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Illustrations as Goods - the artistic value of illustration and conditions on today's book market

International symposium BIB'95

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INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM BIB'95

Thema: Illustrations as goods - the artistic value of illustration and conditions on today's book market

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Medzinárodné sympózium BIB '95 • •

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Italy

Germany

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Maria Jose Sottomayor

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Introduction

The volume of Biennale of Illustrations Bratislava 1995 appears in an unusual form. However, it is only a temporary solution. The first part of the volume consists from papers read in Slovak or Czech language at the BIB'95 International Symposium and they were edited. The second part consists from papers read in English or French. These papers are published unedited, i.e., in the form they were submitted by the authors to the organizers of the BIB.

The theme of the BIB '95 International Symposium was Illustration as Goods - it's artistic value and place in present book market. This theme ensued from general knowledge of the sad situation on present book market in the sphere of children's books. Only small number of illustrations gets to exhibitions of artistic illustration and to our BIB from the book counters. The papers at the symposium dealt with why it is so and what to do in order to change it. However, it is pleasing to know that there are many excellent artists - illustrators who did not lose all their love for children's books and illustrate them for pleasure of the children and their own pleasure. BIB'95 gave evidence of that and provided floor for dedicated words by illustrators - Polish artist Jozef Wilkoň, French illustrator Frederic Clément, Russian artist Nikolai Popov and Italian illustrator Lorenzo Mattotti. Only one paper that by Frederic Clément - is published in this volume, because other artists had not prepared their discussion contributions in writing.



The first part of the volume includes papers by PhDr. Blanka Stehlíková, leading Czech fine art theoretician, by Slovak writer Daniel Hevier, Portuguese illustrator M. J. Sottomayor and Russian theoretician and editor Olga Kondakova in Slovak, resp. Czech language.

The second part of the volume includes the already mentioned paper by Frederic Clément, the paper by leading Italian fine art expert Carla Poesio, German illustrator Binette Schroeder and Belgian children's book specialist Greet Spaen.

Thirty years ago, we discussed illustration as work of art at the symposium, nowadays we discuss it as commercial article: "One can hardly doubt about the value of artistic education. The one who cultivates the art, cultivates the mankind." (Prof. Klaus Doderer, Germany, at the BIB symposium 1967).

We are glad to have contributed to this cultivation of humanity with our symposium.

In Bratislava on September 20, 1996.

Anna Horváthová, Art historian, Scientific secretary of the symposium, Volume editor



Frédéric Clément France

J aimerais poser sur le silence qui précède mon long flot de paroles qui suivra: une phrase de José Luis Borgés que je marque systématiquement en tête de tous mes carnets de notes et d'esquisses:

"J'exerce mon Art avec le sérieux d'un enfant qui joue ... "

Ceux qui ont recontré mon travail se doutent que je ne vais pas parler du mot "marché" auquel je ne comprends absolument rien si ce n'est pour aller chercher des citrons bleus, des souris vertes, des miroirs magiques, des alouettes, non.

Non, je suis tenté de parler d'un mot

qui m'est cher:

c'est le mot cadeau.

Ce mot cadeau qui est la clé de toute ma création. Car au départ,

quand me vient l'envie, l'ideé d'un livre ou même d'une seule image.

Je sais que c'est pour l'offrir... toujours -

J'offre à une maie, à mon amour,

J'offre à ma petite fille (mon prochain livre est pour elle...)

J' offre à une passante, à un promeneur, à un petit garçon traineur de trains à roulettes,

à un lécheur de vitrine, à un rempailleur de chaises ou encore j'offre à un rat de bibliothèque.

Je glisse en douse sur papier glacé ou papier velouté tout - tout ce que j'ai dans la tête, tout ce que j'ai reçu de l'amie, de l'amour, de ma petite fille, de la passante, du petit garçon traineur de trains, du lécheur de vitrine

du rempailleur de chaisses ou du rat bibliothèque.

Je donne ou plutôt:

Je rends tout ce que j'ai reçu - toutes les merveilles que j'ai croisé, que j'ai volé, que j'ai... mangé des yeux en grand gourmand de merveilles:

merveille au quotidien: d'un sourire attrapé au vol sur les quais de Paris -

- merveille d'un poudre de papillon sur le bout de mes doigts -

- merveille d'un cri rouge de colère écrit sur un vieux mur vert de Varsovie...

- merveille du vent, grand recontuer d'histoire, dans les branches des peupliers de mon pays...

- ou merveille d'un décolleté dnas un tableau de Watteau ou d'un baiser dans un tableau de Klimt (que je viens d'admirer à Vienne)

million de merveilles à prendre..

Je prends...

Je capte, j'empoche, j'emmagasine dans ma boite cranienne, dans mes cartons, dans mes tiroires à histoires, dans mes caveines... Je tésorise les morceaux de merveilles comme une pie...

et puis...

et puis quand l'envie monte

quand le désir de dire déborde...

Je m'enferme

je descends dans mes oubliettes

dans mon germoir à images...

ça dure des semaines, des mois, des années parfois (Rilke et le livre épuisé)... des temps et des temps à découper, à trier, à peindre, à user, à polir, à repeindre à... enfiler tous ses morceaux de merveilles (qui pourraient ressembler à ces petits éclats de verre trouvés sur les plages, polis, transformés par le mer)...

à enfiler toutes ces trouvailles sur un fil de page.

Petit travail de magie, de jonglerie, d'orfévrerie:

Faire tenir en équilibre tous ces bijoux d'émotions pures - à ordonner, classer, monter tous ces trésors, à coller bout à bout tout ces débris de vie:



Collage - bricolage - mise en page et mise en scène, mise en scène et mise en vie - Donner - donner envie - surtout - voilà le cadeau - voilà... le bouquet - Faire mes livres à fleur de peau - Toujours - voilà le cadeau que je glisse entre ces deux morceaux de cartons, entre les pages de mes livre... Cadeau - et puis...

... et puis au fil du temps, au fil des titres quand la bibiographie s'allonge, s'étire, l'autre cadeau c'est... l'infidelité oui, mon infidelité à une image, à un "style"...

oui, être infidèle - prendre le risque d'être infidèle au lecteur -

Offrri à l'ami, à l'amour, à ma petite fille Alys, offrir à la passante, au lécheur de vitrine, au rempailleur de chaises, au petit traineur de trains, au rat de bibliothèque - offrir ce que je casse -

ce que je fracasse en moi - ofrir mes doutes, mes hésitations, ma fragilité de funambule - offrir mes batailles, mon acharnement à rester une plague sensible, une plague sincère, garder l'oeil rond, émerveillé, l'oeil étonné pour étonner - plague sensible et toujours... réveler et non pas répeter -

surtout - surtout être vigilant et ne pas se laissser transormer en photocopieuse comme le marché, marketing - marketing - mister marketing voudrait, pourrait y insciter -

résister tous pinceaux, tous crayons dehors -

Daniel Hevier

Medzinárodné sympózium BIB '95

Slovakia

ALICE IN THE SUPERMARKET

(A CONTRIBUTION TO THE THEME ILLUSTRATIONS AS GOODS)

don't know whether my professional background (a graduate of university study on esthetics, editor, editor in chief, owner of the publishing house, author, parent and book addict) is sufficient for this forum. If not, please be so kind to accept my several notes as opinion of a man who struggles voluntarily and with pleasure with the present symposium topic "Illustration as goods" for more than 25 years.

I understand the present symposium topic as purely theoretical, purposeful and abstracting as an illustration, respectively a book illustration and even more detailed a book illustration for children and youth, is only one layer of which a book is composed. As it is known, other ones are text, graphic design, cover, format, paper type and its weight, size of letters, literary, genre but also not defined, and sometimes irrational elements such as author's name, country of origin, reputation of the publishing house and other factors.

However, I have seen too many publishers' negotiations, I had to decide too may times whether I like this or that book, whether to buy it to myself or my children, whether a concrete illustrator meets my author's or publisher's taste to know that the illustration in a children's book is still on the first place.

A picture, in the childhood of our mankind, equally as in the childhood of each of us, was present in an immensely intensive way. And today we live in time, which I am under temptation to call sometimes as a surface visuality period. The visuality replacing shapes, lines and colours for artificial ones. The advertisement, fashion, industrial design, mass culture, TV, video, computer area, sport, motoring – these are external phenomena of the artifi-



cial visuality starting to get more and more separated from its pragmatic fundament, it becomes and independent phenomenon, even it obtains features of an individual or collective drug. Let's us mention at least the addiction to game machines or watching TV for all other forms.

This visuality, intended for a surface perception and subconscious acceptance, the visuality containing a wider and more perfect scale than the nature has, is very impressive, intensive and – dangerous.

For the present adult, or small man, a visit to a supermarket with a high level design, may become a stronger visual and emotional experience than the stay in the nature.

By my longer introduction, I tried to determine the role of a book and book illustration alone, as it seems to me more and more that the role and chance to survive at the same time is equal for both of them: to become an antipole to a collective mass production and provide to a children's recipient an intimate space, asylum for his imagination, creativity, development of moral customs and habits, logic thinking etc.

(When talking about a book, I have on my mind an archaic idea of a book Bradbury's context – a book as a carrier of a certain human mission, not industrially written and illustrates, produced, sold and scraped products (?)

This symposium theme, however, says to us that the illustration and thus also a book is goods. Illustration as goods. In this case, I would add to this opinion, saying: "Illustration as a good goods." An illustration as a good, high quality, valuable goods.

The illustration understood in this way, has to contain then many internal qualities, sometimes also controversial: it has to be strictly purposeful and free at the same time. It has to be an individual member of a wider team, subjective wishes have to be suppressed in it up to a certain degree, it has to be reduced and explosive at the same time for the viewpoint of its content and form, it has to have art values and at the same time, it should not make them absolute, it must, has to – it should not, it must not. In these collisions and overlapping of limitations and ambitions, a unique opportunity of the present illustration for children and youth is being born.

Today, the present illustration generally may become (at existing technical, typographic, communication possibilities) a magnet, attracting a childishly educated illiterate to a book, returning a place to the book, belonging to in the mankind history as it had up to now.

Of course, it may happen under conditions that the illustration will subject to a general phenomenon I called a surface visuality. For instance, if it accepts computerisation offers only on a strict selective basis, that it will be able to re-interpret incentives from advertisement, industrial design, entertainment industry, that it will simply create – I repeat it again – an intimate space for a personality of a child.

It may seem to be a paradox and surprise that this intimate space need not be always created by artistic, professionally done illustrator's phenomena we know from BIB exhibits and production of five to six publishing houses in the world. However, it cannot be created by a decadent, industrial production of illustration of Disney type either, when the original painter's handwriting is split in hands on hundreds of anonymous illustrators – craftsmen. Neither it can be created by a computer graphic technology itself.

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry was, frankly speaking, a third class painter but his illustrations to Little Prince are already not considered as author's eccentricity and book curiosity.

I mentioned this extra example to emphasise the above problem even more. The book illustration area for children and youth is a territory where not everybody may build up his tent. An excellent painter, precise graphic artist, excellent designer, perfect photographer, skilled draughtsman can be absolutely unusable for this area if hi misses the capability and readiness to create a visual intimacy.

At the moment I started to write my contribution, RAGTIME radio broadcast a listener's program in which adult people but still young listeners discussed the topic Fairy Tales with the moderator. Several times, the following opinion was heard: when I was child, I did not like Andersen's fairy tales. Why? Asked the moderator. And the answer was: I was afraid of illustrations.



In the world, where you can choose or better not to choose what to be afraid of, the illustration, book and art should not contain this possibility.

The present book for children and youth should be a private, warm Altamira the inhabitants of which may look at sings, drawing, lines, colours creating a report about their life in a slow time stream.

