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**“Insegnare le lingue/culture oggi: Il contributo dell’interdisciplinarietà”**, a <http://amsacta.cib.unibo.it/archive/00002055>,

disponibile anche in versione cartacea:

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e

- a cura di Miller D.R. e Pano A., *Selected Papers* di quelli presentati al convegno nazionale CeSLiC del 4-5 dicembre, 2008, dal titolo:

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È con vivo piacere che presentiamo questo nuovo contributo agli Occasional Papers, di Mette Rudvin, ricercatrice in lingua inglese e traduzione. La Dott.ssa. Rudvin insegna presso l'Università di Bologna dal 1995 e ha studiato presso le Università di Oslo, Oxford e Warwick, dove ha conseguito il dottorato di ricerca in teoria della traduzione. Le sue pubblicazioni e i suoi insegnamenti vertono sulla grammatica funzionale, la teoria della traduzione, la letteratura anglo-indiana, la letteratura per l'infanzia, l'identità nazionale e il folklore. Negli ultimi dieci anni le sue attività scientifiche e didattiche hanno posto particolare attenzione alla comunicazione interculturale e alla mediazione linguistica. La studiosa ha un'esperienza pluriennale come traduttrice e mediatrice linguistica/ interprete e attualmente coordina un progetto di ricerca sulla formazione di mediatori e interpreti in ambito legale a Bologna.

Il suo contributo s'intitola:

### **Colonialismo, letteratura per l'infanzia e traduzione.**

#### **Lo sguardo coloniale: Una lettura del testo e delle illustrazioni del**

##### ***Libro della Giungla***

L'articolo esamina i concetti e valori colonialisti presenti nella letteratura vittoriana per l'infanzia e indaga se, e in che modo, questi siano sopravvissuti nelle traduzioni italiane tramite revisioni e

illustrazioni in uno degli autori più rappresentativi del periodo vittoriano britannico, Rudyard Kipling. Il saggio prende in esame il *Libro della Giungla*, scritto tra il 1894 e il 1895 in due volumi, focalizzando l'attenzione sulle storie che vedono Mowgli come protagonista, indagando come sono presentate le relazioni interpersonali fra i vari personaggi, e come sono condizionate dalla visione ideologica di Kipling. In particolare ci si sofferma sui concetti di gerarchia, di autorità, di natura, sulla Legge della Giungla, e sulla caccia. Il saggio prende anche in considerazione la vita privata di Kipling, il suo rapporto con l'India, e come questi fattori possano essere collegati al concetto di letteratura per l'infanzia contemporanea nel canone letterario occidentale. Esaminando una vasta gamma di traduzioni italiane, l'articolo pone in evidenza le seguenti questioni:

- Fino a quale punto questi aspetti della visione del mondo di Kipling sono mantenuti nella traduzione, e se sono adattati, in che modo è attuata la rimozione?
- Quali sono le circostanze degli attori (ossia, gli scrittori, traduttori, revisori e case editrici) e editori) e dello stesso processo traduttivo?
- Come viene gestita nella traduzione la dimensione ideologica del testo di partenza, data la forte funzione educativa e informativa della letteratura per l'infanzia?
- Il 'subtext' coloniale viene smussato o enfatizzato dai traduttori e dai revisori?
- I mutamenti traduttivi dipendono delle singole scelte dei traduttori e revisori e dalle loro ideologie e preferenze?
- Essi cambiano nel tempo seguendo gli approcci politici?

Sarebbe interessante in questo contesto, come non manca a rilevare l'autrice, includere una prospettiva più ampia del materiale meta-narrativo ed esaminare le politiche editoriali e di mercato (sia in Gran Bretagna, sia in Italia), tenendo conto del loro cambiamento e di come influenzano materialmente le decisioni dei traduttori, degli illustratori, degli agenti pubblicitari e della catena di distribuzione.

**concetti chiave:** traduzione, letteratura per l'infanzia, Kipling, *Il Libro della Giungla*, colonialismo.

Donna R. Miller



Bologna, li 16 novembre 2011

**Colonialism, Children's Literature and Translation. The Colonial Gaze: A reading of  
the text and illustrations in Italian versions of *The Jungle Books***

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1. Introduction

This paper investigates if and how colonialist tropes and Victorian values represented in Victorian children's literature have survived to the present day in Italian translations through revisions, abridgements and illustrations in a text by one of the most representative Victorian authors, Rudyard Kipling, a paragon of the Empire-building period. The paper examines his celebrated *The Jungle Books* published in 1894 and 1895.

*The Jungle Books* were printed in two volumes containing not only the celebrated Mowgli stories, but also other short stories such as "The White Seal" and "Rikki-Tikki-Tavi". This paper will be looking exclusively at the series of stories in which Mowgli is the protagonist, and only in the volumes catalogued in the children's section of libraries, examining how interpersonal relations among the characters, deeply embedded in Kipling's Victorian convictions, are portrayed. These aspects relate particularly to hierarchy, authority, 'the Law of the Jungle', hunting and nature. The paper briefly touches upon how these issues relate to Kipling's own personal life and his rapport with India, and how they relate to the concept of children's literature as a modern western literary construction.

By examining a range of Italian translations, the paper then questions to what degree these aspects of Kipling's world view are maintained in translation: if and when they are jettisoned and what this tells us about the circumstances, the agents and the process of translation. In order to examine how the core values of the colonialist period are portrayed in translations of *The Jungle Books*, the paper will first discuss how these emerge in the original text, especially through the interpersonal relations between Mowgli and the jungle animals. The paper then moves on to examine a sample of Italian translations to see if and how the colonialist subtext(s) are maintained in the translated text and in the accompanying

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<sup>1</sup> Many of the ideas in this paper stem from work done for classes I held on Children's Literature (focussing on the Victorian period) at the School for Interpreters and Translators at the University of Bologna in Forli in 2002-2003, and I am grateful for the enthusiasm and feedback of my students. As a paper, it was first presented at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Conference of the International Association for Translation and Intercultural Studies, at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa in July 2006 and subsequently in a brief and much more succinct version at Trinity College, Dublin in March 2009 at the conference *Translation Right or Wrong*. A parallel paper, focussing specifically on translation aspects, will be published in 2012 in the Proceedings of the Trinity conference (Four Courts, Dublin).

illustrations. Questions that emerge are: ‘How is the ideological dimension in the source text managed in translation, given the powerful educational and informative function and nature of books for children?’ ‘Is the colonial subtext mitigated or emphasized by translators and publishers?’ The paper will attempt to suggest answers to some of these questions.<sup>2</sup>

Because of the importance of illustrations for children’s books and because of the potent ideological content illustrations embody, the paper explores not only how the subtext(s) travel in translation through words, but also through images. I have looked at a variety of illustrated translations spanning a time period from 1903 to 1991 to see how the underlying colonialist subtext is managed and coordinated by the translator and illustrator<sup>3</sup>. The contribution of this paper, building on a stimulating area of inquiry that has been the object of much attention in the literature in recent years, lies largely in looking at the illustrations concomitantly with the text as a product of the translation process that ‘domesticate’ and ‘foreignize’ as much as the written text does. Indeed, illustrations are perhaps even more potent channels for such adaptations and for textual regeneration than the written text. The importance of the illustrations and the illustrator in this genre is also suggested by the fact that the name of the illustrator, but not the translator (which is given in small print on the page with the publishing details), is almost always indicated on the title page.<sup>4</sup>

However, whether or not textual adaptations depend on the translators’ and publishers’ individual idiosyncrasies, ideologies and preferences and whether or not they change over time as political attitudes and foreign policies change, can only be answered through further investigation. A more exhaustive study of this topic should include a broader range of meta-narrative material examining editorial and market policies (both in the UK and in Italy) as they change through this time period and how these policies materially affect the decisions of translators, illustrators, marketing agents and booksellers. Much interesting research could indeed be undertaken in this area.

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<sup>2</sup> The singular form of ‘subtext’ will be used for convenience, but it should be understood that a variety of subtexts and interpretations are present in this text, as in any complex literary or cultural product.

<sup>3</sup> The first illustrations of *The Jungle Books* were drawn by Kipling’s father, John Lockwood, an art teacher in Bombay and later curator of the Lahore museum (the illustrations can be found in the Wordsworth Classics 1993 edition). It is reasonably safe to presume, thus, that the ideology informing these first illustrations were shared by father and son. Indeed, one of the main literary sources of *The Jungle Books* were John Lockwood Kipling’s anecdotes in his book *Beast and Man in India* (1891).

<sup>4</sup> This is the case with the editions translated by Arduini and Masini; in the edition illustrated by Inga Moore no translator is given; the translator Pieroni is on the title page but in small print; one exception to this trend is the Padoan translation illustrated by Scarato and Spaliviero.

## 1.1 Theoretical Premises

Illustrations mirror contemporary ideas and trends as much or even more than the text itself; where translators are constrained by the mandate to ‘adhere faithfully’ to the original text (to whatever degree this is desirable or possible), editors and publishers are free to commission new illustrations that reflect changes in society and changes in the genre of children’s literature, or indeed in the view of childhood; they are free to target the text at a different age-group. Furthermore, where editors are ‘constrained’ by having to maintain prestigious, canonical translations in a bid to respect the authority of the source text and the author, they have far more flexibility and leeway to project their own ‘ideologies’ in the illustrations. Indeed, by renewing the texts through the accompanying illustrations, they can target them towards what is currently popular in the contemporary market to increase sales. This applies to all readership ages, but especially to books for young children. This paper thus confirms the claim that translated children’s literature reflects current ideology and cultural norms and is managed and coordinated by the consolidated efforts of various text-producing agents: translators, illustrators, editors, publishers and marketing personnel.

