2006)

### Lindsay Myers

This paper will examine the role of food and the cooking and baking of national dishes in two contemporary, children's fantasy novels: *Tilly and the Bookwanderers* by the British author Anna James and *Mistica Maëva e l'anello di Venezia* –by the Italian author Laura Walters.

These works do not initially appear to have a lot in common. *Tilly and the Bookwanderers* is the story of an English girl who discovers that she has the ability to travel in and out of books and who finds herself involved in a battle to save the British Underlibrary while *Mistica Maëva* narrates the adventures of a Venetian girl and her friend who find a magic portal into an alternate sixteenth-century Venice and use the magic ring that they find there to save the city from sinking. At their core however, both books are fundamentally about the preservation of cultural heritage, and in particular about the repositories that store and display this wealth – books and buildings whose survival is threatened by the rapid economic growth at the heart of global capitalism. James has described her trilogy as "a love letter to bookstores and libraries", while Walter has

stated that her first novel was inspired by “la voglia di raccontare il fascino e la magia di Venezia” and there is a definite similarity between the warren-like British Underlibrary that connects the independent bookshops in James’ fictional London and the canals that run between Venice’s historic *piazze* and *palazzi*.

Food and the cooking or baking of national delicacies also feature prominently in both novels. The London bookstore in which the Tilly books are set has its own resident chef whose signature cakes and pastries were all inspired by classic, Anglophone children’s books and Tilly’s adventures conclude with a lavish Alice-in-Wonderland style “tea party”. Mistica’s search for a way to save Venice from the invading floodwaters, meanwhile, is fuelled by her discovery of local Venetian cuisine, and the book contains recipes for three Venetian specialties: *sardée in saòr*, *zaleti* and *bigoli in salsa*, dishes that Mistica’s grandmother makes to entice the city’s most famous *commedia dell’arte* masked character, Arlecchino, on to the streets.

Food as a marker of national identity has a long tradition in children’s literature. The manner in which these authors use national, culinary traditions to mobilise their readers into “saving” national, cultural repositories is, however, worthy of critical attention, not least because it demonstrates the deep-rooted connection that still exists in global, children’s literature between cultural-heritage preservation and cultural nationalism.

## Biography

Lindsay Myers lectures in Italian and Children’s Studies in the School of Languages, Literatures and Cultures at the National University of Ireland, Galway. She is the author of *Making the Italians: Poetics and Politics of Italian Children’s Literature* (Peter Lang, 2012) and has published extensively on Italian children’s literature, children’s fantasy and modern children’s film in *The Lion and the Unicorn, Humanities, Children’s Literature in Education* and *International Research in Children’s Literature*. Her most recent book: *Un fantasy tutto italiano: Le declinazioni del fantastico nella letteratura italiana per l’infanzia dall’Unità al XXI secolo* (ETS, 2017) is an updated Italian translation of her 2012 monograph.

## “E is for Ernest who choked on a peach”: Food, Death, and Humour in the Works of Edward Gorey

Nikola Novaković

In Edward Gorey’s numerous scenes of breakfasts, lunches, dinners, and afternoon teas, food and drink often feature with more or less prominence, and are sometimes even found in the titles of his books, such as in *The Fatal Lozenge* or *The Unknown Vegetable*. However, their seemingly innocent appearance is often tied to violence or death: a head is discovered in a breadbox in one of Gorey’s limericks, a woman murders her husband by lacing his tea with atropine, a boy dies of exposure after being punished for “splashing his soup”, and several characters are consumed by more or less fantastic creatures. And yet, throughout all such seemingly gruesome events, Gorey’s characteristically playful and absurd humour removes the edge from scenes of food-related death, misery, downfall, and even murder. Whether much attention is drawn to such events (such as in *The Unknown Vegetable*, where the entire story revolves around the discovery of a giant turnip-like vegetable that leads to a woman being buried alive) or whether they are merely mentioned in offhanded comments (for instance, about a proctor who lures a pupil into the bushes by buying him ices in order to “practice vices few people even know exist”), Gorey couches them in a frame of the ridiculous and the absurd. It is therefore the aim of this presentation to explore how Gorey achieves this curious combination of the grotesque and the humorous in scenes revolving around food, and how this approach extends to a general

confusion of tone in his darkly funny, seriocomic creations in which any manner of horror may be lurking in peaches, iced cakes, soda crackers, boiled turnips, a recipe for fudge, a family picnic, or under a haunted tea cosy.