At the present time of real and psychic wars, collapses of countries and individuals in an organised delusion of senses, we all, who believe that it's possible to save the book, (and you know that the number of these people is lower and lower) have to do even more than it's in power of one individual. We have not too much time for to do it.

RUSSIAN CHILDREN'S ILLUSTRATION AS A COMMODITY

The problem – the children's book illustration as a commodity – is, at the first glance, a local problem and even a problem of low value as compared with those urgent global problems that have emerged as a result of the historical cataclysm the collapse of the Soviet empire. However, this problem reflects, as in a mirror, all those laws governing the unique authoritarian planned system that comprised the cornerstone of the political and economic system of the empire and that has, finally, led it to the collapse. Therefore, the formulation of this problem is of far form purely academic interest, because its solution may be of considerable practical importance.

This problem is far from simple and local. This is a multiaspectual problem, which embraces a lot of problems relating of financing, production and realisation of the illustrated children's book. In relation to Russia, all these problems must be formulated in historical and futurological aspect, since the process of transition from one political and economic system to the other proceeds here with such a high speed that it may be that at the given moment we are in the extremal point of this transition.

The first question is whether or not the Russian illustration was a commodity in the period of stagnation and whether somebody formulated it in such an aspect and derived from it the practical conclusions?. Let us begin from the end - yes, there were companies that formulated it so and made the conclusions. These companies included the West German company "J. F. Schreiber", Italian firm "Happy Books", British company "Hamish Hamilton" as well as the All/Union Copyrights Agency (VAAP) which, contributing

to the publication of Russian books in other countries, grabbed up to 90% of the royalties into its own and state budget. These companies included also the "Raduga" publishers which at that time monopolised the right to publish Russian books for foreign readers. As an example of the commodity-conscious attitude of these publishers to illustrations may be the fact of relatively-recent republishing by the "Raduga" of the collection of Russian fairy tales in all European languages. Having successfully sold hundred thousand copies of this book, these publishers paid to the book illustrator seven thousand roubles, which, at the exchange rate at that time, amounted to US 20-30. Such was the practical meaning of the right of the chosen organisations, and hence the chosen people, to use the Russian book illustration as a commodity in those stagnant, and for some people blessing, times.

And for all other foreingnes and Russians the Russian children's book illustration was not a commodity. Primarily, it was because of the fact that looking at our books people could not understand whether this illustration was of high or low quality because of the low quality of printing. The cheap an low-quality paper could not reproduce the high quality of the illustration. In addition, people could not familiarise themselves with the illustration as a whole. The counters of the children's book shops were practically empty. To familiarise foreigners with Russian books, they were sent to international book fairs. That is why the Russian illustrated books, which in their best part, are far from mediocre, were known only to specialists.

The causes of the low quality of our book printing are clear everything that was created in the USSR, except military and space technology, and maybe some aspects of academic science and art, failed to meet the requirements of international standards. Then, why was the Soviet children's book illustration at such a high artistic level, despite the fact that it was also created in the USSR?. There are a few causes, which should be divided into two groups: ideological and economic.

The ideological causes consisted in the fact that the authoritarian regime set only one task for the worker of art to glorify this regime. Nevertheless, there existed a few oases, such as classic ballet, mu-

sic, and maybe children's book illustration, where the ballet-master, musician and artist, because of high difficulty of censoring of their creative work, could work in the official, rather than "underground", sphere and, at same time, could remain honest. To be honest and enjoy the benefits, including material benefits as well, is the natural aspiration of each sincere artist. The Pushkin's assassin that the artist "cannot sell his inspiration but he may sell his manuscript "is transcribed in the XX-th century into" the artist cannot sell his inspiration, but he must sell his manuscript!". In the totalitarian period the state itself "bought the manuscript" from children's book writers and illustrator, which was the reason why so many professionals have found here the refuge.

But, we will try now to clear out the economic reasons of a high artistic level of the Soviet book illustration. There reasons are as follows:

- 1. The Soviet power liked children "Children are the only privileged class in our country", it repeated, and made two practical conclusions out of this demagogic slogan: it has established the indisputable principle of financing children's books from budget subsidies as has maximally centralised the process of their development and production. The giant publishers "Detskaya literatura" (Children's literature) with its annual planned output of 600 million copies of 528 names of books, the considerably smaller-scale publishers "Malysh", the Leningrad branch of the "Detskaya literatura" publishers and a few nonspecialized publishers were the only publishers entitled to produce books for children.
- 2. The amounts of royalties paid to the illustrators by all these publishers were strictly regulated by the state document named "Rates of royalties".

The relatively high royalties played highly positive role in raising the quality of the Russian book illustration. This assertion needs the explanation.

On the one hand, the economic position of Russian artists in the totalitarian period was very poor, but, on the other hand, it was relatively high. It was poor because the market of works of art did not exist in Russia at all. Private persons did not buy pa-

inting, the borders of the state were locked, and artists could not make both ends meet by their art. However, the state acquired works of art for museums, clubs, hotels, state farms and sometimes simply for stockpiling in a centralised manner through the agency of a few organisations. For instance, the Union of Artists was subsidised annually with 10 million roubles, a considerable sum at that time, for acquiring the works of art. Smaller, but considerable sums, were allotted to the Ministry of Culture, the Tretyakov Gallery and other organisations. But the selection and the prince of acquired works of art depended primarily on their ideology (the closer the work of art was to the socialist realism, the higher was its price) and, secondly, were governed by the rules of the game established by the mafia. The state bought the works of art of those who occupied high official posts or who were, say, merited or people's artists of the USSR, order-bearers, prominent functionaries of the Union of Artists, members of purchasing commissions or relatives or friends of the abovementioned people. The artists of this group never experienced material hardships. But, the other 90% of artists did experience them. That is why the work on book illustrations was considered by artists to be one of the honest ways of survival. The royalty paid for them allowed artists to live comfortable by the Soviet standards. In the 1970-1980s the averring royalty for a large cycle of illustrations for a book amounted to 10-15 thousand roubles. Taking into account the fact that the monthly wage of a professor or a high/skilled worker amounted to 350-450 roubles, it may be concluded that an artist could live on his or her royalty for 1.5-2 years while working on the nest cycle of illustrations and painting on canvas. It is no accidental that it was children's book illustration that allowed such renowned and highly-paid vanguard artists as I. Kabakov, E. Bulatov, O. Vasilyev, B. Yankilevsky, F. Gorokhovsky and other to survive and master their art of easel-painting.

It is worthwhile to note that these royalties were high not only by Soviet standards, but were also commensurate with the remuneration of the work of book illustrator in Western countries. As far as I know, the average royalty of an average artist in any Western country was not tremendously higher than the average



salary of workers of other professions. Maybe this is the reason why many children's books in Western countries are illustrated either in haste or by not highly professional artists.

3. Another reason accounting for a high quality of the Russian book illustration arises from the same very principle of supercentralized power. so characteristic for the Soviet system as a whole. The production activity in this system was planned and did not obey the laws of economics. Therefore, the work of publisher was almost unaffected by the economic efficiency realised produce'. The problems of financing of publishing of books, their commercial expediency, selling, production costs, selling prices and quality of printing were no concern of the director, the chief editor and the chief illustrator. The chief illustrator did not walk on the ground, but "soared up in the sky of pure art". Having almost absolute authority, he or she was responsible only for ideology, a little bit for artistic quality and for nothing else.

Was it good or bad?. It was good when in the 1930s V. Lebedev, one of the highest-calibre Russian vanguard artists, became the chief illustrator of the Leningrad division of the "Detskaya Literatura" publishers (he occupied the post of a consultant). Having allowed the group of such brilliant artists as V. Honashevich, D. Mitrokhin, N. Tyrsu, E. Charushin, V. Kurdov, Yu. Vasnetsov to rally round him, and having combined into a single flow of inspiratory creation the work of these artists and the work of such talented writers and poets as S. Marshak, K. Chukovsky, D. Kharms, A. Vvedensky, Ye. Shavarts, B, Zhitkov and others, Lebedev has created the school of children's book illustration of the Soviet period, the school of such inertial power that even today it continues to influence the work of the Russian book illustrators.

It should be remembered that this school was created at the time when poets and writers could not fall asleep at nights. And their insomnia was not caused by their inspiration. They were waiting for the "black Maria" to carry them away form their homes to tortures and executions. And the life of the children for whom these artists and writers wrote and illustrated books was still more wretched. It was the time when on April 7, 1935 on the initiative of I. Stalin, "the best friend of children", the Central Executive Committee and

the Council of People's Commissars adopted the Decree on criminal responsibility of children "of 12 years of age and older". After executions of their fathers, the homeless children often turned against their will into thieves, were put behind bars and often shot. During the Great Patriotic War, children who came 15 min late at their workplace or who picked up even one potato on a collective farm field where sentenced to 10 years of imprisonment. Only Russians know what kind of a prison the Russian prison is and only one man Franz Kafka - was able to paint it in his imagination. And when I think about the situation in which those artist - our predecessors painted their fine illustrations, I know that the human being possesses such inspiration and purity that can survive, even in the nightmarish situations. I begin to think that we have not lost the love of the God.

Gut this period was the 1930s, the period when the tidal wave of the Russian contemplative vanguardism had not yet ebbed away. But it was replaced by thoroughly new phenomena and thoroughly new people.

Now, I can list the names of the chief illustrators of the later period whose activity may also be interpreted as a unique phenomenon, if only in terms of the time period during which they occupied this post (in one occasion it lasted for 40 years) and the scope of their administrative authority, which was so vast that the creative work and, sometimes the life of many writers and artists, were dependent on their whims. And, just as in all other spheres in this country, this authority was absolutely boundless and immune from responsibility. However, such boundless authority was granted not only to chief illustrators. In the USSR, there was such a nomenclature-level post, absolutely incomprehensible for Western people, as the post of the Chief Artist of the USSR State Committee of Printing Matters. This man was essentially a supervisor over all the book illustrations for 1/6 part of the Earth's land. It is paradoxically that during nearly 20 years this post was occupied by the man who was neither an artist nor even a professional in this sphere. There were also the spheres of concentration of this authority - the semi-public formations composed of the artists having a sort of the state certificate for immortality. However, the not so much possessed such authority as strived to possess it, for it gave fantastic advantages to the bearers for such certificate.



Summarizing the aforesaid I contend that, just as in all other spheres of the national economy of the USSR, the sphere of children's book illustration had its own institute of the boundless authority immune to economic responsibility. Functioning of this institute complicated extremely the normal creative life of artists. Many of them, particularly young artists, could not adapt themselves to this situation, and, feeling that their talent would remain unrealised, became drunkards in line with the Russian tradition, or even committed suicide. But, on the other hand, this institute yielded also much benefits. Ignoring of economic laws and complete indifference to profits from the publishing activity made it possible in many cases to bring up young promising artists, publish the book whose illustrations, though dislike by the public at large, were the real works of art, and avoid the sugariness and primitivazation of the Soviet children's book illustrations.

And, finally, the last aspect of the problem of the book illustration as a commodity concerns the state price-formation policy in the sphere of the children's book. The strict Regulations on price formation that existed in the USSR could not be violated under any circumstances. The ultimate aim of there Regulations was to allow every worker to buy his or her children any books and in any number. In 1988 a coloured small-format book cost 5 kopeks and a large-format book with more than ten illustrations - from 1 to 2.30 roubles. The minimum worker's wage of 80 roubles was enough to bay 1600 small-size books or about 50 large-format books, i.e. enough to buy a small library. An average salary of high-paid people in 450 roubles was sufficient to buy 9000 small-format and about 400 large-format books - it was the volume of a medium-size library.

But in reality, far from everything was so nice as was written in the Regulations. First, a considerable part of books could not be sold even despite their very low price. These books told children the stories about the "grandfather Lenin", about pioneer Pavlik Morozov who betrayed his father and about the "dear Party". All those books were, in fact, a waste paper.