Like any reading and re-elaboration process, a translation is, by virtue of being a reading, a subjective interpretation by the reader/re-writer. Indeed, the concept of agency inherent in any communicative process, not least translation, is no longer in dispute but widely accepted in the literature on translation studies (see Pym 2010 for an excellent overview of the developments in translation studies). Translations are formed in concomitance not only with the translator’s personal, subjective interpretation of the text, and are thus a uniquely individual product, but are at a collective level ‘manipulated’ by a whole range of agents involved in and constitutive of the general socio-cultural, ideological, editorial and literary climate(s) governing the target language/culture(s) at any particular given time.

Unlike originals, translations can easily be adapted and modernized to a new readership, which, almost paradoxically, lengthens the life-span of the text (or the range of texts). Translation can thus be a vehicle of modernisation and an opportunity for adaptation to current norms, in other words a channel for renewal. Of course, insofar as translation is an opportunity for renewal, by the same token it is an opportunity for the translator to mould the new text into a reconsolidation of existing target norms, as we will see both in texts and illustrations described in this paper. We will also see how old translations can be adapted to a new readership and age-group without changing a single word, simply by adding new illustrations and changing the text-image dialogics. (This is the case with the Mursia edition below, but also in many others.) One might ask if this is an innate feature of the translation

process, the ability to regenerate a source text endlessly through translation/revision/rewriting and the desire to prolong the life of a well-loved text, render it immortal in a contemporary vest. Alternatively, there might be cases where translation-adaptation might simply be the negation of the original text's colonialist and psychological subtext. Indeed, the two – textual regeneration and the subversion of the subtext – might not be incompatible.

In the sample of translations of *The Jungle Books* examined in this paper, the target text is not only a reproduction by virtue of being a translation, but also by being abridged and illustrated for various juvenile readerships. In this regard some methodological issues should be noted. Ideally, a comparison between original and contemporary texts and illustrations in English would have made it possible to draw more general conclusions about the rapport between text and image and about how they reflect socio-political and cultural values. Until this is done it would be premature to draw conclusions about what is particularly culturally-specific (Italian) about the colonial representations and child-image compared to what has been published in English. A second comparison with Italian children's literature (including iconography) during the same period(s) would provide further support for the study.<sup>5</sup>

There are also numerous subtle and intensely complex facets of Kipling's private relationship with India as Child, as Adult and as Adult remembering his Child Self that should be taken on board when reading his texts. In the process of analysing the various changes wrought upon the text through translation, I have limited myself to interpreting what I believe are the main features that have been 'manipulated' in the light of the target reader's rapport with India as a country, 'India' as a concept and colonial attitudes generally.

## 2. The Text and the Illustrations

It is commonly accepted in the mainstream literature of the early days of children's literature studies as well as in more recent studies, that the understanding of childhood and the function of children's literature have changed drastically since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century (Zohar Shavit 1980/1986, Jaqueline Rose 1984, Peter Hunt 1991, Riitta Oittinen 1993/2000, Gillian Lathey 2010, Hugh Cunningham 2006, Emer O'Sullivan 2005). *The Jungle Books*, through a wide range of textual, pictorial and filmic representations, have also undergone deep changes in status and function along with profound changes in the view of the child, childhood and children's literature during the course of this past century. Children's literature

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<sup>5</sup> For reasons of space it has been necessary to present my data here very concisely, sacrificing a full description of all the examples analysed for omissions, additions, lexis, syntax, various aspects governing register, the 'datedness' of the language, and other features of translation changes.



filled a double, or even multiple function in Victorian society but it had a primarily pedagogical function as a tool for socialization and the instruction of Victorian morality and values. Some of the classical children's literature canons were, however, what Shavit calls 'ambivalent texts' (Shavit 1980), by which she means they were read by both adults and children. This particular form of 'cross-over' or ambivalence produces an internal dynamics, for example it may lead to paradoxes of irony and intertextuality. *Alice in Wonderland* is emblematic of this category, a text which in many ways was a precursor to modern Western children's literature in its departure from pure didacticism and its invitation to imagination and fantasy, at the same time maintaining and subverting the paradigms of Victorian cultural life, both in text and illustration. Illustrations in early mainstream children's literature were often intended more as a visual repetition of the text, or a simple addendum (as in the early editions of *The Jungle Books*), whilst in the subsequent generations of illustrations we see a tendency to enter into a 'dialogic relationship', in Oittinen's words, with the text (Oittinen 1993, 2000).

Like the text itself, given that illustrations are commissioned and approved by the publisher, they reflect the culture-based and market-based variables that inform the general editorial policies. It is plausible to assume, thus, that the fact that Italy annually hosts the world's largest children's book fair encourages publishers to invest in this market. One of the motivations for, and possible at the same time a spin-off of, this international cultural event is the importance given to illustrations and the amount of money spent on them by the industry. For example, at the Bologna book fair the ceremony for the award to the best illustrator of the year is an event that draws authors, illustrators, editors, journalists and book-sellers from all over the world. Many of the high-quality and high-investment illustrations produced for contemporary children's literature are inventive, creative, challenging and abstract, creating a complex dialogic relationship with the text and with the reader.

Illustrations have an extraordinary capacity to reflect contemporary trends and world-views because of the facility with which they can be included in the printed volume without altering the text and copyright requirements of the translation. Contemporary abridged versions of *The Jungle Books* present totally different values, in both text and illustrations, than the original editions, favouring the more playful and child-centred aspects of our day (e.g. anthropomorphism, friendship, 'cute-ness'). In current editions of *The Jungle Books*, in part because of the advent of the picture book and a category of books for very young readers due also to the decreasing expense of books and their general accessibility, Mowgli's iconographic age gradually decreases. Because of the shift in the readership group, the

illustrations have increasingly gained importance but have also become more bland. In contrast to Stuart Tresilian's illustrations of the fierce adolescent (see Fig. 1.), Mowgli in eternal combat with his tiger-opponent whom the reader can internalize as a role model to emulate<sup>6</sup>, the cute baby/child hero is now more popular, not least because of the profound impact of the globally successful Disney version. The cute, baby 'hero' rather than the older child (of Tresilian's illustrations) is thus symptomatic of the advent of a new modern genre – the illustrated book for young children, allowing the young reader to identify with and internalize a child his/her own age. This is another example of how, rather than being an adjunct to the text, modern picture books for young children will usually form an intrinsic part of the overall reading experience, to be 'performed' by reading aloud to the child as s/he looks at the pictures in a polyphonic interaction between two semiotic systems (see Oittinen 1993). These highly child-oriented editions will often tend towards 'domestication' (although this is not a hard and fast rule and will also change significantly from case to case and evolve over time reflecting current editorial, market and general cultural policies), for example by portraying texts in a bland, pan-national format. Indeed, as O'Sullivan notes, through the globalization and packaging of texts, differences are often removed in the interests of uniformity and distribution (O'Sullivan 2005). Following these and other changes in the book industry, *The Jungle Books'* text-image relationship, and thus its subtext, has changed radically from 1904 to the present day. When new translations of illustrated books are published, the illustrations reflect these general changes, showing how translations can be adapted to a new age and a new readership and age-group without necessarily changing a single word, simply by adding new illustrations and changing the text-image dialogics.

## 2.1 Kipling, Mowgli and India: The author's tormented nostalgia for his childhood India

Along with *Kim*, *The Jungle Books* best represent the complex relationship of the cultural and psychological construction of the author's Child Self inextricably embodied in these stories and in the painful nostalgia for India. Kipling's remembrance through his writings on India could be seen as a retreat to that primordial childhood safety after the years of trauma of cultural exile in the "House of Desolation", which was how he described his relatives' home in England, where he was sent at age 6; his years there are described as his "years of Hell" (versus the "light and colour and golden and purple fruit" of India (Sullivan, 1993:43). (Kipling returned to Lahore at 16). Indeed, few Kipling critics fail to mention the connection

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<sup>6</sup> Stuart Tresilian's overtly imperialist illustrations from the 1930's are no longer reproduced in modern editions of *The Jungle Books* in the English speaking world or indeed in Italian translations.

between his work and his childhood. Sullivan speaks of his obsession with his original lost home (ibid 43): “if the metaphors that shape and give meaning to Kipling’s life and art are to be traced to his memory of earliest childhood – and the form of the narrative tends to privilege that time over later years – then his memory of that time must contain the filters through which the mind organizes its disturbances.” (ibid 37).

The following quote from Salman Rushdie is particularly telling of Kipling’s complex relationship with India and with his modern readership:

The early Kipling is a writer with a storm inside him, and he creates a mirror-storm of contradictory responses in the reader, particularly, I think, if the reader is Indian. I have never been able to read Kipling calmly. Anger and delight are incompatible emotions, yet these early stories do indeed have the power simultaneously to infuriate and to entrance (Rushdie, 1981:74).

Given Kipling’s political views and his stature and reputation as *the* advocate of Empire Building in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and given much of his Empire literature (in particular the text and reputation of the infamous “White Man’s Burden”), one cannot but note that the overtly colonialist or racialist rhetoric is less prominent in *The Jungle Book* and *Kim* than what we find in much of his other work. The reason for this lack could be that *The Jungle Books*, like *Kim*, were products of nostalgia (the impact of which can be very profound indeed, as so many scholars of children’s literature have indicated) and products of his notorious “Daemon”. Many scholars have read Kipling’s India in a Conradian interpretation as the Dark, dangerous Other of chaos and Death, darkness and nightmares. Kipling’s complex and ambivalent colonial ideology in *The Jungle Books* should not be sought in direct or oblique racist references (such as in the short story “In the Rukh”), but in other aspects of narrative strategies.<sup>7</sup>

## 2.2 Mowgli’s Role in the Reconstruction of Childhood, India and colonialism: Mowgli’s Double-self and the Evolutionary Transition from Jungle to Village/City

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<sup>7</sup>“In the Rukh”, which was published in 1893 and describes Mowgli as an adult, is often read as an “anticipation of Mowgli” rather than the final evolution of the Mowgli character as an adult. The short story portrays Mowgli as a young adult employed by the English game warden Gisborne and on the threshold of marriage and forming a family; Mowgli is so perfectly in tune with Nature and the Forest that Gisborne believes him to be a supernatural figure. Here the colonial overtones are very strong indeed. Comparing “In the Rukh” to the non-Mowgli short story “The Miracle of Purun Bhagat” in *The Jungle Book I*, a tribute to the gentle stoic, generous, self-effacing, spiritual and hard-working Indian, it is hard to believe that the same person wrote both texts (published in the same Penguin edition) in roughly the same period of his life.

