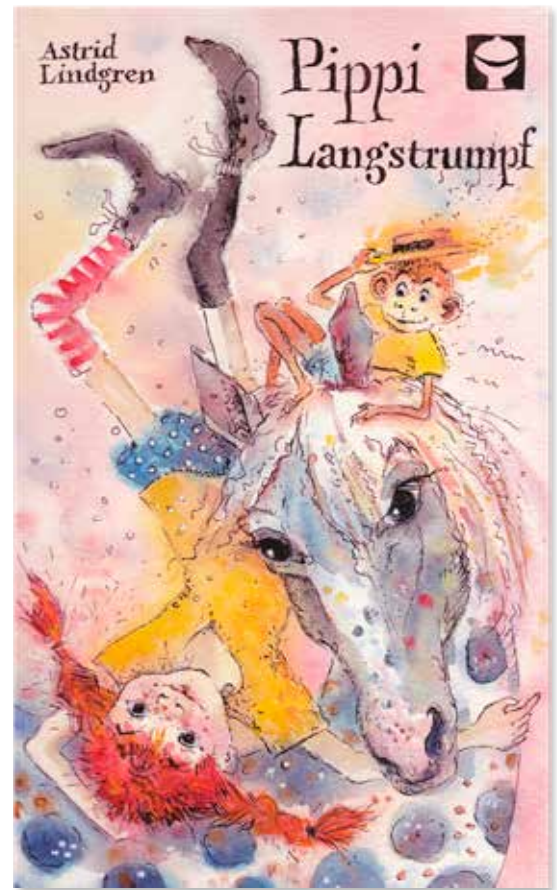


UPSIDE DOWN ON HORSE BACK

The trickster Pippi Longstocking in the GDR

by Lisa Källström



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abstract

A sketch for the cover of the second East German edition to *Pippi Langstrumpf* (1988) showing a girl standing on her head on horseback is the starting point for this article. It was drawn by Cornelia Ellinger, only one year before the fall of the Berlin wall. The sketch becomes a starting point for a discussion of humor and materiality in the reception of Pippi in the GDR. Just as the cover frames and delimits the text, our preconceptions frame our gaze and affect what we can see. However, this act is not just something that is imposed on us but an invitation to act ourselves, which makes issues of illustration, color choice and book format particularly important in a monolithic society, in an attempt to steer the reader's attention in a desired direction. The discussed sketch was never printed. Instead, the publisher chose a more blatantly humorous image.

KEYWORDS: Pippi Longstocking, GDR, print authorization procedure, cover images.

A sketch for the cover to the second GDR edition of the *Pippi Longstocking* (1988) shows a girl standing on her head on horseback. She casually rests her head on one arm while the other arm reaches round the horse's neck. Seemingly unconcerned, she performs this audacious acrobatic exercise without holding on to the horse. With a happy and calm expression on her face, she stretches her long, slender legs straight up in the air. Both her stockings reach above the knees, one is striped white and pink, the other is black. On her feet she has two obviously oversized yet at the same time elegant ankle boots. The title of the proposed publication is written with black slightly squiggly letters: "Pippi" and with smaller letters "Langstrumpf" on the right edge. The playful form of the letters in the title reflects the anatomy and movement of the girl's body.

While Brigitte Schleusing, a much more established artist, had been commissioned to draw Pippi for the first GDR edition in 1975, it was now up to Ellinger to depict her as part of her

internship at the publishing house Kinderbuchverlag Berlin. Giving the commission to a graphic designer who had not yet completed her training was unusual, as she could not be expected to know what was considered politically desirable. Normally, the choice of illustrator was considered important, but here the assignment went to a young art student. Perhaps the decision could be justified by a lack of time. It might even be a sign that the book was not considered particularly important in the yearly publication list. Initially Schleusing (the GDR's first Pippi illustrator) was asked if she could draw some new illustrations for the new edition, but she declined. Ellinger was not even paid for her work, even though she was expected to design two full-page posters and eight black and white illustrations.