Secondly, books for children were published in too many copies by Western standards. The small-format books - by the millions,



the large-format books - by hundreds of thousand. But for the immense country with tremendous number of book readers it was like a drop in the ocean. Finely-illustrated children's books were literally washed out from the book shop counters. The lion's share of these books went from printing houses and stores directly to the blackmarketers who sold them at prices from three to fifteen times their nominal price. A certain number of copies was distributed amoung the nomenclatura.

The conclusion is very simple - during the 70 years of the Soviet power the children's book illustration was never regarded as a commodity. It was a commodity only for the black-market traders, for an extremelylimited number of Western publishers and for those state organisations which were permitted to trade it. The illustrator here was legitimately robbed.

But, on the other hand, this very system contributed to some achievements in the sphere of children's book illustrations: the purely commercial, mass-culture illustration accounted for a small percentage in the total volume of books for children. The collective of book illustrators was distinguished by a high professionalism. For all the difference in individual techniques of the book illustrators, they were combined into a whole organism, which can legitimately be named the Russian school of the children's book illustrators of the XX-th century.

The Soviet empire has collapsed, Russia is balancing on the edge of collapse, the planned economy has perished and became gradually replaced by primitive market, which is often called in Russia "bazaar"

The book publishing sphere was the sphere where these "bazaar" relations became realised most rapidly. There are a few reasons for this:

- 1. Tremendous scarcity of books.
- 2. Abolishment of censorship and lifting of bans and taboos that were imposed on a great number of themes, authors and entire genres.
- **3.** Availability of the material base for production of books, i.e. paper and printing houses.
- Q Quick turnover of capital and high level of profits.



In addition to such génres as pornography and detective stories, the literature for children was the sphere where the requirements for book publishing activity were fully met. Therefore, this sphere attracted thousand of businessmen. The two giant publishers were supplemented with about two thousand dwarf publishers that have flooded the market with diverse books for children. These books covered primarily such literature génres as Russian and West-European fairy tales and the popular children's literature. In terms of the type, these books ranged from books without illustrations at all to the "luxurious" books overloaded by illustrations. In the former case the publishers limit themselves only to a bright book cover saving money through dispensing with illustrations, in the latter case that try to use the illustrative cycles which were early in a high demand. First, these books arise nostalgia with children's parents and, secondly, in most cases the writers and illustrators of these books, and sometimes their legal successors too, died thus relieving publishers from responsibility of payment of rayalties. It should be noted that when we see the recently-made book illustrations, most of them is painted with negligence and in haste. Exclusion here are only the old-school professionals who simply do not know what the negligence and haste are in the work. The children's book illustration is being gradually conquered now by mass-culture, sugary fineness, mechanical and computerised indifference of comics. The Russians, as always, more willingly imitate the West's demerits than its merits. The book illustration has already become a tradable commodity.

The most important parameter characterising economic efficiency of trade turnover is the price. I will put aside here the problems of production cost and dwell only upon the sale price of the book. Here, we witness now the revolutionary, or more exactly counterrevolutionary, changes. The symbolic price of the Soviet book has turned into the real price and increased 1500-fold. The large-format illustrated books sell now at 1500 roubles each. It is very cheap if we convert this sum into dollars. But if we compare this price with the real salary in Russia, we will see that it is a very high price. The minimum wages in Russia now amount to 7500 roubles and the real wages of professors and high-skilled workers to statesector enterprises - and the still constitute an overwhelming



majority-varies from 40 to 60 thousand roubles. Hence, the minimum wages are now enough only to buy 750 small-format books, instead of 9000, as was the case five years ago, and the averagehigh-salary worker or scientist can buy now only 5 instead of 50 medium-quality books. The enormous difference. Though, now these books are aplenty at every corner.

Let us consider now how the new commodity-relations principle affects now the book publishing process. Due to this principle the state-sector publishers have completely exhausted their resources. They have still retained the same outward attributes of publishers -

the same building, the same plaques with their names, the same trademarks, and in most cases, the same directors, and chief editor and illustrators, and the same slightly contracted collectives. Today the "Detskaya literatura" publishers employ 160 people, but they do not publish books. In 1993 these publishers produce 34 names of books as compared with 528 in 1988. Commentary is needless!

The state-sector publishers have no finances to publish books, the not only fail to receive subsidies but even great difficulties in obtaining soft credits. The tax system does not stimulate the initiative. In the structural form in which the state-sector publishers exist today they cannot be resuscitated.

But what sort of organisations are those 6200 private, cooperative and joint-stock publishers which are now trying to outstrip one another in publishing books? In most cases these publishers incorporate only a few people, each of whom is an essentially "Jack of all trades".

In some cases, these publishers incorporate only two people the wive and the husband, two brothers, and even the twins (not Siamese). Were is the source of their initial capital? Do not wait for the answer. Maybe they have obtained soft credit, may they have received the capital from the grandmother - sponsor, maybe they are laundrying the narcobusiness money. People say in joke now that the legendary capitals of the CPSU are invested now into the noble business the aim of which is to provide each child with his or her own library. The money yields profits and is paid back rapidly. Still.



And for so long as the books are rapidly paid back and are in high demand, and for so long as the Russian Agency on Protection of Intellectual property (RAIS) and the Committee on Protection of Consumers' rights are practically idling, publishers may violate all the rights, customs and even may forget about decency. These right, customs, decency, let alone problems of ethical and aesthetic education of children, are absolutely ignored by these publishers that in many cases do not present even their names and addresses, let alone the date of issue, the number of copies and the name of editor! Real samizdat! Only not for the sake of dissemination of dissident ideas, as was the case in the 1960-1970s, but for the sake of money, as is the case in the 1990s. Not surprising that among the people now in charge of book publishing you may rarely find the professional publishers. Most of them are people of various professions, sometimes - artists who have given up painting.

Let us summarise the aforesaid facts: In the transitory period of primitive "bazaar" capitalism the Russian book illustration became at last a commodity. But this fact has brought many misfortunes to it: considerably lower quality, orientation towards mass-culture tastes of readers, ignoration by some publishers of the humanistic traditions of the Russian book illustration and encroachment on copyright. These misfortunes also include the fact of immigration of many talented illustrators or their work under contracts with foreign publishers. Many talented book illustrators have switched over to asel painting, because it has become much more profitable to paint on canvas and sell paintings than to cover the marathon distance from the commencement of the work on illustrations to the publishing of the book and receive nearly nothing for this Sisyphean toil. And the last, but far form the least, misfortune is the fact that the overwhelming majority of the modern books are not only created by amateurish artistic editors, but published without such editors at all. The modern "smart" reader is absolutely ignorant of the fact that the artistic editor is not only the guarantor of the high artistic culture of the book, but also the seeker for young talented illustrators, who can refine their talent and make them high professionals, Now, the promising but "green" illustrator is not needed by publishers, because he or she cannot guarantee fast profits. The professional artistic editor is not needed for them either, even though the profession of the artistic editor is so scarce now in Russia.



But there were not only "losses", but "profits" as well. First, the books for children have become much larger in number, they are no longer short-of-supply goods. Secondly the illustrators have lost the sense of fear. This fear - the feeling common for all Soviet people - was aggravated in the book illustrator by the fear of his college who had become his supervisor.

Now, the illustrator who knows that he or she is capable of making good illustrations fears nobody. He or she does no offer any longer his or her services to publishers, but publishers request his or her services. As for supervisors, or merited or people's artists, the posts or ranks mean now almost nothing for the reader at large and, hence, for the illustrator as well. And this is one of the most positive factors of the collapse of the institute of centralised authority of one artist over another established by the system of the "winning", "developed", "stagnant" socialism.

I have considered the problem of "illustration as a commodity" in the retrospective aspect and in the aspect of the present-day book publishing. Now, I will try to make the forecasts, which, to may opinion, may be both pessimistic and optimistic.

The optimistic forecast: In a few years children's books will no longer be scarce products. There will no longer be superprofits, and the period of "catch and run" will come to its end. They will be replaced by fierce, but fair, competition destined to transform our national economy as a whole, provided, certainly, that the country will manage to come out of the political and economic crisis. In such situation, only those publishers will manage to revive which publish competitive books, i.e. finely-illustrated and printed and, I would say, "intelligent" books. The Role of the illustrator will grow still higher and the new publishers will, at last, learn that they will not be able to survive without the professional artistic editor, who is indispensable for long-term development of book publishing.

The second optimistic forecast is that if the new more natural and more reasonable economic laws establish themselves in Russia, the royalties of book illustrators will undoubtedly rise and book illustrators will no longer have to immigrate or work under contracts with foreign publishers or change their artistic génre. Maybe some of them even return home.

The third optimistic forecast: the state-sector publishers, which will be compelled in fierce competitive struggle to rely on their own power alone, will carry out the radical, rather than cosmetic, restructuring of their activity.

At last, the fourth optimistic forecast: the price on books is unlikely to rise so high and the dollar is unlikely to fall so low that it would be more profitable to import books than to produce them in Russia. I.e. the book will remain thatonly kind of commodity in Russia which is not imported and which is affordable not only for traders but for workers as well.

And which may be the forecast of a pessimist who, as people said in the stagnant times, is also an optimist, but only well informed.

If the Russian economy fails to perform radical restructuring, the process of decomposition of the Russian statehood will run amock. Russia will be self-destroyed together with its people. Though, the history knows such cataclysms, nonetheless even on the historical scale it will be a tragedy, because what will die together with the people is the most compassionate art of the XIX-th century and the most utopic art of the XX-th century. In this tremendous archipelago of the art, there is the small fragrant island that I love just as I love my motherland, my home and my family. This island is the very singular school of the Russian children's book illustration. And if it happens, just as is forecast by pessimists, then the best representatives of this school will either immigrate or become extinct or go into other genres of the art. The school itself will die. And when I think about this possible fate of this school, I imagine myself saying it the words with which N. Oleynikov, the talented poetabsurdist, who wrote both for children and adults, applied to the small fish being fried on the pan. In those grim times, for the poet this fish was probably the symbol of all life creatures that were dying not their natural death. For me, this fish symbolises my beloved, bright, multifaceted and vigorous school of the Russian children's book illustration:

Oh, my small carp-fish being fried on the pan,

Where is your yesterday's smile?



O. Kondakova, artist, leading artistic editor of the "Detskaya Literatura" publishers, President of publishing company "Golden Cocky".

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Medzinárodné sympózium BIB '95

SOME NOTES ON BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

In a constantly growing number of books issued for children, books having a well cultivated graphic design are always in the minority. This situation is not caused only by the level of illustration itself. However, the lack of art is seen at a children's book in the most significant way.

The illustration does not use to be a primary component of the book. It's part of the book unit in which individual elements complete each other mutually. The graphic design and illustration should act in a book as instruments of a good orchestra. An unadequate organisation of the text, inappropriate choice of letters and badly done typography, and the effect of the best illustration may be damaged. We would also find examples of it at BIB exhibits, frequently already on book jackets. A wide team of experts has its share in the illustrated chidrenôs book and their close co-operation has to be organised by somebody.

Therefore, I consider a non professional approach of the publisher's sphere for a primary originator of a bad quality children's book. These are people who should co-ordinate and inspire a team of experts to their outcomes. However, their ideas about a book are uncertain and especially without any respect of art design. The publishers themselves do not usually involve necessary experts managers. Maybe they do not realise how important and difficult the visual book component is. In such a complex unit as a children's book usually is, this amateur approach is clearly visible.

In our post communist countries, in a free entrepreneurial sphere, man cheap imported books appeared with cartoon pictures. We cannot accuse the artist of these publications monstrosity, as he



prepared his drawings for animation possibilities but a man, who reproduces these pictures in a book in a static form. Here, a misunderstanding of specific features of a book illustration and emotionlessness to a book appear. The other side of it is that the market being flooded by this ballast, does not provide any space for a real illustration creation. It is notably a social side of the matter but to make possible to an illustrator to grow and grow up, he has to be given opportunities and it is not enough to get them in a occasional and sporadic way.