In view of Kipling's ideology as well as his tormented relationship with childhood/India, must be read in the subtext of the Mowgli stories rather than in overt references. What we might call 'the colonial gaze' can be discerned in a meta-reading of Mowgli's role, rather than in direct narrative strategies, and the colonial aspects of the text lie mainly in the relationship between the three parties (Kipling, India, Mowgli). At the heart of this interpretation we find Mowgli's development from child to man and from 'animal' to human. Both identities/Selves are embedded in that fluid, amorphous in-between borderline space of change and transition, much like Kim's hybrid Indian-British identity. It is these two aspects to Mowgli's persona and to his identity that create the tension and the colonial subtext underpinning *The Jungle Books*.

In early childhood Mowgli is presented as the 'animal Mowgli', his membership in the Jungle and particularly in the wolf-pack of supreme importance to his identity formation and understanding of himself. There are indeed two Mowglis, Mowgli as Animal, citizen of the Jungle, and Mowgli as Man, future citizen of the world of the villagers and of the world of the British, and this is troubling, perplexing and painful for him. The wolf-child Mowgli is a 'borderline' Man. This in-between-ness is for him as tortuous and painful as Kim's in-between ethnicity is for him. Mowgli's development in the first chapter is a micro-*Bildungsroman*, as he grows and moves from the safety of Mother Wolf's body to becoming a full member of the Wolf Pack, a member of the jungle animals, through a laborious psychological and emotional negotiating process. Through a deeply antagonistic and challenging relationship with Shere Khan (as a test to his manhood, a rite of passage), he achieves – or is attributed with – a position of supreme authority among the animals, before his ultimate and only partly self-imposed expulsion from the Jungle. Mowgli's expulsion from the Edenic Jungle is the inevitable result of growing up (just as Wendy does, leaving Peter Pan behind), just as Kipling's expulsion from India was an inevitable prelude to adulthood and the professional status he was later to enjoy. This displacement process takes Mowgli through a highly antagonistic relationship with humans to again a tortuous identification with those same humans.

Mowgli, the jungle child and later adolescent, is scathing of Man, as he is scathing of what he must one day inevitably become. "I am ashamed of my brethren", he says repeatedly (*The Jungle Book*: 197). As the stories evolve, his membership status moves from citizen of the Jungle to citizen of the village, to Mowgli as Man. It is this juxtaposition and gradual merging of his two selves that create the tension within the child-adolescent and that make the book into a piercingly poignant *Bildungsroman*.

The evolution from Animal to Man is tortuous and slow and the change in membership status means Mowgli must abandon the identification – and therefore friendship – with the animals to a position of rule and superiority over those same animals, an allegory of the colonial relationship between Britain and the colonies, in particular India, in accordance with Kipling’s own well-documented imperialist views. Growing up, becoming adult and/or becoming British entails a changing racial-cultural form for both Mowgli and Kipling. Mowgli, the loyal but independent hero-explorer is superior to all and commands all, except the British. It is in the subtext of the Mowgli stories in the relationship between the three parties, Mowgli, the Animals/Jungle and the Villagers/Adults, we find thus the most explicit references to Kipling’s ideology (see Table 1).

### 2.2.1 Interpersonal relationships in the Jungle

To Mowgli’s relationship with each animal there is a particular value, sentiment or bond attached, and this emerges very clearly in the majority of the illustrations, both in the English and translated versions. The primary bond is with the wolf-pack, in particular Mowgli’s mother – Mother Wolf and the pack leader Akela. Wolf values are brotherhood/fraternity (through friendship and generosity to Mowgli), group/kin solidarity, respect for the Law, Freedom and individuality, self-sufficiency, honour and sincerity. Bagheera and Baloo are Mowgli’s trusted and respected mentors – tutoring Mowgli in the Law of the Jungle – whilst Baloo and Mowgli also have a special relationship as friends. Bagheera is frequently portrayed in a sort of protective, maternal/paternal attitude, offering shelter and/or support with his body. In contemporary abridged versions the friendship with Baloo and Bagheera are given a very high degree of prominence. Inherent in the ‘colonial gaze’ is Mowgli’s superiority over the animals, including (especially) Shere Khan<sup>8</sup>. This might be related to a general superiority. Although Mowgli occupies both an in-between, un-finished space, at the same time this position is a space above and far superior to both jungle and village dwellers. The British, mentioned only in asides, occupy a space apart from the rest, distanced and superior (if not as explicitly superior as Mowgli).

### 2.2.2 Mowgli’s Jungle as the Protected Territory of Childhood

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<sup>8</sup> (note the core psychological function of conquering fear, represented by animals and monsters, in many texts for children, not least fairy and folk tales, but also modern works like *Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak.)

Mowgli's reluctance to grow up and leave the jungle, the animal reign, the Id, finds resonance in one of the most potent themes in children's literature: childhood idyllically circumscribed in a closed territorial space, an idealized, non-localized territory (Lewis Carroll's underworld, John Barrie's Never Never Land, Kenneth Grahame's river Isis, Kingsley's water, Arthur Milne's 100-acre wood, Tove Jansson's Moomintroll's secret village, Astrid Lindgren's other-worlds or indeed Pippi Longstocking's house, C. S. Lewis's Narnia, or Salman Rushdie's Land of Gup and Chup). (This is not true, incidentally of the non-Mowgli stories, both "Purun Bhagat" and "In the Rukh" are more geographically anchored and localized.) There are also mythological traits in Mowgli (Mowgli as Pan) that evoke a primordial childhood of all humanity.

Sullivan reads Kipling's "distance of the frames" in a slightly different light, as an orientalisng displacement which represents ideological dualisms where both the unconscious and the colonized landscape of India become

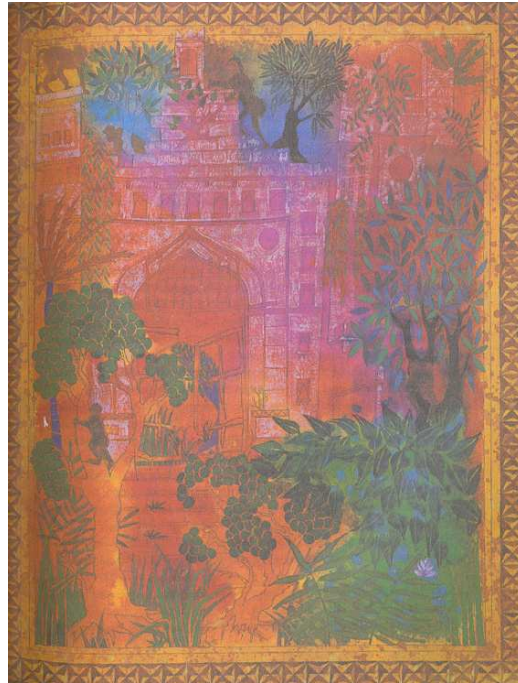
less a place than a *topos*, a set of references, a congeries of characteristics whose origins, because infantile and unclear, suggest a space that needs restructuring and domination. That displacement keeps working/daytime life and England clean, and Orientalizes dirt and chaos onto India: "Now this is the road the White men tread / When they go to clean a land" (A Song of White Men)." (Sullivan, 1993: 37).

This argument is very convincing for much of Kipling's work where metaphors of dirt and darkness coincide with lack of civilization. Yet I feel that for the Mowgli stories it does not necessarily hold true. On the contrary, the Jungle is presented partly as a utopic paradise in which a self-governing Law (which Kipling revered) reigns effectively and peacefully. Like the other lands of childhood mentioned above, Mowgli's Jungle is clearly a *topos* with – unlike *Kim* where Kipling excels as ethnographer – little territorial distinction (except the names). The Jungle is suspended in space before the connection is made with the village; there is for example little sense of heat or other sensory experiences. The space *outside* the jungle – the village and the colonial city Khanipur – is more territorially anchored.

It is interesting to note that in some of the contemporary English editions (Pavilion 1997 illustrated by Gregory Alexander) the Jungle has become increasingly territorialized, 'Indianized' and 'foreignized' (at times more like tropical Africa than India) downplaying the universality and the abstract element in favour of the text's Indianness; it could thus be seen as a modern tribute to Kipling's Indian Self or an acknowledgement of the significance of

India and Indianness in this canonical text, in line with the parameters of current ('post-colonial') literary criticism and literary representations.

Fig. 1. Pavilion. The Indian Jungle (English text)



### 2.2.3 Jungle Values

The idealized social model with inbuilt checks and balances that is represented by the Jungle privileges the strong lone hero and values such as stoicism, perseverance, tenacity, self-sufficiency, loyalty, obedience to the rules, fierce individualism, a robust structure and inflexible social norms and hierarchies. The adulation of the intrepid Victorian explorer/hero is one of the manifestations of this system, as is the authoritarian Victorian colonial leader. It is not a coincidence that Baden-Powell chose Kipling's Wolf as the mascot for his scouts pack (with Kipling's permission) or that the Wolf, Mowgli's nearest kin in his Jungle-consciousness, embodies the highest of all the Jungle values. It is not by chance either that *The Jungle Books*' hunting theme was one of the favourite Empire sports. And it is not by accident that "In the Rukh" starts with a tiger kill, and that the Law of the Jungle is so closely tied to the law and skills of hunting and killing for food. Mowgli's values and skills are also those of the fearless, intrepid Victorian explorer as well of the authoritarian Victorian colonial leader. Mowgli and the jungle animals' disdain for magic and superstition is also very much a reflection and advocacy of Victorian philosophical, biological and sociological trends, not least Darwinism. In this triadic representation of the villagers, the Jungle animals and

Mowgli, we see how their identities, roles and characters diverge along a central axis with the animals in between the child Mowgli and his future, and the Jungle as the space/territory to be understood and left behind rather than appropriated and conquered.