## Biography

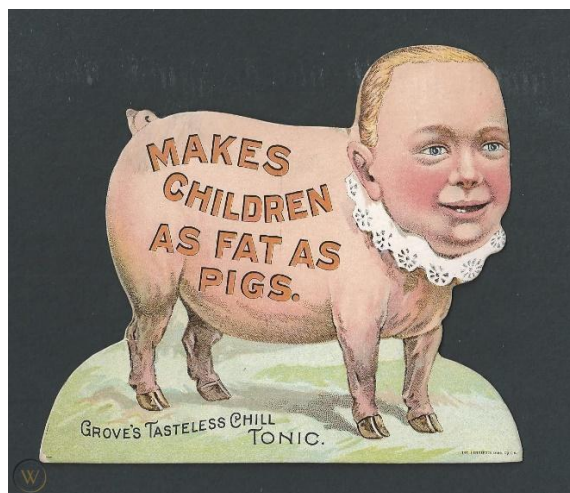
Nikola Novaković, PhD, is a lecturer of English at the University of Applied Health Sciences in Zagreb and an external associate at the University of Teacher Education in Zagreb, Croatia. His field of interest is humour in literature, especially children's literature, comic books, and graphic novels.

## Fat Bodies? Discourses of Food Abundance and Want

### Francesca Orestano

The question of food is not a new subject within the area of children's literature. Childhood intersects the discourses of food at different levels: history, culture, and gender, model a number of texts that throughout the ages have contributed, in a prismatic way, towards the definition of the identity of the child. But such identity needs definition, and needs to be culturally nuanced. My proposal dwells on the construction of such image, culling out of history, fiction, images, stories of children who can be placed at the extreme ends of a spectrum, being rather too fat or too thin, starving or overfed.

During the Victorian age, Grove "tasteless" Chill Tonic "made children as fat as pigs", and hence gained its popularity, with adverts that today look quite frightening and inappropriate to the shared paediatric notion that fat childhood is conducive to illnesses and wrong eating habits.



And yet, even this notion has its limits insofar as when viewed from the Imperial global perspective, which included areas of famine and starvation, the image of the Victorian fat child suggests that the Empire included parts of the world where food was very scarce. The same notions apply today. Children's literature looks back to its underlying culture and helps discovering fractures and unbalance already existing in the past. The discourses of food are extremely telling, especially when we conflate history, fiction, and images, and when we realize that the image of the child, whether fat or thin, incorporates our obsessions, fears, and desires related to the body.

## Biography

Francesca Orestano is Professor of English Literature at the Università degli Studi di Milano. From Early American literature she moved towards picturesque, exploring landscape garden, literature and visibility in Alexander Pope, William Gilpin, Dickens, Ruskin, Pater, Wharton, Virginia Woolf, in two monographs: *Paesaggio e finzione: William Gilpin, il Pittresco, la visibilità nella letteratura inglese* (2000), and *La parola e lo sguardo nella letteratura inglese tra Ottocento e Modernismo* (2005); and with the edited collection *Strange Sisters: Literature and Aesthetics in the Nineteenth Century* (con F. Frigerio, 2009). She dedicated several essays and books to children's literature: please visit the website children's literature in Italy for more information. On Dickens, she co-edited with N. Lennartz the collection *Dickens's Signs, Readers' Designs - New Bearings In Dickens Criticism* for Aracne, as well as *Dickens and Italy: Little Dorrit and Pictures from Italy* (with M. Hollington, 2010). She currently research intersections between history and fiction (editor with M. Bignami and A. Vescovi of *History and Narration: Looking Back from the Twentieth Century*, 2011) and the concept of Renaissance culture in the British context.

