

## SUMMARY

The 10<sup>th</sup> issue of “Children’s Readings” reflects the wide spectrum of problems that are of interest to specialists within the field of children’s literature. Among them are the challenges of Soviet era children’s literature reception; questions related to the history of children’s literature critiqued; and commentaries for the reprints of the literary works published during the Soviet period. Discussed in this volume are such topics as visual aspects in children’s literature, as well as topics highlighting history of literary imagination.

The articles dedicated to the above mentioned topics are organized in thematic blocks.

### BLOCK ONE: READINGS FOR ADOLESCENTS DURING THE THAW PERIOD: PUBLICATION HISTORIES, RECEPTION CHALLENGES, AND STATUS SHIFTS

This block is prepared by Maria Maiofis and Ilya Kukulín and it begins with their brief preface. The archival part of this block (letters of the school teacher to the government authorities in 1956) has a separate preamble composed by Ilya Kukulín.

#### ARCHIVE:

*Kukulín, Ilya*, “This work provides negative influence on school pupils”: Mikhail Sholokhov’s Novel *Virgin Soil Upturned* and the emergence of the new reading culture after the 20<sup>th</sup> Party Congress

Sociology of reading as a discipline was banned in the USSR from the late 1930s until the end of the 1950s. The officially acknowledged Soviet concept of “mass reading” was essentially normative and it aimed at minimizing individual differences of literary reception. Thus, the changes in individual reader’s attitudes to literary works included in the “Stalin’s” canon remained one of the most difficult questions within the study of literary reception in the USSR. This paper presents the unique archival source that allows to trace fast change in the perception of Mikhail Sholokhov’s novel *Virgin Soil Upturned* (first volume: 1932)

during the “Thaw” period. This source consists of a series of letters to the Central Committee of CPSU and to Mikhail Sholokhov personally, written in 1956 by an unknown schoolteacher, Evgenii Ziberov, who was demanding to exclude Sholokhov’s novel from the school’s literature curriculum. Ziberov regarded Sholokhov’s novel as “propaganda of cynicism and violence.” The schoolteacher explained the change in his attitude through two instances: the influence of Nikita Khrushchev’s Secret Speech delivered at the 20th Congress of CPSU (1956) and the Soviet publication of a paper on the Yugoslav village cooperatives (in the same year). The analysis of Ziberov’s rhetoric allows to explain the hidden shift in the Soviet intelligentsia’s strategies of reading during the early “Thaw” period.

*Key Words:* Mikhail Sholokhov, *Virgin Soil Upturned*, Evgeny Ziberov, “The Thaw”, 20th Party Congress, reception’s aesthetics, horizon of expectations, alarming morals, Yugoslav-Soviet relations

#### RESEARCH:

*Mayofis, Maria*, Max Bremener’s Novella *Let It Not Match the Answer!* (1956) and the Program of Education and Literature Renewal at the Beginning of the Thaw

#### Abstract:

Based on extensive archival research, the article analyzes the forgotten work of the mid-1950s, a novella by Max Bremener, *Let it Not Match the Answer!* Published in the most exciting moment of the “Thaw” era (November, 1956), this novella can be considered as a reflection of and response to the earlier (1953–1954) discussions on the problem of “deception and truth” in children’s literature. Bremener radically transformed the very genre of the “school novella”, although he did not succeed in his search for the appropriate literary form, which could have encompassed harsh social critique of the Soviet school system as an institution in crisis. Nevertheless, the novella provides us with the very interesting material for evaluating the current crisis in Russian education.

*Key Words:* The Thaw period, Max Bremener, Lydiia Chukovskaya, school novella, social critique, moral renewal

*Savkina, Irina*, “My Friend, Ol’ga”: Rereading Vladimir Kiselyov’s novel, *The Girl and Birdplane*

In this article, Vladimir Kiselyov’s novel, *The Girl and Birdplane*, is reexamined. It was written during the Thaw period (1966) and it was

aimed at the teenager audience. Critics of the late 1960s considered the novel to be the text about complex relationships between different generations. A modern re-reading of the novel with the application of various categories adopted by gender studies, permits the modern reader to recognize clear representations of the gender role conflicts during the Soviet Era.

*Key Words:* children's literature, school novella, re-evaluation, critique of children's literature, gender, Thaw period

*Kozlov, Dmitry, ShKID Republic and the Dostoevsky School in the Context of Pedagogical Discussions of the 1920s–1960s*

This article analyzes different interpretations of the novella, *The ShKID Republic* (1927) by Grigoriy Belykh and L. Panteleev. The article reveals the fact that the discussion over the discourse on this literary work was not separated from the debate over the very nature of the pedagogical experiment decried in the novella. Critics have paid most of their attention to the pedagogical innovations introduced by Viktor Soroka-Rosinskiy, the head of the Dostoevsky School. In 1920–1930s, debates on adolescents' education guided the examination of the literary value of the book. Opposite to this earlier experience, the renewed popularity of the novella in the 1960–1980s stimulated the discussions of the unorthodox pedagogical concepts revealed through the narrative.

