



UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD

MULTICULTURALITY, INTERCULTURALITY
AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP IN PICTUREBOOKS

17-19 SEPTEMBER 2025

CALOUSTE GULBENKIAN FOUNDATION LISBON

PICTUREBOOKRESEARCH2025.FCSH.UNL.PT

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ORGANIZATION:	CETAPS - Centre for English, Translation and Anglo-American Studies CLLC - Centre for Languages, Literatures and Cultures
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SPECIAL THANKS:	We are grateful to illustrator and picturebook creator André Letria for creating the conference visuals - https://andreletria.pt/



The European Network of Picturebook Research

The European Network of Picturebook Research was established during the first picturebook conference in Barcelona in September 2007. The network was proposed by Bettina Kümmmerling-Meibauer (University of Tübingen, Germany), who was a member of both the reading committee and co-organiser of the Barcelona conference, and of the core group of picturebook researchers, which includes or has included, Evelyn Arizpe (University of Glasgow, UK), Nina Christensen (University of Copenhagen, Denmark) Teresa Colomer (Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain), Elina Druker (University of Stockholm, Sweden), Maria Nikolajeva (Cambridge University, UK) and Cecilia Silva-Díaz (Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain).

The aims of these conferences are

1. To foster international picturebook research
2. To promote young researchers who are focusing on the investigation of picturebooks
3. To publish selected papers presented at the conferences through international publishers or in peer-reviewed journals.

Biennial conferences have been held in different European countries since 2007:

1. **2007:** University of Barcelona, Spain - *New Impulses in Picturebook Research: Aesthetic and Cognitive Aspects of Picturebooks* (organised by Teresa Colomer and Cecilia Silva-Díaz)
2. **2009:** University of Glasgow, UK - *Beyond Borders: Art, Narrative and Culture in Picturebooks* (organised by Evelyn Arizpe and Maureen Farrell)
3. **2011:** University of Tübingen, Germany - *History and Theory of the Picturebook* (organised by Bettina Kümmmerling-Meibauer)
4. **2013:** University of Stockholm, Sweden - *Picturebooks as Meeting Places: Text, Image, Ideology* (organised by Elina Druker)
5. **2015:** University of Gdansk, Poland - *Picturebooks, Democracy and Social Change* (organised by Małgorzata Cackowska)
6. **2017:** University of Padova, Italy - *Home and Lived-In Spaces in Picturebooks from the 1950s to the Present* (organised by Marnie Campagnaro)
7. **2019:** Western Norway University of Applied Sciences (HVL), Bergen, Norway - *Verbal and Visual Strategies in Nonfiction Picturebooks* (organised by Nina Goga, Sarah Hoem Iversen and Anne-Stefi Teigland)
8. **2021:** Tel Aviv University, Israel - *Picturebooks in Time* (organised by Yael Darr)
9. **2023:** University of Osijek, Croatia - *The Picturebook between Fiction and Reality* (organised by the Croatian Association of Researchers in Children's Literature)

The Conference Venue and Map

The conference is taking place in the emblematic Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, which sits alongside the Gulbenkian Museum and is set in a leafy park that is the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Gardens. Enter the Foundation's building from the Avenida de Berna entrance.



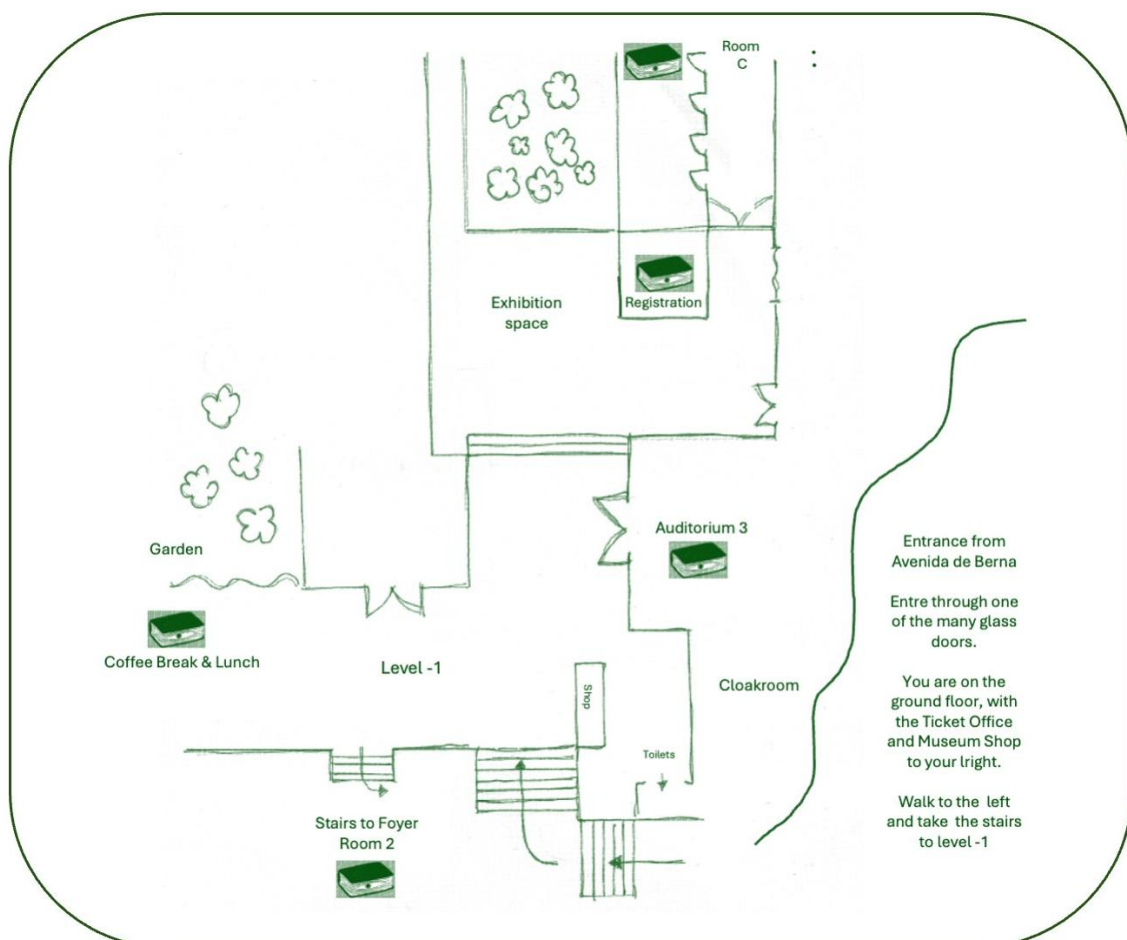
The main entrance to the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation from Avenida de Berna

Spaces for the Picturebook Network activities

Late Summer School - Room C

The Doctoral Workshop – Room C and Foyer Room 2

Conference – Auditorium 3 and Foyer Room 2



Important information

Registration

Registration is open at the following times: **Monday** 12:00 | 15:00
Wednesday 12:30 | 17:00
Thursday 08:30 | 12:00
Friday 08:30 | 12:00

If you have any queries about your registration (e.g. receipts, certificate of participation etc) please speak to Cristina Carinhas, the Conference Secretary.

The Cloakroom

Participants of the three Picturebook Network activities taking place during the week 15 to 19 September are free to use the Foundation's Cloakroom facilities

Coffee breaks and lunches during the week

All coffee breaks and lunches will take place in the Foyer Bar, with access to the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Gardens.

- Participants of the Late Summer School and the Doctoral Workshop have a packed lunch.
- Participants of the 10th European Network of Picturebook Research Conference have a finger food buffet lunch

During registration participants indicated their dietary restrictions for catering and these have been passed on to the Gulbenkian caterers.

Identification

All participants should wear their conference badges when in the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Building. This is especially important during coffee breaks and lunches.

The Conference Bookshop



We are delighted to have Joana Silva and António Alves with their bookshop, **It's a book**, selling a wide range of picturebooks during the conference.

It's a Book, specialising in picturebooks, offers a curated selection of quality publications sourced both nationally and internationally. You'll find books in Portuguese, English, French, Spanish, and Italian. It also hosts a diverse program of creative workshops run by leading illustrators. It currently has two locations, Anjos in Lisbon and Bonfim in Porto.

www: <https://itsabook.pt/>

Instagram: @itsabook

Address: Rua Forno do Tijolo n°30A,
1170-137 Lisbon, Portugal

10th European Network of Picturebook Research Conference

Understanding the world: Multiculturality, interculturality and global citizenship in picturebooks

The oft cited and resonating metaphor of books acting as ‘windows, glass sliding doors and mirrors’ by Rudine Sims Bishop (1990, p. ix) is now over 30 years old. It has had a huge impact on the world of children’s literature and what has become known as ‘multicultural literature’ (Short et al, 2016), ‘transnational literature’ (Arizpe, 2021) or ‘global literature’ - that which according to Hadaway and McKenna (2007) facilitates ‘reading across the boundaries of culture, race, ethnicity, language, religion, social and economic status, sexual orientation, and physical and intellectual ability’ (p. 9–10).

Literature has long been recognized as an intercultural catalyst and picturebooks are acknowledged for their potential to promote intercultural learning (cf. Botelho & Rudman 2009; Dolan 2014; Mourão, 2023; Roche, 2015; Short et al., 2016). The concept of interculturality is defined by UNESCO as ‘the existence and equitable interaction of diverse cultures and the possibility of generating shared cultural expressions through dialogue and mutual respect’ (2006, p. 17). Literature can facilitate reading across boundaries, offering readers a view of the world they might otherwise never experience. Or it can disrupt this reading, challenge linear interpretations, and recognize the fractures and distortions that lead to new becomings (García-González et al., 2020). Such literature can empower readers to value cultural diversity, respect difference, and consider a set

of universal values that include human dignity, human rights, democracy, justice, fairness, and equality (Council of Europe, 2018; Radar, 2018).

Global citizenship has become increasingly dominant in international discourse. It is defined by the United Nations as an ‘umbrella term for social, political, environmental, and economic actions of globally minded individuals and communities on a worldwide scale’. Global citizenship overlaps with the concept of interculturality through its focus on universal values and respect for difference but goes further in its commitment to social justice with an emphasis on civic responsibility. Children’s literature has a role to play in fostering civic responsibility, especially in a world where increasingly, local and global issues associated with climate change, sustainability and insurmountable human rights and refugee crises, often culminate in an increase in racism, marginalization and fear (Leland et al. 2013; Short, 2011).

This 10th **European Network of Picturebook Research Conference** wishes to disentangle how picturebooks employ their multimodality – the pictures, words, design and materiality – to become the veritable vehicles for understanding the world. The big question is **‘How do they act as mediators?’**

References

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The Picturebook Research Network

Late Summer School

Understanding the world: Picturebooks and multilingualism

15 and 16 September 2025

Gulbenkian Foundation - Room C

Multilingualism is a close partner to multiculturalism. Thus the theme of our Late Summer School leads into the 10th European Network of Picturebook Research Conference with a clear focus on understanding the world through picturebooks and multilingualism.

Multilingual picturebooks have been around for many years, with perhaps one of the earliest being *Orbis Sensualium Pictus*, the initially bilingual (Latin-German), and then quadrilingual almanac for children written by the Czech educationalist, Johann Amos Comenius (Haddaway & Young, 2018). Research about multilingualism in picturebooks has more recent origins. While some research precedes it, a special issue of *Bookbird: A Journal of International Children's Literature* (Volume 51, number 3) is a particularly foundational collection of research in this field – a splendid set of articles exploring the use of more than one language in picturebooks and other formats. In her editorial for this issue, Kümmerling-Meibauer (2013) notes the particular need for bilingual children's literature in 'melting pot' or 'mosaic' countries such as Canada, the USA, and

the UK, and indeed Australia and New Zealand where children arrive with their parents, not necessarily knowing the dominant language of their new home. Kümmerling-Meibauer notes that from the 1960s the USA began publishing bilingual and multilingual books, and that these books serve to both support children's language acquisition and to create multilingual awareness. Within this special issue Haddaway and Young (2013) also explore the particular contribution multilingual picturebooks can make to Indigenous language revitalisation.

In this exciting summer school, we will share insights into several important aspects of multilingualism in picturebooks: Linguistic landscapes by Nicola Daly (University of Waikato, New Zealand), language learning by Nayr Ibrahim (Nord University, Norway), and translation by Ines Costa (University of Aveiro, Portugal). Together we will bring experience and examples from around the world. The keynotes will share research and key ideas, and the workshops will give participants the chance to explore multilingual picturebooks from different perspectives

We ask that participants bring a multilingual book, as there will be lots of opportunities for shared scrutiny and discovery.

References:

- Kümmerling-Meibauer, B. (2013). Multilingualism and children's literature. *Bookbird: A Journal of International Children's Literature*, 51(3), iv-x.
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Summer School Part 1 with Nicola Daly

Nicola Daly (PhD) is a sociolinguist and Associate Professor in the Division of Education, University of Waikato, where she teaches children's literature. Her research focus is multilingual picturebooks, and their role in perpetuating and challenging language attitudes. Her most recent book is entitled *Language Identity and Diversity in Picturebooks: An Aotearoa perspective* (Routledge, 2025).

Keynote 1: The linguistic landscape of picturebooks

In this keynote I will present the notion of the linguistic landscape in picturebooks (Daly, 2019), and share research findings concerning how children and preservice teachers respond to such picturebooks (Daly, Short & Klekker, 2022; Daly & Short, 2022; Daly, Rosser, & Haf, 2023). We explore the potential of such picturebooks to not only reflect the linguistic repertoire of children in the classroom, but also to provoke discussions around the notion of what language is and to develop critical language awareness.

Workshop 1: Exploring linguistic landscapes in picturebooks

In this workshop we will explore dual language picturebooks using a linguistic landscape lens (Daly, 2019; Vanderschantz & Daly, 2023) from countries around the world, including New Zealand featuring Māori and English. We will discuss the ways in which the layout of picturebooks can both reflect and disrupt existing language hierarchies in different contexts. Please bring a picturebook featuring two (or more) languages from your own context to share if possible.