Table 1. Schematic representation of relationship between Mowgli's worlds (References from Penguin edition)

<b>MOWGLI</b>	<b>ANIMALS. JUNGLE RESIDENTS</b>	<b>MAN-VILLAGERS</b>
	<b>Identity</b>	
Identifies territorially and character-wise with Jungle animals, becomes superior (pp.350, 352). From forest tracker to Man – guide to the in-between liminal space of jungle-forest, Indian-British, Man-animal	Unchanging	Unchanging
	<b>Social structure</b>	
Above structure as leader of Animals. Accepts Jungle Law, resistant to accept human structure	Rigid structure but effective; constant endorsement - “Keep the Jungle Law”	Rigid structure but open to manipulation; doesn't work
Identity as part of the group, especially the Wolf Pack; but also individual and superior	Both group and individual identity	Group cohesion; structure-group-conformism rather than loyalty
	<b>Values</b>	
Mowgli accepts the Jungle Law, but must be taught it; subsequently he becomes a figure of authority within that same Jungle Law	The Jungle Law: law, order, structure, rules, strict compliance; hierarchy in the group	Social norms and conventions that are manipulated; group hierarchies
Free, unfettered except by bonds of friendship, loyalty and respect	Freedom. Structure does not make unfree	Unfree; strong group affiliation. Social norms maintained and enacted through control of superstition/ magic/jadoo
Silence	Silence (except the monkeys who, significantly, occupy a negatively connotated in-between space)	Chatter (the villagers cannot 'read' the silence of the animals, even the best trackers)
Perseverance, tenacity, stoicism (also revenge and retaliation, pg.184); Loyalty, independence, freedom (pg.64), courage	Perseverance, tenacity, stoicism. Loyalty and generosity but also revenge (Hathi). Respect and care for weak. Wolves embody the highest values	Lack of these. Violent attack (on Mowgli and Messua); cowardice and manipulation of the weak

Kill for food	Kill for food	Kill for sport
Realism/Science. Scathing of magic (pp.60-61)	Realism/Science; Religion (Hindu) – bull as Ram (pg.65)	Magic-jadoo, superstition <sup>9</sup>
	<b>Emotions</b>	
Fear of Tabaqui, not the Tiger; fearful respect for the elephant	Fear of the Tiger, but strong resistance	Fear of the Tiger, general fear
	<b>Character</b>	
Brave, spirited, feisty, self-confident (pg.53)	Brave, independent-minded	Petty, weak
	<b>Role</b>	
Leader of the animals, authoritarian, Individualist, non-conformist (no caste pg.52) – in-between space	Subservient to Mowgli and accepting of his authority	

The Indians are portrayed through a set of disparaging stereotypes (although, as mentioned, the story of “The Miracle of Purun Bhagat” is a tribute to India, Indians and the Hindu religion, so it should not be read as an anti-Indian manifesto). The representation of space outside the jungle is divided between villagers and British. The British, although only marginally present, are clearly superior. Their chief merit, and no small one, seems to be the ability to dispense justice and not to give credence to superstition, versus the villagers’ arbitrary meting out of justice.

### 3. Text and Illustrations in Translations.

#### 3.1.1 Child Image and Didactic Function

As Oittinen (e.g. 1993) has noted, writers, translators and publishers cannot escape their own ideologies. This regards political-imperial attitudes as well as each actor’s unique – and each actor’s collectivized – child image. In the present corpus, the target-culture child image is perceived most clearly and tangibly in the illustrations in the translated volumes, but it is also evident in the attitude towards the translated texts, not least in the translations aimed at adolescents where the text is seen as an educational opportunity and channel, which was also a prime concern for the readers and authors in the period in which *The Jungle Books* was written.

<sup>9</sup> Kipling was very wary of spiritualism which apparently his sister dabbled in and which seems to have affected her negatively (Sullivan 1993: 47; see also Kipling 1990. 232).

After decades of research into children's literature, it is stating the obvious to say that in the process of writing – and rewriting – texts for young children the tendency has been and is that of producing a more cognitively and stylistically simplified product than that aimed at an adult market, equally important being to not offend or challenge the sensibilities of very young readers (see for example Hunt 1991). This applies not only to the text but also to the illustrations. As for the text, the semiotic and pedagogical function of illustrations has changed through the years, along with profound changes in the image of the child and childhood, dictated by socio-economic, cultural, ideological and technological developments in society (not least economic development and the creation of a platform for the existence of an independent childhood also for the socio-economically 'lower-' and 'lower middle' classes). The 'dialogic relationship' in Oittinen's terms, between text and illustration has also changed as a response to numerous general changes in the polysystem. From a more simple function of encoding the contents of the text, illustrations can also complement the dynamics of the text by adding or suggesting different interpretations, endings, etc. Again, these interpretations are a response to changing times, norms, values and attitudes towards children, towards literature and towards art (indeed even what *constitutes* children's literature). Not least, the level of didacticism expected in a book for children has changed over the last century along with developments in the psychological and pedagogical sciences and other cultural shifts.

The early illustrations of the English version of *The Jungle Books* seem to be a visual didactic tool accompanying the written pages by 'staging' crucial moments of the stories and adding extra information, clearly encoding and promoting both the cultural issues of the time and the metaphorical characters of the jungle. By way of example, it might be interesting to look at how Tresilian's celebrated colour illustrations of the 1933 English edition (not Tresilian's equally well-known black and white sketches which are of a very different nature) seem to promote the Victorian values that are so prominent in the text. The scenes are organised around a central main person or group of main characters where the Mowgli character's physical attitude explicitly expresses his inner state of mind and assert, visually, three significant themes:

- The main character, Mowgli, is human, and those animals that are near him, in his physical domain, are more important than the others.
- Mowgli is generally portrayed as a leader, showing the way or commanding the animals with an outstretched arm, standing erect over the supine animals. Mowgli,

being a man, is superior to the other animals. There is a strong interpersonal dynamic relationship here which is crucial to Kipling's subtext: the animal characters demand the readers' attention as they do with Mowgli when teaching him the Law of the Jungle and the wise rules of its creatures. In this case, Mowgli becomes a sort of 'projection' of the young reader in the didactic jungle environment.

- The animal characters are frequently depicted as directing their gaze towards the viewer whereas Mowgli always looks somewhere else, towards other characters or a point in the imaginary landscape evoked by the image. Thus, he shows not so much lack of involvement as superiority. One might also imagine that he is (materially and metaphorically) looking towards the land beyond childhood and adolescence, the expulsion from the Edenic jungle.

Fig. 2 MacMillan. Ill. Tresilian. Mowgli the adventurous boy-hero (cover page)



As we will see below, the Mondadori and Elle editions for adolescent readers reflect this approach in their depiction of Mowgli and the jungle characters.

As in so many countries, *The Jungle Books* became enormously popular in Italy. Today they serve not only to entertain juvenile readers but also as a means through which to teach the English literature canon. In some of the editions we also see a secondary – didactic – objective, namely that of teaching Italian children and adolescents the culture and geography of India. In section 3 I examine three categories of texts: unabridged versions with no illustrations for young adults and adolescents, unabridged illustrated versions for adolescents

and illustrated versions for young children with both abridged and non-abridged texts. I will be focussing primarily on the second and third categories, but primarily on the last which for obvious reasons contains the most significant adaptations of text and/or illustrations,

### 3.1 Unabridged and Unillustrated Versions for Adolescents and Young Adults

In this category, how can we know that the unabridged and unillustrated editions are intended for a juvenile readership, apart from the fact that they were catalogued in the children's section? The clearest indications are the illustrations and layout of the cover page and if and when there are explicit references to the age-group (for example the Pozzo Galeazzi edition) or a series of books for children: (I Delfini, Batello a Vapore, Junior Classici). On the cover page of the Arduini translation, for example, we find small-size highly detailed 'anthropological' illustrations at the top of the page.

Two canonical translations by Pittola 1903<sup>10</sup> and Pozzo Galeazzi 1950-1951 have been reprinted regularly until recent years in this category. These were followed by Catani 1971, Conetti 1993 and Fatica 1998. These translations are 'close' translations', as might be expected.<sup>11</sup> Overt adaptations, or 'manipulations', are minimal although certain stylistic adaptations have been incorporated in this category (noted in Rudvin forthcoming):

- removal of the marked definite article that Kipling uses for animal categories to give them a special status and place in his micro-cosmos and to elevate their function to a symbolic level;
- slight domestication of overtly cultural-specific elements such as the ubiquitous Hindi-Urdu exclamation *arré!* (*Ahi! Ahi!* in Conetti's translation);
- standardization of the marked social deixis ("thou"), the archaic-sounding syntax and lexis and social distancing.

This category is less interesting for the present analysis because of the lack of illustrations and the low degree of translational manoeuvre in the text, and we will not be returning to this category in the present analysis. Although these editions are packaged and marketed for children/adolescents/young adults, a fact which emerges from the illustrations and layout of

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<sup>10</sup> The Milanese publishing house Mursia had the first exclusive copyright to the translation of *The Jungle Books I and II*.

<sup>11</sup> In Rudvin 2006 and Rudvin-Orlati 2006 I argue that translators' strategies can be affected by the reputation and status of the original author. In the case of highly prestigious authors, such as Kipling, the translator might be reluctant to introduce even minor changes to the text and attempt to produce a translation that is as close as possible to the original.

the cover page, the texts are those used for ‘adult’ texts. This is also indicative of the text’s ‘cross-over’ or ‘ambiguous’ nature, not unlike Lewis Carroll’s *Alice in Wonderland*.