THE AIM OF THIS article is to shed light on the cultural adaptation and implementation of the pictorial motif Pippi based on the sketch and the published cover image, with particular emphasis on the playfulness and humor of the character. When a motif is re-expressed, a process which Henry Jenkins calls “convergence culture” emerges, i.e. a power struggle over the distribution and control of content between various intersections of media, industries and audiences.¹ Because of the global nature of such an exchange, the interpicture processes are also necessarily cross-cultural.² Regarding the visualization of an already well-known theme, illustrations, like art in more general terms, are dependent on the interpretation that comes before the individual expression, but the work done by later images obliterates the latter and creates new versions of them through the viewer's interpretation.³ This indicates that our interpretation, as well as any humorous intentions, depends on the context. The question of how humor is expressed through an image is particularly interesting in relation to the trickster Pippi, as the international launch of the character can be seen as an attempt to tame her.

The article consists of six parts, first discussing research on Pippi as a trickster and then discussing this rhetorical figure in more general terms within the framework of children's literature. Then I discuss Pippi's role as a trickster in East German children's literature, the role that contemporaries attributed to her, and the illustrations that aim to capture her essence. Material aspects are important in terms of how humor appears, as humor is about the discrepancy between the framed expectations of the viewer and the perceived reality. Finally, I compare the sketch described above with the printed cover image, examining how they emphasize Pippi's clownesque nature. In this context, humor should be understood as a pragmatic category that depends on the contextual condition.⁴ The theory of incongruity assumes that we have certain expectations when we read a text or see an image. If these expectations are not met, we may find the situation comical.

Pippi as a trickster

Literary scholars have pointed to the humorous qualities of the Pippi character.⁵ Her humor stems from her quirky and unconventional personality.⁶ She is a playful and unpredictable character, often making fun of social norms and expectations. Pippi's superhuman strength and unusual pets, a monkey and a horse, add to her eccentricity. Her unconventional nature and disregard for societal conventions provide ample comedic material throughout the book. Pippi has even been called a trickster, a carrier of a counterweight to the ideologically desired ideal.⁷ The trickster has been described as a liminal actor, as someone who appears in unstable situations and has the potential to influence these situations. Paradoxically, the trickster is a liminal entity, one who is conservative as well as radical, or able to destroy as well as create. The trickster is thus a mediator of anti-structure. In this way, the trickster is a boundary crosser. By offering solutions to problems or explanations and critiques of the world as it is, the trickster can appear as an outsider, or as one who speaks to the center from the periphery. Importantly in relation to Pippi in the GDR, she is an individualist read against a closed society where the collective is of great importance.

THE RECEPTION OF Pippi in the GDR has been discussed. Caroline Roder has returned to Astrid Lindgren in several publications.⁸ Astrid Surmatz also discusses the reception in East Germany in her extensive thesis on Pippi in the German language.⁹ Bettina

Kümmerling-Meibauer mentions the published cover picture by Ellinger but is not very impressed by the young artist's work, which she finds lacks some independence in relation to the Swedish illustrator's depiction of the character.¹⁰ Ines Soldwisch discusses the reception of Pippi from the perspective of a historian in “Pippi als ‘Kontra zu einer bürgerlichen Welt’” [Pippi as ‘counterpoint to a bourgeois world’] in a contribution to Clio-online. In a chapter in *Mera Astrid Lindgren! Författaren, förläggaren och*

“THE QUESTION OF HOW HUMOR IS EXPRESSED THROUGH AN IMAGE IS PARTICULARLY INTERESTING IN RELATION TO THE TRICKSTER PIPPI.”

filmskaparen [More Astrid Lindgren! The author, publisher and film-maker], a not-yet-published Astrid Lindgren anthology, I consider why it took so long for Pippi to reach the GDR, taking as my starting point the correspondence between the author and her FRG publisher.¹¹ I also discuss the changes made to the text and ask where to draw the line between a more faithful interpretation and a freer reworking, if not outright adaptation, as the story in the GDR version was reduced by approximately half.