Summer School Part 2 with Nayr Ibrahim

Nayr Correia Ibrahim (PhD) is Associate Professor of English Subject Pedagogy at Nord University, Norway, leader of CLELT (Nord Research Group for Children's Literature in ELT). Her research interests include early language learning, learning to learn, bi/multilingualism, language and identity, children's literature, children's rights.

Keynote 2: Positioning dual language picturebooks in ELT through a translingual-transcultural lens

In this keynote, I will address the potential of dual language picturebooks for decolonialising and demonolingualising English language teaching. Dual language picturebooks provide primary English language teachers with an authentic and complex visual-multilinguistic resource to engage children with stories of indigeneity, mobility and migration, and multiple identities, while simultaneously paying attention to the languages telling those stories. We will explore how the picturebooks create more dynamic and critical learning environments through a translingual and transcultural lens.

Workshop 2: Developing plurilingual practices through dual language picturebooks

In this workshop, we will engage with a number of dual language picturebooks as peritextual-textual-visual language learning resources. Through language awareness activities, plurilingual practices and critical visual literacy, teachers can overcome the fear of the unknown language. We will reflect on the benefits of visibilising minority languages as well as cultures, while acknowledging cultural and linguistic diversity within and beyond the classroom.

Summer School Part 3 with Inês Costa

Inês Costa holds a European PhD in Literary Studies and a Masters in Publishing Studies, both from University of Aveiro. She is an Invited Assistant Professor at University of Aveiro and a full member of the Centre for Languages, Literatures and Cultures.

Keynote 3: Translating Paratexts: Framing Stories Across Cultures

Paratexts, as “thresholds of interpretation” (Genette, 1997), shape how readers perceive and engage with a book. By signaling genre, targeting specific audiences, or highlighting key elements of a story, they not only guide interpretation but also reveal strategic decisions about a book’s presentation and promotion. In this lecture, we examine paratextual elements (e.g. titles, covers, endpapers, blurbs) in translation, exploring how they mirror differing linguistic and cultural perspectives on what should be emphasised in a children’s book and what is most likely to appeal to readers and consumers.

Workshop 3: The Challenges of Translating Multimodality

This workshop explores the challenges of translating picturebooks (Oittinen et al., 2018), focusing on their inherent multimodality—the intricate interplay between text, images, and materiality (Kümmerling-Meibauer, 2018). Through examples, we will discuss how translation can significantly alter iconotexts and their meaning, affecting the symmetrical, complementary, enhancing, or counterpointing relationship between words and images (Nikolajeva & Scott, 2006). Participants are encouraged to bring translated picturebooks where the word-image dynamic has changed, fostering discussion on the complexities and creative decisions involved in multimodal translation.

Schedule

Monday 15 September	Tuesday 16 September
	09:30 10:30 Keynote 2 – Nayr Ibrahim
	10:30 11:00 Coffee Break
	11:00 12:30 Workshop 2 – Nayr Ibrahim
	12:30 13:30 Lunch
13:15 13:30 Welcome	13:30 14:30 Keynote 3 – Inês Costa
13:30 14:30 Keynote 1 – Nicola Daly	14:30 14:40 Comfort Break
14:30 15:00 Coffee Break	14:40 16:10 Workshop 3 – Inês Costa
15:00 16:30 Workshop 1 – Nicola Daly	16:10 16:30 Coffee Break

The Picturebook Research Network Doctoral Workshop

17 September 2025

Gulbenkian Foundation - Room C and the Foyer Room 2

The doctoral workshop aims to give early career researchers the opportunity to present and discuss their picturebook-related doctoral projects with renowned scholars working in the field of picturebook research. We are delighted to have doctoral students from universities in ten different countries attending the workshop.

Schedule

09:00 09:30 Registration and meet and greet in the Museum Foyer		
Room C	Time	Foyer Room 2
Andreia Nunes (Portugal) Nurjona Pinguri (Germany)	09:30 10:30	B. Sai Harshitha (India) Jonas Vanhove (Belgium)
<i>Coffee Break</i>	10:30 11:00	<i>Coffee Break</i>
Fernanda Rios de Melo (Brazil) Ryoko Yamauchi (Japan) Lv lan (China)	11:00 12:30	Ekaterina Shatalova (Denmark) Eszter Kovács (Hungary) Maria Bîrlea (Spain)
<i>Lunch</i>	12:30	<i>Lunch</i>

A special thanks to the senior readers:

Marni Campagnaro, Inês Costa, Nicola Daly, Nina Goga, Nayr Ibrahim, Bettina Kümmerling-Meibauer, Smiljana Narančić Kovač, Ana Margarida Ramos, Krzysztof Rybak, Ilgım Veryeri Alaca.

The Conference Opening

The musical moment

During the Opening Session we have planned a short musical moment with researcher and musician, **Simão Palmeirim**.

Simão Palmeirim – voice and guitar

Both a musician and a researcher, Simão Palmeirim is part of the quintet *não simão*, composing songs in Portuguese. In 2023, to celebrate the 130th anniversary of Almada Negreiros, the band released *Pintar o sete*, with songs based on poems by Cesário Verde, Almada Negreiros, Ana Hatherly and Cláudia R. Sampaio. Simão Palmeirim will be presenting three of these songs for the conference participants singing one of them in English for the first time.

Simão Palmeirim has a PhD in Art Sciences (FBAUL) and, as a researcher at IELT - NOVA FCSH, his work focuses on Almada Negreiros' art theory and practice. Since 2022 he has been part of the Scientific Committee of “Almada Negreiros and Sarah Affonso Study and Documentation Center”, and since 2014 he has been the lead composer and lyricist for the band *não simão*.

Link to Indiemusic page: <https://www.indiemusic.pt/en/escaparate/nao-simao/pintar-o-sete>

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The launch of the Picturebook Network’s website and logo



The Picturebook Network’s website and logo will be officially launched at the 10th European Network of Picturebook Research Conference with a short presentation by Bettina Kümmmerling-Meibauer, who proposed the Network in 2007 and Danuta Wojciechowska, the designer of the network’s new logo.

Danuta Wojciechowska is an illustrator and designer who has lived in Portugal since 1984. Born in Quebec, Canada, in 1960, she is of Polish and Swiss descent. She graduated in communication design from Zurich’s School of Art and Design and completed a postgraduate degree in Education through Art at Emerson College, UK. In 1992 she founded the company ‘Lupa Design’ in Lisbon. Danuta creates her own picturebooks and illustrated books, as well as illustrating those of others. She has made children’s books with some of the most prominent writers of the Portuguese language. She has received numerous prizes for her work, including the Portuguese National Illustration Award in 2003 and the Portuguese Women of Culture Award in 2014.

An exhibition at the National Library of Portugal



Picturebooks in Portugal: A historical perspective

Curated by Ana Margarida Ramos & Inês Costa (CLLC, University of Aveiro)

Although the picturebook had little tradition in Portugal until the early 21st century, it has since emerged as a significant form of children's literature. Defined by the interdependent relationship between text and illustration, it is marked by a strong emphasis on materiality and graphic design. This exhibition offers a historical perspective on the picturebook's development in the Portuguese context, presenting a curated selection of emblematic volumes that reflect its diversity and evolution over time.

You are warmly invited to visit the exhibition, which will open in early September 2025. An official visit will be organised after the conference on Friday evening at 17.15

Opening hours:

Monday to Friday, from 9.30am to 7.30pm
Saturday from 9.30am to 5.30pm

On foot from Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian takes about 30 mins.

- Turn right out of the Foundation
- Turn left onto *Avenida 5 de Outubro*
- When you reach *Avenida das Forças Armadas*, turn right
- Then immediately left onto *Campo Grande*.
- The National Library is on your left, shortly after.

Address:

Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal
Campo Grande, 83,
1749-081 Lisboa

Other ways of arriving

Buses:

207 / 701 / 727 / 736 / 738 / 744 / 749 / 783

Underground stations:

Entrecampos (200m)
Cidade Universitária (500m)

Programme

Wednesday, 17th September - afternoon

Time	Auditorium 3	Foyer Room
12:30 17:00	Registration	
14:15 15:00	Auditorium 3: Opening Session Musical moment and launch of the network's website	
	Panel 1A: Multiculturality through botanics and art Krzysztof Rybak	Panel 1B: Photography in diversity Dorota Michulka
15:05 15:40	Marnie Campagnaro <i>Branching out: Botanical diversity as a multicultural and intercultural dialogue in picturebooks</i>	Jörg Meibauer <i>The role of photo portraits in triggering children's interest in other cultures</i>
15:40 16:15	Krystyna Zabawa <i>Art as celebration of multiculturalism in Polish picturebooks</i>	Serpil Karaoğlu <i>Picturebooks as mediators for embracing diversity in old age through photography</i>
16.15 16:45	Coffee Break	
	Panel 2A: Intersectionality and identity Bettina Kümmeling-Meibauer	Panel 2B: Reading the world in informational Picturebooks Marnie Campagnaro
16.45 17.20	Sarah Hoem Iversen <i>Understanding the body: multiculturalism in picturebooks on puberty</i>	Krzysztof Rybak <i>The world according to maps: Verbal, visual, and paratextual strategies in the informational picturebook by Aleksandra and Daniel Mizieliński</i>
17:20 17:55	Nadine Seidel <i>Closed windows, broken mirrors? Picturebooks addressing queerness from an intersectional perspective</i>	Chryssa Kouraki <i>Representing Rights: Critical approaches of multiculturalism in Greek informational picturebooks</i>

Thursday 18th September - morning

Time	Auditorium 3	Foyer Room
08:30 12:00	Registration	
	Panel 3A: War and walls in Picturebooks Sissil Lea Heggernes	Panel 3B: Identity and understanding Izaskun Elorza
09:00 09:35	Smiljana Narančić Kovač <i>The power of allegory: Understanding war and peace</i>	Åse Marie Ommundsen <i>"There is a new country": Picturebooks as mediators for understanding the world</i>
09:35 10:10	Loaay Wattad <i>Walls in Palestinian, Israeli and international picturebooks</i>	Ekaterina Shatalova <i>Migration narratives in contemporary Russian picturebooks</i>
10:10 10:45	Ângela Balça & Maria da Natividade Pires <i>Breaking down walls...contributions of picturebooks to integration and multiculturalism</i>	Gargi Gangopadhyay <i>Pictured communities: Local, national and global identities in Indian picturebooks</i>
10:45 11:15	Coffee Break	
	Panel 4A: Migration and belonging Elżbieta Jamróz-Stolarska	Panel 4B: Indigenous representation & environmental identity Nicola Daly
11:15 11:50	Theodora Valkanou <i>Migration stories in Greek and translated picturebooks</i>	Paul DePasquale & Doris Wolf <i>"For as long as the rivers flow": Water security, slow looking, and indigenous environmental paradigms in North American indigenous picturebooks</i>
11:50 12:25	Justyna Bajda & Dorota Michulka <i>In search of a better world. Homo migrant and the colours of migration in a picturebook by Mikolajewski and Rusinek</i>	Hilde Dybvik & Inga H. Undheim <i>Infield, or far out? Representation of Sámi culture in picturebooks</i>
12:25 13:00	Izaskun Elorza <i>Comparing chronotopes of migration in picturebooks: Migrants' representations and diversity</i>	Lena Manderstedt & Annbritt Palo <i>Global citizenship portrayed in a fictional picturebook by Sámi children</i>
13:00 14:30	Lunch	

Thursday, 18th September - afternoon

Time	Auditorium 3	Foyer Room
	Panel 5A: Empowering difference, identity and inclusion Åse Marie Ommundsen	Panel 5B: Otherness and activism Ilgim Veryeri Alaca
14:30 15:05	Maggie Chan <i>Is there such a thing as deaf identity? Examining multiculturalism, empowerment and resistance in deaf-authored picturebooks</i>	Katarzyna Biernacka-Licznar & Elżbieta Jamróz-Stolarska <i>Familiarizing the otherness in Polish picturebooks</i>
15:05 15:40	Małgorzata Cackowska & Jolanta Rzeźnicka-Krupa <i>Crossing cultural boundaries by empowering the neuroatypical voices in picturebooks</i>	Julie Fette <i>Living together: French universalism and others in 21st-century picturebooks</i>
15:40 16:15	Bettina Kümmerling-Meibauer <i>Respecting difference: How non-human characters in picturebooks shape children's understanding of the world</i>	Victoria de Rijke & Jayne Osgood <i>Making Oddkin: worlding a minibeast picturebook</i>
16:15 16:45	Coffee Break	
16:45 17:45	Round Table with André Letria, Madalena Matoso & Catarina Sobral <i>Illustrators creating to understand the world</i> Moderator: Inês Costa	
20:00 22:30	Conference Dinner in Casa do Alentejo	

Friday, 19th September - morning

Time	Auditorium 3	Foyer Room
	Panel 6A: Metaphors of multiculturalism and belonging Ana Margarida Ramos	Panel 6B: Indigenous identities Jörg Meibauer
09:00 09:35	Nina Goga <i>Milkweed, monarch butterflies, and migrants: How nonfiction picturebooks may strengthen a sense of belonging</i>	Nicola Daly <i>Exploring Indigenous multilingual picturebooks and Interculturality: A New Zealand case study</i>
09:35 10:10	Angela Yannicopoulou <i>The fruit metaphor in multicultural picturebooks</i>	Hiroe Suzuki <i>Preserving Ainu Heritage: Shizue Ukaji's Picturebooks of Resilience and Identity</i>
10:10 10:45	Edit Bugge, Kristoffer Jul-Larsen & Ahmed Akef Khateeb <i>Making lemonade out of the lemonade – cancellation and reconciliation</i>	Lynn Mastellotto <i>Indigenous identities in picturebooks: Verbal and visual strategies for cultural representation</i>
10:45 11:15	Coffee Break	
	Panel 7A: Home and social activism Nina Goga	Panel 7B: Learning and collaborating through Picturebooks Małgorzata Cackowska
11:15 11:50	Sissil Lea Heggernes <i>Conceptions of home in two multicultural picturebooks</i>	Elisabeth von Leon & Mara Leonardi <i>Evaluating diversity-sensitive picturebooks in the context of teacher training</i>
11:50 12:25	Marianna Missiou & Özlem Kanat <i>Motherhood, refugee and citizenship: A comparative analysis of Greek and Turkish picturebooks</i>	Christian Müller & Laura Avemarie <i>Shaping the new picturebook – How to create and mediate inclusive and intercultural learning experiences through multilingual digital picture books</i>
12:25 13:00	Valentina Rivera Bravo <i>Warriors, rebels, peacemakers: Embodying activism through award-winning child activist characters</i>	İlgün Veryeri Alaca <i>Collaborative and multilingual children's literature that fosters an understanding for global citizenship</i>
13:00 14:30	Lunch	

