

Tracking Trends and Brands in the International Children's Book Market

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Introduction

[T]here is no golden age, no moment when the literature for and of children is better, more precise, or more effective than at any other moment. Children's literature is not some ideal category that a certain age may reach and that another may miss. It is instead a kind of system, one whose social and aesthetic value is determined out of the relationships among those who make, market, and read books.

Seth Lerer¹

When Friedrich Oetinger (1907–1986), a German children's book publisher, travelled to Sweden in February 1949, he had no idea that he would return to Germany with a treasure in his suitcase.² Although five German publishing houses had declined to buy the first of a trilogy of books written by Astrid Lindgren, a Swedish author as yet unknown in Germany, Friedrich Oetinger nonetheless decided to read the original story when a publishing house in Stockholm offered him a licence contract.³ Lindgren's book was named *Pippi Långstrump* (*Pippi Longstocking*) after its female protagonist, and it had been published in Sweden in 1945. Like a robinsonade, it contained a variety of elements from narrative literature, including domestic stories, high sea adventures and treasure hunts.

1 Cf. Seth Lerer, *Children's Literature: A Reader's History, from Aesop to Harry Potter* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008), 7.

2 This paper was first presented at the 2008 "Rethinking Trends" conference in Heidelberg. I would like to thank the following people who provided valuable suggestions for improving the quality of this article: Jennifer Altehenger, Christiane Brosius, Andrea Hacker, Lena Henningsen, Jennifer May, Barbara Mittler, and the anonymous reviewers of this journal. I would also like to acknowledge the support of Jing Bartz, former head of the Deutsche BIZ (Book Information Center) Beijing, Jörg Mühle, children's book illustrator at Labor Ateliergemeinschaft Frankfurt, Martina Weiss, librarian of Klingspor Museum for Modern International Book Art, Typography and Calligraphy (Klingspor Museum Offenbach für internationale Buch- und Schriftkunst), and project B12 of the Cluster ("Rethinking Trends—Transcultural Flows in Popular Spheres"), which provided funding for research trips to the International Youth Library (Internationale Jugendbibliothek IJB) in Munich and the Swedish Institute for Children's Books (Svenska Barnboksinstitutet) in Stockholm.

3 Cf. Manuela Bialek and Karsten Weyershausen, eds., *Das Astrid Lindgren Lexikon: Alles über die beliebteste Kinderbuchautorin der Welt* (Berlin: Schwarzkopf & Schwarzkopf, 2004), 484.



Pippi is a nine-year-old sea captain's daughter and half-orphan who left her father's ship in order to live in Villa Villekulla, a quaint house in a small Swedish village, together with her horse and Mr. Nilsson, her little monkey. She is an extraordinary, imaginative girl who loves to spin tales, who questions norms and who often puzzles her environment by doing exactly the opposite of what a girl her age is expected to do. In typically picaresque manner, Pippi does not refrain even from tackling unpleasant questions in order to unmask authority and expose the drab, hypocritical world of adults that surrounds her. Although grown-ups usually frown upon what they deem to be Pippi's reckless and ill-mannered behaviour, the self-confident, freckle-faced girl reveals herself as an utterly fair and honest supporter of the weak and oppressed. She befriends two children from her neighbourhood, Tommy and Annika, who love Pippi for her kind heart and generosity, and who admire her courage, strength and power, which she regularly demonstrates during the course of the story. With Pippi around, every day is for them like an adventure full of excitement, newly-invented games, and pancake parties.

Although Pippi definitely displays role-model qualities, the first Pippi book was not immediately recognized and taken to heart by all of its German-speaking reviewers after its publication by Oetinger. The Swiss daily newspaper *Berner Tageblatt*, for instance, criticized the radicalism presented in the book, which was considered too crude for young readers. The Musterbibliothek des Erziehungsdepartements (model library of the education department) of the city of Basel, Switzerland, even refused to include the German edition in its children's book collection, as it was considered to be too inventive and rather offensive.⁴ In Germany, however, Pippi's adventures were mostly well received. Some reviewers praised her humour, her spontaneity and her absurd ideas, which fed the imagination of her audience.⁵ Others welcomed the book because of its freshness compared to the "trivial, moralizing girl's literature" that was popular in Germany during the 1940s and 1950s.⁶ After sixty-six years of publication, the Pippi books have proved to be Lindgren's most successful and widely circulated works.⁷ The complex and multilayered stories

4 The article in the *Berner Tageblatt* was published in 1949. It is cited in Paul Berf and Astrid Surmatz, eds., *Astrid Lindgren: Zum Donnerdrummel! Ein Werkporträt* (Hamburg: Verlag Friedrich Oetinger, 2002), 187.

5 *Ibid.*: 186–187.

6 *Ibid.*: 188.

7 Astrid Surmatz states that Astrid Lindgren is Sweden's most popular and most successful writer, with *Pippi Långstrump* being her "central work." Cf. Astrid Surmatz, *Pippi Långstrump als Paradigma: Die deutsche Rezeption Astrid Lindgrens und ihr internationaler Kontext* (Tübingen und Basel: A. Francke Verlag, 2005), 1.

about Pippi and her adventures, which constantly shift between realistic and fantastic narrative levels, have conquered the international children's book market, including the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Republic of China (ROC), Taiwan.⁸ One Chinese translation of Pippi's adventures was published in a *xiaorensu* 小人书 (small comic book) format in the PRC in the 1980s.⁹

Like *Pippi Långstrump*, stories about Sun Wukong 孙悟空, one of the main protagonists of the Chinese epic *Xiyou ji* 西游记 (*The Journey to the West*¹⁰), number among his home country's enduring bestsellers which have been translated into many different languages and been disseminated abroad. *The Journey to the West* is one of the best-known tales throughout China and is considered a classic of Chinese literature in its home country.¹¹ It tells of a

8 Cf. Kerstin Kvint, *Astrid Worldwide: A Selective Bibliography 1946–2002* (Stockholm: Kvints, 2002), 20.

9 The first Chinese *xiaorensu* were printed in a picture-book format (Chin.: *lianhuanhua* 连环画) with picture sequences—the pictures dominating the page—which made the story easily intelligible even to readers with little or no character knowledge. Professional commercialization in Chinese cities during the 1920s through special *xiaorensu* stalls, where people could borrow or immediately read the books for little money, facilitated the circulation and popularization of certain stories and books. In this way *xiaorensu* became a mass medium of entertainment. Cf. Andreas Seifert, *Bildergeschichten für Chinas Massen: Comic und Comicproduktion im 20. Jahrhundert* (Köln, Weimar, Wien: Böhlau, 2008), 47. How many different Pippi translations actually exist in the Chinese children's book market could not yet be definitively established.

The China Children's Press and Publication Group (*Zhongguo shaonian ertong xinwen chubanshe* 中国少年儿童新闻出版总社) has three Pippi picture books under licence, namely *Pippi Långstrump* (*Pippi Longstocking*, *Chang wazi Pipi lai le* 长袜子皮皮来了), *Pippi Långstrump i Humlegården* (*Pippi Longstocking in the Park*, *Chang wazi Pipi zai gongyuan* 长袜子皮皮在公园), and *Pippi Långstrump i Söderhavet* (*Pippi in the South Seas*, *Chang wazi Pipi zai nan hai* 长袜子皮皮在南海), in 2009. In one of its recently published image brochures, the group states that the Pippi books are “the best gift to all the children in the world” (*gei quan shijie xiao pengyou de zui hao liwu* 给全世界小朋友最好礼物). Cf. China Children's Press and Publication Group, ed., *Latest Copyright Titles*, (Beijing: China Children's Press and Publication Group, 2010).

10 The *Xiyou ji* was originally translated into English by Arthur Waley in 1943. Its title was then *Monkey: Folk Novel of China*. The German translators Georgette Boner and Maria Nils used Waley's edition as the master copy for their translation. In Germany, the *Xiyou ji* was thus first known as *Monkeys Pilgerfahrt: Eine chinesische Legende* (Monkey's Pilgrimage: a Chinese Legend) before Johanna Hertzfeldt's translation *Die Pilgerfahrt nach dem Westen* (The Journey to the West) was published in 1962. *The Journey to the West* has actually come to be known as the title of Antony C. Yu's translation of the *Xiyou ji* which was published in four volumes between 1977 and 1983. Cf. Nienhauser, William H., ed., *The Indiana Companion to Traditional Chinese Literature* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), 417; Wu, Ch'eng-en, *Monkey: Folk Novel of China*, trans. Arthur Waley (London: Allan & Unwin, 1943); Wu, Ch'eng-en, *Monkeys Pilgerfahrt: Eine chinesische Legende*, trans. Georgette Boner and Maria Nils (Zürich: Artemis-Verlag, 1947); Wu, Tschöng-ön, *Die Pilgerfahrt nach dem Westen*, trans. Johanna Hertzfeldt (Rudolstadt: Greifenverlag, 1962); Wu, Ch'eng-en, *The Journey to the West*, 4 vols., trans. Anthony C. Yu (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1977–1983).

11 The notion of “classics” might derive from the Latin term *civis classicus* (according to the Roman

Chinese monk's pilgrimage to India in search of Buddhist sutras in the early seventh century. Storytellers spread the tale of the monk and his companions, combining the adventure with fantastic elements of the supernatural such as the mythical birth of his monkey companion, who later became Sun Wukong, the Monkey King.¹² Today, an extensive range of *Xiyou ji* editions for children, teenagers and adults as well as several different children's book adaptations of Monkey King stories can be found in Chinese bookstores and libraries. In the 1980s, a translated series of the Monkey King's adventures was introduced to the German children's book market, but it did not gain a foothold and thus disappeared.¹³

When the *Pippi Långstrump* and Sun Wukong stories are reduced to their core features, and the protagonists' life circumstances and character traits are compared, the similarities between the Swedish girl and the Monkey King are astonishing: both are one-of-a-kind characters, spirited, witty, brave and funny. Both lead very autonomous lives: Pippi, a half-orphan, lives away from her sea captain father in a house somewhere in a small town; Sun Wukong was originally a stone and came to life through a mythical birth. Pippi and Sun Wukong hold special positions among their peers. They stand out from the crowd because they are endowed with special gifts: Pippi is the strongest girl in the world, and Sun Wukong knows the art of seventy-two metamorphoses. Both are courageous leaders who fight for the good, the disadvantaged, the weak and the poor, and who regularly question, challenge and deconstruct authority. They both dress peculiarly and their anarchic, anti-authoritarian and sometimes rather comical behaviour reveals their carnivalesque character. Both Pippi and Sun Wukong combine stupendous abilities with a childlike curiosity and naiveté. Yet, they are characters children can easily identify with or at least would love to befriend. During Pippi's adventurous trips and travels and

centuriate constitution, a member of the wealthiest class and highest rank), or from *scriptus classicus* (author of high standing). Cf. Lexe, *Zur Motivkonstellation in den Klassikern der Kinderliteratur* (Kinder- und Jugendliteraturforschung in Österreich, vol. 5, Wien: Edition Praesens, 2003), 14. In literary history the term "classics" originally referred to paradigmatic texts which had been selected by Alexandrine philologists as *genera lectorum* for the so-called grammarian schools (*Grammatikerschulen*). Cf. Ernst Robert Curtius, *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter* (Tübingen: A. Francke Verlag, 1993), 255. In Chinese it is usually translated with *jing* 经 (also meaning canon or sutra), commonly relating to seminal works from the premodern period. Here, I refer to the modern Western concept of classics.