Then I move on to the depiction of tricksters such as Pippi Longstocking. The materiality of the book is an important and often overlooked dimension. This statement is also true regarding the reception of Pippi Longstocking in the GDR. Astrid Surmatz and Caroline Roeder have thoroughly analyzed how Pippi was received in the GDR, but without discussing in detail the significance of the book's format, paper quality, typeface, and typography for how Pippi was interpreted and received by her contemporaries.¹²

But books are also concrete, materially designed objects in this world and as such they in turn enter into the fictional world of literature itself. For this reason, an examination of the materiality of the medium itself and the significance of the book and of reading is necessary. The material properties are crucial to the reading experience, to setting the limits of the narrative imagination.¹³ It is particularly important when it comes to a pragmatic understanding of humor, concerned with how our interpretive processes are shaped in relation to our own “contextual frameworks”. Bakhtin defines carnival as materialistic. In his reflections on the trickster, he aims to achieve a positive reevaluation of the material and the corporeal.¹⁴ He opposes the emphasis on the purely spiritual, and takes a firm stand on the insurmountable contradiction between “hyle” (matter) and “pneuma” (spirit) that has characterized Western philosophy and religion.¹⁵

THE HUMOR REGARDING how Pippi has been depicted has also been discussed. Agnes-Margrethe Bjorvand reflects on how text and image interact to emphasize the dynamics of Pippi. She draws on Gunther Kress’ and Carey Jewitt’s concepts of modal affordance and functional load (how different media create meaning together and the possibilities and limitations that characterize each medium).¹⁶ While Astrid Lindgren describes how Pippi “runs”, “skips”, “jumps”, “climbs”, “steps” and “balances”, the Swedish Pippi illustrator Ingrid Vang Nyman depicts this movement through visual blurs, motion lines or action lines.¹⁷ Bjorvand’s reflections concern the strategic choices of the illustrator and the author. With a focus on the viewer, it would instead be possible to reflect on how meaning-making processes require the picture book reader’s ability to remember, associate, combine and connect. This latter kind of reflection brings together ethical and aesthetic considerations.¹⁸ In another context, I have discussed Ingrid Vang Nyman’s work in relation to humor. Using rhetorical concepts, I explain how Vang Nyman’s clear lines, with their clear delineation of solid surfaces, can still convey a strong impression of movement and comedy. In doing so, I use what Sofi Qvarnström calls “the emotional function of the aesthetic artefact”, i.e. the affective appeal of images.¹⁹

The trickster in children’s literature

A trickster such as Pippi Longstocking is often regarded as a manifestation of the child’s desire for individuality and self-expression, free from adult control, in children’s literature.²⁰ Considering the function of the trickster in children’s literature, this rhetorical figure can provide the child reader with “valuable psychological relief from the pressures and confines of adult authority”.²¹ If one assumes that the unexpected, that which does not quite fit in, can attract laughter, then perhaps it is the actions of the trickster, breaking rules, resisting authority, which manifest itself as humor. Humor has often been accused of encouraging stereotypes and confirming the beliefs of mainstream

audiences. Researchers have shown that in a closed society like the GDR, humor can open up a heightened social and political awareness and thus resonate with the public at large, or with parts of the public.

A monolithic society may be more open to jokes due to a clearer picture of the opponent. But in order to work within the framework of the concept of the GDR, a trickster would have to develop into a positive socialist hero who manifests the collectivist ideal but also simultaneously represents its individualistic (“bourgeois”) counterpart. The trickster is the remnant of a collective stooge, a summary of all the deficient character qualities of individuals which, little by little, have become intolerable.²² In

contrast to the savior type, the trickster would not really try to bridge the contradiction, but only “surreptitiously” jump back and forth between the two polarities, i.e. ultimately engage in a “deceptive” pseudo-mediation. Clearly, such a hero would have been problematic within the framework of socialist realism.²³

In further studies I would like to look at the trickster in DDR literature, with

particular emphasis on the expected role of the child and the child reader. Such research would be motivated by a strengthened interest in the rhetorical figure and humor in research. This research could be inspired by rhetorical research where the trickster has been discussed. More recently, scholars have discussed the motivational aspects of humor with its possible applications in the classroom. Such research is inspired by Julie Cross’ work *Humor in Contemporary Junior Literature* (2010), examining the intricate textual humor in contemporary young adult literature using literary criticism and humor theory.²⁴ Cross problematizes the dichotomy between high and low humor and thus an oversimplified view of children’s development and how they will learn to appreciate humor. These previous studies often focus on the text or the interaction between image and text, while here I approach a sketch of a book cover and its materiality.