Friday, 19th September - afternoon

Time	Auditorium 3	Foyer Room
	Panel 8A: Environmental themes and the Anthropocene Sarah Hoem Iversen	Panel 8B: Visual approaches to diversity Smiljana Narančić Kovač
14:30 15:05	Carmen Sippl <i>My Friend Earth: How can picturebook aesthetics meet the challenges of the Anthropocene?</i>	Veronika Čigarská <i>Visual-verbal representation of (non)-human social exclusion in selected picturebooks by Tomi Kontio and Elina Warsta</i>
15:05 15:40	Lydia Wistisen <i>Saviors and victims in the Wasteocene: The child as an agent of climate change in Swedish 1960s and 70s picturebooks</i>	Artemis Papailia <i>Hidden stories: Cultural and historical Europe in Anno's Journey series</i>
15:40 16:15	Hege Emma Rimmereide <i>How visual and verbal strategies in 'We are water protectors' develop identity, human dignity and environmental awareness</i>	Sara Reis da Silva <i>Diversity(ies) way ahead of their time: Manuela Bacelar's picturebooks</i>
16:20 16:45	Closing session and announcing the next conference venue	
17:15	Walk to National Library Picturebooks in Portugal: A historical perspective An exhibition curated by Ana Margarida Ramos & Inês Costa	

Abstracts

Panel 1A: Multiculturality through botanics and art

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Marnie Campagnaro is an Associate Professor of Children's Literature at the University of Padova. Her research encompasses picturebooks, design and materiality, reader-response theory, and the representation of nature and landscapes in children's literature, with a particular focus on ecocriticism, plant studies, and nature agency. She directs the postgraduate Children's Literature program and leads the LETIN Unipd research group. She is actively engaged in various international research initiatives, including the "Green Dialogues" NOTED project (2022-2025), which explores environmental themes in literature. She has published over 90 peer-reviewed articles and regularly presents her work at international conferences

Branching out: Botanical diversity as a multicultural and intercultural dialogue in picturebooks

In the context of increasing eco-cultural challenges, picturebooks emerge as unique mediators that explore the richness of botanical diversity and its intersections with human life. Botanical diversity—encompassing the variety of plant species, ecosystems, and their cultural significance—offers fertile ground for fostering intercultural dialogue and nurturing ecoliteracy. By connecting ecological principles with cultural narratives, picturebooks invite young readers to reflect on the interconnectedness of ecosystems and human societies, inspiring sustainable thinking and cultural understanding. This paper investigates how picturebooks employ botanical motifs to explore themes of multiculturalism, interculturalism, and ecological awareness. These narratives engage with the shared rhythms of growth, resilience, and coexistence to bridge cultural divides and promote reflection on sustainable practices. Some examples include: Roger Olmos's *Cosimo* (2016): Arboreal hybridity symbolizes mutual dependence between humans and nature; Anna Paolini's *S'alza il vento* (2018): A woman-tree metaphor embodies resilience and ecological renewal; Nicolás Arispe's *El Árbol* (2020): A child-tree's transformation critiques exclusion and celebrates individuality; Nat Cardozo's *Origine* (2024): Indigenous stories highlight the intercultural value of botanical knowledge in sustaining ecosystems and traditions.

Drawing on critical plant studies (Duckworth & Guanio-Ulluru, 2021; Duckworth & Herb, 2023; Duckworth, Guanio-Ulluru, & Szabari, 2024) and ecocritical frameworks, this analysis examines how picturebooks connect ecosystems and cultural narratives. By encouraging reflection on this coexistence, these works help readers navigate human-nature relationships, fostering both sustainable practices and intercultural dialogue.

Finally, this study argues that picturebooks highlight botanical diversity as a means of cultivating ecoliteracy and fostering cross-cultural understanding. Through rich visual and narrative depictions of arboreal lives across different cultures and ecosystems, they provide young readers with opportunities to explore shared experiences, fostering empathy and sustainable worldviews.

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Krystyna Zabawa is professor and head of the Literary Studies Department in the Modern Languages Institute at Ignatianum University in Cracow. She graduated from the Jagiellonian University. Her fields of interests include Young Poland and interwar literature, especially poetry, female writers, children's and YA literature. In 2013 she published the monograph entitled *Rozpoczęta opowieść. Polska literatura dziecięca po 1989 roku* [A Tale Begun. Polish Children's Literature after 1989 with regard to Contemporary Culture] and in 2017 – *Literatura dziecięca w kontekstach edukacyjnych* [Children's Literature in Education]. She is a member of IBBY Polish Section and IRSCL. She regularly publishes book reviews.

Art as celebration of multiculturalism in Polish picturebooks

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Panel 1B: Photography in diversity

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Jörg Meibauer is professor emeritus of German language and linguistics at the Johannes Gutenberg Universität in Mainz, Germany. He is the co-editor of *Marie Neurath and Isotype Picturebooks: Transforming Knowledge for Children* (De Gruyter, 2025) and the author of *The Visual Culture of East German Picturebooks 1945–1990: Architecture, Traffic, and Design of Childhood* (De Gruyter, 2025). Among his topics in children's literature research are children's literature of the German Democratic Republic; descriptive and narrative picturebooks; children's literature and language; lying and deception in children's literature; children's literature and the city; photobooks for children; and children's visual culture.

The role of photo portraits in triggering children's interest in other cultures

How do you arouse a child's interest in foreign countries and cultures? In the 1950s and 1960s, black-and-white photography was a popular medium in children's literature to provide children with authentic information about other countries and cultures. Taking up the tradition of humanist photography of the interwar period, several book series were published about other countries with child protagonists who were presented in their everyday lives. The black-and-white photo portrait played a special role in this. Firstly, it should show the portrayed child as a likeable, individual child. Secondly, it should portray the portrayed child as a typical child from a foreign culture that was perhaps even perceived as "exotic". These requirements could well contradict each other.

Based on works by the photo artists Dmitri Baltermants, Dominique Darbois, Tim and Sonia Gidal, Liselotte Orgel-Köhne, and Anna Riwkin-Brick, selected photo portraits and their embedding in a hybrid accompanying text that oscillates between description and narrative are analyzed. Against the background of current research on the photo portrait, portraits are differentiated according to portrait types (e.g. cropping, head position), the gender of the sitter, and single vs. double portrait. Particular attention will be paid to clarifying the question of whether the photos support or counteract stereotypical assumptions about the respective countries and cultures and what information and evaluations the viewing children can glean from these photos at a certain stage of their visual literacy development. Finally, the question of why this tradition of black-and-white photo portraits for children has practically died out today will be discussed.

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Serpil Karaoğlu is a designer and researcher involved in many design projects. She received bachelor's degree in industrial design (BID) from Middle East Technical University, MSc degree in Project Management from Royal Holloway University of London, and an MA degree in Industrial Design from Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University. Currently, she is a PhD Candidate in Design, Technology and Society Program at Koç University. She received a scholarship for Children's Literature Summer School at Antwerp University in July 2023. She was also accepted as a fellow at the International Youth Library (Munich) between October-December 2023. Her research interests focus on the intersections of picturebooks and aging, with an emphasis on well-being, crossover picturebooks, multisensory reading, intergenerational relationships, photography, nostalgia, and cultural heritage. Her research questions primarily focus on exploring ways to empower aging through picturebooks.

Picturebooks as mediators for embracing diversity in old age through photography

Representation is important in picturebooks as it influences children's perceptions and shapes their understanding of the world. More specifically, the representation of old age in picturebooks is quite critical, as it shapes perspectives that affect attitudes towards aging and, in turn, influence how individuals experience the aging process. Depictions of old age play a crucial role in shaping intergenerational relationships and influencing the overall well-being of older adults within society. Extensive research has examined this subject, with a particular focus on how representations of old age relate to ageism and stereotypes about older adults. In this paper, we discuss the use of photography as a supportive visual strategy in picturebooks, highlighting how this approach can promote embracing diversity among older adults through an analysis of selected picturebooks from different geographies

As Sims Bishop (1990) suggests, books should serve as mirrors, reflecting the diverse realities of life in which readers may find their own reflections—perhaps their future selves or those in their close circle. As we envision it, embracing and empathizing with the realities of old people living around the world in picturebooks could empower intergenerational relationships and raise overall well-being in societies, leading to a global effect. Photography can serve as a powerful tool, as it has the ability to mirror realities and convey the materiality of subjects and objects. Unlike drawings, photography (including photorealistic illustrations) is less open to interpretation, allowing for a more factual depiction of old age and heritage. Such representations can support child readers in developing awareness and fostering connections between what they see in picturebooks and their real-life experiences, ultimately contributing to the creation of age-inclusive communities and stronger intergenerational bonds. In this paper, we also examine different uses of photography in the visual narrative of picturebooks to explore further implications for the representation of old age.

Panel 2A: Intersectionality and identity

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Sarah Hoem Iversen (DPhil, Oxon) is Associate Professor at Western Norway University of Applied Sciences. Her research interests include children's dictionaries, nonfiction picturebooks, and issues related to childhood, gender, sexuality, and censorship. Relevant publications include the co-edited anthology *Visual and verbal strategies in nonfiction picturebooks: theoretical and analytical approaches* (2021).

Understanding the body: multiculturalism in picturebooks on puberty

Unlike Anglophone Western countries, Scandinavia is seen as a pioneer of children's sex education literature. However, Scandinavia has been criticised for "exceptionalism", portraying Nordic education as universal and exceptional, while linking Nordic and Western views on sexuality to progress and equality. Fingalsson and Junkala (2023) found that Swedish textbooks depicted Sweden as progressive and happy regarding sexuality, in contrast to "distant" cultures portrayed as unfamiliar and unhappy.

Puberty education is centred on the child's developing body. Although puberty is a rite of passage for all children, not all children's embodied experiences are the same. In her "phenomenology of whiteness", Sara Ahmed (2007) views race as a social construct. Historically, "whiteness" has been positioned as a background quality, imbued with familiarity and positive value: white bodies are inconspicuous. In the context of sex education texts, this could mean that white bodies are the norm, while bodies of colour are conspicuous. Drawing on Ahmed's (2000) discussion on the impact of multiculturalism on embodiment and adopting semiotic approaches to analysing nonnarrative nonfiction picturebooks (Narančić Kovač 2021), this paper considers the visual and verbal strategies used to construct knowledge about the (pre)adolescent child's body, especially regarding race.

In recent years a plethora of sex education picturebooks have been published in Scandinavia and further afield, some of which are specifically described as diverse and inclusive in terms of gender and sexuality and representations of people of colour. This paper focuses on puberty education and multiculturalism in nonfiction picturebooks recently published in Norway, the US, and the UK, including Fiske's *Hvordan er det å ha en kropp?* (2024) and Greener and Owen's *Growing up: an inclusive guide to puberty and your changing body* (2023). To borrow Rudine Sims Bishop's metaphor: what mirrors or glass sliding doors are offered to young readers of these texts?

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Nadine Seidel completed the First State Examination for Primary School Teaching in German and English in 2012. In 2017, she earned her doctorate (DPhil) at the University of Cologne with a dissertation on children's and youth literature addressing queerness, a work that was later awarded the Offermann-Hergarten Prize in 2019 and the Education and Integration Foundation Prize in 2021 by the University of Cologne. She completed the 2nd State Examination for Primary School Teaching in 2019. Since 2021, she has held a Junior Professorship in Children's and Youth Literature at the University of Education Ludwigsburg. Her research focuses on diversity-sensitive children's and youth literature, representations of queerness in picture books, and post-migration perspectives in literature education.

Closed windows, broken mirrors? Picture books addressing queerness from an intersectional perspective

When considering the new releases in the picture book genre in Germany over the past ten years, on the one hand, there is a noticeable aggressive marketing strategy by publishers that uses terms like 'inclusion' and 'diversity' as (supposed) quality labels, while content-wise, it fails to deliver what is suggested paratextually. On the other hand, these very titles are also discussed in educational discourse, and it seems that the recommendations made there are solely driven by the themes addressed, and not by the multimodal representations of subject constructions, normative assumptions, and cultural concepts that underlie the texts and images themselves. Models for selecting literature for schools do address depictions of diversity, yet these do not necessarily make the often-complex intermodal tensions decodable. These tensions are present in contradictory portrayals or statements, both on the pictorial and textual level, between the main, peripheral, and paratext, and again on the narrative level in relation to the overall message, which often conveys conflicting statements.

Therefore, in this article, the 'construction' of these texts will first be explained with reference to a corpus of approximately 30 picture books, which stand out due to their contradictory messages on the text-image level and between the main text and paratext. A focus of this intersectionally framed corpus includes picture books addressing queerness, especially those that had to be removed from school libraries in other countries, such as the USA. In the second part, some models concerning literary learning, will be related to these texts, and it will be outlined how literary, aesthetic, or even inclusion-oriented learning may be hindered if these texts cannot be decoded in their contradictions.

Panel 2B: Reading the world in informational Picturebooks

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Krzysztof Rybak is an assistant professor at the Faculty of *Artes Liberales*, University of Warsaw, Poland. He is a co-initiator of *Grow* (with Rosalyn Borst and Chiara Malpezzi), an initiative that aims at stimulating transnational dialogue and collaboration among young scholars of children's literature. In 2018 and 2021, he was a fellow at the International Youth Library in Munich. Between 2024 and 2025, his research is supported by the Foundation for Polish Science (FNP). Currently, he is working on a project dedicated to informational picturebooks.