12 Dorothea Hayward Scott, *Chinese Popular Literature and the Child* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1980), 91.

13 The illustrated series of Sun Wukong stories was published by the *Verlag für fremdsprachige Literatur Peking* (Foreign Languages Press Beijing, *Beijing waiwen chubanshe* 北京外文出版社). It comprises more than 30 titles. The reason for the story's failure on the German children's book market might also derive from the absence of a fully integrated distribution network.

during Sun Wukong's thrilling journey to the West, the protagonists and their fellow companions regularly meet and overcome dangerous hurdles. Every chapter, story and episode in the Pippi-books and the *Xiyou ji* adaptations of Monkey King stories for children always ends happily, the tension and crises the young readers have to endure throughout the progression of the story notwithstanding.

All of the themes or *Motivkonstellationen*¹⁴ in both the *Pippi Långstrump* and the Sun Wukong stories for children contain paradigmatic elements of traditional storytelling. Many classic works of children's literature are composed of similar constellations of motifs, plots and archetypical characters, no matter what their culture of origin.¹⁵ Sun Wukong's adventures, Astrid Lindgren's Pippi books and J. K. Rowling's bestselling *Harry Potter* novels all feature a similar cast and story structure. Harry Potter is an orphan, an outsider in the "muggle" (non-wizarding) world, and a talented student of magic in the wizarding world, endowed with the gift of speaking "parseltongue", the language of snakes. Harry Potter is easily recognizable by his lightning-bolt scar, glasses and tousled hair, and he fights against evil together with his friends and classmates, regardless of school rules or wizards' laws.

14 According to Heidi Lexe, the absence of parents, the overcoming of hurdles during quests and voyages, nature topics, or the 'child's refusal' (for instance, the refusal to grow up as in Peter Pan's case) are (arche)typal tropes which are usually presented in children's classics. Cf. Heidi Lexe, *Pippi, Pan und Potter*.

15 The terms "children's books" and "children's literature" are occasionally used as synonyms, although children's books and periodicals "were already successful on the market at a time when it was not possible to talk of an independent children's literature." Cf. Hans-Heino Ewers, *Fundamental Concepts of Children's Literature Research: Literary and Sociological Approaches* (New York and London: Routledge, 2009), 23. The umbrella term "children's literature" usually describes the whole range of literary production for children, be it poetry, prose, or drama. Since its acceptance as a distinct discipline in the late 1970s and early 1980s in the Western academic realm, and since the emergence of more and more genres within the growing textual corpus, the study of children's literature opened the floor for different schools and voices that challenged this common and rather universal definition. In this article I will focus on literature, mainly novels for young readers aged 9 to 14. In China, children's literature (*ertong wenzue* 儿童文学) was always and still is connected with the development of Chinese society. On a micro-level, children's literature is thus regarded there as a means to educate its young readers. On a macro-level, children's literature is supposed to serve as a long-term tool for modernising the country. Therefore, Chinese children's literature not only has to meet the demands of many players within the children's book market, but also the requirements of the state. Cf. Mary Ann Farquhar, *Children's Literature in China: From Lu Xun to Mao Zedong*, (Armonk und London, England: M.E. Sharpe, 1999); Dorothea Hayward Scott, *Chinese Popular Literature and the Child* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1980); Baimin Li, *Shaping the Ideal Child: Children and Their Primers in Late Imperial China* (Hongkong: The Chinese University Press, 2005); Hong Yu, *Ertong Wenzue* 儿童文学 [Children's literature] (Beijing: Renmin jiaoyu chubanshe, 2004); Biaoqing Li, *Ertong wenzue yinlun* 儿童文学引论 [Introduction into children's literature] (Shanghai: Shanghai shehui kexueyuan chubanshe, 1991).

For all of their similarities, one evident difference between the protagonists Harry, Pippi and Sun Wukong is their international recognition. In China, the *Harry Potter* novels were as successful as in the rest of the world; the Chinese translation of the first volume of the series, *Hali Bote yu Mofa Shi* 哈利伯特与魔法石 (*Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*) sold five million authorized copies.¹⁶ *Pippi Långstrump* stories can be found today on the Chinese and Taiwanese children's book markets, for instance in special collections of Astrid Lindgren's most famous novels, including *Emil i Lönneberga* (*Emil in Lönneberga*), *Bröderna Lejonhjärta* (*The Brothers Lionheart*) and *Alla vi Barn i Bullerbyn* (*The Children of Noisy Village*). Sun Wukong's *Journey to the West*, however, was not as successful. Today copies can only be found in specialized, mostly academic children's libraries which are not frequented by the common reader, let alone children. In Germany, these include the International Youth Library in Munich, the international children's book archive of the Klingspor Museum for modern international book art, typography and calligraphy in Offenbach, and the libraries of various Chinese Studies institutes in Germany. The picture is similar in other European countries.

As the examples of *Pippi Långstrump* and Sun Wukong have shown, a set of diegetic and generic factors similar to global bestsellers as well as high selling numbers in their respective home countries do not guarantee a story's international success. Hence, the reason for the lack of success experienced by some children's stories must lie beyond their structure, form and content. This leads to the assumption that inherent cultural features might be the reason why some children's stories are accepted or rejected.

In his article "Travelling Cultures," James Clifford suggests that cultures should be understood in terms of hybridity. Cultures are never formed in isolation; they are a product of complex interrelations and connections, and thus never bound to national borders, either.¹⁷ Homi Bhaba further states that "the importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two original moments from which the third emerges, rather ... hybridity is the 'third space' which enables other positions to emerge."¹⁸ In Homi Bhaba's view, such a third space bears a subversive, creative and productive potential: the (post-colonial) subject does

16 Cf. Qingzhou Ye, *Changxiaoshu* (畅销书 [*Bestsellers*]) (Beijing: Beijing gongye daxue chubanshe, 2005), 174.

17 Cf. James Clifford, "Travelling Cultures" in *Cultural Studies*, eds. Lawrence Grossberg et al. (London: Routledge, 1992), 96–116. In post-colonial theory, hybridity commonly refers to "the creation of new transcultural forms within the contact zone produced by colonization." Cf. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, eds., *Post-colonial Studies: The Key Concepts* (London: Routledge, 2003), 118.

18 Cf. Homi K. Bhaba, "The Third Space," interview with Jonathan Rutherford in *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, ed. Rutherford, Jonathan (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990), 211.

not act passively. On the contrary: migrants, artists and intellectuals embody hybridity when they are moving between cultures, making productive and creative use of their cosmopolitan and multiple cultural affiliations.

Taking Bhaba's idea of hybridity and Clifford's proposal that "instead of studying people staying at home we should study travel",¹⁹ I will follow Pippi's and Sun Wukong's journeys abroad, examining their hybrid characters and their possible multiple (trans)cultural affiliations. In order to further reveal the driving forces behind the successful commercialization of particular children's books (given that only popular and marketable "book brands" can set and spread book market trends), I will focus on three aspects: (1) market factors (including an analysis of book-market mechanisms as well as the discussion of trendsetting and branding in children's fiction), (2) structural factors (tackling the asymmetries between the Chinese and the European children's book markets), and, since language is an inevitable aspect of global movement, (3) linguistic factors (concerning the translation of children's literature) leading to further questions of the (trans-)cultural quality of certain texts that have been written for and adapted to young readers.

Popularizing and commercializing children's fiction

Contemporary children's literature comprises a broad variety of genres and topics. Hence, publishing houses throughout the world increasingly depend on microeconomic strategies such as market, target-group and field research to place their products successfully within the different segments of their own national book market and on the international book market. Economically speaking, a market is a place where supply and demand converge and where producers, distributors and consumers (re-)negotiate the exchange of goods.²⁰ Markets are dynamic because distribution and marketing systems, product offerings and consumers' tastes are constantly changing. Consequently, what is now regarded as "trendy" will inevitably change as markets develop and transform.

As commodities of the publishing industry, books can be considered potential trend objects whose popularity and acceptance is usually measured by their successful placement on the book market and by their sales output.²¹ According

19 Cf. Clifford, "Travelling Cultures", 96–116.

20 Cf. Wilhelm Henrichsmeyer, Oskar Gans, and Ingo Evers, eds., *Einführung in die Volkswirtschaftslehre* (München: UTB, 1993), 23.

21 One may conclude that book market trends merely consist of market flows, which means: it does not really matter what is sold as long as it is sold well, with huge marketing budgets and the right marketing strategy underlining the circulation. Bestseller lists which are based on book trade figures

to futurologists and trend researchers Matthias Horx and Peter Wippermann, trends not only mirror the current style and popular taste of a given time, they are sensitive to social change and are thus also indicators of future societal conditions.²² Trends, once they have reached a certain “tipping point”, tend to spread quickly, like a highly contagious disease.²³ Compared to short-lived fashion fads, hypes and socio-cultural movements, trends are characterized by their durability.²⁴

The emergence of trends on the children's book market cannot always be easily reconstructed, because the production, distribution and consumption of children's literature operates in a highly volatile and competitive system where different actors (potential trendsetters) simultaneously pursue their own aims, needs and desires. People on the book market command authority when they attempt to facilitate or restrict access to and the distribution of certain texts. They can thus be regarded as “gatekeepers” and “trendsetters” in the evolution of children's literary trends.²⁵ In the flow of cultural production, dissemination and consumption, gatekeepers serve as a filter which reduces the amount of publications that flood the market.

On the producers' side, publishing houses, represented by publishers and editors, first and foremost want the texts they polish and put out in print to sell.

reflect this assumption inasmuch as the current top selling titles are not necessarily works of great literary quality but books that appeal to the masses or capture the spirit of the times. The children's book market, however, operates in quite a different mode compared to the market for adult literature, as this article will show. Within what Hans-Heino Ewers refers to as the so-called ‘children's literary action system’ one can detect many different actors such as librarians, book critics and teachers who simultaneously operate in different segments of the system, e.g., in book distribution, evaluation or acquisition and thus serve as gatekeepers in the children's book market. Cf. Hans-Heino Ewers, *Fundamental Concepts of Children's Literature Research, Literary and Sociological Approaches* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 57.

22 Cf. Matthias Horx und Peter Wippermann, eds. *Was ist Trendforschung?* (Düsseldorf: Econ, 1996), 13.

23 Cf. Malcolm Gladwell, *The Tipping Point. How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference* (New York: Little, Brown Book Group, 2002). See also: Jennifer Altehenger, Laila Abu-er-Rub, Sebastian Gehrig, “The Transcultural Travels of Trends—An Introductory Essay,” in *Transcultural Studies*, 2 (2011), 155.