### 3.2. Unabridged Illustrated Translations for Adolescents and Young Adults

Many of the translations in this group were clearly aimed at an adolescent readership containing footnotes and educational illustrations and using the canonical translations already mentioned. The significance of the didactic function is prominent. For example, the 1995 Rizzoli edition using Pozzo Galeazzi’s translation seems to be aimed at both an adult and juvenile readership; it includes detailed footnotes by a respected Indic scholar describing various aspects of Indian culture, history and language. Giorgio Scarato and Franco Spaliviero’s illustrations in the 1987 Mondadori edition translated by Gianni Padoani *I Libri della Giungla*, with a short preface by Masolino d’Amico. The appendix contains a post face by the translator and with a collection of the jungle songs/verses and Jungle Laws, and includes the non-Mowgli stories. The blurb at the back of the book makes reference to the meta-narrative aspects of the book – its role in Baden-Powell’s Scout movement and its educational function – and suggests an abstract interpretation of the jungle as the world at large and the animals as human beings “with their defects and virtues”; it also emphasizes the adventure story, nature, animals and ‘exoticism’.

One of the most interesting things about this text is how the translator chooses to expand on the text and is constantly explaining what is happening and what Mowgli is thinking and doing. Thus not only does he attribute actions and qualities to the reader but he also traces a sort of narrative temporal path through chapters and paragraphs which restricts, in a certain way, the reader’s freedom. As Hunt says, this form of clarifying explanation is a typical feature of children’s literature, and also indicative of the text’s didactic function. It also includes the reader more explicitly through an overt narrator function in the narrative frame. Indeed, the tendency to explain and clarify can also be found at the structural level between chapters (for example in the Padoan translation “Addesso dobbiamo tornare al primo racconto”, “now we go back to chapter one”, Padoan pg.59) to facilitate reading for the child and also creating a stronger connection between author/translator and reader.

In this category we also find a combination of the pedagogical function alongside the adventure story. As noted in Rudvin (forthcoming), translators’ prefaces/postscripts demonstrate the translators’ own love for nature and animals, possibly reflecting their own memory of childhood. The combination of adventure story and love for nature recalls the Victorian tradition of the adventurous boy-hero (e.g. Rider Haggard) and is reflected in the

Law of the Jungle which privileges values such as loyalty, courage and friendship. However, as argued previously in Rudvin 2006 (in Rudvin forthcoming, see note 1), the translators seem to have sacrificed Kipling's metaphorical treatment of nature.

I will be looking in detail at two editions in the following paragraphs, the Elle and the Mondadori editions. An Italian translation by Piero Pieroni (Edizione E. Elle) from 1991 that was illustrated by the French illustrator Philippe Mignon, with a preface by Roberto Denti, is a good example of the abovementioned pedagogical function<sup>12</sup>.

This edition is clearly aimed at a (pre-)adolescent readership, signalled by the illustrations but also by the questions and discussions on key issues (culture, history, nature) in an appendix that is clearly meant for use in a school setting. The black and white Doré-like sketches (pp.1, pg.34, pg.39) are realistic, educational, with minute details of anatomy and landscape; they portray far more realistically and sophisticatedly the complex nuances in the text and subtext than most of the other illustrations examined. The high degree of pictorial detail, the accurately rendered backgrounds, the play of light and shade, makes Mowgli look like a *real* human, the animals like *real* animals expressing *real* emotions and relationships; they dispense entirely with symbolism and fantasy. Realism is utilized for this age group as a means of instruction. Although the educational aspect comes across very strongly in the editions for this age-group, we also see a more playful function aimed at pre-adolescents, clearly reflecting the modern values of children/ adolescents having the right to exercise the freedom of play from an early age.

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<sup>12</sup> Several of the most popular Italian editions use French illustrators; I am working on the assumption that they have been chosen by the Italian editors to represent what they think is appropriate to the Italian readership. Illustrations travel internationally in a way that texts clearly cannot, but they are still chosen by the national publishing 'decision-makers' to reflect current trends and norms in the national system.

Fig. 3 Elle publications. Mowgli, leader of the Wolf pack (tr. Pieroni, ill. Mignon/ Galeron; Edizioni E Elle). Pg. 39



### 3.2.1 Interpersonal relationships

In this category we see Mowgli interacting with the animals primarily through posture, body-directionality and gaze, showing a clear superiority, although he is also friendly and respectful. (These illustrations quite clearly *strengthen* the maturation-*Bildungsroman* aspect.) Mowgli's attitude changes and becomes progressively more 'master-like' as the story-line progresses. On pg. 39 of the Elle edition (Fig. 3) we see Mowgli challenging Shere Khan fearlessly. Furthermore, Mowgli is actually portrayed as an Indian – indeed almost as an aboriginal – rather than the standard Caucasian; the animals that surround him also frequently take human attitudes (e.g. pg.67 where monkeys are portrayed in a threatening position around the lost, abandoned temple in the jungle, like human beings defending their house).

### 3.2.2 Topos

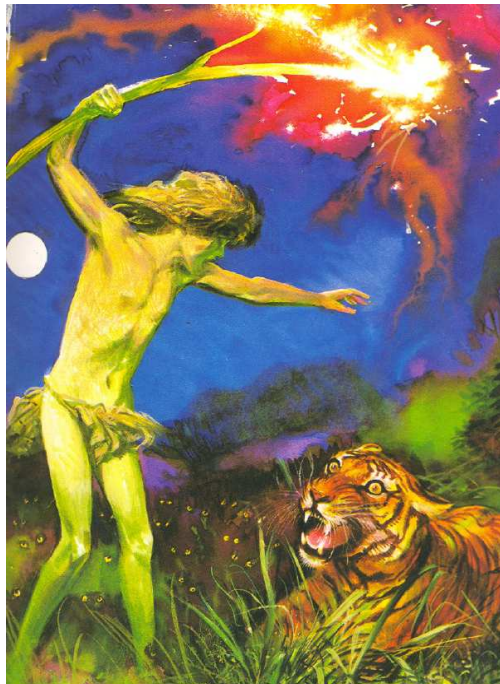
In many of the translation prefaces for this category we read observations to the effect that 'I loved to read *The Jungle Books* as a child because I loved the animals' and in an editor's preface in the Elle edition Roberto Denti also privileges the 'young adult' themes of nature and animals, and discusses his own great love for animals and the values of the animal world



and nature (endurance, perseverance, etc.). In this preface, the much-favoured Victorian motif of the Wolf-child is mentioned, but India is not. India is therefore rendered as a sort of fictional stage for a didactic, metaphorical representation, rather than a real country. Mowgli's story seems to be set in the Indian jungle only because setting it in a European forest would have been less adventurous and believable, or less 'exotic'. The Italian translation with its French illustrations, therefore, shows a form of cultural *orientalism* which is maybe stronger than that which can be traced in the original: Kipling's India becomes a setting for educational stories created for Western children and for the love of adventure and nature. The Mondadori edition illustrated by Scarato and Spaliviero, on the other hand, gives more emphasis to the Indian topos.

Fig. 4 Mondadori. Mowgli threatening Shere Khan (Padoan, 1987; ill. Scarato/ Spaliviero).

Pg. 17



The illustrations in the Mondadori edition have a mainly indexical, direct, function: they are meant to visualise moments of action and to visually support the plot and provide an atmosphere of intense suspense and danger. Mowgli's unafraid confrontations with the tiger support the representation of him as virile and courageous, the lone Victorian hero, capturing the 'boys' adventure book' spirit also suggested in Padoan's preface (indeed it is almost an

illustrated nature-book). They tend towards realism and privilege the expression of fear and tense moments also through the use of intense, vivid colours; the realism is carefully constructed and fear and activity/tension evoked in the most dramatic scenes (e.g. where Shere Khan is trapped and killed by Mowgli and the bulls, pg.65). The *topos* is very Indian but Mowgli is white.

Another ‘school edition’ translated by Giovanni Arduino (Piemme) uses the French illustrator Christian Broutin and includes copious information in the margin on nature, animals (especially wolves), and Indian geography, religion and history. Much of the educational function of this version is realised through the illustrations – sketches, watercolours and photographs which, rather than simply accompanying visually the text, try to depict and teach something about India, to present its forms, its environments, its colours to schoolchildren. Again, the function of the illustrations seems to be significantly, if not exclusively, didactic.

The 1951 Carroccio edition of the second *Jungle Book* uses a conservative, close translation by “prof. Cremonte”, but does not give the name of the illustrator. The illustrations again show Mowgli as an older strong, vigorous, hunter and the epitome of the jungle-dweller (more in line with the colonial “In the Rukh” story); here, Mowgli is almost a super-hero, not dissimilar to Tresilian’s colonial-Victorian reading.

Fig. 5 Carroccio. “All the animals followed Mowgli who silently crossed the jungle..., ” Pg. 50



### 3.3 Illustrated and Abridged Translations for Young Children

This category contains a variety of illustrated texts that have been abridged to various degrees to suit the prevailing culture's expectations of the cognitive and social abilities and sensitivities of this readership group, responding to the general expectations of texts for young children and reflecting the pedagogical and didactic culture of the country where the books are translated. Generally speaking, the abridged Italian versions for young children involve simplification of language and mitigation of content (cognitively or emotionally difficult, provocative or conflictual elements). However, we also find some of the early canonical translations from the first (adult) category with high-quality colour illustrations meant for young children – thereby combining cognitively challenging texts with illustrations aimed at a very young age group.

#### 3.3.1 Adaptations at the Level of Language

At the level of language, we see the 'typical' children's literature language, mentioned above. The simplification of both register and lexis is achieved by using shorter sentences, simpler unmarked syntax, little hypotaxis, a narrow range of grammatical and lexical patterns, standard set phrases, little rhyme, little ellipsis and little metaphor, current rather than the dated language (the 'Thee' and 'ye' of original are lost), standard set phrases rather than idiosyncratic and original language use, and closed/finalized speech patterns. Stylistic simplification involves a standardization of the marked formal, even 'ceremonial', register of the original text.