The world according to *Maps*: Verbal, visual, and paratextual strategies in the informational picturebook by Aleksandra and Daniel Mizieliński and its various editions

Mapy [*Maps*] (2012) by Aleksandra and Daniel Mizieliński, a world-famous duo of authors known mainly for their informational picturebooks (von Merveldt 2018), is one of the most famous Polish picturebooks ever. High popularity and sales in Poland led to more than a few editions, with a total number of slightly different four "blue" (2012, 2013, 2015, 2018) and one "orange" (2016), "purple" (2019) and "green" (2019) editions, as well as an activity book *Mapownik* [*Maps: Activity Book*] (2013) and other publications in different formats.

The universal topic and concept of a map atlas presenting countries of the world make *Mapy* easy to introduce into foreign book markets, with editions in over forty countries. As the original edition presented only forty-two countries, authors added new maps to some foreign editions, such as Serbian. Moreover, as Mizieliński stated on their website, a map of Israel/Palestine was to be never published, yet it appeared in the latest German (2024) and Italian (2024) editions. Editorial and translation practices such as these make *Mapy* a complex work that depicts the world not as it is but as Poland-based authors perceive it. Moreover, the influence of external parties, such as publishing houses outside of Poland, also plays a crucial role.

The paper aims to analyse verbal, visual, and paratextual strategies used by Mizieliński to mediate the world. Special attention will also be paid to changes made by editors and translators. Moreover, investigation of the paratextual elements will go beyond peritexts available in the volume (Pantaleo) and consider also epitexts in the form of a well-developed author's website (olaidaniel 2012) and other materials available online. In comparing and interpreting how information is selected, organised, and interpreted (von Merveldt 2018), my paper will shed light on ideological aspects of internationally recognised informational picturebooks that cross many geographical borders.

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Representing rights: Critical approaches of multiculturalism in Greek informational picturebooks

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a milestone in human rights history, underscores the global commitment to rights and freedoms, with children's protection, health, and welfare central to its aims. This emphasis culminated in the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, affirming children's rights as fundamental to human rights and grounded in human dignity. In alignment with these principles, numerous children's books, especially picturebooks, are published to foster awareness of human and children's rights (Baş & Temizyürek, 2021: 181). Among them, some picturebooks portray the Declaration of human and children's rights through both verbal and visual codes, serving as inherently multicultural, informational texts that promote diversity and inclusion.

This paper examines informational picturebooks published in Greece that depict human and children's rights, aiming to assess whether these books critically engage readers in constructing concepts of multiculturalism. Specifically, we explore the verbal, visual, and peritextual strategies used to enhance multicultural understanding and provide analytical tools to examine dominant messages, revealing how power dynamics related to class, race, and gender are embedded or challenged through discourse, ideology, and pictures (Botelho & Rudman, 2009: 108).

Greek informational picturebooks typically present each right through verbal statements complemented by textual, visual, and peritextual elements. Features such as prologues, appendices, glossaries, contributor bios, games, sidebars with additional information and illustrations deepen each right's meaning, reinforcing concepts of multiculturalism and inclusion. These elements not only enrich the content but also serve as tools for helping readers recognize and question dominant messages and ideologies. By incorporating interpretive gaps and reflective questions, these books actively stimulate and broaden children's thinking (Moss, 2003: 13), placing them within a "literature of inquiry" that encourages knowledge construction, wonder, critical thinking, exploration, and curiosity (Zarnowski & Turkel, 2012: 30; Sanders, 2018: 13-14).

Panel 3A: War and walls in Picturebooks

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Smiljana Narančić Kovač, PhD, Full Professor, recently retired from the Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb, Croatia, where she taught several courses on children's literature and was Head of the Centre for Research in Children's Literature and Culture (2018–2023). Her research interests include comparative literature, the narrative, picturebook theory, children's literature, and contact and transfer studies. She served as the PI for a national research project on children's literature translations (2015–2018). She has published two monographs and edited or co-edited several books. She is the Editor-in-Chief of *Libri & Liberi: Journal of Research on Children's Literature and Culture*.

The power of allegory: Understanding war and peace

In *Dobar dan [A Good Day]* (2023), the latest picturebook of the prolific Croatian author artist and picturebook creator Stanislav Marijanović, a sun is orbited by two beautiful planets, each ruled by a ravenous autocrat. After consuming every last morsel of their planets, the two rulers grow in size until they themselves are all that are left to circle the sun. In a competition for sustenance, the lonesome emperors transform themselves into weapons of destruction that finally collide in an attempt to devour each other. Their clash results in one large mass of debris and rubble, presided over only by the endless weeping of the two rulers, their bodies now impossible to disentangle. Over time, their tears transform the new celestial body from a husk of mangled material into a new planet, now capable of sustaining life. In a final, optimistic scene, a single plant sprouts from the earth to greet the universe with a quiet, shy "Good morning!" This paper will examine how Marijanović's picturebook employs a variety of verbal and visual rhetorical devices and figures of speech to create an allegory of human conflict motivated by greed, unchecked by concerns for the political, social, or environmental consequences. More specifically, it will focus on Marijanović's use of dark humour, paradox, hyperbole, gradation, parallelism, and repetition in his configuration of characters and spaces as symbols within his broader strategy of shifting the reader's perception from the local to the global, beyond the limitations or boundaries of geography, culture, or race. At the same time, the visual and verbal strategies he uses create messages for young readers to decipher and to understand the meanings and significance of the notions of war and peace which they encounter daily in their current real world.

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Loaay Wattad, a Minerva Postdoctoral Fellow with EUME at Freie Universität Berlin, specializes in children's literature and visual culture, with a focus on socio-political themes in Palestinian and Israeli Children's literature. He earned his PhD at Tel Aviv University, edits *Hkaya*, a journal on Arabic children's and young adult literature, and was an affiliated fellow at the International Youth Library in 2024.

Walls in Palestinian, Israeli and international picturebooks

This study examines how Palestinian, Israeli, and international picturebooks visually depict walls and barriers as symbols of division and resistance. Focusing on illustrations, it explores how visual narratives address multiculturalism and connect local experiences to universal themes of inclusion, resilience, and hope.

In Palestinian picturebooks, the Separation Wall appears as a recurring motif, illustrated as both a physical and ideological obstacle. Subversive imagery, such as kites flying above the Wall, challenges oppression and inspires visions of unity and liberation. For example, in *Iman and the Kite* (2008), imagery contrasts the harsh realities of tanks and fences with the dreamlike freedom of kites, symbolizing resilience. Israeli picturebooks often incorporate walls into socio-political narratives, reflecting themes of security and division. These visual portrayals add complexity to the region's storytelling and provide a basis for comparative analysis.

International picturebooks portray walls with varied typologies, addressing themes like migration, marginalization, and resistance. Examples include depictions of the Berlin Wall and the U.S.-Mexico border, where illustrations employ visual metaphors like balloons and wings to transcend barriers. During a residency at the *International Youth Library*, an analysis of 70 picturebooks revealed imaginative strategies in illustrations that foster empathy and challenge division.

By comparing these visual narratives, the study highlights the universal yet culturally specific ways in which picturebooks address borders, barriers, and walls, both literal and metaphorical. The research concludes that illustrations in these works serve as powerful tools for fostering understanding, challenging oppressive systems, and envisioning a world without borders, thereby contributing to global discussions on resilience, justice, and coexistence.

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Maria da Natividade Pires is Professor Coordinator at the Higher School of Education of the Polytechnic Institute of Castelo Branco, Portugal, PhD in *Portuguese Literature*. Researcher in the Institute of Literature and Tradition, from NOVA University Lisboa and collaborator of the Research Centre for Portuguese Literature of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Coimbra. She has participated in European projects related to traditional storytelling, children's literature, intercultural education and Identity and Diversity in Picture Books. She is author of books and scientific articles about these subjects, published in Portugal, Brasil, France, Italy, Spain and USA.

Breaking down walls... Contributions of picturebooks to integration and multiculturalism

This study focuses on some picturebooks that lead children to reflect on issues such as the value of diversity, acceptance of differences and integration. Literary text shares with its readers certain orientations and stances of an ethical, political, religious, and humanist nature. As stated by Nussbaum (2003, p. 101) “Literary works are not free of the prejudices and blind spots that are endemic to most of the political life.”, so “literature does play a vital role in educating citizens of the world.” (Nussbaum, 2003, p. 88).

The research questions for this study are: How can picturebooks share issues like multiculturalism and integration? What discursive strategies are used? How can the materiality of the picturebook influence these discussions? How can we educate for citizenship through picturebooks? Its goals are to critically and reflectively analyse different picturebooks and to understand how picturebooks can be a contribution to promote multiculturalism and integration in children. We start from the metaphor and symbolism of the wall, which represents the “separation between the exiled brothers and those who remained; separation-border-property between nations, tribes, individuals; (...) separation between others and I. The wall is the cut off communication, with its double psychological impact: security, suffocation; defense, but prison” (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 2001, p. 626). Our study focuses on picturebooks where the wall irremediably divides individuals, as for example in *O Muro (The Wall)*, by Giancarlo Macri, Carolina Zanotti, Mauro Sacco and Elisa Vallarino (2022 – Portuguese edition), published by Porto Editora or *Nadav* (2012), by Adélia Carvalho and Cátia Vidinhas, published by Tcharan. In these picturebooks, walls are crossed, torn down, and the protagonists build a fairer, more equitable and more global world, leaving children with powerful messages about the value of diversity, acceptance of differences and integration.

Panel 3B: Identity and understanding

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“There is a new country”: Picturebooks as mediators for understanding the world

Worldwide, more than 47.2 million children were displaced due to war and terror at the end of 2023 (UNICEF 2024). The humanitarian crisis has a major impact on contemporary Scandinavian picturebooks about war and displacement (cf. Neraas 2023, Warnquist 2018, Ommundsen and Stavem 2023). In *Det som finnes og det som er borte* [What's there and what's gone] (2024) Kaia Dahle Nyhus uses pictures, words, design and materiality to tell the story of a Ukrainian child's escape from Ukraine to Norway. The book challenges the reader with its numerous intertextual, interviusal and intraviousal references. Visual symbols like sunflowers, kalyna berries, literalised metaphors and Ukrainian war songs establish the starting point setting as Ukraine. The book thematises flight, alienation and displacement sensed through a child's perspective. What can feel like home, when you have fled your home and country?

The book is designed in a minimalistic colour palette dominated by yellow, green and grey with a few important details in red, like the protagonist's ears. The only exception is the opening spread visualising the happy pre-war past in red, yellow, blue and green. The paper quality is thick with a high opacity, and the verbal text is hand drawn. Nyhus mixes collage and drawings in a naïve and expressive style, typically with exaggerated heads and big eyes. The gender-neutral protagonist is depicted as negative space cut from white paper and placed against various backgrounds created with crayons or pastel chalk. The endpaper's threatening peanut shaped clouds or bombs are placed against the scribbled texture in yellow, green and grey and is a recurrent motif throughout the book.

Based on picturebook theory I will present my analysis and discuss the following research question: How does this picturebook – through words and pictures, design and materiality – act as a mediator for understanding the world?

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Ekaterina Shatalova holds a master's degree in Victorian literature from the University of Oxford. She is a prolific translator of children's books and TV shows. When not translating, she scouts and reviews books for international publishers. A graduate of an Erasmus Mundus International master's degree in children's literature, Media and Culture from the University of Glasgow, University of Tilburg, and Aarhus University (2022), she is currently a PhD fellow at Aarhus University as part of the joint project "PUBLISH: Children's Books in the Russia-Ukraine War."

Migration narratives in contemporary Russian picturebooks

The war in Eastern Ukraine which began in 2014 and accelerated after Russia's February 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine has resulted in the displacement of millions of people, including children, with over 1.2 million Ukrainian refugees recorded in Russia as of the end of 2023. Despite being one of the leading countries of both origin and destination for migrants, Russia has surprisingly few contemporary children's books presenting migration experiences as "a living reality for present day children" rather than "something belonging to the past" (Hope, 2008: 297).

Considering the increasing number of refugee narratives in children's literature across the world, and in the wake of anti-immigrant policies and xenophobic attitudes towards migrants and refugees in Russia, this paper analyses the representation of migrants in contemporary Russian picturebooks from 2014 up to present. How do such books imagine and depict migration and migrants in words and images? Who is telling migration stories and what kind of stories do they tell? Who has the agency to give voice to the child and migrant protagonists in the multi-layered textures created by authors, illustrators, editors, and publisher gatekeepers? How does the Russia-Ukraine war impact migration narratives?

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Pictured communities: Local, national and global identities in Indian picturebooks

In a vast, multicultural and multilingual country like India, forging a common sense of national identity or an imagined community, can hardly be equated with the formation of an independent nation. Thus, though the modern nation of India historically came into being from 1947, the layered diversities of the subcontinent along with the traumatic partition of the erstwhile British India into India and Pakistan; made the independence a starting point towards forging intercultural connections and for paving the way towards a unified nationhood.

In this context, the paper aims to study how Indian picturebooks (as distinguished from illustrated books), in the decades following the independence, created an awareness of multiculturalism and of a common nationhood. The paper will consider policies and landmark publications from initiatives like the National Book Trust and the Children's Book Trust, both set up in the 1950s, with the idea of writing, translating, publishing and distributing picturebooks for children across India. Following the globalization in the 1990s, independent publishers like Tara Books, Tulika and Karadi Tales entered the niche market of children's picturebooks. Not only were these publishers thinking in multilingual and multicultural formats, for the first time they were also reaching out to a global audience. While their books were designed to project India and Indian picture books on a wider platform, thematically and contextually, they also connected India with the rest of the world in the minds of their child readers (in India and abroad).