24 Trend researchers speak of a megatrend when a trend's popularity lasts at least 30 years before it reaches its zenith. Next to this long-term ability to maintain a trend's popularity, three more parameters must be met in order to speak of a megatrend: (1) a megatrend is ubiquitous, radiating through all areas of life and impacting on consumption, economy, and people's living environment, (2) a megatrend is universal, although it might perform differently in different regions or cultures, (3) a megatrend endures and is thus able to overcome and survive lulls. Cf. Matthias Horx, “Die Macht der Megatrends,” (no date) in: <http://www.horx.com/Reden/Macht-der-Megatrends.aspx> (accessed April 1, 2010).

25 Cf. Lewis A. Dexter and David M. White, eds. *People, Society and Mass Communications* (London: Collier 1964), 160–172.

Therefore, they only sign on authors who write stories that suit the publishing house's product line. Furthermore, they hope that an author will establish a name which will underscore the high profile of the publishing house's brand. Booksellers represent the distributor's side; when driven by idealism, they aim to promote authors and texts which mirror their own (sociopolitical, personal and intellectual) visions. However, bookshops cannot survive without making a profit. Hence, their owners must first and foremost find a ready market for their selection of books. The chain of gatekeepers in the book market ends with the consumers, the people who buy and read books.

The trend agents on the demand side of the children's book market are mostly parents, friends or relatives who purchase the books they want the young readers to consume (and here, the parents' choice does not necessarily correspond with their children's primary interests). Parents often consider their children to be too young to select their own role models. When deciding on which literature their children should read, parents commonly pick stories which reflect their own ideals. Often their choices are fuelled by nostalgia, as parents also tend to buy the books they loved to read when they were children.²⁶ In this way they unconsciously initiate a chain reaction: by helping some stories to maintain and consolidate their status as long-term bestsellers, parents help to establish children's classics. Children's classics are usually thought of as "good²⁷" children's literature, products of an "international culture of childhood²⁸" which have been canonized, reprinted in various editions and series and translated into different languages.

When a consumer chooses a book, the publisher's brand is another influential decision-making element. Famous publishing houses like the Oetinger

26 In his work *Modernity at Large*, Arjun Appadurai states that consumption is often repetitive or habitual. According to Appadurai, consumption patterns are inscribed into people's bodies like rituals. A nostalgia-driven purchase of particular children's books can thus be regarded as a habitualized ritual-like act of consumption. Cf. Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 67. The example given also correlates with Pierre Bourdieu's field theory: According to Bourdieu, the literary field is a place where different actors produce, struggle for and give value to cultural goods. In Bourdieu's understanding, cultural goods (e.g. books) are mainly of symbolic value. People, in this case nostalgia-driven parents or a desire-driven collective, bestow the goods with meaning and, by so doing, determine their (symbolic) value. The publishers react to this demand and stimulate the literary production by signing on more authors, requesting similar stories or by acquiring more licenses. A children's book with a high symbolic value is therefore likely to become a book market trend. Cf. Pierre Bourdieu, *The Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field*, trans. Susan Emanuel (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1996), 166-173.

27 Cf. Emer O'Sullivan, "Does Pinocchio Have an Italian Passport? What is Specifically National and What is International about Classics of Children's Literature," in *The Translation of Children's Literature: A Reader*, ed. Gillian Lathey (Tonawanda, NY: UTP, 2006), 147.

28 *Ibid.*: 147.

publishing group in Germany, Little, Brown and Company Books for Young Readers in the USA, or Chicken House Publishing in the United Kingdom (UK), to name a few, are greatly esteemed by authors, booksellers and readers alike for their high-quality and diversified selection of titles.²⁹ Such publishing houses have the power to set new trends and standards in children's publishing, and to create their own literary trademarks, or: their own publisher's brand.

According to the *Oxford Dictionary of Business and Management*, a brand can be defined as "a tradename used to identify a specific product, manufacturer, or distributor."³⁰ In the UK, most branded products were introduced at the turn of the 20th century, some even in mid-Victorian times when manufacturers wanted to distinguish their goods from those of their competitors. They believed that by investing in the quality of a brand it would eventually build up a brand image, "to which consumers will respond by asking for their goods by their brand names."³¹ Whether they are cultural goods, commodities, services or even concepts, brands can easily be communicated and advertised. Consequently, the name of a renowned publishing house can be regarded as a brand, and the products (books) and names (of authors) associated with it form part of the company's corporate identity. A book published by the Oetinger publishing house always transports the intangible and thoroughly positive attributes of its brand: an Oetinger book stands for good children's fiction; an Oetinger book can be trusted.

29 The German Carlsen publishing company which acquired the license to publish the German translation of the *Harry Potter* book series, officially introduced the new German Chicken House programme in September 2009. According to Barry Cunningham, Chicken House publisher and J.K. Rowling's discoverer, the *Harry Potter* phenomenon convinced him that good literature for children always appeals to a global audience. He states: "I will never forget the day when J.K. Rowling was published within Bloomsbury's children's program and Harry Potter started conquering the world. Since that time I am convinced that good books appeal to all children, no matter where they are from. This is why I also signed Cornelia Funke. Her popularity has proven that the best books are universal." (*Ich werde nie den Tag vergessen, als ich in meinem Kinderbuchprogramm J.K. Rowling veröffentlicht habe und Harry Potter die Welt eroberte. Seitdem bin ich fest davon überzeugt, dass gute Bücher überall die gleiche magische Anziehungskraft auf Kinder ausüben. Deshalb habe ich auch Cornelia Funkes Bücher verlegt, und ihre enorme Popularität hat erneut bewiesen – die besten Bücher sind universell.* "). Irrespective of the fact that judgments about a book's quality are highly subjective and debatable, Cunningham implicitly and unintentionally tackles questions of a possible (trans-)cultural potential of literature. One could argue that exceptional publishing successes like the *Harry Potter* series and its followers can be regarded as transcultural phenomena which are easily popularized throughout the world because they exhibit unified, homogenized ideas and structures. Cf. Carlsen Verlag GmbH, ed., *Die Spur führt zu Chicken House* (Hamburg: Carlsen Verlag GmbH, 2009), 4.

30 Cf. Oxford University Press, *A Dictionary of Business and Management* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2009), 71–72.

31 *Ibid.*

One of the most popular Western children's book authors ever to have signed with the Oetinger publishing house was Astrid Lindgren (1907–2002), creative mother of Pippi. In a survey conducted by a radio station in Berlin in 2009, people strolling near the Brandenburg Gate were randomly interviewed about what they spontaneously associated with Sweden. The majority mentioned the beautiful landscape while others thought of Sweden's national animal, the moose, or *knäckebröd*, a typical Swedish crispbread. Several people also named IKEA, an internationally successful Swedish furniture chain, and children's book author Astrid Lindgren. This shows, that names like IKEA and Astrid Lindgren communicate more than their apparent meaning. IKEA and Astrid Lindgren have not only become brand names, IKEA and Astrid Lindgren are trademarks for Sweden in the international consumer goods market.³²

According to Shay Sayre and Cynthia M. King, a brand furthermore “reflects a common thread that runs through a range of products, services, or concepts. At a minimum, that thread usually includes a shared corporate name and logo, but brands usually also extend beyond shared symbols to shared attributes, concepts, stories, philosophies, personalities, and goals.”³³ With the production and dissemination of distinctive national industrial and cultural goods, including commodities, fine art and popular culture, even a popular children's book author like Astrid Lindgren can serve as representative of the whole, a brand name associated with more than a specific branch (in Lindgren's case: the international children's book market). The name Lindgren also represents and personifies the spirit of a whole country. Brands and brand names are thus transcultural in spite (or even because) of this very association with a particular nation.

Another crucial factor for the worldwide popularization and commercialization of a children's story is whether it lends itself to being transferred from one medium to another (hereafter: transmediality), as two recent global sales phenomena show. J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* novels and Stephenie Meyer's

32 Astrid Lindgren's standing as a Swedish cultural ambassador is also shown by her presence in travel guides to Sweden, which usually dedicate an extra section to the author. Cf. Gunnar Herrmann und Alexander Budde, eds., *Merian Reiseführer Stockholm* (München: Travel House Media, 2003), 62–63. The English edition of the Lonely Planet travel guide to Sweden even lists *Pippi Longstocking* as one of the “must read books by Swedish authors.” Apart from travel recommendations concerning Astrid Lindgren related spots, such as Lindgren's ancestral village, The World of Astrid Lindgren or the Junibacken pleasure grounds, this travel guide also devotes a short chapter exclusively to the author. Cf. Betty Ohlsen and Christian Bonetto, eds., *Sweden* (London, Victoria, Oakland: Lonely Planet Publications, 2009), 18.

33 Cf. Shay Sayre and Cynthia M. King, *Entertainment & Society: Audiences, Trends, and Impacts* (London: Sage Publications, 2003), 25.

Twilight saga, a teenage vampire love story, both combine key factors that facilitate the international success of a children's book. Although catering to different audiences, both series reached the top of international bestseller lists and triggered an extraordinary reading mania among children and (young) adults.³⁴ Their movie adaptations drew people of all ages into movie theatres, and paraphernalia like Gryffindor³⁵ scarves, Dumbledore³⁶ puppets and witchcraft utensils such as wands, coats and hats, and manifold collections of diverse *Twilight* collectibles³⁷ made cash registers ring from New York to Beijing. The use of various marketing channels and media merchandizing did more than increase the publishing houses' profits and the authors' fame.³⁸ The sudden omnipresence of both titles within different market segments bestowed the names *Harry Potter* and *Twilight* with a unique, emblematic quality. *Harry Potter* and *Twilight* began their success as book series; through

34 The *Harry Potter* novels were published in a series of seven consecutive volumes, the first telling the story of 10-year-old Harry's first encounter with the wizarding world. In the course of the novels, Harry grows older, just like his intended readership. Whereas the *Harry Potter* series attracts male and female readers alike, the *Twilight* audience is mainly female. Cf. Nina Daebel, "Dem todschicken Flirt mit dem schönen Bösen" in *Bücher*. 4 (2009), 32–36. Both series are considered "all-age literature" (sometimes also labeled "cross-over literature"), meaning that *Harry Potter* and *Twilight* are read not only by children or teenagers, but also by adults. Ralf Schweikart refers to all-age literature as a "trend-topic" in today's publishing industry. According to Schweikart, all-age titles have the best chances to become bestsellers. He also states that literature for young readers has developed further in the last years, approximating genres and styles of world literature. Cf. Ralf Schweikart, "Trendthema All-Age" in *Eselsohr: Fachzeitschrift für Kinder- und Jugendmedien*, 10 (2009), 14–17. In Sweden, however, the *Twilight* series can be found in the same book section as the Pippi series, that is, in the shelves for readers of the age range 9 to 12.

35 Gryffindor is the name of one of the four Houses at the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, a boarding school for young wizards and witches. Harry Potter, the main protagonist of Rowling's novels, lives in Gryffindor Tower throughout the school year.

36 Professor Albus Dumbledore is Headmaster of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.

37 According to the online shop Amazon.com, the *Twilight* collection comprises twenty-nine merchandising items such as action dolls, board games, trading card sets, jigsaw puzzles, jewelry, posters and bedding articles in addition to the various book and DVD editions. Close Up, a German distributor of memorabilia, maintains a special *Twilight* online fan shop with more than 60 items. See: <http://www.twilight-fanshop.de/?aff=99>. The Chinese equivalent to Amazon.com, Dangdang.com, sells various book editions and movie companions for both series, as well as *Harry Potter* bookmarks, colouring books, journals, stickers and postcard albums.