## What Do Babies and Toddlers Eat? Food in early-concept Books and concept Books published in Poland

Krzysztof Rybak

From the early weeks of their life, children 'read' books presenting everyday objects and ideas, which may be perceived in the surrounding world, i.e., concepts. Although it is difficult to call such editions 'literature,' their role in the development process of a baby reader is crucial, as 'pictures displayed in [early-concept books] are vehicles to support the child's acquisition of early concepts' as well as 'pictorial and literary competence' (Kümmerling-Meibauer & Meibauer 2005: 324; cf. *idem* 2018: 149–57). Simple and 'innocent' books – as they may seem at first – give in fact a significant glimpse into the world created by adults (authors, illustrators, and publishers) who propose 'what should constitute a prototype for the child' (*idem* 2005: 337). In the early-concept books, adults constitute the general norms – in the case of concept books, categorization of the world.

In my paper I want to analyze selected early-concept books and concept books, taking into consideration food products and kitchen utensils, classified by Kümmerling-Meibauer & Meibauer as 'food,' 'dishes,' and 'household items' (*ibidem*: 336–337), i.e., fruits, vegetables, sweets, meat, etc. As the cited scholars observed, in the early-concept books from the years 1890–2000, food appears most often; also, dishes and kitchen items are very popular. Interestingly, among these objects, one can find rather inappropriate for a baby/toddler, such as coffee beans, red wine, a penknife, a coffee grinder, or matches (*ibidem*) – inclusion of such elements raises questions concerning the idea behind the book.

To approach such decisions made in the process of creating a book, in the second part of my paper I will focus on the intentions of an author/illustrator, who fosters young reader's development of emergent literacy as well as social and cultural skills. To identify and investigate dominant trends in presenting particular elements, such as food products, dishes, and kitchen utensils, I will use ideology studies applied into the field of children's literature (Sutherland 1985, Stephens 1992).

The analysis will be based on selected books published in Poland in the 21<sup>st</sup> century – both originally Polish (i.a., "Jeden dzień" by Mizielińscy, "Pora na kalafiora" by Dudek & Nowak, "Mój dom" by Dzierżawska) and translated (Bravi's "Le livre des bruits", Kruusval's "Ellen och Olle äter", Carle's "My Very First Book of Numbers, etc.). Considering the context of the visual literacy and the implicit ideologies of their authors, the analysis will show not only what and how babies

and toddlers are instructed to eat, but also what basic concepts of food are promoted in contemporary early-concept books and concept books.

## Biography

Krzysztof Rybak (M.A.) is a Ph.D. student at the Faculty of "Artes Liberales," University of Warsaw, Poland. His main research interests are the reception of classical antiquity in children's and YA culture, children's informational (nonfiction) literature, and representation of the Holocaust in children's fiction. Currently, he is the PI in the "Oczamidziecka. Zagłada w polskiej literaturze dziecięcej i młodzieżowej po roku 1989" [Through the Eyes of a Child: The Holocaust in Polish Children's and Young Adult Literature after 1989] research project (<http://oczamidziecka.al.uw.edu.pl/index.php/en/project/>). He published in *Libri & Liberi*, *Filoteknos*, and *International Research in Children's Literature*.

## 'This body weighed 93.00 pounds': Eating Disorders, Embodiment, and Adolescent Female Agency in Laurie Halse Anderson's *Wintergirls*

### Emma Salt-Raper

Despite a growing body of literature on texts for young children, literary scholarship has largely neglected the early twenty-first century proliferation of young adult novels about teenage girls who experience eating disorders. Novels such as Laurie Halse Anderson's *Wintergirls* (2009) provide a rich site for critical exploration of the ideological, cultural and political significance of eating disorders within the contexts of the medical institution. Whilst research has been completed into the role of eating disorders as a form of expression in contemporary adolescent literature, current scholarship has yet to acknowledge the created complexities in the relationships between food, embodiment and female agency in adolescent literature. In this paper, I argue that *Wintergirls* reinforces, challenges and transforms culturally produced notions of disordered eating and recovery by tracking the text's trajectory of restitution. The paper will critically evaluate the trajectories by assessing how and where the text locates agency during the treatment of the eating disorder. Finally, it will outline how the text's fictionalisation of the medical institution acts as an agent of socialisation to promote scripts of femininity and problematise ideas of female self-identification. My research will engage with theories of female embodiment to uncover the constructed complexities of power structures which distribute bodily autonomy. The paper's critical framework combines embodiment, gender, psychology and social structures to ascertain how issues of autonomy are represented in relation to eating disorders within Anderson's novel.