The paper attempts to review and analyze the nation-building ideas of the Government and Trust-based initiatives like NBT and CBT (1950s to 80s) and the global identities presented through picturebooks published by private houses like Tara, Tulika and Karadi (1990s onwards). Apart from select picturebooks, the policies and catalogues of the publishing houses will be the primary material for the study.

Panel 4A: Migration and belonging

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Migration stories in Greek and translated picturebooks

Greece has been a receiving country for a large number of immigrants and refugees over the past decades, but it was especially after the 2015 so-called 'Mediterranean migrant crisis' that the matter received greater attention. This was also reflected in children's literature with the proliferation of books dealing with migrancy.

This paper examines the picturebooks published on the subject between the years 2015-2024 in Greece, tracing the trends in the portrayal of migrant identities. Employing a combination of multimodal discourse analysis (MDA) and affect theory this paper compares a corpus of domestic picturebooks (n=15) to a corpus of translated ones (n=11), both featuring refugees or immigrants, with the aim to investigate how the interplay of visual and verbal text communicates narratives and ideologies about migration in picturebooks.

The analysis suggests that the representation of migrant identities in terms of affect, emotion, and agency differs across the corpus of domestic picturebooks and the corpus of translated ones. The paper also reports the different societal ideologies with respect to migrants as reflected in picturebooks in Greece, as well as a growing diversity awareness. “

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Błękitny fin de siècle. Kolor niebieski w kulturze i literaturze Młodej Polski (Gabriela Zapolska – Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer – Stanisław Wyspiański), 2023.

Dorota Michułka is an Associate Professor at the University of Wrocław, Poland – a literary scholar and historian; Head of Department of Polish Language Education; member of Polish Scientific Academy, IRSL and Advisory Board of “The Child and the Book” Conferences; she was a lecturer at Tampere University (Slavic Studies) in Finland (2000-2005); she was a fellow of universities in USA and in Germany; she has 200 publications (includes books and articles) on children’s literature, children’s culture, literary education and reader response theory (e.g. in Brill, Routledge); she is editor-in-chief of the international journal of children’s literature – cultural mediation – anthropology of childhood *Filoteknos*.

In search of a better world. *Homo migrant* and the colours of migration in a picturebook by Mikolajewski and Rusinek

Wędrówka Nabu is a verbal and visual story - a metaphor for the escape of a girl protagonist from a country engulfed in conflagration. The book is a symbolic text of childhood exile, a parable of loneliness, war and the dramatic wandering of a girl in search of a new place where houses are not burning (Michułka, Gregorowicz 2021; Wójcik-Dudek 2019). The colours of the illustrations - an obvious element of books intended for a young audience, performing several functions: cognitive, expressive, symbolic - play an important role in the story (Wójcicka 2022: 265). Considering a picturebook as a cultural text consisting of two interdependent qualities - verbal and iconic (Cackowska 2017) - we want to look at *Wędrówka Nabu* through the category of colour being as much a literal reference to the world described (cognitive element) as a semantically (symbolic element) and emotionally (affective element) characterised value (Gage 1999; Gage 2000).

The colours in Mikolajewski's book define the psychological portrait of the heroine who, in the visual narration of the journey, crosses many boundaries (real and mental), is despairing and brave at the same time, determined and motivated to fight for a better life, but they also reinforce reaching the deeper - symbolic - meanings of the work (in an existential-ethical perspective), referring to the wanderings of Ulysses and related to the dramatic fate of socially excluded (*homo sacer*) contemporary migrants (Agamben 2008). The wandering of the book's title character, Nabu, is a confrontation with successive elements of nature / elements of humanity / elements of alienation and elements of her own emotionality. All stages of Nabu's journey are accompanied by a subtle and at the same time poignant colour palette, creating not only a portrait of the heroine, but also of ourselves - the adults on whom this palette of a child's world depends.

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Comparing chronotopes of migration in picturebooks: Migrants' representations and diversity

Migration-themed picturebooks offer highly diverse depictions of migration. This paper proposes that a chronotopic perspective is crucial for analysing and comparing the diversity of migrants' representations in picturebooks. By examining how time and space intersect in narratives, picturebooks reveal the unique experiences of migrants across key geographical migration routes, namely Central-Latin America to the US, Asia-Australia, or Africa-Europe. Each of these routes features a distinct chronotope that reflects the challenges and transformations migrants face. For instance, Central-Latin American narratives, such as *Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote* by Duncan Tonatui, often highlight the perils and obstacles that migrants find when trying to cross the border to the US, while African-European migration stories like *Mediterranean* by Armin Greder present their struggles of perilous journeys across the sea.

Through a corpus of over sixty picturebooks, these geographical chronotopes provide a framework for understanding the diversity of migration narratives. By capturing specific cultural, historical, and spatial dynamics, these stories represent the migrants' experiences around central tropes common to the chronotope and the particularities of each route. The use of recurrent multimodal metaphors and topics related to the specific stage of the migration journey, as well as the intertwining of the visual and verbal resources chosen by writers and illustrators, all contribute to a representation aligned with a certain time and space. A chronotopic lens thus reveals the ways picturebooks portray the resilience, struggles, and hybrid identities of migrants as a particular experience. Indeed, the potential of these picturebooks for fostering an inclusive and empathetic understanding of migration across global contexts is claimed to ultimately relate to their alignment with the readers' own closeness or distance to the chronotope depicted in them.

Panel 4B: Indigenous representation & environmental identity

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Doris Wolf is a non-Indigenous scholar of Indigenous literatures for young people, especially picture books and graphic narratives. An associate professor in English, she currently works on the Six Seasons of the *Asiniskaw Ithiniwak*: Reclamation, Regeneration, and Reconciliation Partnership Project which produces picture books of 17th century Rocky Cree life. She is a former director of the Centre for Research in Young People's Texts in Cultures at the University of Winnipeg and former editor of the scholarly journal *Jeunesse: Young People, Texts Cultures*.

“For as long as the rivers flow”: Water security, slow looking, and indigenous environmental paradigms in North American indigenous picturebooks

From climate and environmental justice to conservation movements, it is increasingly recognized that a sole reliance on western viewpoints is detrimental to our future, and the inclusion of diverse perspectives is necessary for a just transition to a more sustainable world. Numerous recently published picture books by North American Indigenous authors participate in such a revisioning through their portrayals of Indigenous paradigms of human-environment relations. Dominant themes emerge in these books including the importance of protecting vulnerable landscapes such as water, which is the focus our presentation. From Carole Lindstrom's *We are Water Protectors* (2020) and her *Autumn Peltier, Water Warrior* (2023) to Joanne Robertson's *The Water Walker* (2017), Sunshine Tenasco's *Nibi's Water Song* (2019), and Aimée Craft's *Treaty Words: For As Long As the Rivers Flow* (2021), these books address one of the most pressing ecological issues of our contemporary moment, water security.

Using Shari Tishman's concept of slow looking, defined as a patient, immersive attention to content that can produce active opportunities for meaning-making and critical thinking, we argue the picture book form with its words and pictures that co-produce meaning necessitates such a slow looking. Further, this slow looking reinforces Indigenous ontological and epistemological paradigms across these books that emphasize human-nature interconnectedness, intergenerational responsibilities, and spatial and temporal located-ness. Thus, these picture books counter through form and content the complex colonial histories of pollution and flooding of Indigenous lands through Indigenous voices that offer alternative future-oriented ecologies.

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Infield, or far out? Representation of Sámi culture in picturebooks

The Sami people hold a unique status as an indigenous group in Europe, inhabiting four different nations: Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia. For centuries, colonization and assimilation efforts have severely marginalized and oppressed Sami culture and languages. In fact, Sami literature and culture were on the brink of erasure until a significant shift occurred in the 1970s, a period often referred to as the dawn of Sami awareness. From then on, literature addressing cultural, political, and environmental issues related to the Sami started to be published, presenting both minority and majority perspectives.

In this presentation, we will examine (re)presentation of Sami culture in three picturebooks for children, published in the late 1970s: Bodil Hagbrink's *Barnen i Kautokeino* (1975), Boris Ersson and Birgitta Hedin's *Vi är samer* (1975;1977), and Marry Áilonieida Somby and Biret Máret Hætta's *Ammul ja alit oarbmælli* (1976). The selection reflects various and diverse perspectives on Sami culture and lifestyle, from a privileged insider viewpoint to an outsider position. The perspectives are conveyed verbally but may also be inferred from the book's visual expressions, which both incorporate and mirror, mimic, or seek dialogue with Sami art and cultural expressions. We ask to what extent the Sami perspective is maintained in the picturebooks, or if the portrayal lapses into stereotypes that reflect the majority's gaze.

A significant similarity in our selection is the rapid translation of the books, ensuring their accessibility in both Sami and majority languages. As such, these books took on a representative role during a time when interest in Sami culture was on the rise – a situation that parallels our current context. Considering that the paper will explore how children in majority cultures are introduced to indigenous peoples and national minorities through picturebooks, we will ground our discussion in postcolonial and indigenous theories, while also integrating indigenous educational perspectives.

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Global citizenship portrayed in a fictional picturebook by Sámi children

The indigenous Sámi people's traditional land within the European Arctic is Sápmi, an area encompassing Sweden, Norway, Finland, and Russia. In our previous research on Sami children's literature, we have noted a lack of a world outside of Sami society and Sápmi (Manderstedt & Palo, 2023; Palo et al., forthcoming). This can be seen as counter-narratives where the depictions tie today's Sami children to a history and a tradition, different from the reality Sami children experience, where preschool and school, television, the internet and the global world comes close.

Against this background, it is justified to investigate what happens when 13 Sami children in all ages from Noerthenstie Västerbotten's Sami Association, Sweden, portray their understanding of the world in a picturebook that they have invented and illustrated themselves. Two adults, Karin Nyhlén and Lena Sarri from the Sámi association, have edited and summarized the book. The picturebook *Äventyr I Sápmi med Herr Kurt Råtta* (Adventure in Sápmi with Herr Kurt Råtta) (2023) is written in Swedish, North Sami and South Sami.

The aim is to analyze and discuss how human and non-human characters, real and fictional spaces and symbols in *Äventyr I Sápmi med Herr Kurt Råtta* (2023) are employed to a global citizenship among Sámi children and thus mirror children's understanding of multicultural and intercultural views on Sápmi as part of the global world. Drawing on theories on global citizenship (e.g. Leland et al., 2018), ecocritical perspectives on children's literature (Goga, 2018), and Nina Christensen's theories the interplay between visual and verbal narratives in picturebooks (Christensen, 2018), the study's results show that the children, although portraying mainly Sápmi, connect the characters, spaces and symbols to a global citizenship. The world outside Sápmi is thus visible and emphasized but it could be argued that Sápmi is at its center. We will further discuss the potential reason for that.

Panel 5A: Empowering difference, identity and inclusion

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Maggie Chan is an associate tutor and PhD researcher at the Moray House School of Education and Sport, University of Edinburgh. She also works as a support worker for the university's Disability and Learning Support Service. Prior to her work in the UK, Maggie was a children's book author and university lecturer in Hong Kong, where she received multiple teaching awards. Her research focuses on disability and deaf representation in picturebooks and graphic novels, specifically the nature and use of these books.

Is there such a thing as deaf identity?

Examining Multiculturalism, Empowerment and Resistance in Deaf-authored Picturebooks

This paper critically examines the representation of deaf identity in contemporary picturebooks authored by deaf individuals, focusing on their contributions to multiculturalism, empowerment and resistance. Specifically, it investigates whether deaf-authored picturebooks challenge pathological portrayals of deafness and instead present narratives grounded in lived deaf experiences. The analysis also explores whether these works promote a deaf identity that celebrates diversity and pride, fosters inclusion and disrupts stereotypes, audism and ableism.

While research on disability representation in children's literature has expanded, studies addressing deaf identity in picturebooks, particularly those authored by deaf individuals, remain scarce. Utilising a critical analysis framework, this study investigates six picturebooks published between 2014 and 2024. It evaluates how multimodal narratives construct complex depictions of deaf characters as active agents in their own stories. Key themes include the portrayal of sign language, cultural affiliation and community belonging, highlighting how these books contribute to, or complicate, intercultural understanding and global citizenship.

Through this analysis, the paper addresses pressing questions: How do contemporary picturebooks authored by deaf individuals represent deaf identity? How do these portrayals contribute to a broader understanding of the diversity within deaf communities? By situating these works within wider conversations about diversity and inclusion, this research underscores the role of self-representation in literature and its capacity to transform perceptions of marginalised identities.

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Crossing cultural boundaries by empowering the neuroatypical voices in picturebooks

In accordance with the words of Hadaway and McKenna (2007), in our presentation, we define global (multicultural) literature as that which addresses the issue of neurodiversity, intending to acknowledge the diverse ways in which the human brain, mind and body function as expressions of natural human difference. This new and significant field of children's literature production is aligned with the current state of knowledge and discourses that seek to empower and incorporate neuroatypical people and neurodiverse culture into mainstream society (Johnson & Olson, 2021).

The theoretical framework for our discussion is based on an interdisciplinary approach, constructed at the intersection of Critical Cultural Studies, Critical Disability Studies (Ellis, Garland-Thomson, Kent & Robertson, 2019) and Neurodiversity Studies (Bertilsdotter Rosqvist, Chown & Stenning 2020), as well as Children Studies (Murriss 2016). This lens will be used to examine the evolving cultural portrayals of neuroatypicality, particularly within the context of autism, based on an analysis of two seminal picturebooks published in Poland within the last two decades: *Kosmita [Alien]* (2008) by R. Jędrzejewska-Wróbel & J. Jung and *GuzikoŻerca na tropie słów [Buttoneater on the hunt for words]* (2024) by Olga Ptak & D. Czerniak-Chojnacka. The selected picturebooks illustrate disparate approaches to portraying children on the autism spectrum, and their analysis will be contextualised against the backdrop of an overview of picturebooks on neurodiversity published globally. The study will demonstrate the evolving dynamics of change in children's literature as an educational project shaped by the advancing knowledge of neurodiversity culture and its social perception in global and Polish contexts.