38 Famous children's and young adult book authors usually maintain a website through which they inform their readers about the latest publishing news, communicate with their fans, and sometimes even deliver the soundtrack to their novels. With such a complementary media supply and consumption, diving into the *Twilight* world becomes a multi-sensory experience. Other new media, such as online social networks, not only serve as a means to create public identities, shape communities or popularize trends and brands. Through Facebook a fan gets the chance to actually become a friend of Stephenie Meyer (or better: of all the different existing virtual Meyer personas, because more than eight profiles of the famous author can be found on Facebook), notwithstanding spatial or temporal differences, let alone other disparities, shifting the reader-author-relationship to a level yet unknown.

merchandizing, they became trademarks for an array of cultural goods as well as figureheads of the youth culture of their times.³⁹

The fact that the *Harry Potter* movies were released before the first authorized Chinese translations appeared on the Chinese book market can also be regarded as an important multiplier for the popularity and acceptance of the *Harry Potter* series in China.⁴⁰ Indeed, it may be safely assumed that it is always easier to consume a movie than to read a book. China's black markets for cheap fake products, bootlegs and pirated copies of CDs and DVDs also provide a perfect environment for popularizing (pop) cultural goods and spreading trends. Moreover, McDonald's and other popular fast-food chains offer tie-ins to promote cartoons and movies throughout the whole world. In the US, for example, McDonald's gave out Hua Mulan dolls with "Happy Meals" when the Disney movie was released, which increased the popularity of the Chinese girl-warrior enormously.⁴¹ Yet it probably needs the Disney brand for the characters to be advertised in this way: while *Journey to the West* figurines, including the Monkey King Sun Wukong, have long been available everywhere in toy stores in China, they have never been distributed by McDonald's or other fast-food chains.⁴²

39 The power of a brand name in literature is best shown by its ability to revive, set or sustain book market trends. After the *Harry Potter* and *Twilight* books appeared and the initial selling frenzy subsided, similar stories about fantastical worlds of young wizards and teenage vampires emerged, and translations of these stories swamped the international market for children's and juvenile literature. Although their prospects of becoming megatrends can not yet be safely forecast, each series has already helped a genre trend to a revival, because their roots can easily be traced back to two classics of world fiction, namely the Arthurian legend with its tales about the famous wizard Merlin in the case of the *Harry Potter* novels, and Bram Stoker's *Dracula* in the case of Meyer's *Twilight* saga. Even if *Harry Potter* and *Twilight* only turn out to be ephemeral phenomena in the history of children's fiction, they are without dispute connected to classics, and hence also to 'literary megatrends.' The term "megatrend" was coined by US-American bestseller author John Naisbitt. In 1982 he published *Megatrends*, in which he predicted the prevalence of emerging global trends. In a hierarchical trend system, megatrends are active on several levels: they pervade and alter different forms of civilization, technologies, economics, and value systems. According to Horx et al. a megatrend is furthermore characterized by its global quality: although a megatrend might not have attracted the same attention everywhere yet, it will eventually become visible throughout the globe. Cf. Matthias Horx et al. eds., *Zukunft machen. Wie Sie von Trends zu Business-Innovationen kommen* (Frankfurt/Main: Campus, 2007), 179.

40 Cf. Stephanie Hemelryk Donald, *Little Friends: Children's Film and Media Culture in China* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005), 103.

41 Cf. Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom, *China's Brave New World: And Other Tales for Global Times* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2007), 7.

42 Cf. Hemelryk Donald, *Little Friends*, 11. Concerning *Harry Potter*; I argue that marketing factors and the fact that his stories are read by a large number of adults contributed to his international success. Once the books became a bestseller, people worldwide grew interested in the "Potter phenomenon", eagerly waiting for the seventh volume to be published in order to discover how the battle between good and evil ends. However, the extent to which the translations of the *Harry Potter* novels were adapted to

Just like Harry Potter or the young vampires, the images of Pippi and Sun Wukong have also been successfully disseminated via different media throughout Europe and the USA (in the case of Pippi Långstrump) and East Asia (in the case of Sun Wukong). Swedish film director Olle Hellbom's *Pippi Långstrump* TV series from 1969 and 1970 starring Inger Nilsson as Pippi successfully introduced Lindren's heroine to different audiences beyond the Swedish borders. The animated US-American *Pippi Longstocking* film adaptation, which was aired between 1997 and 1999 on HBO channel in the USA and on Canada's Teletoon channel, boosted the Swedish girl's popularity immensely.⁴³ For Pippi's 60th German publishing anniversary, the Oetinger publishing house presented a large range of new tie-in-products at the 2009 Frankfurt Book Fair. Stationery products, dinnerware, games and accessories decorated with Pippi-illustrations as well as re-recordings of Pippi-audio books were added to the various printed editions of the *Pippi*-trilogy, the cartoon series, and the Pippi-movies.⁴⁴

When Sun Wukong's adventures became more and more numerous and epic in China, different media and literary genres also adopted the existing oral and written material. Various types of Chinese operas, plays, puppet shows, picture books, comics, cartoons and movies completed the manifold Sun Wukong-collection over the course of time, "contributing to the public's familiarity with both plot and characters."⁴⁵ *Xiyou ji*'s multiple transmedial reincarnations not only became part of the "rich background texture" in which Chinese thought, speech, and behaviour manifested itself.⁴⁶ They also helped to spread the Monkey King's fame across China's borders, e.g. to Japan. *Saiyuki*, the Japanese version of the Chinese classic, contributed artwork and served as inspiration for several TV and anime series⁴⁷, some of which are but very loosely based on the original story. The protagonist of the popular

the respective cultural contexts requires further exploration.

43 Astrid Surmatz even speaks of a veritable "Astrid Lindgren Renaissance" in North America. Cf. Surmatz, *Pippi Långstrump als Paradigma*, 399.

44 Cf. Verlag Friedrich Oetinger GmbH, ed., *Happy Birthday, Pippi Langstrumpf: Alles von dem stärksten Mädchen der Welt: Bücher, Filme, CDs und mehr* (Hamburg: Verlag Friedrich Oetinger, 2009).

45 Cf. Rudolf G. Wagner, *The Contemporary Chinese Historical Drama. Four Studies* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990), 139.

46 Ibid.: 139.

47 In her article on transcultural fandom, Sandra Annett discusses the interdependencies of the global media environment with regard to trends for different styles of animation, which circulate between cultures and nations. Annett argues that circulation of this kind is a key factor in trends. Cf. Sandra Annett, "Imagining Transcultural Fandom: Animation and Global Media Communities," in *Transcultural Studies*, 2 (2011), 164–188.

Dragon Ball computer game, *Songoku*, for instance, is named after the Monkey King. *Dragon Ball* originally started as a comic strip published in the weekly magazine *Shonen Jump*.⁴⁸ Books, a TV anime series, movies and finally *Dragon Ball* video and computer games followed, paving the way for a triumphant long-term success for Sun Wukong's different reincarnations in East Asia.⁴⁹

Besides their ability to transfer from one medium to another, the degree of structural susceptibility (*Strukturanfälligkeit*) is likewise pivotal to the popularization and acceptance of stories and book market trends. The faster a cultural good, a commodity, a concept or an idea reacts and adapts to socio-cultural or politico-cultural conditions, the easier it will be communicated to and accepted by its consumers.⁵⁰ In the late 1990s, for instance, Chinese women's magazines started to advocate the so-called "model new woman" who "can afford what she desires," who "is a doer—straightforward, efficient, and self-controlled," and who is also "a bit of a rebel."⁵¹ Recent Coca-Cola advertisements in China have already responded to this phenomenon and presented a new type of female role-model: different TV spots showed self-confident young women enjoying their independent life while drinking Coca-Cola—with men playing only a minor role.⁵² With reference to the structural susceptibility thesis, the promotion of a new role-model such as the described "model new woman" can thus be regarded as a catalyst which helps to accelerate the popularization of new ideals and will, therefore, be able to set and spread new trends throughout the consumer market. The "model new

48 Although the Chinese epic served as a blueprint for *Songoku*'s adventures, Sun Wukong's Japanese anime derivative is an autochthonous figure that has little in common with his Chinese predecessor. The German Carlsen Publishing House published the first volume of the manga series in 1997. It introduces the main protagonist *Songoku*, a human-simian hybrid, who owns a dragon ball which is said to have special magic powers. According to a legend, *Shenlong*, a dragon spirit, will appear once all existing dragon balls are collected and put in one place. The dragon spirit will then fulfill any wish made by the last dragon ball keeper. Cf. Akira Toriyama, *Dragonball: Das Geheimnis der Drachenkugeln* (Hamburg: Carlsen, 2008). Here a combination of (Western) translation and (Asian) presentation is the reason for the *Dragonball* manga series' success on the German book market.

49 Just how advanced the merchandizing of Sun Wukong's image has become is shown by the Microsoft Office XP Multilingual Pack. Here, a Monkey King version is introduced as one of its Office Assistants.

50 Annett refers to this constant adjustment of trends to what is emerging as an "ongoing affective experience."

51 Cf. Julia F. Andrews and Kuiyi Shen, "The New Chinese Woman and Lifestyle Magazines in the Late 1990s," in *Popular China—Unofficial Culture in a Globalizing Society*, ed. Perry Link, Richard P. Madsen, Paul G. Pickowitz (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002), 151.

52 Cf. Nora Frisch, "Coca-Cola—ein chinesischer Mythos? Über Erscheinungsformen und ideologische Aussagekraft politischer Mythen in kommerzieller Fernsehwerbung in China (1989–2009)", PhD Thesis, Heidelberg 2010.

woman” paragon might even help to consolidate the status of the Swedish sea captain’s daughter as a long-term bestseller in China, smoothing her way to becoming an accepted role model for Chinese girls.

Likewise, perhaps, Sun Wukong’s adventures will eventually find their place in the European children’s book market, now that the Monkey King’s stories have repeatedly been promoted via different channels in England, the US, and Germany over the last four years. Damon Albarn, for instance, former front man of the British pop band Blur and member of the British creative pool “Gorillaz”⁵³, chose Sun Wukong and his fellow companions when asked to design a cartoon teaser for the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) to promote the 2008 Olympic Games.⁵⁴ This Monkey King cartoon strip was created in the distinctive “Gorillaz” style and broadcasted throughout the UK during prime viewing time two weeks prior to the opening ceremony in Beijing.⁵⁵ Earlier Albarn co-composed an opera based on *The Journey to the West* which premiered in June 2007, opening the Manchester International Festival.⁵⁶ The stage-adaptation was also shown in France and in the US, the soundtrack even entered the UK Albums Chart at number five and the UK indie chart at number one. Also in 2008 Hollywood released a martial arts-adventure-movie entitled *The Forbidden Kingdom* with Chinese actor

53 “Gorillaz” is the name of a conglomerate comprising of musicians, graphic designers, and illustrators which is also known as a pop group that performs its own pop songs in the form of an animated “virtual” band.

