



Beyond the Canon (of Children's Literature)

Book of Abstracts

The 14th Child and the Book Conference
Zadar, Croatia, 8–10 May 2019



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Beyond the Canon (of Children's Literature)

Zadar, Croatia, 8–10 May 2019

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A Fabulous Wardrobe: Fairy-Tale Clothing Functions, Fashion and History

All sorts of personal items – dresses, shirts, berets, hoods, pearls, collars, scarves, ribbons, capes, belts, shoes, and so on – which can cover, conceal, protect or adorn the body have a special role in fairy tales. They are items that reveal the qualities of the hero or heroine, and their social group and status. They tell us a great deal about the characters, their roles in the story, the privileges they enjoy, the powers they represent, and the dramas they suffer. From the beautiful ballgowns of *All-Kinds-of-Fur* and *Cinderella* to the furs of the *Snow Queen* and *Princess Mouseskin*, from the stinging nettles knitted into shirts by *Elisa* to the ugly garb of the *Little Goose Girl*, to the Emperor's invisible clothes: these are just a handful of the costumes that great fairy-tale writers like Charles Perrault, the Brothers Grimm, and Hans Christian Andersen have used to dress their characters. Leafing through the pages of their stories, we find gowns that sparkle like stars and dainty golden slippers, but also far more modest tunics, capes and hoods, boots and moccasins, hats and ribbons. Numerous fairy tales also have tailors and shoemakers among their characters. The impression is that clothing in fairy tales is by no means merely for decorative purposes or to represent magical objects (Lüthi, 1947; Propp, 1976; Reddan, 2016). The ways in which the characters' clothing is represented (paying attention to their accessories, ornaments and hairstyles, too) seem to have changed as the fairy tales evolved. The oldest fables described a society that advanced at a slower pace, there was less social stratification (and also fewer raw materials available and less expertise in textiles), so the variety was somewhat limited. It was much more in evidence as the storylines of the fairy tales became richer in the original literary details conceived by more complex and developed societies, like those emerging after the mid-16th century; and this trend expanded further from the 17th century onwards. Despite the precise and significant references to the wardrobes of the main fairy-tale characters, research in this field has long remained patchy. The topic has been little explored and often neglected by the traditional canons of scholars of children's fairy tales. Studies focusing specifically on the role of clothing and accessories in this type of literature are rare (Garber, 1992; Scott, 1996-1997; Ivleva, 2009; Carney, 2012; Hill, 2016). The aim of the present paper is to examine this under-investigated aspect of the fairy tale, pausing to consider a few crucial questions on the relationship between clothing, history and fashion in this literary medium. What types of clothes are described in fairy tales, and what purpose do they serve? Do fairy tales contain historical traces of the fashions of the day and, if so, what is the nature of these references? Which features and forms of clothing did illustrators of fairy tales in the 20th and 21st centuries consider most important? After framing the theoretical setting of this topic, the paper considers a few examples and compares some of the models of fairy-tale clothing drawn from modern-day picturebooks.

Keywords: fairy-tale clothing, fairy-tale accessories, history of 16th- to 19th-century fashions, intertextuality, picturebooks

Marnie Campagnaro, PhD, is a researcher in Children's Literature at the Department FISPPA, University of Padua. Her main research fields include the history and theory of children's literature, picturebooks, fairy tales, reading pedagogy and Italian children's writers. In 2013, she hosted the Ninth Annual International Conference of the Child and the Book and in 2017 she was appointed to organise the 6th International Conference of the European Network of Picturebook Research. Her most recent publications include *Touch and Feel: The Body, Senses, Books and Narration in Childhood* (2018); *Il cacciatore di pieghe* (2017); and "Bruno Munari's Visual Mapping of the City of Milano" in *Maps and Mapping in Children's Literature* (ed. by Nina Goga and Bettina Kümmerling-Meibauer (2017).

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The Canon before the Canon: The Soviet Novel *The Son of the Regiment* by Valentin Kataev and Its Origin in Italian Children's Literature of the Risorgimento

The well-known children's book *Syn Polka* [The Son of the Regiment] written by the Soviet author Valentin Kataev (1897–1986) in 1946 was a classic book for children in the Soviet Union in the post-war period. It deals with the topic of the child soldier. *Ivan's Childhood*, a short story by Vladimir Bogomolov (1957) also concerned the topos of the child soldier. This narrative also inspired the well-known film by A. Tarkovskij, *Ivanovo detstvo* [Ivan's Childhood], presented and winning an award at the Venice Film Festival in 1962. The role of young soldiers engaged in war actions during the Nazi occupation in the Soviet Union has been recently investigated by historians, but not in its literary aspects. Some Pioneers have also been celebrated as WWII heroes and their monuments became a place of cult for the new generation of young Pioneers in the post-war years. This presentation considers the hypothesis that the model of these narratives is Italian and has to be researched in the context of Italian children's literature of the 19th century concerning the Risorgimento. The first part of the paper will attempt to present the Italian model of the child orphan and soldier; the second will try to highlight the translation process of the original work from Italian into Russian, and the third part will analyse the metamorphosis of the original Italian novel into the Russian model about the history of an orphaned Russian boy, Vanya Solntsev, adopted by the artillery regiment. During the 1960s, it became a symbol not only of patriotism but also of vengeance and hatred of fascism.

Keywords: children's literature, history of education, Italy, Soviet Union, 19th–20th century

Dorena Caroli is Associate Professor at the University of Macerata where she has taught History of Education and Children's Literature since 2014. Among her more recent books is *Cittadini e patrioti. Educazione, letteratura per l'infanzia e costruzione dell'identità nazionale nella Russia sovietica* (2011).