Pippi in the GDR

Pippi’s trickster characteristics were, it is claimed, responsible for her late arrival in the GDR.²⁵ The first Swedish Pippi book was published in 1945 and was quickly followed by two more. But the books about her were only published in the GDR in 1975 in a collected edition. It was quite late compared to other countries in the Eastern Bloc. Pippi was introduced to Russian children with illustrations by Irina L. Tokmakova as Peppi Dlinnyj Čulok (*Пиппи Длинный Чулок*, 1968). Pippi also appeared in Poland and the former Czechoslovakia in 1968 with illustrations by Zbigniew Piotrowski and Karel Teissig, respectively. The publishing house Verlag Mladé letá published a translation into Slovak: *Pipi Dlhá pančucha* (in Czech the title would have been *Pipi Dlouhá punčocha*).²⁶ The stories about Pippi were also published as a serial in the early 1970s in the children’s magazine *Mateřídouška*, and later in several editions, illustrated by the popular illustrator Adolf Born. In Russia, Pippi was never as popular as *Karlsson*

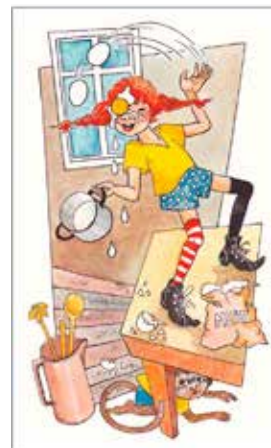
“PIPPI’S TRICKSTER CHARACTERISTICS WERE, IT IS CLAIMED, RESPONSIBLE FOR HER LATE ARRIVAL IN THE GDR.”

on the Roof. One reason for this was the cartoon film by Boris Stepansev. The film portrayed the wicked Karlsson as a cute and funny trickster saving his friend from the overbearing Miss Bock who punished the boy for interrupting her coffee break with cinnamon buns by locking him into his room.

The GDR regime's authoritarian and highly didactic approach, combined with the already immanently pedagogical nature of children's books, meant that careful considerations were made not only about which books to publish, but also about their design. Books were taken into the service of the agenda. Coupled with a uniform, ideologically convergent, and state-controlled education system, books were reshaped into tools for the all-round formation of a new kind of socialist human being.²⁷ Publishing was a political, ideological, and bureaucratic issue. GDR leaders spoke of need for "planning" cultural processes and "protecting" socialist art, constantly reminded artists of their "responsibility" not to damage the state or its reputation. This review process did not apply solely to the text itself but also to the appearance of the book, the type of illustrations it should have and the number of copies to be printed. Of course, these regulations also had an impact on the books published, the layout of the book with pictures, the design of the cover and much more.

The review process outlined above might be one explanation why it took so long for a publisher to pick up the books about Pippi in the GDR. If in the FRG it was the publisher Friedrich Oetinger himself who decided to publish the Pippi books, in the East it was a state matter. This resulted in fundamental differences in the publishers' considerations. Before an international book could be published in the GDR, it had to be approved by a commission consisting of a GDR official, a GDR educator and a GDR author. While Pippi arrived in the FRG in 1949 at the Oetinger Verlag, it took until 1975 for her books to be published in the GDR. This delay can partly be explained by the fact that the attitude towards fantastic literature differed in the two countries. In the FRG, the post-war book market was quickly filled with translations of Nordic and English literature. Fantasy and nonsense became dominant genres. Domestic authors such as Ottfried Preußler and Michael Ende soon joined Astrid Lindgren, whose books quickly gained a prominent position in the publishing house.²⁸ After a brief phase of mainly problem-oriented literature in the 1970s, a new wave of fantastic literature emerged in the 1980s.²⁹