54 The reason for Albarn’s choice might derive from the fact that a Japanese TV adaptation of *The Journey to the West* was aired by the BBC in the late 1970s, which caused a virtual “Monkey Mania” amongst its viewers and thus became a cult series in the UK. Furthermore, different translations of Sun Wukong’s stories into English can be found on the British and American (children’s) book market: *The Journey to the West* has been published in a Penguin foreign classics edition; the Beijing Foreign Language Press on the other hand created special adaptations for a young English speaking audience. Even today Monkey, as Sun Wukong is known especially amongst the young descendants of Chinese ethnic and immigrant populations in the UK and in the US, is introduced to a young, English-speaking audience as one of China’s most amazing tricksters and superheroes, thus placing him right next to Superman, Batman and other typical DC comics characters. Cf. Aaron Shepard, *The Monkey King* (Washington: Skyhook Press, 2009); Cheng-en Wu, *The Journey to the West*, retold by Christine Sun (Oxford, UK: Real Reads, 2012). Christine Sun and Shirley Chiang (illustrator) also edited other versions of Chinese classic tales, such as *The Dream of the Red Chamber*, *The Three Kingdoms* and *The Water Margin*. For all books a detailed addendum is available offering useful background information and ideas how to include these Chinese stories into the regular school curricula (for *The Journey to the West*: <http://realreads.co.uk/chinese/PDFs/JourneytotheWest.pdf>).

55 Cf. British Broadcasting Corporation, *BBC Sport’s Olympics Monkey* (2007), in <http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport2/hi/olympics/monkey/7521287.stm> (accessed December 8, 2012).

56 Cf. Smith, Andrew, “Damon Albarn has Written an Opera, in Mandarin,” in *The Sunday Times* (2007) http://entertainment.timesonline.co.uk/to/arts_and_entertainment/stage/opera/article1738687.ece (accessed June 23, 2010).

Jet Li playing a featured part as the Monkey King. How important the Monkey King's adventures still are for younger generations of contemporary Chinese film artists is illustrated by the recent release of a remake of the 1964 animation movie *Sun Wukong danao tiangong* 孙悟空大闹天宫 (*The Monkey King: Uproar in Heaven*), one of the best-known tales from *The Journey to the West*.⁵⁷ For the 2012 3D-version, computer animation specialists from China collaborated with 3D-experts who worked for the *Harry Potter* movies as well as for the Oscar-awarded animation movie *Avatar*. The original Chinese ink paintings were restored and combined with contemporary animation features; the original soundtrack of the movie was re-recorded and mixed with Western musical elements. The movie was shown in the so-called "Generation Kplus" series which is specially designed for children and young people. It did not join the Berlinale competition, though, which makes it rather difficult to evaluate its real influence on the young German audience. Thus, despite their multi-channeled circulation within the Asian and the Western popular spheres, one can only speculate whether (and to what extent) the various Sun Wukong-images will be able to result in a growing interest in the book series and in a successful dissemination of its different translations.⁵⁸

Children's literature beyond culture? The translation and adaptation of children's fiction

According to Helene Schär, editor-in-chief of the Swiss Baobab Children's Book Series which was established to promote German translations of children's literature from Latin America, Africa, the Middle East and Asia, a blatant discrepancy can be detected between the numbers of foreign titles that have been licensed from US-American or European writers compared to those that have been acquired for titles by Asian authors. In her article from the year 2006 about images of Asia in children's fiction, Schär stated that only twenty-four Asian authors (including five illustrators) had found their way into the German children's book market within the last twenty-five years.⁵⁹ Of these, a total of sixteen worked and published in their home countries. Eight authors (i.e. one third of the group) were living abroad and writing in a foreign (European) language. In order to find explanations for this underrepresentation

57 For more information, please visit http://www.berlinale.de/external/de/filmarchiv/doku_pdf/20126661.pdf.

58 In particular Albarn's Monkey King opera might not be able to influence the children's book market because it attracts a different audience segment.

59 Cf. Helene Schär, "Zwischen Aufklärung und Klischee: Bücher über fremde Kulturen können bereichern und eine respektvolle Begegnung mit ihnen fördern. Asienbilder in der deutschsprachigen Kinder- und Jugendliteratur", in *JuLit*, 1 (2006), ed. Arbeitskreis für Jugendliteratur (München: Arbeitskreis für Jugendliteratur, 2006), 3–12.

of “genuine” Asian stories in the German-language children’s book market, Schär focused on titles that had been written by Chinese authors. Taking books by for instance Lin Haiyin⁶⁰ 林海音 and Chen Danyan⁶¹ 陈丹燕—authors who write in Chinese and live and publish in the PRC Schär observed that their works seemed more “foreign” or “exotic” (*fremdartiger*) than books written by authors living and working in Europe.⁶²

In her study of the Chinese children’s and young adult publishing industry of 2008, Jing Bartz, head of BIZ Beijing⁶³ until April 2010, confirmed Helen Schär’s observations. Bartz corroborated her opinion that transactions for translation rights are mainly unidirectional: “Chinese publishers purchase German licenses, but the business hardly ever goes the other way.⁶⁴” While Schär assumes that this imbalance might stem from cultural differences inherent in the texts, Bartz argues that it is structural or organizational problems that uphold the asymmetries in the Euro-Asian copyright trade.⁶⁵

60 Lin Haiyin’s semi-biographical novel *Chengnan jushi* 城南旧事 (Old stories from Chengnan) was first published in 1960 by Erya Publishing House Taipei. The German publishers Carl Hanser Verlag bought the rights for the German market and published Lin’s book under the title *Die Geheimnisse der Yingzi* in 1997. Cf. Lin, Haiyin, *Die Geheimnisse der Yingzi* (München: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1997).

61 Chen Danyan’s novel *Yi ge nühai* 一个女孩 (A Girl), first published by Jiangsu Publishing in 1993, tells the story of Sansan, a Chinese girl, and her coming-of-age during the Cultural Revolution in China. The German translation *Neun Leben* won the Austrian Children’s Book Award (*Österreichischer Kinderbuchpreis*) in 1996 and the UNESCO Prize 1997 for Children’s and Young Adult Literature in the Service for Tolerance (*UNESCO Preis 1997 für Kinder- und Jugendliteratur im Dienst der Toleranz*). It was also nominated for the German Youth Reading Award (*Deutscher Jugendbuchpreis*). Cf. Chen, Danyan, *Neun Leben* (Zürich: Nagel & Kimche, 1995).

62 It is noticeable, however, that the reception of Chinese titles in German is not contingent on the works’ place of origin and distribution. According to Schär, neither consumers nor producers differentiate between the two types of Chinese writers: a Chinese story is a Chinese story, as long as it was written by a Chinese author, notwithstanding the place or language it was originally published in. Cf. Schär, “Zwischen Aufklärung und Klischee“, 7. Among those authors who work and live outside China, Chen Jianghong is one of the more well-known and successful writers. Educated as an illustrator in China and France, he now lives in Paris and writes his books in French exclusively. In Germany, Chen’s books are published by Frankfurt based Moritz publishing house, a sub-company of the famous Beltz-group. Chen Jianghong’s latest book, *An der Hand meines Großvaters* (literally: Hand in hand with grandfather, the original French edition is entitled *Mao et moi*) has been nominated for the German Youth Reading Award 2010 (*Deutscher Jugendbuchpreis 2010*). Cf. Arbeitskreis für Jugendliteratur e.V., ed., *Deutscher Jugendliteraturpreis: Nominierungen 2010* (München: Arbeitskreis für Jugendliteratur e.V., 2010), 14–15.

63 The BIZ Beijing is a dependence of the Frankfurt Book Fair, providing all kinds of services concerning the promotion, licensing and distribution of German publications on the Chinese book market.

64 Cf. Jing Bartz, *Zusammenarbeit deutscher und chinesischer Kinderbuchverlage im Lizenzbereich* (Buchinformationszentrum Peking der Frankfurter Buchmesse, no date) <http://www.buchmesse.de/imperia/ celum/documents/Kinderbuchmarkt%20in%20China.pdf> (accessed June 23, 2010).

65 *Ibid.* According to the *New Children’s Books Rights Guide 2010* a total of 160 licenses were sold

The pivotal moment in a children's story's journey from one culture to another is the moment of translation. In her introduction to the anthology *Beyond Babar: The European Tradition in Children's Literature*, Sandra L. Beckett has pointed out that "translations play a key role in the constitution of literary canons that cross languages and cultures."⁶⁶ For children who are not expected to master foreign languages at an early age, translations are an important means for their first contact with foreign literatures and cultures. However, only well-established stories with proven long-term bestselling qualities are usually translated and disseminated beyond the borders of their countries of origin. Usually the publishing house—represented by its editorial office—and the translator agree on the most apt translation strategy with regard to the primary text and the target language, taking into account both cultural contexts. Translation is thus more than the transformation of the respective textual corpus into a different language. It is "an act simultaneously involving mediation and refraction."⁶⁷

According to Bhaba, translation can also be regarded as "the performative nature of cultural communication" which "continually reminds us of difference, for there is always in translation a starting point and a point of arrival that are never the same."⁶⁸ Such a (post-colonial) notion of difference also displays a judgement, namely that of the culture to be translated as being constituted as that of the "other."⁶⁹ Hence, a children's book which features

for altogether 46 German publications until the date of publication. Korea is the country which ranks highest (with 15 licenses acquired), closely followed by France (14 licenses) and the Netherlands (13 licenses). The PRC is in fourth place with 9 licenses acquired. ROC Taiwan shares a place with Russia, Slovenia and Sweden (4 licenses each), Thailand with Belgium, Lithuania, Norway, Portugal and Slovakia (3 licenses each) and Japan with Croatia, Italy, Latvia, Romania, Serbia and Turkey (2 licenses each). This example shows that Asian publishing houses actively participate in the German licensing market, regardless of possible linguistic problems. Cf. Arbeitsgemeinschaft von Jugendbuchverlagen e.V., ed., *New Children's Books Rights Guide 2010 From Germany, Austria & Switzerland* (Frankfurt am Main: Arbeitsgemeinschaft von Jugendbuchverlagen e.V., 2010). The *New Children's Books Rights Guide 2010* is a publication by the Association of Children's Book Publishers in Germany, Austria and Switzerland (*Arbeitsgemeinschaft von Jugendbuchverlagen avj*) for those publishers interested in acquiring rights of German language children's books. It lists a range of new releases of different genres which have been selected by avj-members.

66 Cf. Sandra L. Beckett, "Introduction", in *Beyond Babar*, ed. Sandra L. Beckett and Maria Nikolajeva (Lanham: The Children's Literature Association and The Scarecrow Press, 2006), vi. The title *Beyond Babar* refers to the children's classic *Histoire de Babar* by French children's book author Jean de Brunhoff's, which was first published in the 1930s.

67 Cf. Jan van Collie and Walter P. Verschueren, "Editor's Preface," in *Children's Literature in Translation: Challenges and Strategies*, eds. Jan van Collie and Walter P. Verschueren (Manchester, UK: St. Jerome Publishing, 2006), v.