My paper builds on earlier research which examines the way gendered notions of shame are cast onto young female bodies. This study will address this under-researched genre by exploring how projections of shame and sexuality add layers of complexity to the depictions of adolescent female bodies and their eating disorders within *Wintergirls*.

This paper engages with the following themes of the conference: food and the child body; concerns about food disorders; relationships between food and gender and eating within medical institutions.

## Biography

Emma began her PhD in Medical Humanities at the University of Leeds in 2019. Her research involves the representations of mental illness and trajectories of recovery within twenty-first



century young adult novels. Her research is particularly concerned with the scripts and performances of gender within portrayals of mental illness in recent fiction for adolescents, such as ideas of female embodiment and eating disorders. She is also part of the editorial team for the *Postgraduate Journal of Medical Humanities*.

## Food on Islands in Contemporary YA Literature

Monica Santini

YA authors have always been fascinated by islands as they are ideal places for rites of passage and coming of age. On islands, young boys and girls are allowed (or forced) to learn about the world and themselves away from societies or within reduced models of society. Some of the first great stories for British young boys and girls were set on islands that have eventually become part of the cultural background of generations of young readers all over the world. And if the Victorian and Edwardian *Treasure Island* and *Neverland* are now universal symbols of adventure, another unnamed Pacific island invented many years later was the setting of the first of many unsettling post-war and post-nuclear tales about survival and civilization.

In the last few years, quite a few award-winning British and American YA novels have been set on islands. These novels span through different genres, from historical fiction to very different types of fantasy stories. Both in these modern tales and in the classics mentioned above, food is undeniably linked with the process of growing up and with that of building or preserving a community. On islands food may be scarce or mysteriously abundant. It can represent danger, comfort, reward or temptation. Where does food come from? Who provides it? What skills, challenges, sacrifices or compromises does providing food imply? In other words: how does food come into play with the overall rite of passage and process of growing up of the protagonists? The paper explores the role of food in some of the best YA novels written in the last five years by showing how food determines or hinders the inescapable job of growing up and finding a place in the world. While exploring real islands such as Geraldine McCaughrean's *Stac an Armin*, Lauren Wolk's *Elizabeth Islands* or Kiran Millwood Hargrave's *Culion* and imaginary islands such as Francis Hardinge's *Myriads*, Hargrave's *Joya* and Michelle Harrison's *Crowstone*, the paper also tries to highlight similarities and differences between genres in an effort to find patterns and establish connections.

## Biography

Monica Santini is an independent scholar and secondary-school teacher. She started working on YA fiction as a PhD student and then junior lecturer at the University of Padova and she is now carrying on her research independently and promoting YA fiction among her students. She has published articles on Philip Pullman, J.K. Rowling, Kevin Crossley Holland and she has co-edited the collection *What are Young Boys and Girls Made of ?* (Unipress, 2009). She has also worked and published articles on Elizabethan letter-writing and the legacy of medieval romance in modern Britain.

# A Feminist Strike in the Kitchen: Gender and Food in Adela Turin's *Storia di Panini*

Anna Travagliati

Picture books play a crucial role in educating children, introducing social norms, and proposing desirable role models. Unfortunately, sometimes those values reflect not society's progress and reality, but an idealized and conventional past.

In spite of the fierce opposition of second-wave feminism, the old-fashioned belief that preparing and serving food is a fundamental female chore was and still is instilled through education. In particular children's books continued proposing idyllic and stereotypical images of little (and adult) housewives elated about the idea of setting the table, cooking complex dishes, and serving lunch and dinner to the male head of the family, back from work.

In 1975 Italian Adela Turin reacted to this and other sexist messages common in youth literature by founding *Dalla parte delle bambine*, a feminist publishing house for children based in Milan. Turin, both writer and editor, proposed innovative and subversive fairy tales, obtaining vast and unexpected critical and commercial success. The coeditions with the French *Des femmes* and the Spanish *Lumen*, in addition to English translations by the Writers and Readers Publishing Cooperative, ensured the books' wide circulation abroad. The public and the press were particularly fascinated by the vivid synergy between aesthetically pleasant images and the daring investigation of feminist topics, from little girls' education to domestic violence.