*Key Words:* Grigoriy Belykh, Anton Makarenko, L. Panteleev, Viktor Soroka-Rosinskiy, children's literature of 1920s, *The ShKID Republic*, The Dostoevsky School, Thaw period

*This block is concluded with the section entitled In the Editor's View that includes commentary of prize-winning children's books editor, Ilya Bernstein:*

*Bernshein, Ilya, Children's Literature of the Soviet Era: Challenges of Commentary Structuring*

In the last five years, an immense amount of Soviet era texts has been reissued, especially those from the 50s–70s. This practice has raised the issue of present generation comprehension as well as its interpretation of these works of the past. The comprehension issues run deep and they are present on all levels — from the verbal and mental to cultural. The commentary discusses possible ways available to the publishing industry to resolve these issues by providing supporting texts

of the same author (if thematically relevant) as well as incorporate various visual aids, such as illustrations and video commentary.

*Key Words:* author's commentary (notes), artistic representation, video commentary

## BLOCK II: HISTORY OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE CRITIQUE

*Kostiukhina, Marina*, Critics from the Ministry of Public Enlightenment

This article is devoted to the survey of the children's literature critique in the publication entitled *Journal of the Ministry of Public Enlightenment* (published in 1834–1917). The reviews published in this magazine served simultaneously as pedagogical recommendation, a ministry decree and a censorship license.

*Key Words:* children's literature critique, *Journal of the Ministry of Public Enlightenment*

*Miaotes, O'lga*, Children's Literature Critique in Russia during the First World War (based on the periodicals "Children's Literature News" and "What and How to Read for Children")

At the beginning of the 20th century, Russian periodicals, *Children's Literature News* and *What and How to Read to Children*, made attempts to rework the criteria for evaluating children's books. The traditional view of children's books was subject to revision, which considered them as an educational tool and new aesthetic criteria were suggested. During the First World War, when it became necessary to protect children from the war propaganda, the pedagogical potential of children's books that asserted humanistic ideals, once again came to the forefront, but as once before, both critics and pedagogues appealed to the artistic imaginary as it was looked at as the most effective way to influence the young reader.

*Key Words:* World War I, 20th century Russian children's literature, children's literature critique

*Dimianenko, Anna*, Children's Literature Critique of Russian Emigration in the 1920s: Reading through the "Russian School Abroad" Periodical

Criticism of children's literature in emigration emerged during the period of hard economic restraints in the publishing sphere that had its

impact on publishing of children's books as well. Despite these financial challenges, the publication of the Russian pedagogical periodical *Russian School Abroad* was initiated in Prague in 1920. It printed critical reviews of new children's books by the leading professionals, pedagogues and philosophers of Russian emigration. The focus of this article is on the content of reviews published in this periodical, its addressees, as well as the structure of the arguments. Proper attention is given to the special section on the principals of the book selection in the above mentioned periodical.

*Key Words:* *Russian School Abroad*; criticism; children's literature; E. A. Elachich.

*Simonova, Ol'ga, Children's Book as a Subject of Influence Struggle (late 1940s — early 1950s)*

The article focuses on the ways the Komsomol and the Young Pioneer Organization, the Ministry of Education, Academy of Pedagogical Sciences, the Committee on Children's Literature of the Union of Soviet Writers impacted on *Detgiz* (the State publishing house for children's literature) in the postwar period (late 1940s — early 1950s). It examines what requirements these institutions imposed on children's books and how *Detgiz* tried to meet them. This study is based on archival materials.

*Key Words:* *Detgiz*, children's literature edition in the Soviet Union, pedagogy and children's books, criticism of publishing activity, the Ministry of Education, the Central Committee of the Komsomol, the House of Children's Books

### BLOCK III: LITERATURE FOR CHILDREN AND SOVIET IDEOLOGY

*Kravchenko, Artem, Children's Press as a Leader and Organizer of the Masses: on the History of Komsomol Leadership over the Management of to Your Pioneers Periodicals in Moscow in the 1920s*

This article examines the process of creation of the young pioneers' central periodicals in the mid-1920s ("Pioneer", "Drum", "Kolkhoz' Fellows" etc.). The main focus of the article is on the analyses of the Komsomol activities in creating the system of control and management of the Young Pioneers' publications and their overall activities.

*Key Words:* Komsomol, young pioneers, magazines for children, 1920s, Soviet ideology

*Sinitskaia, Anna, "Language of Melodrama, Playing Epos, and Soviet Metaphysics"*

The article is devoted to the features of melodramatic plot and the epic and heroic genre models. Their paradoxical interaction in the adventure stories of the Soviet period is investigated based on the works by Arkady Gaidar and Vladislav Krapivin. In the post-Soviet context, the works by Maria Galina are analyzed. Reception of essential foreign texts that made it into the domain of children's readings in Russia is investigated and it includes such foreign authors as Alexandre Dumas, George. Tolkien, Clive S. Lewis. Special function of the genre of adventure story and its cinematic representation (films by L. Nechaev, G. Yungvald-Khilkevich) is discussed within the Soviet cultural context.