68 Cf. Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 228.

69 Cf. Anuradha Dingwaney and Carol Meier, eds., *Between Languages and Cultures: Translation and*

typical cultural traits can also be regarded as a marker of cultural difference. In order to overcome these differences and due to the assumption that their “foreignness” might be too difficult to comprehend by a young reader of the target culture, texts are sometimes altered in the course of their translation.⁷⁰ Realia like foreign names and locations, coinage, foodstuffs, as well as aspects of behaviour and manners, speech specifics and unfamiliar expressions are sometimes changed during the translation process in order to prevent a book’s rejection on the foreign market. The assumption is that especially when particular cultural idiosyncracies are made explicit in a book, it is unlikely that the story will gain an international readership.⁷¹

Pippi Långstrump may serve as an example for such a practice of “cultural context adaptation”—a term coined by Göte Klingberg, who recommended that any attuning of a children’s story to the target language should be restricted only to details.⁷² In its German translation, for instance, Pippi wears a yellow dress over blue-and-white polka dot pants instead of the original short blue dress with red patches, because the German translator thought the latter would look too frivolous on a child.⁷³ Thai and Iranian publishers darkened Pippi’s hair and skin colour.⁷⁴ British and French translators changed Pippi’s typical Swedish habit of taking an “*eftermiddagskaffe*” (afternoon coffee) to “having afternoon tea” respectively to “*prendre le thé*” in order to match their countries’ customs.⁷⁵ Much more problematic, however, are substantial modifications to the composition of the book (e.g. the order of the chapters) or to linguistic

Cross-Cultural Texts (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1994), 4.

70 Cf. O’Sullivan, 148.

71 According to O’Sullivan, Selma Lagerlöf’s *Nils Holgerssons underbara resa genom Sverige* (Wonderful Adventures of Nils Holgersson) and Johanna Spyri’s *Heidi* novels are exceptions because both books gained international recognition despite their typical Swedish and Swiss features. *Ibid.*: 154.

72 Cf. Göte Klingberg, “Children’s Fiction in the Hands of the Translator” in *Studia psychologica et paedagogica*. Series altera 28 (Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1986), 17, cited after Gillian Lathey, ed. *The Translation of Children’s Literature: A Reader* (Tonawanda, NY: UTP, 2006). Actually, Klingberg followed the suggestion raised by educational expert Theodor Brüggemann and children’s literature researcher Malte Dahrendorf, who both advanced the term adaptation first in the mid-1960s. Adaptation in its original meaning describes the modification of a literary work to a different genre or medium. Ewers prefers the term “accommodation” [*Akkomodation*] for the customization of children’s and young adult literature to their respective audience. Cf. Hans-Heino Ewers, *Literatur für Kinder und Jugendliche: Eine Einführung* (München: UTB, 2000), 203–207. As Sandra Annett demonstrates, the “Japanese repackaging” of pop culture icons served as a means to facilitate their translation for and communication to a global audience.

73 Cf. Surmatz, *Pippi Långstrump als Paradigma*, 154–155.

74 *Ibid.*: 413.

75 *Ibid.*: 266.

aspects (e.g. particular oral expressions or idioms) which significantly depart from the Swedish original.

The first French translation of 1962 liberally omitted four entire chapters which contained what French people at the time considered improper behaviour for a child, namely those chapters where Pippi clearly displays her evident superiority over adults.⁷⁶ In “*Pippi leker kull med poliser*“ (Pippi plays tag with the police) two policemen try to send Pippi to an orphanage. Pippi, however, prefers playing tag with the policemen, letting them balance on the rooftop of Villa Villekulla, and finally throwing them out of her garden. In “*Pippi går på kafferep*“ (Pippi has coffee with the ladies), Pippi ruins the coffee party which Annika’s and Tommy’s mother organized for some ladies of the neighbourhood by raiding the plates full of cakes and pastries and by constantly interrupting the ladies’ conversations. In “*Pippi muntrar upp tant Laura*“ (Pippi cheers up aunt Laura), Pippi makes up incredible stories about her grandmother, about cows in trains, and about strange-looking Singaporean sailors in order to distract Annika’s and Tommy’s aunt Laura, who is complaining about her health. In “*Pippi ordnar frågesport*” (Pippi organizes a quiz), a rich lady, Ms. Rosenblom, hands out presents, clothes and sweets to all the poor village children who successfully pass her quiz. Pippi takes Ms. Rosenblom’s quiz to the point of absurdity by ridiculing the questions and organizing a counter-quiz in which only those children win prizes who cannot answer the questions correctly.

English and American translators have likewise omitted the puns and parley that reveal Pippi’s wit and her “skillful play with language,” which greatly changes Pippi’s character and weakens the book’s intention to question adult authority.⁷⁷ In her article “A Misunderstood Tragedy: Astrid Lindgren’s Pippi Longstocking Books”, Maria Nikolajeva, Professor of Education at Cambridge University and children’s literature researcher, states: “In fact, when I used *Pippi Longstocking* in my children’s literature classes in the U.S., I discovered, to my frustration, that whenever I wanted to illustrate Pippi’s verbal skills by an example I knew from the original, it simply wasn’t there in the translated

76 Cf. Svenja Blume, *Pippi Långstrumps Verwandlung zur “dame bien-élevée”—die Anpassung eines Kinderbuchs an ein fremdes kulturelles System: eine Analyse der französischen Übersetzung von Astrid Lindgrens Pippi Långstrump (1945–48)* (Hamburg: Kovač, 2001); Maria Nikolajeva, “What Do We Translate When We Translate Children’s Literature?” in *Beyond Babar: The European Tradition in Children’s Literature*, eds. Sandra L. Beckett and Maria Nikolajeva (Lanham: The Children’s Literature Association and The Scarecrow Press, 2006), 283; Christiane Jung, “Tea-time oder Kaffee und Kuchen? Von den Schwierigkeiten des Übersetzens,” in *Bulletin Jugend + Literatur*, 2 (1996), 14.

77 Cf. Maria Nikolajeva, “A Misunderstood Tragedy: Astrid Lindgren’s Pippi Longstocking Books,” in *Beyond Babar: The European Tradition in Children’s Literature*, eds. Sandra L. Becket, Maria Nikolajeva (Lanham: The Children’s Literature Association and The Scarecrow Press, 2006), 50.

version.⁷⁸ The Swedish-American movie adaptation by British director Ken Annakin from the year 1988, *The New Adventures of Pippi Longstocking*, relied heavily on the US-American text. As a result, so Nikolajeva, it had to “chiefly rely on slapstick, because the verbal humor of the Pippi stories is completely gone [in the translated versions, P.T.].⁷⁹” As a result, the Pippi appearing here was, if not lost, then somehow warped in translation.

The travels of translative misrepresentations of children's stories sometimes prolong their journeys around the globe. Following the trajectory of the English Pippi version, for example, one soon realizes that it served as a template for the Taiwanese translation. Although the introduction presents Astrid Lindgren as a famous Swedish author of children's literature, Ren Rongrong 任溶溶, the Taiwanese translator, comments on parts of the story that he considered typically British and which thus, in his eyes need additional explanation in order to be intelligible to the young Taiwanese audience. In the process, he reinvents a British Pippi and thus reconfigures the story to a remarkable degree. When Pippi's little monkey Mr. Nilsson (Chin.: *Nayuxun* 纳雨逊), a farewell gift from Pippi's father, is introduced, Ren explains in a footnote that a British naval commander of the same name, *Nayuxun* 纳雨逊, died when he fought Napoleon at Cape Trafalgar.⁸⁰ Ren obviously mistook admiral Lord Nelson, a British admiral, as the eponym for Pippi's monkey, because the transcription of ‘Lord Nelson’ in Taiwanese only differs slightly from Mr. Nilsson's (Nelson: *Na'eroxun* 纳尔逊). In spite of Ren's good intention to actually explain British culture to young Taiwanese readers, by mediating “images of foreignness” presented in the book he actually obscures them even more, and indeed makes them into “images of strangeness”—at least to the Western adult reader who knows the story's background.⁸¹

Unlike the publishers of some Western *Pippi* versions, the Beijing Foreign Languages Publishing House (*Beijing Waiwen Chubanshe* 北京外文出版社) did not exercise the option of cultural context adaptation when the decision was made to introduce Sun Wukong to a German audience. For the translation of a series of Chinese Sun Wukong adventures into German, it drew up contracts exclusively with Chinese translators.⁸² In the years 1984 and 1987,

78 Ibid.: 50.

79 Ibid.: 50.

80 Cf. A. Lingelun (林格伦·阿 [Lindgren, Astrid]), *Chang wazi Pipi maoxian gushi* (长袜子皮皮冒险故事 [*Adventure Stories of Pippi Longstocking*]) (Taipei: Zhiwen chubanshe, 1993), 15.

81 The young reader's attention might not, however, be at all distracted by such an annotation.

82 The serialization of sensational fiction used to be a trend in the Victorian literary sphere, as Huang

the translations of over 30 stories were finally completed, embellished with rich and colourful illustrations, and printed for the German book market.⁸³ In order to inform the young German readers about the genesis of *The Journey to the West* as well as the Monkey King's eminent position within Chinese children's literature, the publishers decided to add an expository introduction printed on the book covers of each volume.⁸⁴ Inside the book covers the publishers further

Xuelei exemplifies in her article on left wing cinema in 1930s China, which has also been published in this issue of *Transcultural Studies*. In China, serial publication played a dominant role in the distribution of Chinese popular fiction at the beginning of the twentieth century, when book-length stories were circulated in the form of newspaper sequels.

In today's children's publishing, the trend of serializing fantasy fiction has reached a new level, as recent press releases have shown. Just in time for the opening of the Leipzig book fair and the annual Bologna Children's Book Fair 2011, different German publishing houses announced the release of several prequels to successful fantasy stories. Instead of the continuous production of yet another sequel, authors of fantasy fiction for young readers prolong their bestsellers' fame and economic success by publishing the ultimate ur-story. Cf. Sylvia Mucke, "In bewährter Tradition—Fantasy Trends 2011", in Eselsohr: *Fachzeitschrift für Kinder- und Jugendmedien*, 3 (2011), 36–37.

Rowling's and Meyer's latest publications add to this trend: while Rowling published a fairy tale collection which was crucial for the course of the story in the seventh and final book of the *Harry Potter* series, Meyer composed a spin-off novel covering the background story of a minor character that appeared in the third book of the Twilight series, *Eclipse*. Both books were written after the last book of each series was published. Cf. Rowling, J.K., *The Tales of Beedle the Bard* (London: Bloomsbury, 2008); Meyer, Stephenie, *The Short Second Life of Bree Tanner. An Eclipse Novella* (London: Little, Brown Book Group, 2010).

