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Marion Mas and Anne-Marie Mercier-Faivre, eds., *Écrire pour la jeunesse et pour les adultes: D'un lectorat à l'autre*. Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2020. 243 pp. Notes, references, index, and summaries. €64.00 (hb). ISBN 978-2-406-10138-3; €25.00 (pb). ISBN 978-2-406-10137-6.

Review by Gretchen van Slyke, University of Vermont.

The papers in this volume are drawn from a colloquium held in Lyon in 2017 on authors who in successive works have targeted an audience of adults, then an audience of children, or vice versa. In their introduction Marion Mas and Anne-Marie Mercier-Faivre state that studying this particular corpus may help to better define what is meant by children's literature, still a problematic term. Although children's literature has often been considered a lesser form of literature, they argue—with many compelling quotations from various authors—that choosing to write for children may in fact increase the difficulty of the writer's task and enhance the value of the work produced, that the juvenile audience may enjoy superior esthetic and moral sensitivity in comparison with adults, and that it is perhaps only in children's literature that some subjects and questions can be dealt with adequately. “Ainsi, loin d'être une littérature du manque et de l'appauvrissement, la littérature pour la jeunesse pourrait être aussi une littérature de l'ailleurs, qui explorerait des formes et des sujets délaissés par la littérature générale. Elle ne serait pas une littérature de la facilité, mais de la simplicité” (p. 22).

In the first chapter on George Sand, Amélie Calderone teases out several related questions: a) what does Sand mean when she qualifies a story as *fantastique*? b) did the term always mean the same thing throughout the nineteenth century? c) do Sand's *contes fantastiques* target an audience of children or adults? In 1873, George Sand published the first volume of her *Contes d'une grand-mère*. In her correspondence she qualified these tales as *fantastique* and stated that they were meant for children. Yet all of them had first been published in reviews for adult readers. Moreover, some of the tales that Sand identified as *fantastique* were not included in *Contes d'une grand-mère* since the author judged them as ill-suited to children. Yet another wrinkle appeared in 1876 when Sand, contemplating a second volume, refused to qualify her new tales as *fantastique*. Calderone argues that the term *fantastique* bore several meanings in nineteenth-century France, first as unbridled, child-like imagination, then as purely entertaining literature meant for a mass audience, and finally, as the more frightening aspects of science fiction. Calderone's main point is that Sand's tales strive to fulfill an ambitious pedagogical project for novice readers of any age. Despite their supernatural and fanciful aspects, her grandmotherly tales aim to educate the reader about moral, social and political matters, all the while avoiding the pitfalls of didacticism. Thus, “le conte fantastique sandien est une occasion supplémentaire de recourir à la littérature pour agir, afin de faire advenir l'idéal républicain qui anime leur auteure” (p. 47).

Yvon Houssais's contribution studies the target audience of four tales by Marcel Aymé that first appeared in a review for adults and were subsequently republished in 1934 in a collection for children. His basic question is: did Aymé change the way he wrote when his tales began to be marketed to children? And the answer is no, he made very few changes. Instead, he wrote for a readership that can include both children and adults. Although irony is not usually a facet of children's literature and surely escapes a juvenile audience, Aymé left it in for the adults who could fully enjoy the author's tongue-in-cheek delivery. This study, unfortunately, leaves something to be desired. Two different dates are given for Aymé's preface to his collected *Contes*, and Houssais's language is sometimes troublingly vague, for instance, "Le conte comporte également un certain nombre de détails ou de traits descriptifs qui disparaîtront par la suite" (p. 54). Does Houssais mean that these details disappear from subsequent editions of the tale, or from tales that Aymé composed after 1934? The study also exhibits a certain lack of balance. Of the four tales gathered into the first children's edition in 1934, Houssais says nothing of two, devotes just half a page to one, and two pages to another.

Virginie Tellier devotes her systematic contribution to Vladimir Odoïevski, a nineteenth-century writer known as the Russian Hoffmann. In 1834, he wrote a story for children about an animated miniature world, and in 1840 he returned to the same motif and wrote a fantastic tale for an adult audience. Tellier compares the two, point by point, in order to "définir les spécificités d'un texte adressé à un jeune public" (p. 62). In the tale for children, the target audience is inscribed in the text as a typical little boy while the adult narrator corrects the boy's errors in a fatherly way. In the tale for adults, the narrator is an adult with adult preoccupations. Likewise, the frame of reference is very different in the two tales: in the first, it is limited to daily life in a family; in the second, it extends to Shakespeare, Goethe, and Plato. The two tales treat the supernatural differently. In the tale for children, the transition between the real and the supernatural is explicit, with a well-defined threshold between them. On the other hand, the fantastic tale for adults blurs the boundaries between the natural and the supernatural so that "le motif du rêve est remplacé par celui de la folie, dont on ne se réveille pas" (p. 68). There is also a difference between the lessons they deliver. While the tale for adults opens out onto great questions of philosophy and religion, the generally clear didactic purposes of the tale for children are confined to the material world. Yet things are not so simple in the children's tale, and it is this aspect that may explain its enduring success throughout the Soviet period and even now in Russia: the tale for the juvenile audience suspends judgment about political questions, aiming to form the young readers' abilities to make judgments and to decide for themselves.