The theme of nourishment and gender injustice appear frequently in Turin's books: in *Rosacconfetto* (*Sugarpink Rose*), young female elephants are pushed to eat edible but bland flowers in order to become beautifully pink; in *Storia di panini* (*The Breadtime Story*), the sandwiches symbolize women's invisible domestic labor; in *Una fortunata catastrofe* (*A Fortunate Catastrophe*), the male head of the household evolves from a petty self-appointed *gourmet* to a good cook himself.

This work examines how the author, through the use and subversion of children literature's tropes, manages to make the contradictions in the choice and preparation of food apparent, conveying the topic in an attractive and understandable way to her young public.

Focusing in particular on the close reading and analysis from gender perspective of *Storia di panini* (1976), this paper will demonstrate how the eponymous sandwiches accompany the readers through the reflection on the exploitation of women's unpaid work, encouraging questions about the preparation and the consumption of food. Additionally, Turin connects this theme to other urgent feminist matters, such as the necessity of collective organization and the dangers of an otiose culture that ignores society's most immediate issues.

Republished in the 2000s in France and Italy, and slightly updated to make up for the multi-decennial gap, this remarkably frank tale of feminine liberation, where women abandon the kitchen and discover solidarity, culminating in the building of a utopic society for both men and women, still offers revolutionary and thought-provoking content to its contemporary readers.

## Biography

Anna Travagliati is a full scholarship Ph.D. student at the University of Bologna. Her doctoral project focuses on Adela Turin's *Dalla parte delle bambine*, the first Italian publishing house for feminist children's literature. She participated in international conferences held in Seattle (Modern Language Association, 2020), North Carolina (American Association for Italian Studies, 2019), and Sorrento (Sant'Anna Institute, Women of the Mediterranean, 2019). She wrote articles and essays for "DWF donnawomanfemme", Associazione di Storia Contemporanea, Enciclopedia

delle Donne. In 2020 she was awarded the Marco Polo scholarship from the University of Bologna for her research stay at the Université Paris 13 (Sorbonne Nord).

## Between Mali and Milan, between Cairo and Catania: Migration Recipes in *Sekù Is Not Afraid* and *The Sea Hides the Stars*

Maria Truglio

Debates about food and foodways, especially in regard to notions of “authentic” or “traditional” cuisines, have become a site in which anxieties about changing forms of national identity are articulated, in Italy and elsewhere. These deeply felt links between food and nation emerge in children’s books about migration. This presentation examines two recent novels that chart the stories of real life immigrants: Paolo di Stefano’s 2018 *Sekù non ha paura: Una storia di amici in fuga*, and Francesca Barra’s 2016 *Il mare nasconde le stelle: Storia vera di Remon, il ragazzo venuto dalle onde*. Both authors present these stories through the first-person voices of their protagonists: Sekù, a teenage boy from Mali, and Remon, a teenage boy from Egypt. In both texts, food figures prominently as part of the migration story for these boys who must flee home and its familiar customs and adapt to life in Italy. After a torturous journey from Mali to Milan, Sekù, now 18, would have liked to play professional soccer, but realizes a more realistic path is to get a job in a restaurant. He starts as a dishwasher at “Gino Pane e Olio,” a Roman cuisine restaurant near Porta Romana. As he watches the chefs, he moves up to kitchen assistant and after a few months masters the art of making meatballs. As he learns more recipes he continues to excel. The novel concludes on a hopeful note as Sekù becomes an admired cook living in a room above the restaurant with his Italian girlfriend. Remon, similarly, thinks often of the meals shared with his family during his lonely journey from Cairo to Sicily, recalling how he would lick the raw dough as his mother baked cookies for Christmas or Easter. Eventually adopted by a local family in Sicily, he compares the food he eats with his new family to what he was accustomed to eat in Egypt, and eventually learns to enjoy a range of typical Sicilian fare: caponata, eggplant parmesan, cannoli. He claims as a sign of true assimilation the moment he decides on a favorite pizza (topped with eggplant): “Or ho anche io la mia pizza preferita” (113). In a scene of bonding with his adoptive mother, they cook together a favorite rice-based Egyptian dish, even though they can access only about half the ingredients. Remon remarks that this shared meal preparation, even if not “equal” to the results his actual mother would achieve, was a way to bring his adoptive parents “closer” to his “his world” (113). In both novels, I argue, food functions metonymically as an instrument and a symbol cultural assimilation. However, the texts reveal a fundamental difference in their approach: *Sekù* proposes a “producer” model in which the immigrant becomes active agent who contributes to his destination culture, while *Mare* instead envisions a “consumer” model which sees the immigrant as a guest who must be fed and is therefore positioned in a perpetual state of mandated gratitude (“I cannot thank them enough” is a refrain in the text).