In the GDR, however, the situation was different. Here, fantastic literature played a more subordinate role.³⁰ In a state where the aim was to educate the socialist citizen, other literature was considered more important. This fact applied not only to what was written for adults but also for children. In the mid-1970s fantastic literature did receive a certain boost, but the genre was still not very important. For example, only 100 titles of such children's literature were published in the entire period 1949–1989.³¹ The aim was to strengthen domestic book production in an attempt to assert its uniqueness. Moreover, Russian classics were translated more often than children's books from the West. Finally, though, in 1975, it was Pippi's turn. This was probably also

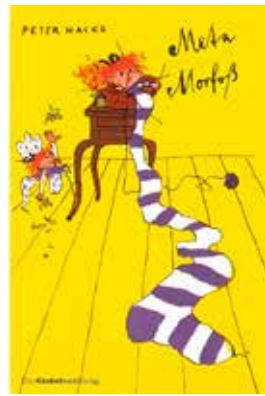


Cover and illustration, Cornelia Ellinger, *Pippi Langstrumpf*, 1988.

linked to the fact that Pippi Longstocking films were released in the FRG, which could also be watched in the GDR by those who received West German television.³² However, from the 1970s onwards, the state leadership was also liberal due to its belief in its own consolidated socialist world. Erich Honecker stated on 17 December 1971 at the 4th Congress of the SED Central Committee: "Based on the firm position of socialism, I believe that there can be no taboos in the field of art and literature."³³

Pippi and other GDR-tricksters

In this article I discuss a sketch that was never printed as a book cover for children. Material concerns may seem all the more important as Kinderbuchverlag Berlin attached great importance to the appearance of their books and their illustrations, within the constraints of the paper shortage. Founded in 1949, it was the country's largest publisher of children's literature. The books, illustrated by established artists such as Werner Klemke and Hannelore Teutsch, were characterized by clear lines, bright colors and quirky characters. One example is Peter Hack's *Meta Morfoss* with illustrations by Heinz Edelmann (1975). *Meta Morfoss* has a special gift. She can transform herself: into an angel,



Cover, Heinz Edelmann, *Meta Morfoß*, (Kinderbuchverlag: Berlin, 1975).

Cover, Manfred Bofinger, *Alfons Zitterbacke*, (Kinderbuchverlag: Berlin, 1976).

an animal, or whatever she wants. This skill often leads to unexpected situations. Another example is Gerhard Holtz Baumert's *Alfons Zitterbacke* (1958) with illustrations by Manfred Bofinger. Unlike other children's book heroes of his time, Alfons is not an ever-ready pioneer but an anti-hero who never succeeds and whose every good intention is misinterpreted. Also, Meta Morfoß and Alfons, like Pippi, are tricksters. But while Pippi gives the impression of being quite happy with herself, Alfons tries to fit in and fails.

When discussing Pippi as a trickster, it is important to remember that the GDR Pippi is not nearly as unrestrainedly wild as the Swedish version and even slightly milder than the FRG rendition. The collection of books about Pippi came to the GDR as a license purchase from the FRG in a translation by Cäcile Heinig. As for the text, the GDR version was a bit more formal than that of the FRG. The main difference, however, was that the entire third book and parts of the second book were deleted with the consequence that in the GDR edition, Pippi never leaves the small town in which she lives. This makes Pippi less controversial because, as a white girl, she never visits a South Sea island. At the same time, she conforms to an ideal in which the book's characters, having been out of the loop early on, adapt to the group and realize the undeniable benefits of the collective.