Another typical adjustment of editions for small children is 'clarification': the translator explains what lies between the lines and may be misunderstood, especially the morally didactic elements of rules, laws and the behaviour of the jungle and its animals. The long explanations of the Jungle Law and the attributes of the animals, essential to *The Jungle Books*' narrative style and characterising the original version with a specific half-orientalist, half fantastic tone, have however been drastically shortened, presumably deemed to be tedious and redundant. These adaptations are also based on the belief that children are unable to capture covert meaning, implicit signification, irony, subtexts, etc. A higher degree of the narrator's visibility, 'speaking and thinking for the child', also emerges. (In what O'Sullivan calls the 'translated narrator's voice', the translator's adaptations for this age group can be identified through the cultural explanations in a general domestication strategy in the corpus. See Rudvin forthcoming).

### 3.3.2 Adaptations at the Level of Content

In *The Jungle Books* we find a range of adaptations that fall into both the ‘simplification’ category to adapt to the readers’ cognitive level and concentration span category and the ‘child suitability/appropriateness’ category, as well as a number of features that seem to be specific to this text. To adapt the text to the cognitive level of children, irony also seems to be completely absent. Simplifying strategies at the level of content include the (full or part) removal of Mowgli’s mental world of thoughts and attitudes (for example his scathing attitude towards the villagers and the monkeys) and practical details about geography or logistics that seem not to be essential to the main plot (as noted in Rudvin forthcoming). For example, in the Lito edition for very young children translated by Maria Paola de Benedetti and illustrated by the French illustrator Valérie Michault, much of the text has been jettisoned, either by removing it or summarizing it. Such details are important, however, to set the mood for and provide adequate information to fully explain the workings of the Law of the Jungle.

Cultural differences are also homogenised, again for purposes of simplification. Hindi/Urdu words (except for names) are largely domesticated in these editions, sacrificing some of the Indian-ness of these texts, and the nostalgic significance they probably had for the author. In the next section I will be focussing on the heavily abridged (“reduced” in Italian) 1996 Bompiani edition translated by Beatrice Masini and illustrated by Franca Trabacchi. This edition includes a one-page preface about Kipling for children, presumably written by the translator, where she focuses on Kipling’s love for India and his unhappiness at being sent away to England, away from India, as a young child. It is a slim paperback of 126 pages with big print indicating the age of the suggested readership: “from 8 years”. We find in this edition a general domestication in culture with very few Urdu words (*diwane* – rabies madness and *Gidur log*, pg.8), except the names and the words. Masini’s is quite a close translation, and has a more lively and varied lexis than some of the others, such as the Lito edition. Here too however, the translator accepts the current norm of children’s literature in the target text and produces shorter sentences, simpler syntax. For example, she never uses inverted or archaic, dated or slightly anomalous language which is so evocative in the source text, almost creating an internal jungle diglossia: e.g. “Good luck go with you, O Chief...” (pg.35) becomes “Good luck to you, Chief of the Wolves” (pg.7); Tabaqui the jackal’s “All thanks for this good meal’, he said, licking his lips” (pg.36) in which resides a hint of menace as well as irony is jettisoned. “Now get hence” becomes “Ora vattene”, “now leave..” (pg.18). (“thee” and “ye” are regularly modernized as in the other texts). Shere Khan’s menacing “Ye

choose and ye do not choose! What talk is this of choosing?” where his authority is first threatened becomes “Volere? Voi volere?” “Want? You, want?” (pg.18). Generally speaking, Masini has chosen to shorten the text by removing what she presumably has categorized as the most redundant and least essential parts – e.g. geographical, territorial, logistical, pictorial detail. Although the formal register is often sacrificed she has at times tried to maintain the irony in the dialogues between the animals, sometimes emphasising it by explaining (“chiese Tabaqui, insolente”, “Tabaqui asked *insolently*” pg.10).

The feature that perhaps most captures the attention of the reader when comparing the original and the various translations in this category is the removal of violence and aggression, especially in the portrayal of Shere Khan the tiger, but also Tabaqui the jackal. Some of the basic premises of the Jungle Law have been deleted, i.e. ‘manipulated’, by downplaying both the tension between the jungle animals as well as the hierarchical structure of the jungle (authority, obedience, order). In the downplaying of fear, aggression and challenge in the interpersonal rapport between the jungle animals described above, both in text and image, the source text’s prime emphasis on the Jungle Law and the inbuilt hierarchy and law (Mowgli-Man’s superiority, not least as a psychological maturation story) are sacrificed. Also, the potentially threatening nature of Mother Wolf, Raksha (“the Demon”) has been sacrificed (e.g. Lito, Giunti) in some of the abridged texts I have examined, assigning her a role as a safe, secure, maternal haven rather than a ferocious jungle animal protecting her young – including Mowgli – and loyal and brave till the end. The very use of “Mamma” and “Papà/Babbo” for Mother and Father Wolf (in most of the texts in this category) attributes this same ‘safe’ affectionate bond in place of the slightly more distant and more parental role-collocating “Madre” “Padre”. In no way is their identity as potentially dangerous jungle beasts highlighted. This contributes to the creation of a safe, secure environment in which Mowgli becomes unthreatening, unprovocative and appealing in the way a very young child is.<sup>13</sup>

Mowgli’s relationships with the different animals, especially the wolves, Shere Khan and the Panther, are crucial to the plot of the story and to the maturation theme. Thus, not only has the downplaying of tension affected the plot at the level of the dynamics of the jungle and its inhabitants, but the adaptations (in particular, many of the translations eliminate Mowgli’s challenging of Shere Khan) have affected the storyline as a maturation story and

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<sup>13</sup> The representation of animals with human-like characteristics is a long-standing tradition in children’s literature in English for all ages (*Rupert the Bear*, *Paddington Bear*, *Peter Rabbit*, *Watership Down*, *The Wind in the Willows*, *Narnia*, *Dr. Seuss*, *The Rats of NIMH*, to name a few, as well as numerous comic books). It is only in the categories for older children that the animals embody threatening or potentially dangerous characteristics.

deflected attention from Mowgli's coming-of-age process. In Masini's translation, for example, little emphasis is accorded to the text as a maturation story. Mowgli (in the illustrations) grows older, but remains, innocent, gentle, trusting, happy, unafraid, never forceful or aggressive as we know him in the original text. The removal of a sentence between chapter 1 and chapter 2 in the target text has sacrificed Mowgli's first look at Shere Khan, again unafraid (although the accompanying illustration pictures the scene, baby Mowgli's eyes are covered by a mop of hair). As in so many of the other adaptations – both in text and image – the suspense, fear and aggression always pervading the events in the jungle, are substituted by a safe, secure environment with a cute, cuddly baby boy. In this text, as in so many others, Shere Khan becomes 'she' rather than the 'he' of the original.

There is one sentence that illustrates particularly well the Victorian values as they are portrayed in the Law of the Jungle and which is central to the plot of the story, namely "The Law of the Jungle, *which never orders anything without a reason*, forbids every beast to eat Man except when..." (pg. 37). This sentence embodies the quintessential jungle principle of 'killing only for food', rendering the jungle animals – in their hunt for prey – less savage than they would otherwise have been. The whole or partial removal of this aspect in the translated versions (e.g. Masini pg. 8) is frequent in this category and undermines a fundamental jungle value.

What is also striking in this category is the 'watering down' of Mowgli's personality: he seems to be used as a 'puppet-character' to tell stories about one of many wonderlands peopled with speaking animals.

In the original version, in both text and illustrations, the relationship of authority between Mowgli and the jungle and Mowgli and the other animals is crucial to the subtext – indeed it is the basis of the story – but in most of the illustrations I have looked at and in most of the abridged translations, it is this aspect which is sacrificed most – or rather, it is the complexity of this relationship which is most sacrificed. Mowgli the leader, superior, commanding and Mowgli the wise teacher, tends to be replaced with Mowgli the adventurous teenager, Mowgli the languid boy, Mowgli the cute toddler. In the Animal versus Man dichotomy, the animals tend to be unthreatening and amicable. The snake Kaa is at times dangerous but less so the other animals, not even the tiger (which epitomizes colonial hunting) or jackals and red dogs. In those illustrations where this theme *is* picked up through a marked iconographic portrayal of gaze, for example in the Fabbri and Bompiani texts, Mowgli's superior, challenging, engaging gaze is substituted for a more gentle, inclusive and friendly one (positively languid in the Fabbri text). Although the illustrations in both of these

works are utterly charming, the gaze loses some of its interpersonal complexity and underlying menace, and so much of the colonialist and *Bildungsroman* subtext.

Hand in hand with the educational function, I have found one translated version for very young children which combines also a more concrete pedagogical function, namely that of language-learning, resorting to this classic text from the English literature canon to learn English, complete with Italian translations and a glossary of ‘difficult words’ (in the series “Scuola di inglese junior”, edited by Giromani, Margherita).

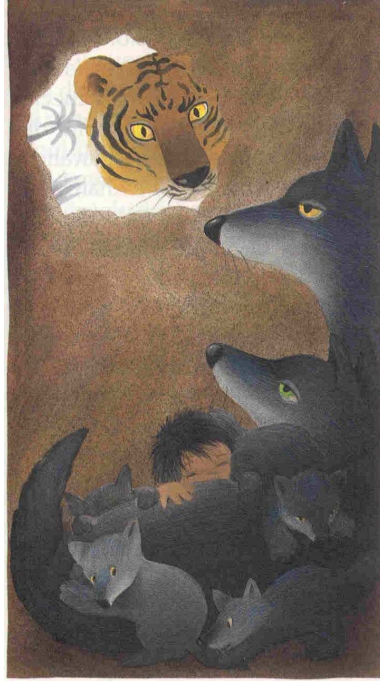
To sum up, the textual adaptations generally fall into categories typical of children’s literature, namely:

- *textual simplicity* (the removal of textually complex elements);
- the removal of *affect and negative social norms* (emotions and states of being involving conflict and tension, death, violence, threats, fear, suspense, decadence);
- ascribing *a low cognitive level to the child protagonists* (Mowgli’s sophistication of thought is lost);
- ascribing *a low cognitive level to the readers* (the removal of irony, ecc.);
- *identification of the protagonist with the largest reader-consumer group* (making Mowgli seem Western) through a *low culture-specificity* (removal of the majority of Indian words and cultural-specific elements);
- *a lack of historical specificity* (suspended in time and place).