I had the opportunity to take part in several workshops for illustrators from so called developing countries. Though they frequently came from countries with a rich art tradition, their developmental level in the illustrated book area consisted in the insufficient book awareness of publishers and editors, who should know haw to navigate an artist at making illustrations. Parallel to illustration making, participants had an opportunity to get acquainted with the basic book typography what was highly appreciated by them by the way. I leave on consideration of this event organisers whether to organise such workshops also in the future.

In Slovakia we had a well functioning publishing house for children's books Mladé letá. It was established in hard times of the communist ideology and beside good books, it issued also a lot of bad books but within it, a graphic design department arose and its editorsô work consisted especially in managerial activities. They searched for and professionally assisted to part time illustrators. They submitted exact requirements on extent, type, number and economic consumption of illustrations to them. They tried to visualise illustrator's naturel and orientation. They supervised the book graphic design or invited to co-operation a graphic designer. They followed and protected illustrator's interests in the production process They were able to change flexibly original ideas about a book, if illustrator's imagination required it. They significantly contributed to a high artistic value of children's books because their approach was professional.

Some years ago, at reducing the number of workers, the management of the publishing house was of such an opinion that itôs possible cancel this department as the first of all. Today, this publis-



hing house is standing at the end of its doom. I have no other comments.

At the Faculty of Fine Arts in Bratislava, we try to get potential illustrators acquainted with complex problems within the book culture, typography and book production side. It is not simple, as a book needs for its arise many various professions and in lectures, frequently insufficient space is left for it. We hope that at least the most basic awareness and attitude to a book as to an artefact wall arise at our students, removing gradually a non professional approach to book creation questions.

I think that in this sense, the BIB institution and Bibiana have some debts in a certain support toward professional audience, perhaps by organising competitions, initiating tenders and publisherôs events, effort to build up not only illustratorô awareness but also awareness about a perfect and beautiful book.

The illustration never was and will never be goods. The same as a music composition and theatre performance record cannot be. It depends on all who devote to books that making illustrations is not changed for goods production under the economic pressure.

In thirties, on American journal set up as one criterium of the cultural level in the society also possession of a personal library. The utility of books may be transferred to microfiches, computer databanks by the time but a book artefact is irreplaceable by these media. Reading and parallel perception of artistic illustration, decoration and book material component is especially for a children's reader the fundamental basis for the emotional education. The book culture level is a mirror of the cultural level in the society.

Ľubomír Krátky graphic design Bratislava

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Carla Poesio Italy

THE BOOK COVER: A MEETING POINT BETWEEN ART AND ADVERTISING COMMUNICATION

o day no one objects anymore when the book, and especially the illustrated book, are considered as goods.

From this standpoint the book is subjected to the laws of marketing; must combine together art and commercial profit, must keep the competition with TV and other media, cleverly exploiting the resources of the image.

Its existence relies on meeting the audience's requirements and conquering the audience itself.

It is goods even when compared to other goods and their technique of distribution. We can verify it as far as the actual selling strategies are concerned, i.e. new ways and places of selling, like supermarkets, newsagents and fairs.

To clarify this picture let us take into account a component of the book - such as the bookcover which is provide with a double function: the commercial and the artistic, tightly connected.

Like the disk jacket (and, why not? Like a chocolate box) the cover is the containing exalting its content.

It is the touchstone for both: the graphic designer and the illustrator (and sometime the two rôles coincide in the same person). But it is mostly a famed graphic who is in charge of dealing with the creation of a new format and of a distinctive design which, in turn must reveal the style, the mark and the cultural aims of the publisher.



The message conveyed by the book cover is multifaceted: not only and advertising message but also an informative, an interpretative and an aesthetic message.

Bruno Munari, one of the greatest Italian designers, said: "THE BOOK COVER IS A SMALL POSTER", thus underlining its value appeal to the observer who has to look at it, to read the innerpages and, of course, to buy the book.

THE INTERPRETATIVE WORK

In my opinion the work of the illustrator in the field of interpretation of the text is engaging and important as much as the physical, material creation of the illustration.

I have been often disturbed by doubt.

Having been several times a member of BIB jury as well as of other national and international juries in the field of illustration, I wonder whether we, the jurors, gave much more attention to the graphic elements, to the compositive and colouristic qualities, to the originality of the illustration more than to the way in which the illustration had interpreted the text.

Did we evaluate enough the deepness, the coherence of the interpretation, that is the capacity of reading the text which the artist showed in his illustration? Did we evaluate enough his taste, his intelligent choice of meanings, his skill of enhancing the text without betraying it?

The interpretation of the text, the selection of its most significant aspects is one of the artist's primary tasks in order to answer to the demands of art as well as to the exigencies of an appealing communication.

MEETING THE SERIES ' EXIGENCIES

But other tasks are equally important and difficult to accomplish as regards book covers and their double nature of ART and GO-ODS.

I pointed out that generally a talented designer (Albe Steiner called him a "graphic redacteur") has been charged of creating the
graphic setting of the series: the type of format, the grid, the font, the lettering a.s.o.

His aim is to differentiate the new series from an other series already existing on the market. The series, in fact, must be immediately identifiable among many others.

This research of DIFFERENTIATION shall be expressed in a particular device which shall remain the same in the whole series.

Yet the illustrator must struggle in order to tune his need for being new and original in every book cover to the recurring graphic device, mentioned above - which can be seen as a constant created by the designer.

SOME EXAMPLES

Now I'll show some examples of Italian book covers within the context of their bookseries.

I have chosen book covers of pocket books or of rather cheap series, to show how the artists solved the problem of assigning ot the covers an advertising and informative connotation on one hand - as required by the exigency "books as goods" - and an aesthetic and interpretative value on the other.

Emanuele Luzzati's artistic invention is originally submitted to the graphic setting created by the designer Claudio Saba for the serie "La freccia azzura" by Editori Riuniti publishing house: a definite space cleared than the blue background (and also viceversa). Luzzati treats this space as a door, letting his figures go out of the frame. Like actors on stage his caracters come in and go out of such door, and start, like that the action which is narrated in the book.

We see it clearly in the slide with Ali Baba where one of the forty thieves is peeping behind the supposed door.

The same applies to the parade opened by Pulcinella's wife in Punch and the golden fish, a revision of the old fairy tale of the poor fisherman with greedy wife. The pagentry involves also the final page of the cover.



Also Grazia Nidasio in the series "Volta pagina" (Turn the page) of Emme Edizioni publishing house adopts a similar formula. She depicts the caracters as they were moving sideways towards the edge of the cover (title of the book: A trap in your mouth by Michel ucet). The same happens in the following slide (title of the book: Veronica by A Nanclti) where the characters "attack" the events which are narrated in the pages inside.

THE APPEAL OF THE COMPOSITION

Another orientation is the one of selecting some characters AND some objects that refer more than other ones to the plot and arranging them in a composition exiting at the utmost the reader's interest and curiosity. To underline this artistic aggression.

I quote here the words of a series director: " I choose book covers which look the reader's eyes"

This procedure implies a previous, well meditated work of weighting, of the evaluating the fundamentals of the narration.

For instance: in the rich series of the publisher PIEMME, called "The steam boat", the graphic device implies essentially a back ground where the white space of the grid has a primary rôle. Almost every illustrator of the series exploits in his own way such "island of white".

Let us see Emilio Uberuaga's work for the book The with of the mountain by Gloria Diaz where the heroine is a quite modern witch with her favourite hobby of flying dangerously: an activity which has been very impressive for the illustrator. His book cover in fact focuses on the dizziness of the flight (almost a plane-dive). The witche's body is in an anomalous position, visually transformed in a hideogramm or in an emblematic hierogliph, midway between hour an surreality.

Also Chiara Carrer (the winner of Caralonia Prize 1993) has chosen a humorous book cover for the book The monster' house. Here the theme of horror fades in a visually suggested question:

"is IT really there or does IT simply seem to be?"

In fact the monster ins only a shadow, a terrifying one, indeed but not enough to frighten the baby hero who advances fearlessly.



Also Carmen Solč Vendrell in her bookcover for The mistery of the hounted house by David Adler, PIENNE publisher, chooses horror as a main theme. She creates a shadowy almost indistinct figure in order to suggest the sense of gloomy theatregoing. Moreover, she accentuates it by unifying with the same phosphorescent yellow colour three key point: the monster's eyes, the hero's shirt and the background which defines the outside of the dangerous room, which is thus isolated with its frightening content.

Nicoletta Costa for the book cover of the castle's ghost by Mira Lobe, PIENNES publisher, represents the hero of the plot: a ghost. She points out the innocuousness of this peaceful ghost, who is very prone to sleep, and for such liking, haunts especially bedrooms (which look so abundant in the composition).

Harmlessness and peacefulness are expressed through the insistent roundness of the forms and the unlikely red cheeks of the hero.

THE HERO

The illustrator quite often chooses to represent in the book cover the hero alone or with a second level character. He tries sometime to confer some peculiar traits on him (her) or them in order to allow the observer to foresee or to guess the observer other special features of such character and to make him, layer, at the same time, to find his expectations being realised in the inner pages.

Aun BALZOLA follows such orientation creating the bookcover of Histories of Franz by Christine Nöstlinger, PIEMME Publisher. In the plot the hero is described as an introverse boy, quite hyper sensitive, with a lot of difficulties in his attempts to integrate himself with the others. Obviously these are psychological connotations and it is not easy to express them visually. Asun Balzola fulfils the task by representing the boy in an unusual position: upside down (and quite at ease in it!). The form is reduced to the essentially but is full of expressiveness. This illustration is an example not only of an intelligent interpretation of a text but also of a great strength of communication which exploits very well the "Island of white" mentioned above which the designer previewed as a device for the whole series.



The following slide shows the work of Chiara Carrer for the book cover of Christine Nöstlinger's A cat is not a pillow, PIEM-ME publisher. Chiara creates a contrast in the figure of the big cat (getting it form a careful reading of the text). The animal looks resigned to its rôle of pet (actually of "pillow-cat", according to the title), hyper nursed by men. But his constant dreams of independence and freedom appear evident from a detail: the cat is looking at a very small bird above him which is really enjoying freedom and independence.

THE HERO'S PORTRAIT

The hero's portrait is the classic solution for a book cover: so much classic as a to risk obviousness.

To avoid such risk the artist must engage himself to make this portrait as original as possible, thus stirring the observer's interest and curiosity to the most.

A photo or a simply realistic illustration are generally cheapish. The portrait should prompt and allow a subjective participation of the observer to the hero's physiognomy more than showing it in full. In other words: the illustration should make him (her)feel that he (she) may become like a "partner" both of the writer and of the illustrator and make him (her) bring his (her) mental contribution to the global result. One of the functions of art is to intensify the perception of reality.

In the book cover of The talisman of Adriatic's sea by Joan Manuel Gisbert, PIEMME publisher, Alfonso Ruano's line (a line which evokes more than imposing) leaves to the observer the possibility of being a partner in the hero's representation. The illustrator has placed the boy near an adult (who is a second leading character) facing towards opposed directions from each other. Their clothes (oriental for the adult, monastic for the boy) refer to some significants points of the plot.

In another Ruano's book cover, for Pipi the pink young monkey by Collodi, PIEMME publisher, the dress has once again a fundamental rôle. With a hint of XVIII century's fashion and in the mannerism of the body's position. Ruano accentuates the anthoropo-



morphysm of the young monkey. The animal shows an anomalous grace of dandy and Ruano, supports it with a showy landscape. It's an elegant, high class garden, possibly the work of a large team of gardeners and servants. The "stage design" thus becomes a good key of admittance into the plot.

ALLUSION AS PORTRAIT

And finally another solution as regards the portraying of the hero in some novels for advanced readers.