Olga Fedotova's piece on Louis Ratisbonne does not yield many surprises. Ratisbonne wrote poems for adults and for children in late nineteenth-century France, and Fedotova studies his conceptions of poetry in relation to his two distinct audiences. She concludes that Ratisbonne's poetry has two poles: "la poésie pour enfants avec son humour et son côté moral et édifiant, qui s'apparente au genre de la fable et se caractérise par la simplicité lexicale et syntaxique, et la poésie pour adultes, avec une forme et une expression plus complexes..., et des thèmes atténués dans la poésie pour enfants...ou bien absents" (p. 92), such as death and sexual love. She also reviews the poetry that Ratisbonne wrote for adolescents, saying that its status is more difficult to characterize precisely because it lies between the two poles previously defined, and shows "une progression naturelle des formes et des thèmes" (p. 92), with one exception: humor is completely absent from the poetry for adults and adolescents.

Éléonore Cartellier's methodical study of J.K. Rowling's fiction starts out with the statement that the boundaries of children's literature are porous. Whereas it has been argued that texts for young readers suppose an accessible style, simple vocabulary and syntax, well-worn metaphors, and relatively simple mysteries, Cartellier shows that Rowling's work, in her pre-2010 Harry Potter series for children and her post-2010 novels for adults, demonstrates a certain continuity. As for Rowling's lexical, narrative, and thematic choices with regard to the two audiences, the differences are not in kind, but in degree. Vulgarity is present in Rowling's pre- and post-2010 works even though it is understated in the children's books. There may be less narrative complexity in the children's books but it is clear that Rowling began experimenting with focalization in the Harry Potter series before perfecting this technique in her later novels for adults. Both contain bloody and horrific acts of violence, although the books for children are less explicit and tend to protect the young reader. Cartellier concludes that the porous boundaries between Rowling's novels for children and adults may be the very reason for their general appeal.

Eager to expand the study of children's literature to contemporary times and beyond the borders of France, Merveilles Léoncia Mouloungui focuses on the Congolese writer Alain Mabanckou, who wrote two versions of the same tale, one for children and the other for adults. They tell similar stories in that they concern a ten-year-old boy who continues to communicate with a sister or sisters who died before he was born. Despite the parallels between the two, there are also significant differences on the level of *bigraphie* which Mouloungui defines as the stylistic choices that authors make according to whether they are targeting a juvenile or adult audience. Moreover, the tale for children contains illustrations, and these develop "un aspect absent du roman et pourtant déterminant dans un récit d'enfance: le rapport à la lecture" (p. 124). When Mouloungui turns to *bi-editorialité*, or the choice of writing for two distinct readerships, she conjectures that the author is addressing the world and attempting to form young readers who will follow a particular intellectual itinerary. "C'est donc parce qu'il a été un lecteur-monde que Mabanckou...tend à former un futur lecteur-monde...un lecteur averti de la richesse culturelle du monde, un lecteur formé à son image" (p. 129).

In a piece owing much to Luce Irigaray, Ilaria Moretti examines the figure of the doll in a novel that Elena Ferrante wrote for adults and in her only tale for children. Both works aim to represent the complexity of the mother-daughter relation, deeply flawed and often damaging, nevertheless the active foundation of a woman's sense of identity. In the novel for adults, Leda--the narrator and protagonist--relives the agonizing memories of a time when she felt so overwhelmed by caring for her two small children that she abandoned them. At the same time, she becomes fascinated, to the point of obsession, with a young mother who plays every day with her daughter and her ugly, old doll. The sight of the doll intensifies Leda's painful recollection of having felt forced to accept a pre-existing destiny, like her mother, grandmother, and generations of mute, enraged women before her. Finally, Leda steals the doll and keeps it until the mother discovers the crime and attacks Leda, freeing her from her obsession and allowing her to reconnect with her present-day self and professional pursuits. In the children's tale, a doll is absentmindedly abandoned by her "mother" at the beach and recounts the terrors and trials of that separation. Bereft of her mother, the doll loses all sense of agency. Yet, in order to survive, she must fight back not only against the elements but also a beach-attendant who wants to steal the words that her mother taught her, the words that lie at the origin of her consciousness and form her identity. The doll is finally saved and returned to her mother, who, despite all her failures, is the one who delivered her from silence and gave her life. For Ferrante, writing is the way out of silence and into agency: "La métaphore du silence est l'emblème d'une féminité niée

qui cherche...une nouvelle parole capable de s'incarner dans une langue qui veuille l'accueillir and se faire berceau de sa propre histoire" (p. 144).

