

## Introduction Volume 48

The forty-eighth volume of *Barnboken: Journal of Children's Literature Research* consists of sixteen articles which mainly deal with Nordic children's and young adult literature. The majority are included in one of this year's four themes "Multilingualism and Children's Literature," "Dog," "Children's Literature Reviews – How, Where and Who?," and "The Children's Library Saga and the Swedish Teachers' Magazine's Publishing House." In addition, eleven reviews of recent Nordic and international theoretical literature were published, among these were four doctoral dissertations and the two-volume *Den svenska barn- och ungdomslitteraturens historia* (The history of Swedish children's and young adult literature, 2024).

One independent article was published in 2025. In "Barntid och växttid: Ekokritiska läsningar av tidsförlopp och relationen mellan växter och barn i två bilderböcker" (Child time and plant time: Eco-critical readings of the lapses of time and the relationship between plants and children in two picturebooks), Emilie Moberg and Anna Westberg Broström examine the depiction of lapses of time in one picturebook by Stefan Casta and Sara Lundberg, and one by Per Gustavsson. With inspiration from ecocriticism and queer theory, they analyse how the lapses of time are described in these works and whether the iconotexts portray human- or plant-centred concepts of time. Moberg and Westberg Broström particularly draw attention to moments when child time and plant time coincide. These instances show how different life forms can share experiences and communicate across species boundaries.

The volume's first theme, "Multilingualism and Children's Literature," began in 2024 and is concluded this year with the publication of three articles. Helena Bodin (professor, Stockholm University, Sweden) and Julia Tidigs (docent, Åbo Akademi University, Finland) are the theme editors. The three articles analyse multilingualism in Nordic picturebooks of varying kinds – bilingual Sámi picturebooks, state-sanctioned Finnish baby box books, and Swedish picturebooks including several alphabets. All articles foreground the linguistic diversity of the Nordic region and that these picturebooks play an

important role in creating cultural dialogues, but that it can also be challenging to integrate the multilingual features in the illustrations in an aesthetically successful way. Moreover, the arrangement of languages and letters on the book page may contest or unwittingly relay power hierarchies among the featured languages. The articles are published with the support of Letterstedtska föreningen (the Letterstedtska Foundation).

The second theme focuses on dogs in children's and young adult literature and consists of four articles. These, too, mainly deal with Nordic children's literature and analyse, among others, picturebooks by Eva Lindström, Tor Åge Bringsværd and Anne G. Holt as well as by Rose Lagercrantz and Ilon Wikland. The articles describe how literary depictions of dogs and children, from idyllic tales of everyday life to war memorial literature, often portray the dog as the child's companion. They contend that one of the animal's main functions is to support the child's development. Thus, several of these works may be said to forward an anthropocentric worldview, and one recurring question in the articles is to what extent the dog is described as a subject in its own right. One of the articles also explore if the different media of film and book provide varying opportunities to depict animal subjectivity.

"Children's Literature Reviews – How, Where and Who?" makes up the third theme this year, and it highlights the changing arenas and forms of children's literature criticism from a contemporary and a historical perspective. Theme editors are Nina Goga (professor, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway) and Maria Lassén-Seger (docent, Åbo Akademi University, Finland). The five articles use a variety of methods, from quantitative digital analyses to close readings of a more limited material. The use of sound in BookTok reviews, young readers' opinions of easy-to-read fiction, and the reception of Astrid Lindgren's Pippi Longstocking books in Swedish and Norwegian newspapers are investigated in three of the articles. Read together they clearly illustrate the changes that have taken place over the last eighty years in terms of who the children's literature reviewers are and where reviews are published. The other articles examine whether children's literature reviews are different from reviews of general literature, and variations in the use of consecration markers on picturebook sleeves in the Scandinavian countries.

The last theme, "The Children's Library Saga and the Swedish Teachers' Magazine's Publishing House," was initiated in 2022 and resumed in 2025 with the publication of three articles. The theme is

edited by Åsa Warnqvist (docent, the Swedish Institute for Children's Books) and Olle Widhe (professor, University of Gothenburg, Sweden). The theme will continue in 2026 and is connected to the research and digitisation projects on Barnbiblioteket Saga (the Children's Library Saga) that is being carried out at the Swedish Institute for Children's Books. Founded in 1896, Svensk läraretidnings förlag (The Swedish Teachers' Magazine's Publishing House) was a prominent agent in the children's book market during the best part of the following century. This year's articles foreground the editorial work of the publishing company through analyses of the negotiations between the editors Amanda Hammarlund and Signe Wranér and the authors and illustrators. Moreover, they show how the publishing house strived to renew its publication profile in the middle of the 20th century. This is examined through the launch of special books for early readers and the new book series Stjärnböckerna (The star books, 1937–1950). Stjärnböckerna was aimed at young adults and was described as an entertaining alternative to commercial popular literature. The articles are published with the support of Lärarstiftelsen (the Teacher's Foundation).

*Barnboken* is an Open Access journal, which means that all articles and reviews are published online and are freely available on the journal's website and in full text through several international databases. Article submissions are subjected to double-blind peer review, ensuring that all articles published in *Barnboken* have been reviewed by at least two external reviewers outside of the journal's editorial board. When members of the editorial board or theme editors contribute with submissions of their own, they are not involved in the editorial work or the peer review process of their article in any capacity. *Barnboken's* focus is mainly Swedish and Nordic, but the journal has readers all over the world.

During 2025, my fellow members of the editorial board were Nina Goga (professor, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway), Maria Jönsson (professor, Umeå University, Sweden), Peter Kostenniemi, (PhD, Linköping University, Sweden/Aarhus University, Denmark), Anne Skaret (professor, Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway), Olle Widhe (professor, University of Gothenburg, Sweden), and Mia Österlund (professor, Åbo Akademi University, Finland). Review editor is Malin Nauwerck (PhD, the Swedish Institute for Children's Books) and Hanna Liljeqvist is editorial secretary (research assistant, the Swedish Institute for Children's Books/PhD student, Åbo Akademi University, Finland). Åsa Warnqvist (docent, the Swedish Institute for Children's

Books) functions as consulting senior editor and responsible editor. The journal's international advisory board includes fifteen prominent Swedish, Nordic, and international researchers. The journal is published with support from Vetenskapsrådet (the Swedish Research Council).

*Barnboken* welcomes new and old readers to take part of the exciting and inspiring research presented in this year's volume.

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