*Key Words:* adventure literature, heroic and epic plot, fantasy, melodrama, Gothic, George Tolkien, Krapivin, mystical character of post-soviet world view

*Vdovenko, Igor', "Murzilka as Literary Character within the Soviet Production Mode: Models of Appropriating and Re-Codifying the Other in Soviet Children's Literature"*

The article follows the evolution of the Murzilka character in Soviet children's literature of the 1920s — 1970s. The investigation is focused on the processes of identification and description of succeeding models that came to replace each other during various periods in Soviet culture. In the analysis, special attention is given to the relationship between visual (illustrations) and textual representations of the Murzilka character.

*Key Words:* children's literature, Soviet children's literature, cultural translation, text and illustrations, intermediality, brownie, Murzilka, Neznaika, P. Cox, A. Hvolson, N. Nosov

#### BLOCK IV: CONTEMPORARY CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

*Vandenborre, Katya, The Parody of Russian Fairy Tales in Polish Children's Literature after 1989: The Case of Jerzy Niemczuk (Trans. from French)*

The article examines two fairy tales present in Jerzy Niemczuk's collection *Mr. Disorder's Fairy Tales: The Worm and the Fish* (1989) and *The Little Paunchy Horse* (1993). These little known texts constitute interesting parodies of *The Tale of the Fisherman and the Fish*

by Alexander Pushkin and *The Little Humpbacked Horse* by Pyotr Yershov. Special attention is given to the political context of Niemczuk's writings that appeared immediately after the fall of the Soviet Union. While they refer to the literary history of Pushkin's and Yershov's fairy tales in post-war Poland, these new fairy parodies appeared to be full of domestic political meaning reflecting events in Poland after 1989.

*Key Words:* Jerzy Niemczuk, *Mr. Disorder's Fairy Tales*, *The Worm and the Fish*, *The Little Paunchy Horse*, Alexander Pushkin, *The Tale of the Fiherman and the Fish*, Pyotr Yershov, *The Little Humpbacked Horse*, parody, historical context, post-war Poland, Poland after 1989

*This block continues with the articles dedicated to the study of various contemporary practices present in children's literature:*

*Gubajdulina, Anastasiia*, Opportunity and Event as Categories in Contemporary Siberian Poetry for Children (Alexander Bergel'son, Andrew Olear, Nikolai Yaroslavtsev, and Aleksei Eroshin)

Siberian writers occupy an important place in contemporary poetry for children. Such present day poets as Alexander Bergelson, Alex Eroshin (Novosibirsk), Andrew Olear (Tomsk), Nikolai Yaroslavtsev (Chita) are not well-known to the Russian readers. Nevertheless, their poetry exhibits many important features that characterize contemporary children's literature as a whole; their works are marked by particular interest to the genre of miniature, they are full of wordplay, and paradoxes. The depiction of two separate categories, an opportunity and an event, are analyzed based on poetic examples. These categories are discussed as opposites that as such contribute to the poetic simulation of reality.

*Key Words:* modern poetry for children, case, event, Siberian poetry, Alexander Bergelson, Alex Eroshin, Andrew Olear, Nikolai Yaroslavtsev

*Scaff, Maria*, Comics and Picturebooks: On the Limits of Visual Literary Genres

The article describes the specificity of visual literature genres division and the possibility of establishing new borders between these genres, dependent not only on formal, but also content characteristics of the visual texts. Special attention is given to the discussion of real and imaginary differences between comics, graphic novels and picture books.

*Key Words:* visual literature, comics, picture book, visual narrative

*Bondarenko, Varvara*, Frame-Analyses as a Decision Maker in Children's Literature: on the Nature of Sociological Inquiry

The subject of children's literature is approached through sociological research. In the article the discourses of parents and experts about children's books are analyzed. Two opposing frames are identified: conservative and liberal. They determine the preferences in choosing works of children's literature. Frame-analyses (R. Entman) and theory of social construction of reality (P. Berger, T. Luckman) are used as theoretical and methodological apparatus of this investigation.

*Key Words:* sociology, frame-analysis, children's literature

This 10<sup>th</sup> issue is concluded by the new permanent rubric of the journal, Children's Books in the Domain of Reading for Adults. Ekaterina Anosova is presenting her views on contemporary children's literature under the title *Set of Postcards or Seven Contemporary Books for Slow Reading*.

Last but not least is the overview of the conference in Moscow on December, 2015 entitled "*Children's Literature as an Event*". The report is prepared by Ekaterina Anosova and Daria Nevskaja.