### 3.3.3 Adaptation Through Illustrations

Fig. 6 and 7. Bompiani (tr. Masini, ill. Trabacchi)

6. Baby Mowgli with wolf pack, discovered by Shere Khan (pg.17)



Many of the traits that apply to the textual adaptations (above) apply equally to the selection of illustrations, namely:

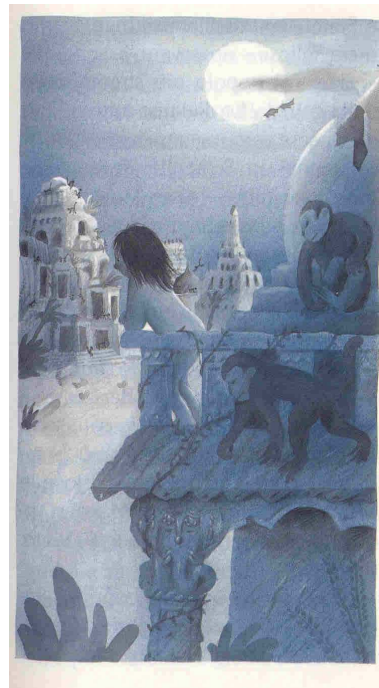
- the undermining of the danger (violence, fear, suspense) and the strict rules of the Jungle Law;
- the removal of negative affect and social norms;
- the undermining of the rigid and conflictual triadic structure represented by the relationship between Mowgli, the jungle animals and the villagers and the Jungle Law (as presented in the table);
- the mitigation of the aggression of and underlying threat from the villagers (representing both the human and adult world);
- a ‘softening’ of Mowgli’s and the animals’ personalities;
- the mitigation of cognitive challenges to the reader;
- the identification of the protagonist with the largest reader-consumer group (Western, Caucasian);
- a low culture-specificity (Indian landscape);



- a lack of historical and temporal specificity.

This list is representative, but schematic. Some editions contain elements of both highly Westernized representations of the Mowgli character and context, along with more ‘Indianized’ representations (albeit stereotypical). For example, in the same Bompiani version for young children, the topos is clearly ‘Indian’, Mowgli languorously leaning over the rails of an ancient, overgrown temple-like building ignoring or unaware of the slightly sinister monkeys lurking behind him. In the Padoan-Simon Mondadori edition, the Indian topos is realistically depicted (e.g. pg.21); the Marrucchi edition for young children evokes some degree of Indianness in the small details such as the earthenware pot and clothes.

Fig. 7. Mowgli with the monkeys (pg.53)



We see excellent examples of these adaptations in the Lito edition of the de Benedetti translation illustrated by Michault (Fig. 8): Aiming at a very young readership, it uses a highly abridged text; the illustrations depict characters with extremely simplified, puppet-like traits, using plain colours and stage-like backgrounds, thus creating a situation of

incongruency between story-line and image. The realism and drama of the subtext is therefore misunderstood and/or ignored: this process can be considered to be a part of the general ‘Disneyfication’ of the most recent editions of *The Jungle Books* for very young children. Mowgli is portrayed as a young, white child (except in the last chapter as he is about to leave the jungle and has grown older), again sacrificing much of the *Bildungsroman* aspect. The ambience is not dramatic or threatening but amiable and humorous in a cartoon-format; even the corpse of a man is humorously portrayed with its tongue sticking out (pg. 70). Mowgli is funny rather than a serious, reflective adolescent on his journey towards manhood; even Death is funny and innocuous in this edition.

The illustrations are further domesticated by depicting the jungle as an Amazonian rain forest. This typical ‘standardization’ reflects classic colonial stereotypes which still linger in many editions of books written in the colonial period, even if both text and images match the contemporary children’s literature standards. Text and image have been domesticated to conform to a contemporary child image of what children are, what they should be like, and what they should be taught (playing, happy, the right to remain young rather than the duty to grow up, not being exposed to too much suspense or fear, etc.).

In the second (1987) Mondadori edition with selected stories translated by Padoan but illustrated by Romain Simon, the age-group and the animal focus are emphasized also by the title: “I miei animali da I libri della giungla” (“My Animals from the Jungle Book”).

Fig. 8 Lito Editrice. Mowgli playing with the wolves (tr. de Benedetti, ill. Michault ) Pg. 22



The next two examples are very different from the Lito edition: The first is the Fabbri Editori edition (Figs. 9 and 10) using Pozzo Galeazzi’s 1951 translation of the *Jungle Book I* with

illustrations by Vanna Vinci. The second is Mursia's 1929 (1963-2005 republication) of the *Jungle Book II* in the "Corticelli" series using Umberto Pittola's 1903 translation. Memo Vagaggini's watercolours combined with Piero Bernardini's sketchings are combined in the same edition. The Fabbri and the Mursia editions are perhaps the most interesting illustrations in that they are both expensive, prestigious hard-cover editions and in that they use, unabridged, the versions of two prestigious translators. Although directed at a young readership, they are clearly aimed at achieving the status of 'classics' in the target polysystem (again, the ambivalent status mentioned earlier where a text is aimed at both adult and juvenile readerships).

In the Vinci illustrations gaze and eye-contact with the animals is striking: the characters (both Mowgli and the animals) frequently look at the reader, thus challenging him/her, or the gaze is pointedly directed away from the interlocutors. It is through their ways of looking at each other that relationships and mutual reactions are visually construed. The gazes construe (correctly according to the interpretation of the reading employed in this paper) the complexity of the relationship between Mowgli and the animals, and Mowgli and the jungle: his look is sultry, defiant, cheeky and yet his relationship with his surroundings and the animals is one of great trust and familiarity; the relationship with the monkeys is threatening which partly fits into the text's negative attitude towards the monkeys (in the original text Mowgli is disparaging and contemptuous towards the monkeys, rather than finding them threatening). Shere Khan too is challenged (unlike the Disney version) by a very young child. In this edition Mowgli remains a young child, undermining the idea of a *Bildungsroman* but facilitating identification for young child readers.

In the Vinci edition, Mowgli is not white, and the topos is clearly Indian, albeit in a slightly stereotypical manner. There is a downplaying of the violence in the text in comparison to the illustrations in the 'older' categories. There *is* a sense of inaction and stasis; a languid gaze directed at the reader which seems to be the only 'real' action taking place: the pictures are therefore rather introspective and although they downplay the action, they emphasize the psychological aspects of the stories.

Fig. 9 Fabbri. Baloo instructs Mowgli (tr. Pozzo Galeazzi, ill. Vinci) Pg. 34



Fig. 10 Fabbri. Mowgli challenges Shere Khan (tr. Pozzo Galeazzi, ill. Vinci) Pg. 45



The same considerations can be made about the abovementioned 1929 Mursia text using Pittola's sophisticated 1903 translation combined with simple sketches for a young readership by Bernardini and evocative, haunting, languid watercolours by Vagaggini, creating a complex subtext for a slightly wider age-group through a thematic and iconographic incongruency between the sketches and the watercolours. The final (pg. 241) watercolour portraying Mowgli's separation from his beloved Jungle-Home and his beloved animal friends against the backdrop of a star-filled light blue sky captures the entire essence of Mowgli's – and Kipling's – searingly painful separation from his beloved India. They convey that poignant in-betweenness, his tug-of-war between childhood and adulthood, nature and

city, Indian and British, India and the UK, and the inevitable leave-taking of an over-grown child to join the world of adults. In the illustration we see the infinite space of sky as a universalized longing. Furthermore, the preface to the Mursia edition is *the* preface which best captures the complexity of the text and of Mowgli's strained love-authority relationship with the animals and his power over them; it mentions India positively (albeit stereotypically: 'a magnificent, mysterious landscape') and discusses the *Bildungsroman* angle. The illustrations have great psychological depth and show respect for nature and animals although they tend to downplay Mowgli's superiority: there is no superior gaze, no Jungle Law, rather, the animals are completely at peace with their surroundings and the mood is represented through soft gentle hues. There is equality and friendship between Mowgli and the animals (perhaps democracy and equality are considered to be more appropriate to modern child socialization values), the animals are *real* animals and Mowgli is a *real* adolescent/young adult; the emotions are *real* and each character's gaze is filled with emotion, interaction between the players (but not the reader). Despite the languidness, there is little stasis or uniformity. The *topos* is Indian but also symbolic and universalized; Mowgli is Indian, especially in the sketches<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> This book (see also Conclusions) contains an interesting genre variation in the illustrations: as well as the watercolours and sketches, we find a modernistic cover with a slightly quirky picture of Baloo in strong colours (red, black and yellow against a deep blue background)

Fig. 11 Mursia. The Indian, adolescent Mowgli (tr. Bagozzi/Castelnuovo, L., ill. Bernardini).  
Pg.180



Fig. 12 Mursia. Leaving the Jungle (tr. Bagozzi/Castelnuovo, L., ill. Vagaggini). Pg.241



The illustrated versions for young children in the De Agostini edition translated by Roberto Pasini of *The Jungle Book II* and illustrated by Aldo Ripamonti are also clearly intended for a

young readership, as is the unabridged slim paperback Giunti edition with the Mowgli chapters from both volumes translated by Angelica Marrucchi and illustrated by Mirek (Miroslav Zahradka) in humorous economical black-white sketches in a simple, naive, humorous style.<sup>15</sup> The fun-loving, long-haired, Caucasian Mowgli is depicted as almost trendily ‘hippy’

This book is in the series “Giunti Ragazzi Universal” indicated as “under 14” and “10”. In this same category we find Ottavio Fatica’s 1998 translation (Einaudi) of *The Jungle Book I and II* and Fausto Catani’s 1971 translation (Editrice Ancora) of *The Jungle Book I and II*.