The book cover insists in the non realistic representation: the artist prefers allusions, references, metaphors.

Let us see two book covers by Stefano Ricci, one of the participant to the Biennale 1995 for the series "The lynx", Salani publisher.

The first one has been created for Skinhead, a novel by Marie Hhagelmann, Salani Publisher.

Ricci uses a strong line echoing an expressionistic style and evokes a face which is mixture of rebellion, suffering and disadaptation. Such effect is fully reached by the harsh twist of the head. The small razor (which is only apparently extraneous to the portrait and a fleeting detail) reminds us of an important remark by Milton Glasser: "The task of an illustrator is that of creating links and connections among phelomenons and objects which seem to exist independently the ones from the others..."

The sharp and clashing colours, as well as the contrast of the figure with the order and the symmetry of the lettering, suggest a violent personality. I would define this book cover a wonderful example an artistic blow in the nose: a real success for a book cover.

We find the same style in the book cover for Don Giovanni by Andrea Stanisci, Salani publisher. It is a mystery novel dealing with the performance of Mozart's opera.

Here the mask of the noble charmer, don Juan seems to withdraw behind an emblematic body. A body which exist only through a grabbing arm: a gesture midway between the jest of the mask and a desperate yearning. Here too, as in the previous illustration,

the setting on the bias of the figure gives to the book cover a great clashing strength and a surreal perversity.

For all the book covers I have shown we might coin the label "strong visual invitations" to the reading (as well as to the purchase!) for the book. An invitation which is to day indispensable. Artistic achievements high even if submitted to the boundaries of economy, and to the laws of the present market.

However, in the present as in the past, the memory of the impressive books we have read and of those ones we would have read, is a visual memory too, which lingers constantly.

Binette Shoroeder Germany

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"REASONS FOR CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOKS BEING AN INTERNATIONAL SUCCESS - OR THE OPPOSITE" REFLECTIONS ON COPRODUCTION

irst of all I would like to thank you very much for your kind invitation. It always has been a great pleasure for me to come to beautiful Bratislava

Before going into the matter I would like to point out that in this lecture I will concentrate on childrens picture books of a HIGH ARTISTIC and/or VERY INTERESTING QUALITY.

There are so many brilliant illustrators in the world. In this lecture I only can show some examples from my collection - please forgive me if I miss one of your favourites.

I. My MAIN CONCERN

In school we all haven been well educated in writing and reading, but the visual education was very superficial. Our school systems ignores its importance more and more - at least in Germany. A fact which is depressing, especially in these times, where the modern medias, like TV, video, computergames etc. Are overfloating the life of our children.

For me children's picturebook illustrations belong to the most important materials there are to teach ,,looking", to gradually introduce children to visual qualities to CULTURE.



Teachers, parents, adults in general have got rather arrogant attitude towards children. I am sure you all have heard some of them say "oh, but this is much too beautiful,… but this is much too good… but this is much too intellectual for children…!"

Sure enough - also artistic illustrations can or should be devided into those which are for the very small, those which are mainly for school children and those which are for children from, lets say ten years on - that's the habit.

But watch out! Don't put your limits too low! Adults will have to learn that children are much more intelligent than they think. Sometimes children understand much better than grownups what a painter wants to express. A child of three years or even less is able to understand rather complicated and demanding illustrations or at least parts of it, simply because it is FASCINATED by it. In getting older, it will understand more and more and the child will grow with the illustration. These are the books they will treasure their whole life long.

(Right after the war, when I was still a little child, I had only very few children's picturebooks. My grandfather used to show me some of his artbooks about the quattrocento, about Brueghel and Bosh and I absolutely loved it and especially the painting about hell with all its horrors thrilled and fascinated me. Your will agree that these kind of paintings are not easy to digest! They had a strong influence on my whole life and work).

II. My MAXIM

This is why I aim and claim to support the most possible variety in contemporary art of illustration. The culture of illustration. Its high standards should be cultivated, encouraged and promoted to the benefit of our children.

III. About the PRESENT SITUATION OF CHILDREN'S BOOK ILLUSTRATION

The big boom of childrens picturebooks on the international market started only about 30 years ago.



I would like to speak to you about these 30 years, but not without looking back for some moments into publishing habits of the last century.

(I mainly speak about the German situation, but I think it was more or less a bit the same everywhere.)

PUBLISHING IN THE 19TH CENTURY

It is not uninteresting that already in the 19th century you could find mass market books of very low quality which were sold not by the piece but by the kilo or ton. The Löwnsohn Verlag, a kind of forerunner of coproduction, printed mass market books terribly bad taste in many languages and exported then in a great range above all to England, but also Scandinavia and other European countries. Books of high quality like those of Kate Greenaway never reached an equal print run. You see, things haven's changed too much.

Publishing on base of licence has been done since a long time but selling a licence means, that you have to produce and publish the book first. Only then you look for a licence partner, who is prepared to loin into the second edition or to buy the films.

A NEW ERA OF BOOK PUBLISHING

We all know that it is extremely expensive to produce a picturebook. A small publishing house with a small budget in a small country with a small bookmarket couldn't afford the cost of ambitious bookprojects. This was the moment for COPRODUCTION, a magic word in the world of books since.

Around 1961 two publishing houses from Switzerland had the same idea: to do coproductions instead of licences. BETTINA HÜRLIMANN from Atlantis Verlag, a wellknown and rich publishing house with childrens picturebook department since 1930.

And DIMITRI SIDJANSKI from Nord-Süd-Verlag. He was daring newcorner, an outsider with no money but with revolutionary ideas and lots of idealism.

It never was clear weather it was Bettina Hürlimann or Dimitri Sidjanski who did the first coproduction. At least Dimitri Sidjanski

was the one who would not have been able to afford a single book without coproduction - he simply didn't have the money to do so.

Both publishing houses created a phascinating variety of books. The books of Bettina Hürlimann were highly artistic, but more in a traditional way. Those of Nord-Süd were artistic and avantgardistic without being sophisticated.

Very soon other publishers realised how clever the idea of coproduction was - and that there was a lot of money to make. New children's picturebook publishing houses popped up everywhere and they all joined into the coproduction party. Some of them specialised in creating the books, others in buying them. In the end of sixties it were Harlin Quist (USA) and Franôois Ruy Vidal (France) who kreatur a new kind of very well designed sophisticated, avantgardistic and sometimes shocking picture books. They definitely have changed the world of children's picturebooks.

The art of illustration had turned from a regional level to an international one. It was thrilling to watch foreign illustrators entering the german market. International standards brought in new impulses and challenges. Illustrators from countries all over the world showed us new ways how to transport delicate and difficult problems into childrens picturebooks, taboo topics like fear, aggression, violence, war, death etc.

And it was a overwhelming moment when one day english humour and nonsense walked into german bookstores, childrens rooms and kindergardens!

A new era had started, a kind of gloden age of illustration, which lasted for about 20 years. (It is significant, that on the other hand the tradition of illustration for adult books went way down.)

I myself am indepted to coproductions for my greatest success artistic as well as financial. I was a lucky girl to meet Dimitri Sidjansk at the Frankfurt Bookfair in 1969. With North-South Books I was introduced into the international bookmarket, happily enjoying "the golden age of illustration". But I must say that in the first 20 years I have been much more successful in foreign countries than in my own country Germany. (Only about 6 years ago I started a kind of german career with "The Frogprince". 1A The german picturebook lobby and the journalists sort of "discovered" me... after all that time!)

1B "Lupinchen" and 1C "Florian and Tractor Max" internationally have been my most successful books. Both books reached a world edition of about 250.000 copies - each - over a period of 25 years! So no illusions! To become rich as an illustrator you need much more copies sold than that! To be true, I never earned enough money to make a good living. I was lucky enough to find a wonderful husband who made it possible for me to work on my books as long as I need to sometimes up to three years and more...

THE 80s

But since the beginning of the 80s, the big boom of highly artistic children's picturebooks is over. The economical demands started to bring down the artistic quality of the books. The rich and big Publishing houses discovered the market and developed criterions for successful books. All of a sudden every picturebook had to be fullcolour, glossy, looking rich and expensive.

Without question, there are many excellent picture books which have taken the international market by storm and have rightly made their producers world-famous. Nonetheless, as a longtime collector of international picture books, I have come to speak of an "international illustration pie" which nowadays generally is offered in the book shops of the economically well-established countries. It needs a lot of patience, tenacity and a "good nose" in order to still find good books whether of regional or ethnic character or even unusual sophisticated and excentric books. The books which you normally find in a bookstore are all a bit the same - easy to digest. Which means that a children's picture book which is chosen for coproduction should please about everybody - the children (and adults!) in France and England as well as those in the States, in Scandinavia and in Japan etc.

Result: If an illustrator wants to be successful in coproduction, he has to develop a style which is easy to sell in every country. Many illustrators could not follow this demand. Others created new successful styles.

Facit: We only can hope that in the end not only giant publishers will survive. That there will always be some ,,outsiders" who don't ,,sell their souls..."

IV. WHAT IS IT THAT MAKES A CHILDREN'S PICTUREBOOK AN INTERNATIONAL SUCCESS - OR THE OPPOSITE?

Medzinárodné sympózium BIB '95 • • • • • • •

Before we go into this matter, I would like to show you some of the very great illustrators of the past, some classics which still have a big influence on childrensbook illustration of our days.

In SCANDINAVIA Elsa Beskow's 1 "Hänschen im Blaubeerwald" became a real classic. A classic of our time is Tove Jansson 3.

In FRANCE the charming pictures of Bouté de Monvel 5 have left their traces and so have those of Edmond Dulac 6. A modern classic is Jean de Brunoff's 7 "Barbar".

The RUSSIAN classic is Bilibin 8. B. Lebedev 9 stays for the russian avantgarde in childrens picturebooks.

ENGLAND has given us Kate Greenaway 10 and Arthur Rackham 11.

And the UNITED STATES join in with "Little Nemo" by Windsor McCay 13, with Walt Disney... and with Maurice Sendak 14.

You will find their enriching influence a bit everywhere in the world of modern childrensbook illustration. They still are a kind of solid base to all what happens today in the field of childrens picturebooks.

But now let us go into analysing picturebooks and lets start with the succesful ones:

ANALYSE 1

SUCCESSFUL SUBJECTS FOR STORIES

- stories about little animals, like mice, rabbits, squirrels, little piglets and at the moment especially about little bears.

Earnest E. Schepard "Winnie the Pooh" - thats the one who started it all! GB. I don't show him - you all know him!

15 Maurice Sendak "Little Bear" USA



16 Gabrielle Vincent "Earnest et Celestine" F

17 Hans de Beer "Kleine Bär, wohin little Bear?" NL

18 Barbara Firth "Can't you sleep little Bear?" GB

19 Jane Hissey "Little Bears trousers" GB

20 Quint Buchholz "Schlaf gut, kleiner Bär"

and so on and so on

- stories about little children - think of Eva Erikson and Helen Oxenbury!

- but also stories about monsters or fearful animals and how to defeat fear

21 Anthony Browne "Gorilla" GB

22 Tony Ross "I am coming to get you" GB

23 Jean Claverie "Jeremie peur de rien" F

SUCESSFUL TECHNIQUES:

- drawing (mainly pen and ink), combined with watercolor.

24 Maurice Sendak "Where the wild thing are" USA

25 Eva Erikson "Große Schwester und kleiner Bruder" DA

- watercolour

26 Georges Lemoine "Leila" F

27 Chihiro Iwasaki J

SUCCESSFUL STYLES:

- comiclike styles, mostly combined with the "successful technique": pen and ink plus watercolour.

28 Quentin blake " The dancing frog" GB

29 William Steig "Shrek" GB

30 Tony Ross "Oscar got the blame" GB

31 Martin Hadnford "Where's Wally?" GB

32 Olof Landström "Herr Bohm und der Hering" S

33 Sven Nordquist "Mama Muh schaukelt" S



35 Lucy Cousins "Maisy goes swimming" GB

Exception: Loustal "Dune" 35A, 35B, a french comic star. His style is too sophisticated to be a success on the international children's book market.