### Biography

Maria Truglio (Ph.D. Yale 2001) is Professor of Italian and Women’s Studies at the Pennsylvania State University. Her research investigates Italian literature from the nineteenth century to the present with attention to questions of gender and national identity formation. Her first book, *Beyond the Family Romance: The Legend of Pascoli* (U of Toronto P, 2007) examined the works of poet Giovanni Pascoli through a psychoanalytic lens. Her monograph *Italian Children’s Literature and National Identity: Childhood, Melancholy, Modernity* (Routledge, 2017) analyzed books for young readers between unification and fascism (1861-1922). She is now researching how contemporary Italian children’s literature portrays migration.

# “I thought brawns stood up?” Motherhood at the Table: the Role of the Family Meal in Creation of a maternal Ideal

Kay Waddilove

The concept of a family sharing home-cooked food around the table is a widely-naturalised image in Western culture; itself powerful, it carries connotative meanings – ‘myths’ in Barthesian terms. Such meals represent a system of values inscribed in family life that promulgate the ideal of a perfect mother serving abundant, well-cooked meals in a situation that ‘feeds’ her family physically, emotionally and culturally. In this paper I examine the family meal as a locus of cultural transmission where performative motherhood is either celebrated or castigated, and wherein the maternal identity is tested or affirmed.

The paper will interrogate constructions of maternity with a specific focus on domestic stories from the popular twentieth-century British novelists, Enid Blyton and Noel Streatfeild, at the height of their productivity in the post-war period of the long 1950s. I offer close reading of two representative texts, Blyton’s *The Family at Red-Roofs* (1945) and Streatfeild’s *The Bell Family* (1954). The emotional investment in food as an element of maternal self-esteem, and the provision of good food as an expression of good mothering is implicit in the scene in which the title quote features. Cathy Bell’s unsuccessful brawn turns out “a cross between cold soup and a half-jellied jelly”; her children will not eat it, and even the dog rejects the dish, which ends up in the pig bucket.<sup>7</sup> The offering of food is both a symbolic representation and a practical demonstration of maternal love, so refusal of it is interpreted as more than evidence of poor cooking technique; the familial rejection of the brawn that fails to ‘stand up’ is a marker of failed motherhood that effectively consigns Cathy’s maternal self-image to that pig bucket. I consider the fictional texts alongside contemporaneous socio-historic sources such as government pamphlets and lifestyle magazines, and in the light of later cultural work by investigators Carole Counihan, Sarah Sceats, Kate Cairns and Josee Johnston. I argue that these two often-denigrated popular authors offer significant representations of maternity which are in dialogue with societal narratives on the changing role of mothers in post-war Britain.

Drawing on Michel Foucault’s exploration of the ‘microphysics’ of power, I raise the question of whether the family meal, while evidently a demanding measure of idealised motherhood, can also be construed as a Foucauldian ingredient of maternal power. In exploring this possibility, I discuss how the texts may be open to both compliant and resistant readings and could thus challenge as well as affirm the received ideal of motherhood in their creation of subject positions for the young reader. I conclude by evaluating the extent to which the mother’s role today, in preparing and bringing food to the table, mirrors the maternal ideology of the long 1950s. I argue that the role of the mother as primary nourisher remains a potent force in twenty-first century maternal discourse, demonstrating that these mid-twentieth-century texts still have resonance.