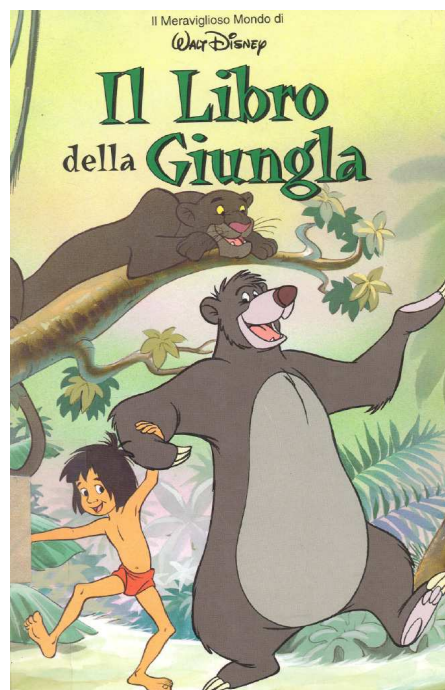
Elisabetta Florenzano translated and adapted the Disney version published by De Agostini in 1998-1999 (the film is from 1966) and, unsurprisingly, this version contains the most overt and deliberate changes (Fig. 13). It is not clear if hers is an adaptation of the original, of an existing Italian translation or of an already similarly abridged English version. There are few Victorian ideals here. Friendship, yes, but treated at a superficial level without those Kiplinguesque elements of loyalty and tenacity and the rather more disturbing authority of the Imperial-Child. Friendship is happy, carefree and playful rather than a grave duty and responsibility. Kaa is only an enemy, not a complex interlocutor. There is no Jungle Law, no superior gaze – only friendly democratically interpersonal eye-contact where Mowgli is not the boss; he never really challenges Shere Khan, the animals are not realistic, especially the musical-entertainer Baloo (which readers will probably recognize from the theme song “Those Bare Necessities”). The setting is that of social exchange between ‘peers’. Furthermore, there are no conflicts or tension in this Edenic jungle – not even with the monkeys or the villagers, only with Shere Khan where, however, the relationship and power-base is skewed in favour of the tiger. The tiger is one of a kind in its category – a dangerous, fear-inducing predator of whom Mowgli is afraid and to be kept at bay but not killed, so there is no real vanquishing of the enemy in the human maturation process. Rather, it is Shere Khan who has the authoritative, indeed hypnotic, gaze and Mowgli – with a few exceptions – is at first afraid and only later, gradually more stubbornly defiant. There is no kill, no prize. The conquest of Shere Khan is a simple test of bravery, not the climax of a complex maturation process. The tiger’s hide is not put on display on the Council Rock for the whole jungle to see and smell. Unlike the original, the village girl is Mowgli’s prize for vanquishing Shere Khan rather than the act of killing him, the act of an adult and of a human. In the original text the village girl is not a prize but the definitive proof and ultimate symbol of Mowgli’s reluctant

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<sup>15</sup> The first translation is from 1937 but it is unclear whether this edition, published by R Bompard, Florence, is illustrated or by whom.

entrance into manhood and maturation. She represents a door to adulthood, the company of other adult human beings, a point of arrival and of departure at the same time. Even Mowgli's extreme reluctance to leave the jungle is somewhat downplayed in the Disney version. The *topos* is not really Indian and Mowgli is again white. Numerous intertextual elements, especially in the film version, have been added from contemporary US culture from jazz/blues music and dancing and Afro-American culture to the Bible (i.e. Mowgli found in a Moses basket; the snake as the symbol of temptation).

Fig. 13 De Agostini (tr. Florenzano; ill Disney). Cover page



In this category which containing highly abridged texts and illustrations, the author's world-view has been most obviously abandoned: the Victorian ideals of authority, obedience, hierarchy, independence and the complex socio-cultural interpersonal network that prevails in the jungle. We have seen how the contents of the texts for younger readers have been toned down to suit their level of socialization in that given society. In the illustrations we have seen a downplaying of the interpersonal power dynamics and hierarchies between the protagonists and between the characters and their wider context. The friendship feature among the animals in the jungle has been given a great deal of prominence (not in the Victorian sense but in the more modern egalitarian sense of 'let's all be friends'); possibly because it is seen as reassuring for children. In terms of overt colonialist tropes, few examples where such



overtones are given *more* prominence in the translated edition were found. Tresilian's overtly imperialist illustrations were not reproduced in Italian translations, at least not those that are still in circulation (the Mondadori and Carrocci editions would be exceptions here). Rather, in the abridged versions for young children (in both text and illustration) we see that the theme of the Jungle Law (especially strict order and the hunting theme) has been sacrificed, as have many of the Victorian values discussed above, and most significantly Mowgli's interpersonal relationship with the animals and with the villagers, at the core of which we find the most significant colonial overtones of authority invested in the human, the adult and, possibly, the Briton.

#### 4. Conclusions

In the course of examining the translations of *The Jungle Books*, a number of patterns have emerged suggesting certain general trends and also showing how a translation, especially when accompanied by illustrations, can be either a vehicle of change or vehicles of conformism. The main trends we have seen are those of linguistic and conceptual simplification, of the mitigation of Victorian-colonial motifs, and a rewriting of the subtext at many levels.

In the category for adolescent readers a high degree of foreignization was found in the illustrations and other textual features (appendices, footnotes) reflecting the underlying education-norm for this age-group for both source- and target cultures. The educational function is maintained, indeed regularly intensified (the Elle edition, the footnotes in the Rizzoli text, the instructive presentation of India in the Piemme edition, the editor's prefaces and translator's commentaries emphasizing the adolescence-nature/animals connection). Not much emphasis is accorded to the text as a maturation story and to Mowgli's physical and spiritual growth.

In the category of texts for young children, I have found a general tendency towards domestication and translator visibility, at times very marked, again in accordance with target culture norms for that age-group (and prevailing norms in most of the Western literature for that age-group). In this category, however, there were interesting cases of incongruity, or 'fluidity' between text and image ('child' illustrations in unabridged translations), and even between illustrations in the same book: the watercolours by Vagaggini in the Mursia edition form a metaphorical dialogue with the text, especially the last picture where an old, stooped Mowgli, his back covered in an overcoat, leaves the jungle towards an empty road and an open sky, compared to the highly 'Indianized' sketches by Bernardini in the same edition. We

find these illustrations alongside an unabridged text, creating a challenging polyphonic translation product by combining elements of both foreignization and domestication to render a wider scope of textual interpretation at various levels. This, I believe, demonstrates how difficult it is to pin down a translation, or a translation product, as being either ‘domesticated’ or ‘foreignized’ globally, although many works may of course contain a higher degree of either tendency. Translations, and illustrated translations, are the result of many, at times contradicting, variables that may ‘pull’ the translator in various directions and are led by the market, by socio-historical parameters in a particular historical period as well as the specific norms of any given literary polysystem. One might describe this as a ‘continuum’ (as on Gideon Toury’s adequacy-acceptability axis) of ‘textual fluidity’.

Children’s literature is a powerful source of socialization for young minds that are still highly impressionable, and the publishing industry seems to be well aware of this fact and their importance in this socialization process. What, then, do these adaptations tell us about how the Italian publishing industry and readership view the values embodied in *The Jungle Books*? To answer these questions one would need to compare the volumes to other works of Italian children’s literature (and ideally works translated from other languages and absorbed into the Italian polysystem) of the same period(s), which is beyond the scope of this paper. Also, as mentioned, data on both translators and illustrators and should be included in a global study of these issues, which again is beyond the scope of this paper.

There are a number of useful questions that can be raised in this regard, however. The following are some of the most salient that warrant further study and through which interesting conclusions could be drawn regarding ideology in children’s literature in Italy.

1. How does the child image compare to other original language and translated works in comparable historical periods and age-groups? (Educational, moral-didactic or playful? Egalitarian or hierarchical?)
2. Looking at how Victorian-based values have been ‘managed’, for example how the Jungle Law (law, order, structure, rules, strict compliance; hierarchy in the group, killing for food, authority, obedience) and the jungle characters (independent, stoic, courageous, adventurous) are represented, can one conclude that these values are still seen as admirable for society in general? Do the Italian readers deem this to be appropriate subject matter for children? Does the Italian polysystem subscribe to and appropriate these values or attempt to modify them? In what way do these ‘translation ideologies’ change over time and across age-groups?

3. What are the ideological features that emerge that tell us about how and why the subtext is 'managed' (i.e. which features do the publishing industry and the market view as being appropriate to the adolescent/child reader) and about the representation of foreign cultures and languages? Is the text marketed as belonging to a colonial context or a colonial period? Which features emerge in the process of adapting the narrative *topos*: a 'real India', a stereotyped 'India', as the enclosed idyllic jungle of childhood, an India devoid of Indian vocabulary? Does the Italian publishing industry and readership crave an Indian Mowgli in India and an Indianized childhood or an Italian/European Mowgli for their children to identify with? Does this change over time and across age-groups?
4. What does the degree of adaptation and the presentation of the book tell us about the status of prestigious authors like Kipling and of the English literature canon?
5. To what degree has the representation of Mowgli's personal development through a triadic structure been maintained in the format of a maturation story? Is the *Biildungsroman* a tradition in non-translated Italian children's literature, and if not has it been imported and fostered through translation? If so, for which age-groups?

These are all questions that would require an exhaustive comparative study including a wide range of other texts for children in Italian, both original language- and translated literature. Such an inquiry could provide a number of interesting explanations of the ideological and socio-cultural values children receive through reading.

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