- historicising styles, reminding of other centuries or of illustrations done by p.ex. Arthur Rackham, Bouté de Monvel, Kate Greenaway etc.

36 Jindra Capek "Der Hahn im Korb" (illuminations 15 AD)

37-38 Genadi Spirin "Rapunzel", "Die Nase" (historicism, russian painting of the last century) Russia

40 Lisbeth Zwerger "Die sieben Raben" (Rackham) Austria

41 Kaarina Kaila "Däumelinchen" (Rackham, Beskow etc) FL

42 Stomi Ichikawa (Bouté de Monvel) J

45-46 Michael Sowa "Esterhayz" (romanticism) D

47-48 Vladimir Radunsky "The Pub grew up", "Hail to Mail", USA/Russia, (russian avantgarde, Lebedev)

At this point I would like to show you some very successful illustrators, whose work have got two different sides. One side is perfectly adapted to the demands of coproduction, the other one is not.

The first one is HELEN OXENBURY 49-53. I adore her work, her english humour. You may remember her early style: funny, wicked, grotesque. She was rather successful with these illustrations.

But her real career started when she began to work for Sebastian Walker of Walker Books. She did a serie of little board books for him which became worldwide success. Her illustrations were still funny, but not grotesque. Her heroes, especially little children, were of a new loveable quality. Perhaps this had to do with the fact that she had a new baby or her own at that time.

Her illustrations from that time on were very different. They became more "normal". Her drawing were no more wicked, still very funny, but very close to nature and she began to use watercolour in a classic and very professional way. She has lost the "bite" of her early work, she now is "digesteable" in the best meaning of the word. And her books sell like hot cakes!



Nixt is MITSUMASA ANNO 54-56, internationally the most wellknown japanese illustrator. He has made a lot of unforgettable books which have been published all over the world. Some people might not even realise that he is japanese. But ANNO has created also some very japanese books.

KAZUO IWAMURA 57-60 became very famous with his books about mice and squirrels. Some years ago I discovered a book, which was very different and which will never be published outside of Japan. "In the last train".

JOZEF WILKON 61-66 is another example. I am sure most of you know his work the famous baby lion books, etc etc. But there is quite another side to his work, a side of high artistic quality a very polish side. These books never were published outside Poland

This seems a good transition to our next chapter, to the books which in their own country might even be quite successful, but which have little or no chance in field of International Coproduction.

ANALYSE 2:

BRILLANT BOOKS - BUT TOO DIFFICULT SUBJECTS TO BE SUCCESSFUL

- stories about political, social problems (always with exceptions!)

67 Jörg Müller "Der Aufstand der Tiere" (new medias)

68 Peter Schimmel "Die Lisa, ein Leben" (u.o. about Nazi time)

69 Carme Sole Vendrel "Les enfants de la mer" (children in Brazil)

Exceptions: Roberto Innocenti 69A "Rosa Weiß" I (concentration camp)

70 Wenche Oyen "Abschied von Rune" N (death)

FABULOUS BOOKS IN UNSUCCESSFUL TECHNIQUES

- black and white illustrations

71 Chris van Allsburg "Jumanji" USA

72 Arthur Geisert "Oink" USA

73 Gennadi Kalinovsky "Alice" GUS

74 Keitsaburo Tejima J

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75 Katrin Mensing "Bruno ist brummig"

- illustrations done in oil colour or other "heavy" colours

74A Antoon Kring "Olaf et Marjorie" (École)

76AA Nicole Claveloux

- illustrations done with collages

76C Sara "Dans la Guele du Loup" (Épigones)

76E Binette Schroeder "Lelebum"

76G "Zebby"

WONDERFUL BOOKS IN UNSUCCESSFUL STYLES

-illustrations of a special regional touch and-or ethnic character

78 Tatjana Mawrina GUS

80 Swetosar Ostrow Gpopular prints, the Luboks

82 Suekichi Akaba "The rats sumo" J

83 Toshio Kajiyama "The wind festival" J

84 Yasuo Segawa "Gioh" J

85 Yasuo Segawa "The battle of the Monkey and the crabs" J

86,87 Takaaki Nomura "Grandpa's Town" J

89 Raymond Meeks "Pheasant and Kingfisher" Australia

ARTISTIC BOOKS f la KLEE, KANDINSKY, MATISSE ETC ARE BOUND

TO BE UNSUCCESSFUL

99 Mireille Vautier "Une lle dans ma beignoire" F (Matisse)

90 Woodleigh Hubbard "C is for curios" USA (Klee, Kandin-

sky)

91 Lane Smith "Big Pets" USA (Klee, Kandinsky)

92 Kristiina Louhi FL (Klee)

94 Antoni Boratynski P (Klee)

96 Kunio Sato J (German expressionism)

100 Nikolaus Heindelbach D "Der Ball oder ein Nachmittag mit Berti" (German expressionism, Georges Grosz, Otto Dix)

101 Keiji Ito/Yorouyu Ikuta "Klin Klan" (Surrealismus) J

102 Yuji Kobajashi (Max Ernst) J

103 Chris van Allsburg "The Stranger" (Edward Hopper) USA

STUNNING BOOKS WHICH ARE TOO SOPHISTICATED, TOO EXCENTRIC, TOO ABSTRACT ETC.

Scandinavia: (Although Norway has only 4 millions inhabitants, you find a lot of most interesting and avantgardistic books. This is only possible, because the publishinghouses are subsidised by the Norwegian government.)

105, 107 Fam Ekman N

109 Ibn Sandemose N

112 Saara Tikka F

- Exception: 112A Anna Höglund S. Her excentric illustrations are very popular in Germany and very much loved by children and adults as well

France: (In France the level of quality has never really gone down. In the last years some publishing houses like p.ex. Epigone, Grandir, Editions du Rouerge, Syros but also Seuil Jeunesse, École des Loisirs, Pastel, Le Sourire qui mort etc. Produced a range of most interesting avantgardistic books)

114, 116 Claire Forgeot "Maco des Grands Bois", "Talhuic"

117 Jean Christian Knaff "Manhattan"

119 Gregoire Solotareff "Lulu" (published by Moritz Verlat,

a subsidiary company set up in Germany by École des Loisirs. The critics were enthousiastic - but I have not seen a single book in the bookstores I go to)

120,121 Fédéric Rébéna "Qui a tué Minou-Bonbon?"

123, 124, 125 Anne Brouillard "Lesourire du Loup"

Spain:

125 Francisco Melendez "El verdadero inventor del Buque Submarine"

United States:

127, 128 William Joyce "A Day with Wilbur Robinson"

129 David Wiesner "Tuesday"

You will have notice, that England does not appear in the chapter about unsuccessful books. The english picturebook market is in a charming way very traditional - perhaps this is the secret of its big international success. The avantgarde has got very little chance in England.

At this point you may ask, why artist use these unpopular techniques and styles which norrwminded parents don't accept for their children. One reason could be that in our tie bookillustrations for "adult-books" are out of fashion. If as an illustrator you don't like or if you don't habe the chance to do illustrations for periodicals and other magazines, you are left with children's picturebooks.

As I mentioned already at the beginning, I personally think that these ambitious illustrations are a great chance for the children's visual education and for the improvement in the art of children's book illustration.

Still - we al know that these kind of sophisticated books have no chance on the coproduction market, although these books mostly represent essence of national culture.

V. EXCEPTIONS

There are some exceptions which do not fit in the theories and patterns mentioned above. The three following artists have collected nearly everything in their work which you think MUST make

them a total failure on the international market. But it didn't. They may not be best-sellers, but they have started to make their way into the big international coproduction business.

130 STASYS EIDRIGEVICIUS, born in Vilnius, Lithuania, living in Poland. Winner of the grand Prix in Bratislava and many other prizes.

131 DUSAN KALLAY from Bratislava, Slovakia. Winner of the Grand Prix at the BIB Bratislava and the Hans Christian Andersen award.

132 And last not least KVETA PACOVSKA from Prag, winner o the Hans Christian Andersen Award and Many other prizes.

Did you realise that these three famous illustrator all come from the eastern part of Europe?

VI. ILLUSTRATION IN THE EASTERN PART OF EUROPE

Till a very short time ago the world of illustration as well as the political world were devided in two: the East and the West.

The development of illustration in the East was totally different from the one in the West. As long as an illustrator didn't expose himself politically and as long as his work was not too excentric, he had all liberty to do what he wanted - at least this is the impression I got. An illustrator was supported financially, he could experiment and work in very individual ways - and he never had to consider the demands of the economic market, as books in the comunist countries were fully subsidised. Picturebooks in the Ex-UDSSR p.ex. were printed in editions of 20 000s and more and were sold out in about a week.

But if your style was too modern or if you or members of your family had a different political opinion, you could easily get into difficulties. At this point it might be interesting to realise that the outstanding artist and Hans Crhistian Andersen prize winner Kveta Pacovska was never admitted to the BIB.

Also in the east of Germany a very different kind of development in childrensbook illustration took place. As the techniques in

printing were rather poor, the artists had to adjust themselves. The result was a culture of drawing of very high level, some times bizarre, in the continuety of the german tradition of drawing which goes back to such artist as Dürer and those of the 19th century and the famous two: Otto Dix and Georges Grosz. The german drawing mainly is not pleasant. It tends to show the ugly, the unpleasant side of life.

This very german tradition nearly got lost in the western part of Germany, where everything had to be fullcolour, glossy, perfect and NICE in a rather american kind of way.

Since the "Wende" some east german illustrators have found new publishing houses, other could stay with their old publishing houses - and still others lost their work. A few years ago I was afraid that the eastgerman illustrators might be forced to adjust themselves to the western americanised bookmarket. But I am happy to say that in fact they were able to keep their wonderful "eastern qualities" and some of them made their way into the "western" bookmarket, giving it a new interesting and lively touch. But I do not know if they will be successful in coproduction - I hope for the best.

Coming to the end I would like to show you a long line of illustrations from the eastern part of Germany, from the ExCSFR, from Poland, Lithuania and Russia.

The eastern Part of GERMANY:

133 Eva Natus-Salamoun "Das Rolandslied"

134 Regine Grube-Heinecke "Methusalem"

135 Roswitha Grüttner "Gobia mit dem ellenlagen Haar"

136 Franz Wahle "Pfannkichen Dickbauch"

137 Franz Zuleck "Vor Katzen hab ich keine Angst"

138 Hans Ticha "Von Räuberchen, dem Rock un dem Ziegenbock", "Klein Zaches, genant Zinnober"

139 Christa Unzner-Fischer "Verkehrte Welt"

140 Volker Pfüller "Vater ist der beste", "Köning Edmund, der Gefürchtete"

141 Manfred Bofinger "Konfetti"

142 Egbert Herfurth "Der zerstreute Zauberer" "Das derdiedasbuch"

143 Klaus Ensikat "Jeder nach seiner Art"

The CZECH and the SLOVAKIAN REPUBLIC always have been shining examples for excellent illustration:

144 Albin Brunovski

145 Ondrej Zimka

146 Frantisek Skala

147 Vaclav Spale

149 Jirji Salamoun

POLAND: a country, famous for its brillant grafik design

150 Janusz Stanny

151 Robert Knuth

152 Jerzy Czerniawski

154-156 Wieslav Rosocha

LITHVANIA: famous for every different, beautiful books

157 Sigute Valiuviene

158 Marija Ladigaite

159 Leonardas Gutauskas

160 Bronius Leonavicius "Bruknele"

161 Irena Guobiene

162 Gintaras Gesevicius

163 Kestutis Kasparavicius "Münchhausen" (now published by Schreiber-Esslingen)

and last not least RUSSIA:

164 Genadij Pavlischin "Märchen von Amur"

165 Vera Pavlova

166 Juri Vascenko

167 Alexander Koschkin "Pinocchio"

168 Michail Majofis

169 Sergej Kovalenkov (Now with Schreiber-Esslingen)



170 Boris Diodorow "Nils Holgerson" (Now with Ipornée, France)

171 Nicolai Popov (Now with Michael Neugebauer Verlag, Austria)

There is an enormous and phascinating artistic potential in the east. The breakdown of the economy, the political insecurity above all in Russia, in Lithvania and in Poland have taken on alarming proportions which endanger also the existence of many illustrators.