83 The available editions are Xiuzhen Li and Shumin Xu, eds., *Sun Wukong kommt auf die Welt*, Die Bilderbuchreihe vom Affenkönig 1 (1984); Cheng Tang ed., *Aufbruch im Himmel*, 2 (1986); Shumin Xu and Xiushen Li, eds., *Sun Wukong wird zum Buddhismus bekehrt*, 3 (1984); Shifeng Dai and Hui Tian, eds., *Aufbruch auf dem Berg Heifeng*, 4 (1984); Shifeng Dai and Wenhui Ma, eds., *Zhu Bajie als Bräutigam und Schwiegersohn*, 5 (1985); Yong Huo and Min Cheng, eds., *Mönch Sha am Liusha-Fluß*, 6 (1984); Shumin Xu and Hui Tian, eds., *Der Kampf mit dem Gespenst*, 8 (1984); Shuangdong Han, ed., *Die Lotosblumenhöhle*, 9 (1986); Fuxin Lin ed., *Der grüne Löwe wird entlarvt*, 10 (1987); Guangyou Tang, ed., *Mit Zauberei gegen die drei Unsterblichen*, 12 (1986); Yuzhen Ding, ed., *Heftige Gefechte am Tongtian-Fluß*, 13 (1986); Yuan Fang, ed., *Am Zimu-Fluß*, 15 (1986); Mingyou Gao, ed., *Der wahre und der falsche Sun Wukong*, 17 (1986); Huan Zhen, ed., *Wukong verschafft sich den Zauberpfeifer*, 18 (1986); Ping Zhen, ed., *Der neunköpfige Dämon wird besiegt*, 19 (1987); Ya Qing, ed., *Streit mit dem Gespensterkönig*, 20 (1987); Tingjie Wu, ED., *Der Qijue-Berg*, 21 (1987); Chengde Wen, ed., *Die Spinnwebhöhle*, 23 (1986); Huan Zhen, ed., *Der Schwur des Königs*, 27 (1987); Jinchang Sun, ed., *Das Rechenbankett*, 30 (1987); Hongye Liang, ed., *Drei Nashorngespenster stiften Unruhe*, 31 (1987); Xueyi Mo, ed., *Eine Jadehäsin spielt Prinzessin*, 32 (1987); Chen Zi, ed., *Tang Sengs erfolgreiche Rückkehr*; 34 (1987).

84 "Der Bilderbuchreihe vom Affenkönig Sun Wukong liegt der chinesische, klassisch-mythologische Roman „Die Pilgerfahrt nach Westen“ zugrunde. Hauptthema dieses Romans ist, wie der chinesische Mönch Xuan Zang in den Jahren 629 bis 645 nach Indien fährt, um die Heiligen Schriften des Erhabenen Buddhas ausfindig zu machen. Zur Darstellung dieses Themas schrieb der Autor Wu Cheng'en viele seltsame und zauberhafte Geschichten, die seit einigen Jahrhunderten vom chinesischen Volk gerne gelesen werden. Besonders der Affenkönig, der die Charaktereigenschaften der Widerstandskraft und Standhaftigkeit verkörpert, ist bei den Kindern sehr beliebt. Er ist in ihren Augen zum Helden geworden." (The classical-mythological Chinese novel "The Journey to the West" serves as template for the illustrated book series about Sun Wukong, the Monkey King. The novel's main topic is Chinese monk

printed a short synopsis of the book's storyline as well as a short outline of the following book, a teaser to arouse the young readers' curiosity and make them want to continue reading the next part of the series. Although both publisher and translators tried to reposition their product in the German children's book market, they did not consider performing a cultural context adaptation when they translated the textual corpus. Neither the names of Sun Wukong's fellow companions or the other characters presented in the books, nor the settings and symbols which derived from classical mythological stories, nor the Chinese pantheon which several episodes refer to, have been thoroughly explained or adapted in order to be more comprehensible to young German readers, an audience which in most cases is familiar neither with the Chinese language nor indeed with the details of Buddhist principles and thought. However, the editors tried their best to break down the epic storyline of the original, which consists of 100 chapters or *juan* 卷, into 32 separate picturebook volumes. The German edition further followed the "*xiaorensu* principle" with every page being dominated by a colourful picture which is accompanied by a short text explaining the scene. By merely appreciating the sequence of illustrations, even an (almost) illiterate audience is thus able to roughly grasp the course of the story.

The German translation is mainly composed of simple, declarative sentences or independent clauses, which are sometimes interrupted by direct speech. From a syntactic perspective, the German texts perfectly meet the demands of an audience of emergent readers. Still, it can be safely assumed that some of the paragraphs in the German picturebook edition might have caused some bewilderment among its readers, as will be illustrated in the following: the first part of the classic, which consists of seven chapters covering the mythical birth story of the later Monkey King, his acquisition of magical powers, his rebellion in the Heavenly Kingdom, and his subsequent conversion to Buddhism, is covered by three picturebooks of the abridged German Sun Wukong-series.⁸⁵ In the first book, Sun Wukong comes to life from a stone.⁸⁶ He then moves to the border of Aolai county where he becomes the King of Flower-Fruit Mountain's monkey population following a successful trial of courage. After some monkeys tell him about the life of the Buddhas, the

Xuan Zang's journey to India during 629 and 645 in search of the Grand Buddha's holy scriptures. To illustrate this theme, Chinese author Wu Cheng'en wrote many strange and enchanting stories which have been embraced by the Chinese people throughout the centuries. Especially the Monkey King, while embodying character traits such as stamina and pertinacity, is very popular among children. In their eyes he [even] became a hero.) Cf. Li and Xu, eds., *Sun Wukong kommt auf die Welt*, 1 (1984).

85 Cf. Nienhauser, William H., ed., *The Indiana Companion to Traditional Chinese Literature* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), 414.

86 Cf. Li and Xu, eds., *Sun Wukong kommt auf die Welt*, 1 (1984).

Monkey King decides to leave the mountain in order to search for the path to immortality. After a long quest he finds shelter in a mountain cave, where he finally meets his master, who teaches him the art of shapeshifting and who gives him his courtesy name Sun Wukong, “monkey who is aware of emptiness.”⁸⁷ In the second book, Sun Wukong wreaks havoc in the Heavenly Kingdom after he has assumed the position of the Emperor’s equerry.⁸⁸ When Sun Wukong finds out that the post as Head of the Imperial Stables does not rank as high as he thought it would, he is enraged. To vent his anger, Sun Wukong not only frees the horses he is supposed to take care of, but also ruins the peach banquet of the Empress Mother. As a consequence, Sun Wukong is dispelled from the Heavenly Kingdom. In the following, an enlightened Buddha is asked to subdue the impudent Monkey King and teach him a lesson:

Yisheng begibt sich zum Leiyin-Tempel auf dem Lingshan-Berg und erzählt das dem Tathagata. Als der Tathagata schon alles weiß und sagt dann zu allen Bodhisattwaen [sic]: „Ihr bleibt sitzen, um die buddistischen Schriften zu lesen, aber ich gehe sofort gen Osten, um Sun Wukong zu unterwerfen.“ Dann befiehlt er zwei Würdenträgern, Anuo und Jiaye, ihn zu begleiten.⁸⁹

87 The character *sun* 孙 refers to the species to which Sun Wukong belongs (Chin. *husun* 猢猻: simian). In Anthony C. Yu’s translation of the *Xiyou ji*, *Wukong* 悟空 is referred to as “wake-to vacuity.” Sun Wukong’s name thus represents the Buddhist concept of Sunyata, emptiness. The German text does not explain the meaning of Sun Wukong’s name at all. On the contrary, it is rather misleading as the master only states that Sun Wukong is a suitable name for an ugly and stupid monkey: “Du bist so häßlich, siehst aus wie ein dummer Affe. Also, du kannst Sun als Familiennamen und Wukong als Vornamen annehmen, geht das?”. Cf. Anthony C. Yu, ed., *The Journey to the West*, Vol. 1 (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1980), 82; Li and Xu, eds., *Sun Wukong kommt auf die Welt*, 1 (1984), 28.

The English version of the Sun Wukong stories for children does not introduce the protagonists’ Chinese names either. Instead, Sun Wukong is simply named “Monkey”, his fellow companion Zhu Bajie 猪八戒 (“pig of eight abstinences”) is referred to as “Piggy”, Monk Sha (“sand monk”) or Sha Wujing 沙悟净, another of Monk Xuanzang’s disciples, is named “Sandy.” All of these characters can be interpreted as allegories: “Xuanzang can be seen as a man in search of Enlightenment; the horse that carries him, as his will; the monkey, as his heart (and mind); and the pig, as his physical powers and inclinations.” Cf. Idema, Wilt and Lloyd Haft, eds., *A Guide to Chinese Literature* (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, The University of Michigan: 1997), 208f.

88 Cf. Cheng Tang ed., *Aufbruch im Himmel*, 2 (Peking: Verlag für fremdsprachige Literatur, 1986).

89 “Yisheng goes to Leyin temple, which is situated on Lingshan mountain, and talks to the Tathagata. When the Tathagata already knows everything and tells all the Bodhisattvas [sic]: ‘You stay here and continue reading the Buddhist scriptures. I will head further East in order to subdue Sun Wukong.’ He then asks two dignitaries, namely Anuo and Jiaye, to accompany him.” Cf. Shumin Xu and Xiushen Li, eds., *Sun Wukong wird zum Buddhismus bekehrt*, 3 (Peking: Verlag für fremdsprachige Literatur, 1984), 2.

The young readers have already been introduced to Yisheng, an adjutant of the Jade Emperor, but they most certainly have never heard of a Tathagata or a Bodhisattva before. The organization of the life of Buddhist monks in their temples as well as the numerous foreign names and titles might be completely new, perhaps even strange, and exotic to a German pre-schooler. What is most irritating, however, is the fact that the German translation is also grammatically inaccurate.

On taking a look at a Taiwanese comic edition of Sun Wukong stories for children, it is striking that the editors not only wrote a short exposition appropriate for its young audience in order to explain the *Xiyou ji*'s classification within the history of literature in China.⁹⁰ They also added important facts about Buddhism and explanations of the names of some of the main protagonists.⁹¹ The German readers on the other hand have to gather and combine numerous small facts and pieces of information that are scattered throughout the different volumes in order to get a vague notion about the complexities of Buddhist thought. They learn that Buddhist monks use a certain vocabulary, that there is a set of rules which every Buddhist has to obey, and that sometimes incense is burnt during ceremonies.⁹² They also learn that Buddhists cherish life and that killing a creature—apart from demons and ghosts—is considered a sin.

Similar to the Pippi stories, the adapted plots of the Sun Wukong adventures for children follow a certain pattern. During the course of the story, the character constellation usually focuses on the four main characters, Sun Wukong, Zhu Bajie, Monk Sha and Monk Xuanzang. On their epic quest in search of the Buddhist sutras, the pilgrims regularly have to overcome hurdles. They are haunted and threatened by different demons and ghosts in disguise, and it is usually Sun Wukong who exposes their true nature and who saves his companions' lives. What one has to keep in mind is that *The Journey to the West* is a highly allegorical tale with a rich polysemous texture and—more importantly—not intrinsically a children's story. Therefore, many of its satirical and political layers as well as its multiple rhetorical styles have been lost after they have been adapted for a young audience.