The methodology of Critical Content Analysis (Jonson, Mathis & Short 2019) will be employed to analyse the verbal and visual strategies deployed in the picturebooks that serve to exacerbate differentiation, stereotyping and the phenomenon of ableism, while their alternative represents a transgression of the boundaries of the dominant rules of ableist culture, thereby empowering neuroatypical people as full subjects with their own voice within cultural texts. Furthermore, we will investigate the role and significance of such picturebooks for educational and multicultural advancement in the ongoing cultural transition associated with the neurodiversity turn.

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Respecting difference: How non-human characters in picturebooks shape children's understanding of the world

How can the depiction of non-human characters in picturebooks influence children's perception of the world? This question is at the core of this paper that focuses on three challenging picturebooks in which insects act as characters: *Insects from Outer Space* (1995) by Frank Asch and Vladimir Vagin, *Eloísa y los bichos* (2009) by Jairo Buitrago, and *Alien Invaders* (2010) by Lynn Huggins-Cooper. While the first picturebook centers on an unexpected encounter between extraterrestrial and terrestrial insects, the second one tackles the situation of a young girl and her father who emigrated to another country where all inhabitants are represented by human-sized insects. The third book, on the other hand, deals with a boy's biased attitude towards insects. The relationship between insects and other species, whether human or non-human, emphasizes the feeling of otherness that permeates the picturebook stories. Initially driven by prejudices, reservations towards strangers, and misunderstandings, the main characters undergo a developmental process which finally leads to a more nuanced world view.

Against this backdrop, this paper first elaborates on the representation of the insects by focusing on the level of anthropomorphization, their size ratio in relation to the other characters, and their depiction on a scale between cuteness and ugliness. Second, this paper outlines the emotions evoked by the depicted insects which sway between fascination, anxiety, and irritation. Third, it will be analyzed how the encounter between two species, represented by the insects on the one hand, and humans or aliens on the other hand, effects a change of mind. By adopting various perspectives, the characters learn to respect difference while simultaneously cementing a sense of identity. Finally, this paper examines the challenges these picturebooks pose as they employ insects as characters to promote mutual understanding, tolerance, and the acceptance of diversity and alterity.

Panel 5B: Otherness and activism

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Familiarizing the otherness in Polish picturebooks

For many centuries, Poland was one of the most linguistically, religiously, and culturally diverse countries in Europe. After the Second World War, the so-called Iron Curtain isolated Eastern Bloc countries from the rest of the world. Following the political transformation in 1989 and the opening of borders, Poles once again had the opportunity to encounter, on a broader scale, people representing different cultures, religions, or races. Unfortunately, research indicates that Polish society, which is largely homogenous, is not prepared for greater cultural diversity (Mamzer 2018), and the number of criminal cases related to racism and xenophobia is steadily increasing, a trend undoubtedly exacerbated by the migration crisis strongly felt at the Polish-Belarusian border. Fear of the unfamiliar and unknown indirectly affects children as well. Therefore, it is crucial to familiarize them with diversity from a young age, and appropriate literature is a useful tool in achieving this goal (Nieszporek-Szamburska & Wójcik-Duda 2014).

In this context, small, independent children's publishers, which emerged on the Polish book market at the beginning of the new millennium, play an important role (Biernacka-Licznar et al., 2018). We owe them the popularization of picturebooks by both Polish and foreign authors in our country. The titles they publish often serve as windows through which Polish readers can get to know people whose culture differs from their own (Bishop 1990). An original contribution is the $\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2} = \infty$ publishing series released by Poławiacze Perel, which presents a new perspective on multiculturalism. The authors of the series are half-Polish. The autobiographical nature of their works allows Polish readers to view the challenges of adapting to otherness and the search for personal identity (Coats 2021) from a different perspective. In this presentation, we will analyze selected titles from the series, representing picturebook genre. We will focus on the visual and verbal strategies used to depict life at the intersection of two distinct cultures and the use of book materiality to strengthen the impact of the message.

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Julie Fette is an associate professor of French Studies, Rice University, Houston. She has published three books: *Exclusions: Practicing Prejudice in French Law and Medicine, 1920-1945* (Cornell University Press, 2012); *Gender by the Book: 21st-Century French Children's Literature* (Routledge, 2025); and is co-author of the French civilization textbook, *Les Français* (Hackett, 2021). She holds doctorates from New York University and the *Ecole des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales* in Paris. This proposal bridges her two monographs on xenophobia in the professions and gender in children's literature. She won a Fulbright fellowship to research this project in 2023: this is her first public conference to present results.

Living together: French universalism and others in 21st-century picturebooks

In the twenty-first century, a wave of French children's books dealing with migration, citizenship, and otherness began to be published. My presentation evaluates a corpus of 69 picturebooks labeled *vivre ensemble* or "living together," found in the library collection of the National Museum of the History of Immigration in Paris, which I examined during a Fulbright fellowship in 2023. Two main narrative patterns emerge in the corpus. The most common (some 30 books) presents difference – or an encounter among diverse characters – as a problem to be resolved, leading first to xenophobic resistance but often ending in tolerance and integration. Another pattern (over a dozen books) features a child protagonist grappling with an adult who is prejudiced. Sensitive to representations of diversity and via a sociological lens, I analyze how these picturebooks espouse or oppose the French republican model of assimilation and universalism whereby newcomers or others are generally welcome but on the condition of becoming "French."

In addition, my presentation examines representations of three ethno-racial categories that feature in this corpus of contemporary French picturebooks: Blacks, mixed races (*métisses*), and Roma (*tsiganes*). I argue that French universalist rhetoric is one reason that there are many more picturebooks about *métisse* children than about Blacks. I also critique the sexualization of girls and the valorization of mobility in picturebooks about Roma. I examine the use of anthropomorphism and more abstract approaches to otherness, such as via shapes or colors. I claim that school is a charged setting in many of these picturebooks: a place of potential integration but also of risk (rejection, deportation). Finally, I consider why stories about Asians, Muslims, and Jews are largely absent from this corpus.

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Victoria de Rijke and **Jayne Osgood** work at Middlesex University on research and practice projects with children and other animals. Sharing research interests across constructions of childhood, play and arts-based creative research methods underpinned by feminist posthumanist materialism, they co-write and collaborate on projects such as ‘What can a method of scrabbling with Le Guin’s Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction offer conceptualisations of ‘the child’ in the Anthropocene?’ in *Children’s Culture Studies After Childhood* (2021), *Postdevelopmental Approaches to Childhood Research Observation* (2023), and *Postdevelopmental Approaches to Play* (2024). Their current project with minibests and children explores posthumanist arts-based methods for climate-change picturebook making.

Making Oddkin: worlding a minibest picturebook

This presentation explores how a picturebook *Making Oddkin* (2024), by bringing together innovative research and shared generative cultural expression undertaken with 120 four-year-olds, acts as mediator. Behind the book’s production was an approach to re-thinking relationships to the environment to investigate how important multispecies flourishing is to *all* of us. Underpinned by childhood research practices that actively mobilise the arts (Osgood et al. 2015) and by critical, posthumanist philosophies troubling the idea that humans sit at the top of species hierarchy, it dwells on relationalities and interdependencies with everything around us, regardless of how small. Rather than *teaching* children to be responsible for the future of the planet, the approach was experimentation and open-ended exploration. Children were invited to tune into the environment with all their senses and to playfully contemplate (through an emergent arts-based praxis of collage, drawing, nonsense poetry, movement, collective mark-making, walking methodologies and paper-making) how their connections with the smallest of critters (insects, molluscs, microbes and the fantastical) might open up other ways to think about and live in the world.

Making Oddkin’s becoming emphasised interspecies understanding through mutual respect for difference, locating the book’s role in mediating environmental and planetary crises through *artwork* rather than pedagogic tool. *Making Oddkin* was not about achieving global citizenship or net zero emissions by being taught how to, but as a mediator of oddkin intra-relations. Mediation in this sense – through playful arts practices and disruptive ruptures- questions human exceptionalism to “engage affectively – to *care about*- questions of extinction, climate change and global belonging” (Ede et al. 2023). Can “becoming minibest” encourage eco-empathy, complicate the relationships between humans and minibests via nonsense, cross ontological alliances and assemblage hybrids that emphasise interrelatedness, offering the act of making and reading as transformative practice for understanding the world in “possible times”? (Haraway 2018).

Panel 6A: Metaphors of multiculturalism and belonging

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Milkweed, monarch butterflies, and migrants: How nonfiction picturebooks may strengthen a sense of belonging

The picturebook *Butterflies Belong Here: A Story of One Idea, Thirty Kids, and a World of Butterflies* (2020), written by Deborah Hopkinson, illustrated by Meilo So, and published by Chronicle Books is promoted as a powerful story of everyday activism and hope. *Butterflies Belong Here* demonstrates how reading, including reading nonfiction, may be an entrance to required knowledge in this time of environmental crisis. The book tells the story of an immigrant girl's struggle to connect with her surrounding community and how her growing knowledge about monarch butterflies, with whom she shares the migrant experience, empowers her to connect with classmates. Although the emphasis is on the girl and her classmates, their actions are never contrasted with counteracting adults. The use of the pronoun "we" on the poster reading "we make a difference" held in hands by the girl at the end of the book not only indicates that this is not a single environmental hero/heroine project, as seen in many other contemporary children's books, but it also suggests that others besides children in the group or community is needed to make the difference.

Building on established research on nonfiction picturebooks (Grilli ed, 2020; Goga, Iversen & Teigland eds., 2021) and the importance of stimulating young readers engagement with such books (Bertoldi, 2024), my paper focuses on how reading nonfiction helps the girl access language in a smooth way and provides her with information about other creatures experiencing some of the same challenges as she is. Finally, the nonfiction book displayed in the picturebook can also be perceived as a possible cultural tool appropriate to create hope and build a social network, including butterflies and plants, to nurture a sense of agency (McAdam et al. 2020).

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Angela Yannicopoulou is a professor of Children's Literature at National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece. Her research interests focus on picturebook, teaching of children's literature, ideology in children's books and materiality of the book. She has served on several boards and committees, including State Children's Literature Award committee in Greece and Cyprus, and has organised several national and international conferences, including *People on the move and nostalgia in historical picturebook* (Agius Nikolaous, Greece, 2022). She has authored seven books published in Greece and U.K (*Aesopic Fables and Children: Form and Function*, Liverpool, 1993) and many peer-reviewed articles and book chapters.

**The fruit metaphor in multicultural
picturebooks**

"Conceptual" metaphors often describe complex social concepts (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), such as multiculturalism, which is represented through metaphors like the melting pot, mosaic, kaleidoscope, patchwork quilt, rainbow, and others (Shakoury & Boers, 2024). Metaphors for a multicultural society are sometimes drawn from the food domain, with one of the most prominent being that of a salad tossed in oil, where each ingredient remains distinct while contributing its own flavor to the overall taste of the dish (Halstead, 2007).

Food, and especially fruit, metaphors used for representing multiculturalism are also employed in picturebooks. Since the fruit metaphor provides a vivid and accessible means of conveying ideas about cultural diversity, integration, and coexistence, it would be interesting to explore how it is used in picturebooks, a genuinely multimodal genre, to describe a multicultural society. Why is this specific metaphor chosen, and how is it presented through verbal and visual text? What types of fruits or fruit-related imagery are most commonly used? How do they convey attitudes toward multiculturalism and/or interculturalism?

Picturebooks often use fruit metaphors as their central narrative device, depicting a multicultural society as a fruit juice, marmalade, pie, garnish for grilled meat, a fruit basket, and a fruit salad often seasoned with spices. Fruits serve as fitting symbols of a multicultural society due to their connection to trees with deep roots, their association with specific regions, and their distinctive characteristics, such as color, scent, and taste, which collectively function as representations of individual identities. Picturebooks, when aiming to introduce social diversity to young children utilize metaphors—much like teachers do (Chung & Miller, 2011)—that convey a range of perspectives, from assimilation to interculturalism. Picturebooks, through multimodal fruit metaphors, become vehicles for dwelling on complex concepts, communicating attitudes towards diversity, and mediating an understanding of what a multidimensional society is/should be.

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Making lemonade out of *The lemonade* – cancellation and reconciliation

In 2011, Hilde Henriksen and illustrator Helena Ohlsson published *Sitronlimonaden* [The lemonade], recounting the experiences of Nasir, the son of a Syrian mother living in Norway. The book centres on Nasir's experience of alterity (Nikolajeva, 2009) as he struggles to accommodate his Syrian family background into his Norwegian lifeworld. In 2024, Henriksen published *Sana og øynene* [Sana and the eyes], with co-author Mina Adampour and illustrator Kristina Farstad Bjerkek. The protagonist, Sana, is similar to Nasir in many ways but shows no sign of identity conflict. The two books demonstrate very different narrative and visual strategies for depicting the intercultural lives of children.

What transpired between 2011 and 2024? In 2019, a section of *Sitronlimonaden*, where Nasir is angry at his mother for, among other things, wearing a hijab, became the subject of debate in the Arab language Facebook group "Norway in Arabic". Consequently, Mina Adampour reported the book to the Norwegian Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud. This created a significant and heated national debate, raising questions about the boundaries of children's literature, representativity, censorship and artistic freedom.

We will apply three analytical approaches to interpret the two picture books. First, we will focus on their key difference: their depiction—and degree of problematisation—of the child-mother relationship and the relationship between the family and their community. Second, we will analyse how the different visual strategies in the books undergird their tendencies towards harmonisation and problematisation.

Finally, drawing on an understanding of texts as heteronomous objects, we will examine emotional and moral reactions to the picturebooks within the Arabic and Norwegian discussions (Mjør, 2012). This will demonstrate the polyphony of the initial debate and how this multiplicity of perspectives was reduced in the Norwegian public sphere. This reflects a historic tension between problematisation and harmonisation, integral to Nordic children's literature.