The economic situation in the Slovakian and the Czech Republic is much better. These countries have always been famous for their beautiful books. But if today you go to a bookstore you will find very few new book of interesting quality...only some of the "international illustration pie".

I have hear that many new small publishing houses have been founded in Russia - most of them disappear after a short time. Most of them are bound to fail, because they lack money and know haw. Still, they are a proof that lots of efforts are made, that culture is alive and carries on.

We only can hope, that the high standard of illustration of the east european countries will survive and will stimulate the western market which has become so poor already.

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Greet Spaepen

Belgium

ILLUSTRATIONS AS A COMMERCIAL ARTICLE A STATUS QUESTIONS IN BELGIUM

Flandes. You can look at illustrations as a commercial article from two different angles.

1. the illustration as a commercial article on its own.

2. The illustration as a commercial article as part of the book for which it has been made.

I have tried to make a survey of the use of illustrations as commercial articles in these two ways in Belgium.

ILLUSTRATION ON ITS OWN

Looking at the illustration in this way. You could say that the illustration is in itself the article that is to be sold.

In Belgium, some illustrators sell their original work as a work of art. Some illustrators want to keep all the originals they have. Whether the illustrator can sell his art or not, depends entirely on his celebrity or his connections in the world of art.

Another interesting way of selling the illustrations, is the use of illustrations on all kinds of objects. Here, the illustration is a means to sell something else. And that can be anything from placements to cutlery, garments, beakers,...

In Belgium the situation may be slightly different from other countries.

I have the impression that we buy and sell millions of illustrations every year. But, not one of our illustrators has any benefit from this.

Looking at all the gadgets I could find in my house, carrying illustrations I found masses of objects bearing classical illustrations like Beatrix Potter's Winnie the Pooh, Walt Disney's etc. These can probably be found anywhere in the world. In the northern part of Belgium we do have gadgets carrying illustrations by Dick Bruna and Fiep Westendrop. This might be due to the fact that the fact that the Bruna Books and Annie M. G, Schmidt are very popular in Flanders.

I did not find one object carrying illustrations coming from a genuine Belgian children's book, and I wonder if this is also the case in other countries.

A typical Belgian phenomenon, could be the massive use of illustrations coming from comic albums: Suske en Wiske, Asterix, Jommeke,...

ILLUSTRATION AS PART OF THE BOOK

An illustration could also be regarded as a commercial article in that sense, that it sells the book it has been made for. I have tried to find out to what extend the illustration is used as a means to sell the book. Therefore I sent a small questionnaire to all publishers of childrens' books in Flanders, focusing on the question: how does an illustration influence the economical aspect of bookpublishing?

The questionnaire was divided in three parts: fiction books, nonfiction books and picture books. The answers were given by the editors of the children's book in the publishing houses.

Fiction books: 8 respondents

- When choosing the illustrations for a fiction book, all publishers take into account the age of the target group and the content of the book. The majority also takes in account the series the book will be published in. For translations, not one of them takes notice of the original illustrations.



- All respondents say that the cover of a book influences sales figures, they all make use of the cover when they promote the book, all but one say that the general outlook of a book influences sale.

- As far as the inside illustrations are concerned, they only have influence on the individual buyer, the person who has the book in his hand. Inside illustrations are far more important in books for smaller children.

- Half of the respondents make promotion material based on illustrations. These are mostly booklayers, postcards and posters. Sometimes T-shirts are made, calendars, badges.

- Only one publisher makes gadgets carrying illustrations.

- All publishers but one say that illustrations make books expensive, they are a considerable weight on the budget. One publisher says they do not have any influence, but he then adds, that books simply have to have illustrations. To him, illustrations are so necessary that should not be considered an extra cost.

- All respondents but two say that illustrations have no impact on selling foreign rights.

Non-fiction books: 6 respondents

- When choosing the illustrations for a non-fiction book, all publishers take into account the age of the target group and the content of the book. The majority also takes in account the series the book will be published in. For translations, 4 out of 6 respondents take notice of the original illustrations. In translated non-fiction books most illustrations are taken over.

- All respondents say that the cover of a book influences sales figures, they all make use of the cover when they promote the book. All publishers say that the general outlook of a book influences sale.

- All respondents say that the cover of a book influences sales figures, they all make use of the cover when they promote the book. All publishers say that the general outlook of a book influences sale.



- The inside illustrations are far more important here than in fictions books. They influence not only the individual buyer but also distributors, booksellers and librarians.

- Illustrations are rarely used to promote the book. Covers are most important.

- No publisher makes gadgets.

- To all respondents illustrations are the most important factor in the cost of the book. They sometimes make the book too expensive to make.

- Contrary to fiction books, illustrations do affect selling foreign rights of non-fiction books. Reasons could be: no language barrier, possibility to make coeditions etc.

Picture books: 7 respondents

- When choosing the illustrations for a picture book, all publishers take into account the age of the target group and the content of the book. The majority also takes into account the series the book will be published in. For translated books, original illustrations are decisive.

- All respondents say that the cover of a book has an influence on the selling, they all make use of the cover when they promote the book, all say that the general outlook of a book influences sale.

- As far as the inside illustrations are concerned, they only have influence on the individual buyer, the person who has the book in his hand. Inside illustrations are more important in picture books than in fiction.

- Most of the respondents make promotion material based on illustrations. These are mostly booklayers, postcards and posters and badges.

- only one publisher makes gadget carrying illustrations.

- All publishers say that illustrations are decisive for the cost of picture books. Colours and techniques of the original illustration have a large influence on the price.

- For picture books, illustrations are the only factor that influence selling foreign rights of the book.



CONCLUSION

- * Publishers are convinced of the commercial importance of the general outlook of a book and its cover.
- * inside illustrations have commercial value in that sense that they make the individual buyer buy the book. Inside illustrations in picture books and non-fiction books are very important for selling foreign rights. They may however increase the cost of the book considerably.
- * Most publishers use illustrations, especially the cover, for promotion purposes, but none of the respondents exploits the illustrations as a commercial article on its own.

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Maria Jose Sottomayor Portugal

ILLUSTRATIONS AS GOODS: WHAT IS CURRENT IN PORTUGAL

have pleased myself on having knowledge that BIB's 95 symposium theme will be "Illustrations as Goods" and accordingly I had a great will to put in writing some anxieties and doubts that this mater has arisen since I began in children's literature.

BIB is a special space to question and exchange our reflexions why illustrated high quality books which call on our sensibility, bring out new narratives, provoke many ways of interpretation, together with the very text, remain staying in Bookshops's shelves, while editions without any aesthetical value are sold out.

This is an unusual fact, for I have mostly noticed that the child has unbelievable capacity, whenever we give it such opportunity to look calling illustrations, to do several reading of images, because those illustrations feed its curiosity giving opportunity to observe, to reflect, to question itself and to go further.

Unfortunately, however, the books are not bought by the children and the choices are therefore made by adults.

In the majority of portuguese editions, according to my view, there are several reasons which seem still to children's books.

We are born, grow up, are guided through our studies and formed, with barely exceptions, in stereotyped books and schoolbooks.

The innovator aesthetical sense showing in Portugal in books for children and youth from the beginning of Republic (1910) as far as the appearance of dictatorship (1926) disappeared afterwards and, during 50 years, the official art of Salazar's time was the naturalism.



We were ever accustomed to follow the saying that modern art should be considered as aggressive, making a trauma and even unuseful.

Till today, this fact still remains in spite of 24 years living in democracy, beasing in many adults minds, because there is no will to adopts a true cultural politic.

If only a few, mainly publishers, writers, teacher are willing and have capacity, opening and a bigger maneability to accepts other kind of illustrations not being only a mere repetition, ornamental redundancy of the text, it is owing to anothers opportunities of their information.

Reality, however, is quite a different one. The majority of kindergarten teachers and teachers who arrive to teaching are not active people because during their school life they were only asked to be on class, to listen and to sit for examination. To sum up to all that there is a strong competition for the final result marks which reduces any possibility of changing ideas.

This is a vicious cicle - the children formed by adults coming from this scheme, will be, of course, conformed themselves, mere spectators and afraid of everything questioning them.

They are only a few publishing houses, at this moment, wish maintain portuguese original collections where one feels a true wish to show the function of the iconic language and its relationship with the textual language, besides a careful graphic project. I may refer publishing houses in Oporto: Ed. Afrontamento which in spite of the limited number of published titles has, in my point of view, the best workers in Children's an youth's literature, some of them having won prizes, including BIB'89 Golden Apple-"Silka" portraing illustrations by Manuela Bacelar and some other books translated in foreing languages; Ed. Asa the first publishing house wich opered up a portuguese authors, high level collection; and Porto Editora.

In Lisbon, Ed. Quetzal and finally some editions of Ed. Caminho have had our writers texts illustrated by portuguese painters.

I publishing houses, in first place, do not risk to offer other proposals to children, bearing in mind "this is not for children", loo-



king at them as no thinking beings, we are all mutilated, loosing for ever our aim to train our observing capacity, to question our standards and accordingly preventing others to grow up, using and developing their potentialities.

When the publishing houses do not invite our artist (I have many authoritative statements) under the excuse so often unfounded, that they will be charged with few larger than their possibilities and instead they are please to call to illustrate a work someone who is able to make scrawl trying a drawing, they are disrespecting not only authors texts but, what is worse, also the readers mainly the youth and those who are far from the main cities, refusing sometimes the chances to have knowledge with our plastic artists - in other words, with Art.

It is a paradox, but our writers are often accomplice, as it were, in this matter with a few exceptions (Sophia de Mello Breyner Anderssen who have always kept up by their text regarding the illustrations).

To my view may be said, perhaps, that there has always been an over text valorisation as compared to illustration, the latter placed as secondary - regarded as just a decoration and not as a new looking on the text.

All this has been preventing the appearance of reflection works about illustration on children books and even so there is not up till now a catalogue showing portuguese illustrations on children and youth literature.

Gulbenkian Foundation together with Education Ministry is making from 1980 Symposium where is awarded the only prize for illustrators. The winners, however, have never seen their originals exhibited and neither any Symposium has been dedicated to illustration.

We have witnessed in eighties in Portugal, like in other countries, to a "boom" of children's literature published by several publishing houses looking for this public. The increase of buying power which enlarged the middle class, together with a better communication with European Economic Community resulted that the child began to be looked as a potential buyer and the books started to be one of the new ways.

The outbreak of meeting, symposiums, congress which stresses in the end of 80's has made many primary and Secondary schools to review existing libraries, to open "Reading Clubs" to enlarge the pleasure of reading. Much to our regret, and as above told the text remains in first place.

Here we take again the problem of the mediator children/books formation, which are most rarely exigent as to the quality and the diversity of styles and tectonics of illustration.

Mostly people are not duly informed to search books and, the critics writing in newspapers and magazines are not helping very much as regards to illustration. It is sometimes ignored and when it is spoken about, special the decorative way is stressed.

Thus, when some publishing houses are able to be courageous enough affoer other proposals of children's books, the majority of mediators come to reject them choosing instead doubtful qualities, on account of their references.