THE FACT THAT the GDR version was purchased from the FRG is evident in the colors of Pippi's clothes. At the same time, the publisher Kinderbuchverlag Berlin wished to personalize the story with new illustrations. While the Swedish Pippi has a blue dress with blue patches, the first FRG-Pippi has yellow top and

blue trousers with white dots. In this sense, Ellinger's Pippi repeats a color pattern from the FRG-Pippi when she draws Pippi in a yellow sweater and blue shorts with white dots, but one stocking is clownish, red-and-white striped instead of yellow-black. Regarding Pippi's top, the German text translated into English states: "It was a beautiful yellow, but because there wasn't enough fabric, it was too short, so a pair of blue trousers with white dots peeked out from underneath. On her long thin legs she had a pair of long stockings, one striped and one black."³⁴ In Ellinger's interpretation, however, the yellow dress has become a yellow short-sleeved shirt, possibly a sports shirt in line with the country's sporting ideals.³⁵

In terms of book format and paper choice, however, the difference between the two East German editions and the West German license book is striking. If the FRG edition was printed in the "Hausbach" format (17 x 40 centimeters), which usually is reserved for classic fairy tales, the DDR edition is simpler. It was published in an already existing book series. Weighing 850 grams and spread over 351 pages, the FRG edition belonged more on the coffee table in the parlor than in the nursery. Not only the price of the book (19.80 DM compared to 70 Pfennig for a comic book), but also the quality of the paper and the linen cover with its protective colorful paper dust jacket, show that the FRG publisher Oetinger was targeting a conservative clientele.³⁶

The Kinderbuchverlag had 25 series of books recognizable by their uniform layout. The first Pippi Longstocking was printed in the series *Paperbacks for Young Readers* with illustrations by Brigitte Schleusing. The book included about 180 pages for 2.40 Marks. Like the rest of the Paperbacks for Young Readers series, the 1975 Pippi book has a glossy cover, a cardboard cover with foil, with a colored illustration, but otherwise the inside was rough unbleached paper with black lettering. The second edition of the stories of Pippi Longstocking (which Schleusing would illustrate) was published in 1988 in the *Alex Taschenbüch-er*-series at a price of 2.80 Marks and a print run of 40 000 copies.³⁷

"[...]THE GDR PIPPI IS NOT NEARLY AS UNRESTRAINEDLY WILD AS THE SWEDISH VERSION AND EVEN SLIGHTLY Milder THAN THE FRG RENDITION."

IN THE CASE of the 1988 second edition the publisher Kinderbuchverlag Berlin also decided to provide the new edition with inside illustrations which also justified a new front-page design. The first edition had only one cover picture and no other illustration. While the FRG edition had a lavish mustard yellow linen cover with a blue dust jacket, both GDR editions looked more like any other book in the

same series, apart from Pippi's yellow dress and blue shorts (an outfit reminiscent of the BRD version). While the FRG edition is richly illustrated with drawings by Rolf Rettich, the GDR edition has only one illustration, on the front cover, and it looks like all the other books in the GDR series. After this review of the material aspects of the book, it is now time to take a closer look at what Gerhard Holtz-Baumert, who wrote the external review in connection with the publication of the Pippi stories, thought

about her more generally, and about future illustrations of this trickster more specifically.