Panel 6B: Indigenous identities

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Nicola Daly is a sociolinguist and Associate Professor in the Division of Education, University of Waikato, where she teaches children's literature, and leads the Postgraduate Certificate in Children's and Young Adult Literature. She also co-directs the Waikato Picturebook Research Unit. Her research focus is multilingual picturebooks, and their role in perpetuating and challenging language attitudes. She was a Fulbright New Zealand Scholar at the University of Arizona, USA in 2019/2020.

Exploring Indigenous multilingual picturebooks and Interculturality: A New Zealand case study

Intercultural competence, or the ability to be aware of one's own cultural identity in relation to the cultural identity of others (Huber & Reynolds, 2014) is an increasingly important skill for children to develop living in diverse societies. There has been some work in this field showing the power of picturebooks to make a contribution to intercultural awareness (Mourão, 2023), specifically in relation to an Indigenous picturebook featuring Sami and Norwegian (Ibrahim, 2022). This presentation extends this work by introducing our work exploring Indigenous voices in children's picturebooks in Aotearoa (Waitere et al., 2024).

Based on the publishing practices of HUIA, a Māori publisher of children's literature, we present themes from research conversations and document analysis concerning the potential contribution of selected picturebooks to Intercultural themes and awareness amongst readers. We explore the layering process evident in the publishing process; how Indigenous voices come through in translation and the illustrations from HUIA publishers; and, how the Māori language is interwoven into the text of HUIA's English language picturebooks (Barbour, Daly, & Wessels, in press). In addition, we critically examine the notion of Indigeneity in relation to Interculturality, discussing the importance of positive representations of Indigenous stories (Hanson et al., 2020).

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Hiroe Suzuki, a Professor at Kanagawa University, earned her PhD in Literature from Shirayuri University in 2016. Her research focuses on marginalized groups in children's literature, particularly ethnic minorities and oppressed communities. She has co-authored over 20 books, including *Animal × Gender: Into the Woods of Multi-Species* (2024), where she explores representations of Indigenous cultures in Australia. Her book *Reading African American Children's Literature* (2022) received widespread acclaim and was highlighted by The American Literature Society in Japan. For more details, visit her profile (in Japanese):

<https://researchmap.jp/hiroesuzuki>

i.

Preserving Ainu Heritage: Shizue Ukaji's Picturebooks of Resilience and Identity

This paper explores the representation of cultural diversity in Japan through picturebooks depicting Ainu heritage, with a particular focus on the works of Shizue Ukaji. Drawing on insights from Indigenous studies and comparisons with previous research, it examines how her works convey and preserve Ainu cultural identity. The Ainu, recognized as Japan's indigenous people, have experienced severe cultural erosion, dispossession, and enforced assimilation since the implementation of the Hokkaido Former Indigenous People Protection Law in 1899, which remained in effect until its repeal in 1997. It was only in 2007 that the Japanese government formally recognized the Ainu as indigenous, and in 2019, legislation was introduced to support the restoration of Ainu rights and the protection of their cultural heritage.

Ukaji's picturebooks exemplify Ainu efforts to reclaim cultural identity by documenting traditional Ainu folklore, which has historically been transmitted orally. Her works draw upon *Yukar*, the Ainu tradition of chanting epic poetry. Utilizing the Japanese fabric art technique known as *kofue* ("old cloth pictures"), Ukaji repurposes worn cloth to craft visuals for her stories. In doing so, she transforms her personal experiences of discrimination into an artistic practice that reimagines and revitalizes Ainu narratives. In *Tokina-to*, an owl god rescues his sister from a monster, symbolizing resilience; in *Semi-gami-sama no Otsuge*, a woman becomes a cicada god with a beautiful voice, representing transformation; while *Shimafukuro to Sake* depicts an encounter between an owl god and salmon herds, highlighting cultural values and animistic beliefs.

Ukaji's work is celebrated for merging Ainu storytelling with Japanese artistic methods, thereby creating a unique aesthetic that underscores the hybrid nature of her cultural expressions. Through analysis of Ukaji's picturebooks, this paper explores her role in both preserving Ainu heritage and advancing cultural hybridity as an essential component of contemporary identity.

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Lynn Mastellotto is an Assistant Professor in English Language, Linguistics, and Translation in the Department of Humanities at the University for Foreigners of Siena, Italy, where she teaches Linguistic and Cultural Mediation. Her main lines of research include identity in narrative discourse, transnationalism and transculturalism in cultural theory, multimodality in English language learning and communication, and intermediality in translation.

Indigenous identities in picturebooks: Verbal and visual strategies for cultural representation

Picturebooks are multimodal resources that immerse children in “transmedia storytelling” (Hutcheon, 2012), offering them the possibility to engage in reading stories, hearing stories read aloud, and interacting with stories through tactile engagement with books and related cultural artefacts. This multisensory input activates learning on multiple levels as children move across modes, semiotically recycling information in creative and transformative ways, building their linguistic, metalinguistic, visual, and metaphysical knowledge (Kress, 1997, 2009).

This study explores intermodality in a small corpus of Canadian indigenous authors and illustrators whose work contributes to linguistic and cultural revitalisation by depicting First Nations voices and traditions in picturebooks for young learners. The interanimation of text, images, and peritext assist the process of social memorialization for First Nations communities, fostering cultural memory through the representation of symbolic systems and traditions that were lost through the enforced use of the English language in schooling.

Drawing on Barthes’s (1977) and Moya-Guijarro’s (2014) work on multimodality, the study examines the intertwined verbal and visual strategies for voicing indigenous identities, with particular attention to moments of concurrence and divergence in the intermodal input, and the role of linguistic and cultural mediation needed to support young learners’ meaning-making practices (Ellis & Mourão, 2021).

The recent affective turn in studies on children’s literature places attention on the emotional and ethical dimensions of the immersive storyscapes experienced through picturebooks, which open up a dialogic space for the development of intercultural awareness and empathy. The picturebooks examined in the paper contribute to learners’ “social consciousness” (Chaudrhi, 2017) by enhancing knowledge of linguistic and cultural diversity in a global context. In this way, the study seeks to contribute to the development of culturally sensitive curricula for intercultural learning (Johnston & Bainbridge, 2013) that make visible occluded identities in Canadian history and contribute to indigenous cultural revitalisation.

Panel 7A: Home and social activism

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Sissil Lea Heggernes is Associate Professor in English Language Teaching at Oslo Metropolitan University. Her PhD study from 2021 explores English language students' intercultural learning through texts, with a particular focus on the role of picturebooks. Her research interests also include children's literature, visual analysis, critical thinking, dialogic learning, and language teachers' professional development.

Conceptions of home in two multicultural picturebooks

Home is a prevalent topic in research on children's literature, but some types of homes are less frequently represented than others (Kelley & Darragh, 2011). Consequently, this paper discusses the following question: What visual and verbal strategies are employed to represent socioeconomic inequality and conceptions of home in the two picturebooks Matt de la Peña and Christian Robinson's (2018) *Carmela: Full of Wishes* and Kate Milner's (2019) *It's a No Money Day*?

The metaphor of windows, mirrors and sliding glass doors launched by Bishop (1990) highlighted the need for diverse representation and multicultural literature. While Bishop's contribution revolved around racial diversity, intersectional perspectives (Koss, 2015), including socioeconomic inequality, are equally important.

The concept of home has connotations of rootedness, a sense of belonging and identity (Newns, 2024). Reviews of children's literature reveal that home is overwhelmingly presented as a single-family dwelling, and other living situations, such as apartments, trailers or homelessness are severely underrepresented (Kelley & Darragh, 2011; Terrile, 2022). The imbalance between the living situations of "real" children and those depicted in children's literature may delimit the possibilities for young readers to see themselves mirrored in literature.

Common to both books are low-income families living in apartments with absent fathers. The paper explores the use of colour, proximity/distance and material objects to convey contrasting conceptions of home. The introductory kitchen scenes set the tone: Warm and vibrant in the apartment of Carmela's nuclear family and sparse and cold in the single-parent household of *It's a No-Money Day*. Yet, there is ample human warmth in both books, indicated by both the words and the physical proximity of family members. While the conceptions of home differ, the books may, in a combination, work as mirrors and windows to young readers through showing a diversity of homes and living situations.

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Özlem Kanat is an Assistant Professor at Ankara University. Her research interests in children's literature likely involve exploring the role of narratives, storytelling, and literary themes in shaping children's understanding of the world. She may examine how books and stories contribute to cognitive and emotional development, as well as how children engage with literature across different cultural contexts. Her second focus—teaching Turkish as a foreign language—suggests that she is involved in developing methodologies and materials that help non-native speakers acquire proficiency in Turkish. This could involve exploring various strategies for teaching grammar, vocabulary, and cultural context in ways that are accessible to learners from diverse backgrounds.

Motherhood, refugee and citizenship: A comparative analysis of Greek and Turkish picturebooks

In recent years, both Greece and Turkey have experienced substantial migration flows, particularly involving refugees from Syria and other Middle Eastern countries. Both countries serve as crossroads in the global refugee crisis, acting as entry points and transit hubs for displaced populations. In the context of this phenomenon, mothers and their children are frequently depicted in the media, crossing borders and seeking asylum. These portrayals are also embedded in literature from both countries, aligning with the notion that literature traditionally responds to social challenges and reflects them.

Given the experiences of Greece and Turkey with migration—both as host and migrant nations—this research examines how motherhood is framed in Greek and Turkish picturebooks on refugee narratives, primarily through the lens of children's literature studies. It employs a comparative multimodal analysis of visual and verbal elements to investigate the portrayal of fictional mothers situated between life and death. Furthermore, it explores how their nurturing and protective roles are challenged within the narratives and examines how these portrayals function as mediators in shaping conceptions of citizenship.

The results show that Greek and Turkish picturebooks reinforce the idealized construction of motherhood, perpetuating the myth of the all-giving, self-sacrificing mother—a theme prevalent in children's literature. This shared portrayal underlines the universal experience of motherhood and displacement, transcending geographical and cultural boundaries, whether on either side of the Aegean Sea or across the globe. In this context, refugee mothers emerge as a model for shaping a more humane, compassionate, and inclusive conception of citizenship—one that recognizes the complexities of migration and the essential role of caregivers in society.

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Valentina Rivera Bravo is a PhD researcher at the University of Cambridge, funded by ANID and Cambridge Trust. Her research project looks into the intersection between activism and children's literature awards. She earned a master's degree in education from the University of Glasgow, where she completed the Children's Literature & Literacies program. Her research dealt with the representation of dictatorships in Latin American picturebooks. Her work has focused on teaching at the university level, educational and social justice research, and reading promotion projects in Chile and Latin America. Her research interests lie broadly within picturebooks aesthetics, childhood and cultural studies and social justice.

Warriors, rebels, peacemakers: Embodying activism through award-winning child activist characters

Activism can be broadly defined as “explicit actions taken to address power and inequity in texts and society” and as a “bidirectional transformation of people and the world” (Fletcher & Hoyloke, 2023, p.173). This paper considers activism as both a discourse and practice that interconnect and inform one another and have the purpose to incite and create change in concrete manners. Such action is, in turn, performed by activists, defined as “challengers to policies and practices, trying to achieve a social goal, not to obtain power themselves” (Martin, 2007, p.19-20). Children's fiction has not only incorporated activist characters that engage with activist issues – such as climate change, gender equality, migration, race and ethnicity, to name a few – but has also formally recognized these narratives by means of prizing. *The Little Rebels Awards* is a prize for radical fiction that seeks to recognize stories that actively challenges stereotypes and the status quo and builds children's awareness of social issues. These award-winning books make use of child activists that acknowledge current social issues and offer diverse alternatives to effecting change.

Through close readings of award-winning picturebooks, this paper analyzes the figure of the fictional child activist as portrayed in three different embodiments: the warrior, the rebel and the peacemaker. This categorization will illuminate the concrete ways in which child characters, by means of activism, are able to facilitate and mediate the understanding of current social issues, such as migratory crises and environmental issues. This visual and textual analysis considers explicit or implicit calls for action, interconnectedness of activist issues and the adult figure as either a facilitator, collaborator or detractor. Ultimately, this paper discusses the type of activist behaviors are recognized and celebrated by a prizing institution, and to what extent they reinforce the potential of children's picturebooks as a catalyst for social transformation.

Panel 7B: Learning and collaborating through Picturebooks

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Mara Maya Victoria Leonardi (PhD) is a linguist at the Faculty of Education at the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano (IT). She completed her MA and PhD in Bilingualism at Bangor University in Wales (UK). Her research interests are children's literature and its didactics, sociolinguistics, contact linguistics and multilingualism with a particular interest in South Tyrol. Two of her latest publications focus on aesthetic experiences with children's literature, and democracy and participation in picturebooks.

Evaluating diversity-sensitive picturebooks in the context of teacher training

In the educational context, diversity is both, a reality and a challenge. Children's literature and especially picturebooks can play an important role in shaping and co-constructing young readers experiences and helping them understand the world. Therefore, (young) children should be exposed to a wide range of books that contain characters both similar to and different from themselves. As books are an irreplaceable resource for exploring diverse identities as well as to foster children's awareness for stereotypes, they enable the topicalization of diversity categories with children (Ong 2022). A quick glance at current trends in children's and young adult literature market suggests that the outcry in recent years about the lack of multicultural and intercultural identification figures in children's books has been considered. In many cases, however, 'diversity' remains a (paratextual) label, a mere marketing strategy, a dramaturgical gimmick. There is a need for trained mediators to ensure that these productions can be used effectively in an educational context in terms of inclusive pedagogy. Previous research has shown that educators – and here in particular future teachers – often lack knowledge about diversity in picturebooks and that they are not trained enough in their teacher education programs (e.g. Iwai 2013).

As universities play such a crucial role in preparing future teachers to work with diverse groups of children, we will analyze a selection of books from the 'Children's Literature Lab', an EduSpace of the Faculty of Education at the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano in the Italian province South Tyrol. In our analyses, we will investigate which forms of narrating diversity can be observed in picturebooks along the continuum of centering on differences and natural casualness (Leahy & Foley 2018: 177). Moreover, narrative as well as visual dimensions will be examined in our analyses (Staiger 2022). The main aim is to raise awareness to how diversity-sensitive picturebooks can be used by educators to teach about and reflect on diversity with their children and pupils, to promote visual literacy (Dehn 2019), and ultimately to foster inclusive education.