Only of a near late has the talking in meetings begun about illustration in children's books wich is owed, to my view, to the opening to an other king of information and consequently to the debate. Formally with BIB Golden APPLE won by Manuela Bacelar, and afterwards by such a special opportunity as that BIB has promoted in Lisbon in Nov./Dec. 1990 together with Fundaôôo Maria Ulrich and Associaôôo Portuguesa de Educadores de Infancia, during three weeks the "International Exhibition of children's Books Illustration - originals Prized in BIB" witnessed by about 7.000 visitors, mostly children, and, to finish with, we must point out the high quality of illustrations in some lasted published translated books.

We have accompanied lately the efforts of several level educators, from Kindergarten to some experiments in Universities, so as to promote the book.

There has been, at most, private first steps from Trade Unions Teacher's Associations, Public Libraries, Town Hall Culture Departments, out of big cities, where the offer of new editions is scarce on account of publishing houses' distributing problems, because people responsible are questioning and organising themselves to the urgent need of meeting about the relationship image/text.



There is, therefore, very stimulating experiences which are due to continue.

This is my opinion about all this subject in Portugal

I wonder whether this is true!

As above told we verify an increased interest of entities and mediators about this subject, but we doubt that the activities are covering the whole country.

We know that in any country the cultural problems are not solved up by one person's good will, a small group or even an enlarged group in quantity, because nobody owns the truth.

What is important and essential is to find the way to leave the vicious cycle - a closed mediator, walking through without feeling the need of questioning himself and put questions to others, honestly accepting his ignorance about such main points as interpretation or the choice of an artistic work, is imposing to future mediators (I speak about teachers, parents, publishers and so on) a passive way of life, neither curious nor questionable.

Only an entire change of mood will make it possible that quality illustration arrive to everybody.

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Blanka Stehlícová Czech Republic

Dear colleagues,

think that the Czech children's book has many problems today, common to the destiny of books in countries of the former Eastern block. We got rid of a direct and only rarely sensitive treatment of culture and partly unprepared, we had to face to all mighty power of money.

The stone publishing houses, specialised to children's and youth literature lost their used position, collectives of editors with many years of practice who no always in favourable conditions tried to publish the best of what was allowed, were scatted. The majority of newly established private publishing houses - there are 2500 publishing houses registers but only roughly a quarter of them is functioning - considers children's literature prevailingly only as a supplement, without any clear concept. Better publishing houses issue books of their owners and their friends, re-editions of titles charming them in their childhood, and those worse one publish anything, they are convinced that it brings the profit. Especially in the first after revolution years, parallel to necessary illustrative books, there were mostly badly translated titles from abroad, especially American substandard literature with even less substandard illustrations, various cartoon series and comics which in high numbers filled quickly up book agent's and drugstores in all the country. The majority of publishing houses, either stone or small private ones, struggles with the lack of capital, operational costs, rapidly increasing price for paper and printing works. The books are expensive and many people who used to buy them before, have no money for them, now. The layer of population which became suddenly rich, is mostly not interested in them.

Sudden and frequently chaotic steps to the world book market caused also the change in the composition of our books for adults and children. First of all, the share of fiction decreased essentially

and number of illustrative books increased, either text books, especially language text books, or various encyclopaedias and editions devoted to various scientific branches. Many of them were taken over from aboard together with original illustration material, however, they supported the establishment of home editions at the same time, especially in the area of history and recent history of Czechoslovakia, in which foreign illustrations were, of course, missing. It is a paradox that for instance our books about nature by Czech authors and Czech illustrators, exported with success by Artia publishing house from the end of sixties, issued in many language mutations and many re-editions in the world, could get to our home book market only in these years in a higher measure. Of course, illustrations of the illustrative literature are a specific space to the illustrator for an illustration, interesting from the artistic point of view.

Thus, if taking into consideration the growth of foreign titles with original illustrations, suppression of the fiction publishing, a relatively high number of home re-editions of the most demanded books on the market and fear of publishing houses to issue original home new works, our illustrators' opportunities were significantly reduced. Moreover, the uncertainty appears whether publishing houses applying for illustrations, are not going to make a bankruptcy, whether publishing of book will be not delayed too much and whether there will be money to pay the royalty. Only indomitable optimists may withstand to such examinations. How much advantageous it is to devote to an essentially more lucrative advertisement! No wonder that in the last year when the situation on the publisher's area started to consolidate, 20% book titles more were published than in 1989 but in the national competition for the most beautiful book, no children's book appeared.

I don't want to cry over spilt milk, I better share with you how we face or intend to face negative phenomena, appearing in our children's literature in the last five years.

Those most affected - authors of children's books - developed the initiative first. The Club of Literature for Youth at the Community of Writers and the Club of Children's Books Illustrators at the Union of Fine Artists which became a part of the Czech IBBY sec-



tion at the same time, agreed upon and in 1992 announced together the Golden Ribbon competition.

Original Czech new work may participate in the competition, determined for children and youth, judged according to individual categories in a similar way as in the competition for the most beautiful books. Publications sent by publishing houses are judged by a jury, composed of delegates of the Club of Literature, evaluating the literary side and Club of Illustrators, evaluating illustrations and typography. The original idea was to make the competition really actual and award the Golden Ribbon quarterly. The awarded books had to take part in the final competition at he end of the year, and of books already awarded, the best ones had to be chosen - the books of the year. The publishing houses were, however, not very much interested in this honour award, sometimes they also had nothing to offer. Quarterly evaluations proved to be unrealistic, then a half year interval was chosen and now, the numbers of participating books moves within twenty to thirty titles as a rule. The number of categories has also decreased as well. But in the last year, translations were added at which the choice of the title, quality of translation, respectively our illustrations are evaluated. All year results are now announced in the Monument of the National Literature in Prague, Strahov.

I would like to mention those three books, evaluated as the best ones in three years period of the Golden Ribbon existence from the literary and artistic point of view. By specific way, they objectively reflect the present situation of the Czech illustration for children and publishers' efforts. The book of 1992 became Fairy Tale Wanders around Bohemia awarded by the Golden Ribbon for its text, the author of which is Vladimír Hulpach, illustrations by Karel Franta and for the graphic design by Václav Kučera. Vladimír Hulpach worked in Artia publishing house for many years, issuing books of Czech authors and illustrators with various foreign partners in foreign languages. He himself re-told many myths, legends, epics and tales from foreign literatures. This time he chose stories bound to individual castles, towns and places in Bohemia, the heroes of which are fairies, devils, green-coated manikins, headless knights parallel to real historical personalities. He decided to choo-

se the illustrator Karel Franta who by his age belongs so called new wave, entering the Czech art scene in sixties. However, compared to his contemporaries, he became mature later. He took lessons from his generation contributions, putting the emphasise upon poetic fantasy but instead of hints and allusions, he based his illustrations upon a rich colourful drawing with many details using a lot of very time consuming procedures. He subordinated his handwriting to requirements of the present children's readers, educated by more exquisitely staged fairy tales of the TV screen than art works from modern art galleries. He developed efforts that his illustrations were generally understood and his evils, he likes especially, did not embodied only dark powers but also a bit of humour when playing their roles.

As the most successful books in 1993, first volumes of the illustrated twelve volumes encyclopaedia were considered with the title The Czech History in Pictures. They were designed by Helena Mandelová who is also the author of two volumes. In other volumes several other authors participated and participate and illustrators are different as well. I don't know why Albratros - publishing house decided for this way of art accompaniment. The Czech scientific drawing, characterised by the excellent technique, capability of typization and impersonality of handwriting was very well applied for instance in natural sciences publications up to now. But at historical pictures, the illustrators, positioned near to exactly detailed drawings of really, were given also completely different tasks, solved - however on a considerably larger space - by historical painting in the last century at the last time. In recording of fights, ceremonial parades and genre scenes, perhaps all tried to make pseudo-reconstructions which seems to me today, in the age of computers, to be an anachronism. They could be replaced by photographies of realia, repodctions of authentic, thattime art expressions - plastic arts, wall paintings illuminated manuscripts, pictures and engraving. (The illustrations is from the book by Helena Mandelová, Czech Lands under the Luxemburgs' goverment, illustrations are by Pave Major).

The book of 1994 became Royal Fairy Tales written by the poet Kare Šiktanc in seventies but due to political reasons this book as



all his other books were not allowed to be published. These are really extraordinary fairy tales. Siktanc came from our classic message but his heroes are not carriers of the good and evil from the beginning. They come to the good through a special complicated way. As the title indicates itself, the heroes here are king, thus not folk characters as we were used in Czech fairy tales. And they are also stories, full of a noble grandeur. Illustrations in this book were done by František Skála junior, an artist with a wide expression scale, not avoiding happening presentations and installations either. In the illustration area, he has already proven for several times at many different titles (such as volumes devoted to extinct crafts, Sandburg's Stories from Potatoes Rows, own picture series about Vlas and Brada (Hair and Berad). Skála with his extraordinary sensitivity for the nature of a literary text, created an artistic parallel of stories, finding a starting inspiration in the Czech symbolism. Similarly as the text, his illustrations are rather exclusive, but without any doubts they belong to the best what was created in the children's book area in the last years in our country.

The Golden Ribbon competition, however, remained and event, limited to a narrow group of persons. It did not address the majority of publishers either, it neither became known to a wide cultural public. But more or less, it reacted quickly and it still reacts to what interesting appeared on our book market and provides also a certain orientation at classifying awarded books in other competitions, especially in the competition for the most beautiful book of the year and at awarding annual prizes to publishing houses. The decision about a final form of the Fund will be done at the workshop of experts, held in November this year in Brno.

Of course, objections appeared, whether we again prescribe and set marks, whether the Golden Fund will not become a bogey of a previous compulsory school reading. However, everyday practice shows that hand in hand with the freedom, also helplessness appeared - helplessness of teachers, helplessness of publishers, helplessness of librarians. The Golden Fund should be an inspiration everywhere. Where the teacher, publisher of librarian cannot rely fully on his own knowledge. Compilation of the Golden Fund list, which is evidently to be so wide that it will be possible to choose alterna-



tives, is not enough. Through the Czech IBBY section, we would like to address the Ministry of culture and Ministry of ducation to recommend these books as a recommended reading to schools and public libraries what may assist to a higher number of copies and thus also a higher interest of publishers.

It is probable that at least a part of post-communist countries, not only fights against similar problems but perhaps also already work on their Golden Funds. It would be surely useful to share their experience, respectively to exchange lists of recommended books through the IBBY Secreatrial or university workplaces.

At studying children's books in a wider time horizon, I came to conclusion, that some publications, very important form the viewpoint of children's books development and their illustrations, exist today only in one or two copies and that they are completely unaccessible outside our main cultural centres and completely unknown abroad. Moreover, a danger appears that at a modern reorganisation of the library, or at some natural catastrophe or disaster, they may disappear completely. These are especially books from this century beginning, from the beginning of the movement for belle letters and movement for education through the art which were mostly completely "consumed" by generations of children and then valuable books of the Czech avantgard between wars, issued in low numbers of copies and if they got public libraries at all, they were withdrawn from them in a short time. When I mentioned this problem in Brno, my colleagues, literary historians confirmed my worries. Therefore, we intend to make a list of the most endangered titles, to address the grant commission of the Ministry of Culture and ask experienced publishers to issue endangered books as reprints under the financial support of the Ministry, respectively other sponsors. The effort to preserve the cultural heritage in the project on endangered books, the effort to provide the best and most beautiful books to the whitest possible group of readers by the Golden Fund establishment, the attempt to implement promote an finally support the modern Czech creation for children by awarding the Golden Ribbon, these are the main activities at the moment by which the Czech YBBY section and institutions co-operating with it, try to face the present, and perhaps only transtionally unfavourable situation in which our book for children and youth is.



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Zborník Bienále ilustrácií Bratislava Vedecký redaktor a zostavovateľ Anna Horváthová - historička umenia Jazykový redaktor: Peter Čačko Lay-out: Margaréta Marettová

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