How some Sun Wukong stories have been adjusted for political purposes (and thus been used in a highly adult context) can best be understood on taking

90 Cf. Gao, Yuanqing, *Xiyou ji* 西游记 (Taipei: Niudun chubanshe, 1990), 4f.

91 *Ibid.*, 7; 10; 43; 59.

92 Cf. Li and Xu, eds., *Sun Wukong kommt auf die Welt*, 1 (1984), 29.

a closer look at one specific story, namely *Monkey Subdues the White-Bone Demon*, which has also been published in the German book series for children.⁹³ In this story, Xuanzang, Sun Wukong, Zhu Bajie and Monk Sha end up in a vast wasteland. They are hungry and thirsty, and have no more supplies. Sun Wukong leaves the group in search of food. In an earlier version of a picture book, Sun Wukong takes his magic rod and draws a circle on the ground, asking his companions to sit and keep within its borders.⁹⁴ When the White-Bone Demon enters the scene in the disguise of a young woman, pretending to bring food to the hungry pilgrims, Xuanzang, Zhu Bajie and Monk Sha are too blind to realize that a demon is lurking after them. Fortunately, Sun Wukong reappears and kills the demon with his rod.⁹⁵ The White-Bone Demon ascends to the clouds, only a dead body remains on the ground. Since Xuanzang “cannot tell the truth from lies,” as the text further quotes, he gets angry and reproaches Sun Wukong for having killed an innocent woman.⁹⁶ In the course of the story, the White-Bone Demon reappears twice, once camouflaged as the young woman’s mother and another time as an old man. Again, Xuanzang does not recognize their real nature. Before the demon can eat the monk, however, Sun Wukong saves his life and kills the demon. All that remains is a pile of white bones. When Xuanzang is almost convinced that he has been mistaken all the time, Zhu Bajie reminds him that Sun Wukong killed three living beings without hesitation. He further assumes that Sun Wukong has used magic and conjured up the bones by some trick. Xuanzang believes Zhu Bajie and sends Sun Wukong back to Flower-Fruit Mountain. Sun Wukong is crestfallen at the fact that Xuanzang did not trust his loyal and devoted monkey companion.

93 Cf. Shumin Xu and Hui Tian, eds., *Der Kampf mit dem Gespenst*, 8 (1984). Other available editions are Wang, Xingbei (text), Zhao Hongben and Qian Xiaodai (illus.), *Sun Wu-kung besiegt das Weisse-Knochen-Gespenst dreimal* (Peking: Verlag für fremdsprachige Literatur, 1974); Wang, Xingbei (text), Zhao Hongben and Qian Xiaodai (illus.), *Monkey Subdues the White-Bone Demon* (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1976). The original version *Sun Wukong dan da baigujing* 孙悟空三打白骨精 was published by Shanghai renmin meishu Press in 1962 and was most likely addressed to a mature audience. It features impressive woodblock prints which are complemented by short but rather elaborate texts.

94 This part is missing in the German children’s book version. Also Rudolf G. Wagner states that “[t] here is no precedent circle in the relevant chapter of the *Xiyou ji*, but it appears in a different place, in chapter 50, where it is used (unsuccessfully) to protect Tang Seng [Xuanzang] from another demon.” Cf. Wang et al., *Sun Wu-kung besiegt das Weisse-Knochen-Gespenst dreimal* (1974), 7; Wagner, *The Contemporary Chinese Historical Drama* (1990), 171.

95 In the German adaptation for children, the demon sometimes is also referred to as “witch.” Choosing this term (instead of “demon” or “ghost”) helps German children to easily distinguish right from wrong, or evil from good. The (bad) witch is a common character in puppet plays for kindergarden children. It also appears in many of the Grimm brothers’ fairy tales—a set of stories which belongs to the oral tradition of storytelling in Germany and which still circulates in German households. Cf. Xu and Hui (1984), 7.

96 Op cit.: 9. In the 1974 edition Xuanzang is literally shocked that his disciple destroyed a living being’s life and thus violated one of the most important Buddhist tenets.

However, when Xuanzang and the other pilgrims are kidnapped by ghosts, Sun Wukong returns and saves their lives yet again.

What at first sight seems to be a classic bad-versus-good-story for children proves on closer inspection of the textual material to be a rather intricate web of allusions and allegories. The story offers different readings and can be interpreted within different historical contexts and frameworks.⁹⁷ In a post-Cultural Revolution analysis, for instance, the White-Bone Demon, a devil of the first order, can be identified as Jiang Qing. Mao Zedong is represented by Xuanzang, who searches for the highest truth, and Sun Wukong, his loyal disciple, can be interpreted as Deng Xiaoping.⁹⁸ Another reading focuses on the story's "polemics about eating or being eaten."⁹⁹ In this interpretation, the White-Bone Demon depicts Krushchevian revisionism, a "man-eating demon beleaguering the pilgrims on their way toward Communism; the transitional society as a barren land to be traversed through constant struggle; the Party as a muddleheaded body, unable to recognize the danger of it and willing to follow Zhu Bajie instead of Mao."¹⁰⁰ These examples of possible readings of *Monkey Subdues the White-Bone Demon* demonstrate how textual misrepresentations can develop when the original textual corpus has been primarily written for a mature audience. Here, not only a cultural hierarchy has to be adjusted when customizing the story to the developmental stage of its respective audience. Linguistic hurdles also have to be overcome when adapting textual intricacies to a less trained readership—even if this means that some deeper meanings or certain allusions within the stories might get lost in translation.

There are quite a few and different interactions when a children's book travels the globe: while most of the Pippi stories saw some (more or less creative and helpful) reworkings in the process of being translated into other languages, the adventures of the Monkey King did not undergo significant changes before they were introduced to the German children's book market. Comparing the itineraries of both protagonists, the Pippi stories continued their journey from one European country to another before they moved further west and east, entering US-American and Taiwanese ground, where they can still be found on the bookshop shelves today. Sun Wukong's *Journey to the West*, on the

97 For a more detailed analysis please consult Wagner, *The Contemporary Chinese Historical Drama* (1990), 139–235.

98 Cf. King, Richart and Jan Walls, "Introduction: Vibrant Images of a Turbulent Decade", in King, Richard, ed., *Art in Turmoil. The Chinese Cultural Revolution 1966–76* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 3–24, 16.

99 Cf. Wagner (1990), 233.

100 Ibid.

other hand, is virtually unknown in Europe. What is characteristic of those Pippi versions that have been finally and fully accepted by a non-Swedish audience is that these adapted Pippis combine both global and local, universal and particular elements. Hence Pippi—in her various “Western” existences, but still recognized as a Swedish brand—is not only particularly Swedish, but a hybrid character that permeates different cultural contexts, without explicit reference to her national, cultural, historical or political background. Sun Wukong, on the other hand, remains a native of his home country, still epitomizing his specifically Chinese background despite the translation of his stories into various languages.

Conclusion

Literature for children and teenagers has always had to meet disparate needs: the demands of the book markets, expectations regarding value and content, and the entertainment of its young audience. This means that both producers and consumers determine whether the sales of a product will gain momentum or not. However, the final consumers, that is to say, the young readers, have the least power to influence the children’s book market, which is mainly operated and regulated by adults.

As the examples of *Pippi Långstrump* and Sun Wukong have shown, neither a story’s standing as a classic of children’s literature in its country of origin, nor its correlation to a particular literary genre, nor their transmedial commercialization can guarantee a children’s story’s international success. Both children’s book series began to travel, in an attempt to expand their popularity globally, almost simultaneously, and yet their itineraries took very different courses. Astrid Lindgren’s *Pippi Långstrump* books were bidden a rather cold welcome in most of the countries where the book was first published in translation. Even many Swedish publishing houses declined to publish Lindgren’s manuscript as they thought Pippi too extreme and defiant for a child of the 1940s.¹⁰¹ Over the years, however, Pippi has become a beloved, esteemed and admired heroine for generations of children—partly due to socio-cultural and sociopolitical changes, which have also been promoted through various media channels, partly due to the well-established distribution networks the original Swedish Rabén & Sjögren publishing house could fall back onto when signing contracts with foreign publishers, and partly as a result of adaptations of the original written material to fit local cultural contexts, which were made by editors and translators alike.

101 Cf. Berf and Surmatz, *Astrid Lindgren*, 181–188.

This may lead us to the conclusion that only those translations of children's stories that have been carefully and concertedly adapted to the culture of their target audience have the potential to move beyond cultural boundaries, a thesis which is supported by Nicholas Mirzoeff's concept of transculture. According to Mirzoeff, transculture evolves when two cultures collide.¹⁰² In children's literature, transculture evolves when the original textual and visual material collides with concepts and ideas of the target culture, or to be precise, at the moment of translation and adaptation. What emerges is a new hybrid form, a transculture, which is characterized by its lack of accurately defined borders to identity.¹⁰³ This, of course, presupposes a high stability of "culture," or—in this particular case—a high stability within children's book publishing in the international children's book market. Pippi, Harry, and the Monkey King might show similarities when it comes to their looks and their behavior. However, when the cultural settings that are exposed in the stories do not undergo a thorough adaptation while being translated for a foreign audience, as a result, they often do not receive the same appreciation as they originally did in their respective home countries. In the case of Harry Potter translations, one might assume that the young wizard's adventures were certainly adapted for a Chinese readership for the simple fact along that a comparable literature of this specific kind had never existed in China before. Furthermore, translations are very often deliberately made and presented as a radical alternative to existing mainstream reading in order to attract new readers. The reason that let Sun Wukong's "Journey to the West" come to an abrupt end was not necessarily asymmetries in terms of cultural hierarchy, but rather the lack of a functional distribution network. While famous publishing houses like Rabén & Sjögren in Sweden or Oetinger in Germany rely heavily on their elaborate distribution networks and on strong collaborations with big international publishing groups, the Beijing Foreign Language Press remains a lone fighter within the shark pool of international children's book publishing.

Taking all of these factors into account it is not surprising that Sun Wukong did not gain the attention—let alone the hearts—of a larger German readership.

102 "[T]ransculture [is] the violent collision of an extant culture with a new or different culture." Cf. Mirzoeff, Nicholas, *The Visual Culture Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 477. The term "transculture" was originally coined in the 1940s by Fernando Ortiz, who revealed three major steps within the (trans)culturation process: (1) deculturation (divesting one's own indigenous culture), (2) acculturation (adapting cultural features of the host culture or assimilating to it), and finally (3) neo-culturation (creating new cultural elements or features after the adaptation and assimilation process has finished). Cf. Ortiz, Fernando, *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar* (Durham: Duke UP, 1995). The term transculturation was introduced in opposition to "acculturation" because of its obvious connotation with colonial power relations and its unidirectional view concerning the description and analysis of cultural contacts. Cf. Nünning, Ansgar, ed., *Metzler Lexikon Literatur- und Kulturtheorie* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2008), 726.

103 Cf. Mirzoeff, Nicholas, *The Visual Culture Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 477.

The charming stories about the scintillatingly witty Monkey King have almost completely disappeared from the German book market. Pippi Långstrump in her various “Western” adaptations became a world citizen in a transcultural fictitious literary world without explicit borders, where passports were no longer needed. Sun Wukong, on the other hand, still remains a children’s book character in transit.

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