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Shaping the new picturebook – How to create and mediate inclusive and intercultural learning experiences through multilingual digital picture books

The interdisciplinary research team of the *ReaDi* (Reading Digital) project, funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, developed the first multilingual digital picture books with different functions for inclusive and intercultural contexts. Based on the principles of inclusive multilingual language education, 16 digital picture books have been produced in four spoken languages and one sign language, which contain theoretically and empirically validated features and will be freely available on an open access platform. These picture books aim to facilitate inclusive and intercultural learning (Hayden & Prince, 2023; Wang, 2020) to promote emotional and cognitive development (Garces-Bacsal, 2022; Papen & Peach, 2021) while enhancing literacy, communication skills, and second language acquisition (Tunkiel & Bus, 2022). Firstly, each picture book incorporates a bilingual-bimodal language approach, offering spoken and signed language simultaneously to support inclusive language development. Secondly, the selection of picture books reflects themes of inclusion, with each story addressing values such as diversity, empathy, and mutual understanding. This approach furthers inclusion by providing a linguistically rich, multimodal experience that benefits all children. Thirdly, the picture books encourage intercultural learning through appropriate content links in German, English, Arabic, and Turkish so that children from different linguistic backgrounds can participate. Finally, two of the 16 picture books will be presented as concrete examples to show and discuss how their design and content promote inclusive and intercultural learning experiences.

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Collaborative and multilingual children's literature that fosters an understanding for global citizenship

Unique methods for creating picturebooks can foster an understanding of global citizenship and universal values. Children's books based on their innovative production phases, verbal and visual narratives, and bilingual structures can all support critical literacies. The books that feature authors and illustrators from different countries can serve as stepping stones to making these works intercultural at their core. While publishers may not prioritize bringing together authors and illustrators from diverse geographic backgrounds, there are certain projects that facilitate this type of engagement.

In this context, we will present selected books where multicultural collaboration takes place right from the beginning of the project. For example, "Is 3 Too Much?" authored by Beyhan Gültaşlar and illustrated by Christian Inaraja, was initially published in both English and Turkish supported by the Institute Roman Lull. The picturebook text was offered to a group of illustrators, who presented illustrations for potential cooperation. Another notable example is "Mokadikko," which fosters teamwork between Türkiye and the Netherlands, with Gürçim Yılmaz and Zeynep Köylü authoring the text, Lies Van Gasse illustrating, and Elif Sarıgüzmen handling the graphic design. The title of the book also introduces a word that is unknown to us, encouraging readers to imagine the formation of new words in an unfamiliar language. A children's calendar published by the International Youth Library, is another work that promotes cross-cultural understanding through its methodology. This volume is published annually, bringing together poetry from around the world. For each week, a different poem from a selected book is presented in its original language alongside its German translation. In this way, children are exposed to at least fifty-four different poems from various countries. A poem entitled, "Synchronized" (Veryeri Alaca 2024), showcases cooperation among children from different nations. The selected countries often include those not typically found in atlas books, aiming to highlight diverse regions of the world to support critical literacies.

Panel 8A: Environmental themes and the Anthropocene

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My Friend Earth: How can picturebook aesthetics meet the challenges of the Anthropocene?

The Anthropocene is a geological term to describe 'the age of humankind' as an epoch of far-reaching transformations in Earth system such as climate change caused by human impact, and it is now used across the disciplines "to describe, analyse and interpret the transformed conditions in which humans now live" (Zalasiewicz et al., 2024, 980). In the Environmental Humanities it serves as an epistemological framework for reflecting upon the nature-culture relations in past and present and for redefining humankind's future relationship to planet Earth (Horn & Bergthaller, 2020; Dürbeck, 2000).

Literature addresses the "social, cultural and philosophical questions posed by the Anthropocene [...] in old and new literary forms" (Parham, 2021). In children's literature especially, the picturebook has taken up the Anthropocene as a narrative to foster young reader's perception of planet Earth as the home of human and non-human living beings, and of non-living matter. So-called 'global picturebooks' adopt an Earth-narrative perspective that enables a new understanding of and future co-responsibility for the world: Multicultural societies that promote global citizenship must include and respect ecological and multispecies perspectives, for "Reimagining our futures together" (UNESCO, 2021).

This contribution to the conference theme offers an Anthropocene reading of selected examples of the 'global picturebook' (e.g. P. MacLachlan & F. Sanna: *My Friend Earth*; S. Blackall: *If you come to Earth*; S. McNulty & D. Litchfield: *Our Planet!*; F. Stickley & T. Hopgood: *Love, the Earth*) as a new literary form in children's literature. It will look at the narrative, visual, and material strategies used in picturebooks to meet the challenges of the Anthropocene, i.e. latency, entanglement, and scale (Horn & Bergthaller, 2020, 102), and analyse how they are verbally and visually encoded and formally represented to adopt a planetary perspective. Anthropocene aesthetics thus opens a new field for picturebook research.

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Saviors and victims in the wasteocene: The child as an agent of climate change in Swedish 1960s and 70s picturebooks

Ever since Greta Thunberg began her school strike outside the Swedish parliament in Stockholm August 2018, she has become a contradictory symbol of a new generation of climate activism. Although she emphasizes an imaginary of children as victims in her speeches, she is presented as a hero and savior of the planet in public debates. The purpose of the paper is to historicize this dual positioning of children as victims and saviors of climate change by exploring environmental issues in Swedish 1960s and 70s Picturebooks. Mainly books that embrace the collapsing nature-culture divide of the Wasteocene – the age of waste (Armiero 2021) – such as *Sagan om Lotta från Dösjöbo* (1969) by Max Lundgren and Fibben Hald, *Filurstjärnan* (1969) by Inger and Lasse Sandberg, and *Måns och Mari om våren* (1970) by Kaj Beckman.

A basic assumption of the paper is that the environmental crisis also involves a crisis of culture and imagination (Buell 1995). It claims that late 1960s environmental picturebook developed a new understanding of ecology on the one hand, and a new aesthetic on the other (Wistisen 2023). The theoretical framework originates from Waste Studies, a growing field of cultural analysis that expands traditional approaches of ecocriticism by focusing on decay, built environments, and toxic sites (Dini 2016). The paper studies waste, trash, and pollution as theme, metaphor, and a mode of artistic creation (Dunlany 2017). By turning its attention to waste, the paper seeks to disrupt traditional, nature centered perceptions of environmental children's literature. Instead, it will illuminate the link between picturebooks aesthetics, escalating environmental problems, and activism. How does the visual and verbal strategies of the picturebooks relate to power relations such as that between children and adults, man and nature, waste material and commodity? How is the dual positioning of children mediated and negotiated through Swedish 1960s and 70s picturebooks?

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How visual and verbal strategies in *We are water protectors* develop identity, human dignity and environmental awareness

This paper will discuss the picturebook *We are water protectors* (Lindstrøm & Goade, 2020) and will draw on theory from ecocriticism (Haraway, 2016) and intercultural theory (Hall, 1996). The analysis will entail reading the picturebook through a lens of critical visual literacy (Janks et al., 2014) and picturebook theory (Nikolajeva & Scott, 2006).

Ecocriticism centres on how nature is (re)-presented in literature, particularly focussing on the relation between the human-nature dichotomy. Haraway challenges the power relations between humans and nature and argues that there is a holistic affinity between humans and non-humans, animals, plants and other species. Similarly, intercultural theory also addresses power relations between peoples, nations and races and aims to deconstruct the meaning of having an identity. Critical visual literacy considers the image-maker’s choices to create a position for the viewer, which impacts how we read the world. Critical visual literacy emphasises the social, cultural and ideological contexts of images.

The verbal and visual strategies employed in the picturebook offer insights into ways in which consciousness and knowledge about local traditions and myths develop the Self. Through reiterative motifs the picturebook discloses disparate nations, races and identities. The word-image interplay may be characterised as enhancing (Nikolajeva & Scott, 2006, p. 12). The aesthetics of both the visual and verbal and the word-image interplay in the picturebook enhance questions about identity, human dignity through inclusion, and environmental awareness.

Although the theme of the picturebook is a local struggle fighting an oil pipeline which pollutes the water, it simultaneously addresses global environmental threats. The quiet voices of characters in a local community articulates social and historical challenges through verbal and visual expressions. Concomitantly, the picturebook addresses global challenges on issues of identity and belonging, human rights and environmental awareness in a democratic society.

Panel 8B: Visual approaches to diversity

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Visual-verbal representation of (non)-human social exclusion in selected picturebooks by Tomi Kontio and Elina Warsta

The paper explores the visual-verbal representation of social exclusion in two selected picturebooks, *A Dog Called Cat* and *A Dog Called Cat Meets a Cat*, by Tomi Kontio and Elina Warsta. Using a multimodal analysis rooted in the social semiotic framework (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2010) and informed by Gunter Kress and Theo van Leeuwen's visual grammar theory (2006), the study examines how the interplay between text and illustrations portrays the dynamics of exclusion and belonging, focusing on both human and non-human characters. Central to the analysis is the investigation of visual symbols, contrasts, and narrative structures that contribute to readers' understanding of social exclusion.

The study highlights how the picturebooks employ metaphorical imagery, colour symbolism, and spatial arrangements to evoke emotional responses and communicate the experiences of marginalized characters. Through the theoretical lens of Kress and van Leeuwen's framework, the paper analyses compositional elements to uncover implicit and explicit messages about social exclusion. By juxtaposing non-human and human perspectives, the works challenge traditional boundaries, prompting readers to empathize with diverse forms of social alienation. Particular attention is given to the nuanced portrayal of relational dynamics, including the tension between isolation and connection, friendship and empathy, multiculturalism, and social inequality as conveyed through the authors' distinct artistic and narrative styles.

This analysis further explores how the visual and verbal elements engage readers of various age groups, particularly children, in reflecting on themes of inclusion, diversity, and resilience. Through close readings, the paper demonstrates how these picturebooks serve as powerful tools for fostering social awareness and emotional literacy, encouraging young readers to critically engage with issues of exclusion in their own lives and communities. By bridging literary and visual dimensions, this paper contributes to the broader discourse on the pedagogical and interpretative potential of picturebooks, emphasizing their role in shaping empathetic and socially conscious individuals.

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Hidden stories: Cultural and historical Europe in Anno's Journey series

Mitsumasa Anno's *Journey* series redefines the art of wordless storytelling, guiding readers through visually rich narratives that explore the cultural and historical landscapes of worldwide. While the series spans multiple regions, this study focuses on its European dimension, where intricate illustrations blend iconic landmarks, folklore, and everyday life to create immersive, multilayered narratives. Each page becomes a visual exploration of identity, diversity, and history, challenging readers to uncover the connections hidden within the artwork.

This presentation examines the role of Anno's detailed illustrations in constructing a nuanced depiction of Europe, asking: How does Anno use visual storytelling to map Europe as both a collective cultural identity and a mosaic of traditions?; In what ways do his illustrations challenge readers to navigate time and space, particularly through depictions of historical and cultural continuities?; How do the evolving peritextual elements, such as titles and supplemental guides, mediate the reader's interpretive experience? and How do Anno's wordless narratives inspire readers to reflect on the interconnectedness of cultural heritage and human experience?

Anno's unique approach, where the protagonist subtly guides the narrative while fading into the background, invites readers to take on the role of explorer. Seamless transitions between countries emphasize Europe's interconnectedness, while the absence of text shifts interpretive power entirely to the audience. By merging past and present within his panoramas, Anno reimagines Europe as a fluid, borderless space of cultural exchange and shared history. This study positions Anno's *Journey* series as a transformative contribution to children's literature, combining aesthetic innovation with profound cultural inquiry. Through its focus on Europe, the series celebrates both the specificities of place and the universal experiences that connect us all, encouraging readers to engage with the complexities of culture, history, and identity in an ever-connected world.

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Diversity(ies) way ahead of their time:

Manuela Bacelar's picturebooks

Manuela Bacelar (1943-) is one of Portugal's most relevant illustrators and picturebook creators. Both nationally and internationally recognized – with the Golden Apple at the Bratislava International Biennale (1989) and the Illustration Prize from the Ministry of Culture/IBBY (1996), among others – and having lent her art to the literature of prominent authors such as Ilse Losa, Luísa Ducla Soares, or António Torrado, Bacelar truly distinguished herself by designing her own picturebooks, where she broke with stereotypes and conventions in 20th-century children's literature. The ruptures in her work are diverse. They include the use of narratological mechanisms – some of which are intertextual or metafictional and were relatively rare in 1990s Portuguese children's books – such as metatextuality, metalepsis, and *mise en abîme*. Another distinctive and progressive line in her artistic project is the fictionalisation and visual conveyance of topics such as ethnic, cultural and gender diversity, respect for alterity, and the valorisation of difference. These thematic and stylistic approaches anticipate and promote intercultural dialogue, multicultural understanding and a notion of global citizenship central to the picturebook's role as a mediator for social transformation.

In this paper, I aim to investigate the innovative and at times ahead-of-its-time nature of Bacelar's picturebooks within the evolving context of Portuguese and international children's publishing, especially as regards these ideothematic axes. Focusing primarily on the illustrations and their intersemiotic relationship with verbal text, we will undertake a dialogic analysis of the picturebooks that constitute the 'Tobias' series (1989-1992) as well as *O Dinossauro* (1990), *Bernardino* (2005), and *O Livro do Pedro* (2008). Attention will be paid to stylistic and multimodal strategies in the construction of narrative, with particular regard to the visual representation of human and anthropomorphic animal figures, as well as to the depiction of settings that evoke openness and inclusivity. Ultimately, Bacelar's selected works – and many others – substantiate an open, plural, and welcoming vision of diversity, making them powerful vehicles for fostering empathy, interculturality, and universal values, while challenging linear or monolithic interpretations of otherness and the world.

Organisers



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