## Biography

I am an independent postdoctoral researcher, currently working on constructions of family life in post-war austerity Britain during the long 1950s. Previous research has focused on gender issues in children’s texts, the societal position of women, and representations of motherhood. I have published on children’s book awards, careers series for girls, fathers in picture books, and popular 20th century children’s authors including Jacqueline Wilson and Noel Streatfeild. My former work with international programmes to promote reading for teenagers has informed my

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<sup>7</sup> Streatfeild, Noel. *The Bell Family*. London: Collins, 1954. p183

current attention to the ideological role of literature, particularly popular literature. in the transmission of cultural identity.

## Delights of Dinners, Pleasures of Picnics in the “Make-Believe” – Fantasies of Food in the Texts of the Edwardian Golden Age of Children’s Literature – Kenneth Grahame, Beatrix Potter, A.A. Milne, J.M. Barrie

Aleksandra Wiczorkiewicz



In the middle of the river there is a boat flowing gently, carrying the Water Rat, the Mole and the picnic basket with ‘coldtonguecoldhamcoldbeefpickledgherkinssaladfrenchrollscress sandwichespottedmeatgingerbeerlemonadesodawater’. “This is too much” – cries the Mole, stunned by the long enumeration of tasty treats, but during a lazy picnic on the river bank he will learn that there is a strict ‘animal etiquette’, which forbids asking about friends who have disappeared in other friends’ maws. In Kenneth Grahame’s *The Wind in the Willows* (1908) – an Edwardian fantasy about home and the pleasures of rich afternoons – food sets the boundaries between ‘Culture’ and ‘Nature’: the ‘civilised’ consuming of meals *versus* primordial eating of one another. The axis of the animal world of Beatrix Potter stories – such as *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* (1902) – sets a similar tension between feeding and eating: Peter Rabbit goes to a lettuce feast in Mr. McGregor’s garden, although the same Mr. McGregor ate Peter’s father in a pie for his dinner. Grahame’s short stories – *The Golden Age* (1895) and *Dream Days* (1898) – show even more clearly that the imaginative world of children revolves around food: the narrator, little boy of ten, dreams of the Palace in which the first chamber is the Chocolate Room, while the second contains all possible “fizzy drinks”. Food is also a constant focus of *Winnie-the-Pooh* (1926): in the idyllic world of Hundred-Acre Wood, the rhythm of the day is determined by the order of meals, and the honey-sweet “little something” is synonymous with the sweetness of childhood. Meanwhile, in the Neverland, Peter Pan’s kingdom, meals depends on his whim “and you never know whether they will be real or make-believe” (J.M. Barrie, *Peter and Wendy*, 1911). In the Golden Age of English juvenile literature – from Carroll’s *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* at the Victorian beginnings of the era up to its inter-war, post-Edwardian ends marked by the



publication of Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh* (Carpenter 1986, Hemmings 2007) – 'food fantasies' and images of eating play the key role in construction of textual universe. At the same time, children's literature was associated with food on a higher level: in the turn-of-the-century England reading was perceived as consumption according to the principle "you are what you read" (Galbraith 1997). In my presentation I will explore the Edwardian and post-Edwardian Golden Age children's classics in terms of literary representation of eating and take a closer look at the numerous similarities and intertextual connections in the realisation of 'food fantasies' in the work of Grahame, Potter, Milne and Barrie. My focus will be on the functions of food in literature, its imagery and specificity (also national and temporal – as a way of rooting the narrative in a certain space and time), as well as its translation implications, which result from the presence of this topic in the analysed works. As a context, I intend to look not only at the original texts, but also at their Polish translations in order to highlight the additional meanings of the 'food fantasies' in Edwardian children's classics.

## Biography

Aleksandra Wieczorkiewicz, MA – PhD candidate at the Faculty of Polish and Classical Philology at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland; Visiting Scholar at the Centre of International Research in Childhood: Literature, Culture, Media at the University of Reading, UK. She is working on her doctoral thesis about Polish translations of the Golden Age of English literature for children and is also a translator of children's books. Her first translated work – new translation of *Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens* – was published in 2018, along with her monograph *Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens by James Matthew Barrie. Context – Interpretation – Translation* (Lublin, KUL University Press 2018).



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