The backdrop of the chapter by Gersende Plissonneau and Florence Pellegrini is how to represent the unrepresentable, in this case the Holocaust. Lanzmann and Wiesel, among others, have stated that there cannot be, must not be, any literary representation of the Holocaust. Yet recent works of children's literature have evoked the Holocaust, without being roundly condemned. Plissonneau and Pellegrini aim to study how Aharon Appelfeld, himself a concentration camp survivor, deals with the Holocaust in two novels, *Tsili* (1983) meant for adult readers, and *Adam et Thomas* (2013), meant for children, and to see if Appelfeld makes different narrative choices according to the target audience. Although the "heroes" of these narratives all share in the dereliction that characterized Appelfeld's early life, the two texts treat these biographical elements differently. In the text for adults, it is possible to reconstruct the chronology and topography of Tsili's wanderings across Eastern Europe. Yet it is nearly impossible to do so in the children's narrative, as the two protagonists--Adam and Thomas--live in a forest without name that seems to belong more to a fairy tale than an actual place. In the same vein, *Tsili* is clearly identified as a Jew in a world where Jews are hunted down and killed. The Jewish identity of the boys in *Adam et Thomas* is mainly suggested by brief allusions to the historical context and discussions between them. Yet in both texts the Holocaust is only fleetingly, marginally present. "C'est l'absence de récit d'extermination qui traduit, plastiquement, poétiquement, l'extermination elle-même" (pp. 156-157). Finally, both texts share a minimalist language, something like Agamben's *experimentum linguae*. In another important difference, the narrative for adults is clearly a novel, whereas it is impossible to identify the genre of the children's narrative, a mixture of autofiction, adventure novel, fairy tale, fable, etc., which encourages its reception as fiction. Fiction enables one to "jouer' avec la réalité sans s'y abîmer...et de reconnaître dans la réalité les amorces d'une telle situation et d'y couper parce que, justement, on s'est imaginé ces conséquences" (p. 161). Thus, fiction may have some pre-emptive virtue.

In her contribution, Pauline Franchini treats a novel that Maryse Condé wrote for adult readers, then rewrote some twenty years later for children. Both novels concern African children of royal lineage who are kidnapped and sold into slavery, and both detail the active role that Europeans, West Africans, and Arabs played in the slave trade. Yet there are differences between the two versions so that each is better suited to its target audience. For example, the children's narrative simplifies the vocabulary and descriptions, shortens the plot, reduces the numbers of characters, and makes the protagonists younger so that juvenile readers can better identify with them. All the same, Franchini concludes that Condé shows the same historical rigor in both works, and does not shrink from showing the violence inflicted on enslaved women and children. Yet she also notes that Condé censors other kinds of violence from the children's narrative, specifically the sexual violence to which women were exposed. It is difficult to square historical rigor with self-censorship, suggesting avenues for further analysis.

Lydie Laroque's cogent essay studies two works by Roald Dahl, a short story conceived for an adult audience in 1960 which was then reconceived as a novel for children in 1975. Both are first-person narratives about pheasant poachers; both rail against those who have power and influence in society. Yet there are important differences. On the narratological level, the novel for children is much longer because the author wants to seduce his readers by inscribing them in the text. Also, the two adult poachers become father and son in the version for children, and the nine-

year-old narrator creates a *stratégie de proximité* vis-à-vis the juvenile readers. On the stylistic level, despite the realistic trappings of the novel, the child narrator often views the world through a fairy-tale perspective. On the thematic level, the novel is not so much about taking revenge on the powerful as it is about exploring the father-son bond. Laroque concludes that when Dahl writes for children, he intends to initiate and instruct the reader, whereas his works for adults aim only to entertain. She quotes Dahl, in French translation, discussing what a good children's book should do: "Par-dessus tout, il aide à apprendre aux enfants à ne pas avoir peur des livres....Pour arriver à quoi que ce soit dans l'existence, il faut être à l'aise avec les livres" (p. 191).

Marie-Thérèse Duffau studies the tales that Antonin Perbosc, a school teacher in the vicinity of Montauban between 1893 and 1912, had his students collect in order to preserve this oral history as well as the Occitan languages in which it was told. Because the tales were sometimes bawdy, with scatological and anti-clerical references, Perbosc had to choose which ones were appropriate only for an adult audience and which were suitable for an audience including children. Duffau does not clearly enounce the criteria that Perbosc used to make these determinations and others, such as the difference between a *récit populaire* and *un récit littéraire*. Moreover, her language occasionally lacks precision, as when she writes, "Perbosc s'amuse du succès d'un conte présenté comme littéraire, alors que ce succès aurait été moindre s'il avait été présenté dans son origine rurale" (p. 204). When she says "dans son origine rurale," does she mean the version gathered by the schoolchildren?

Jean Perrot turns to the illustrated album that he himself authored in order to analyze what Serge Martin has called *une poétique de la voix*. The album's short poems move back and forth between the points of view of a turbulent infant and a robust grandfather eager to see the child grow into understanding, which Perrot compares to the dynamic of Nietzsche's *The Gay Science*. Yet the poles are not fixed in place because the child and the grandfather move through time so that the last poem inverts the relationship between them, the now grown-up boy celebrating his grandfather confined to a wheelchair. Perrot concludes that his album is a children's book for adults in the tradition of Florence Montgomery's 1869 *Misunderstood*, and that he is a *ludilecteur*, saying yes to life in words of pleasure that are nonetheless oriented toward intellectual enlightenment, both participation and proposition.

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