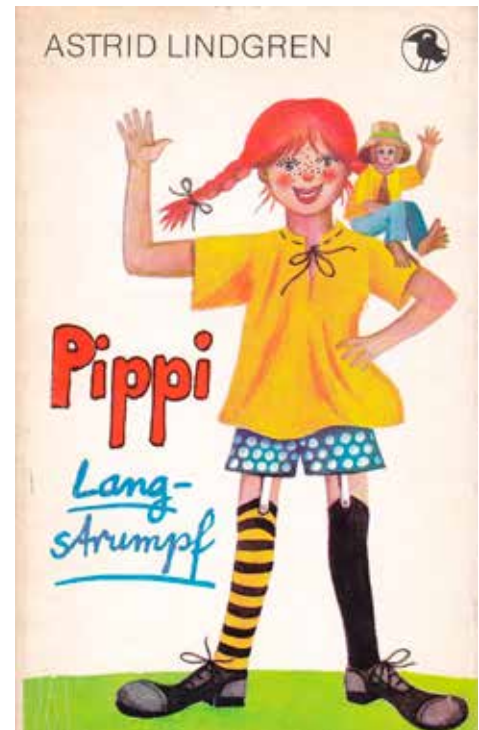
The importance of illustrations

Authors and cultural officials of the time also emphasized the value of proper illustrations for children's books. Gerhard Holtz-Baumert, for example, emphasizes the particular importance of the illustrations for the Pippi books in a statement to the Ministry of Culture on the question of whether it was worth publishing Pippi. He notes: "The artist who takes on the task of drawing Pippi must make an effort to reinforce the subtle, the Utopian, the humanitarian of Pippi in order to help the book to become what it really is – a fairy tale".³⁸ This quote is interesting for two reasons: firstly, because it says something about how Pippi was interpreted at the time and secondly, because it shows the recognized importance of illustrations for the reader's experience of a literary character.³⁹ There was never any question of taking over the FRG illustrations as the publisher preferred domestic illustrations. Moreover, Rolf Rettich, who had drawn Pippi for the German publisher Oetinger in 1967, had absconded from the GDR.

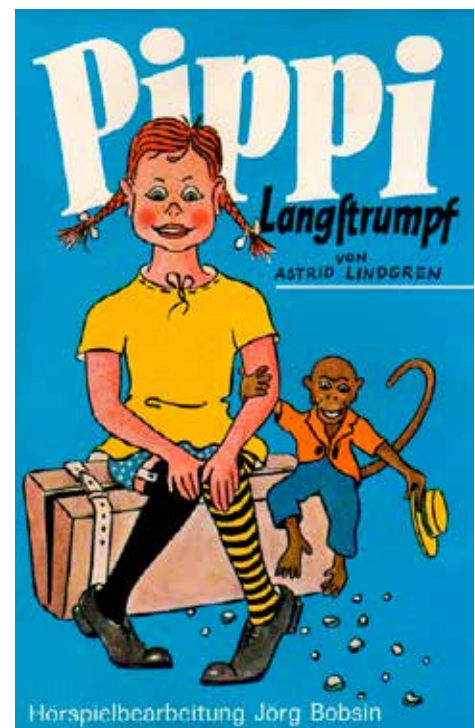
Brigitte Schlusing, who was first commissioned to draw Pippi in the GDR, had established herself in the field of fairy tales. Ellinger, in turn, was an art student and therefore still relatively new to the scene. The fact that the assignment went to her may indicate a certain urgency to publish the book, but also that the book was not considered particularly important in comparison with other works that were to be printed at the same time. As I discussed above, Kinderbuchverlag Berlin regarded illustrations as important. The illustration techniques and styles used in GDR children's books were diverse. Many books contained realistic depictions of everyday life, while others contained abstract or surreal elements. Illustrators often used bright colors and bold lines to create visually striking images. The publishing house awarded several prizes, including the Hans Baltzer Prize, in order to recognize outstanding illustrators. Emphasizing high-quality illustrations helped to establish the GDR as a leader in the field of children's book publishing.⁴⁰ Due to the illustrations' proximity to the text, they were supposed to highlight desirable features and thereby steer the readers' interpretation in the right direction.

GERHARD HOLTZ-BAUMERT, who acted as an independent reviewer of the stories about Pippi, was a major cultural figure as head of the Authors' Association for Children's Literature and editor-in-chief of the only journal for children's literature, *Beiträge zur Kinder- und Jugendliteratur*. He argues in favor of the work's potential literary qualities. All publications in GDR were subject to authorization. This procedure, known as the print authorization procedure, covered not only domestic literature but also licensed literature. At least two opinions were sent to the Ministry of Culture together with the manuscript: one prepared by the editor and one external expert opinion. Both assessed the literary quality of the manuscript as well as its political message.

The careful scrutiny of Pippi is in itself perhaps not particularly remarkable; even today, publications are the subject of strategic considerations in publishing houses around the world.



Cover, Brigitte Schlusing, *Pippi Langstrumpf*, (Kinderbuchverlag: Berlin, 1975).



Cover, Walter Scharnweber, *Pippi Langstrumpf*, Oetinger, Remake of original cover from 1949 to new context.



Illustrations,
Cornelia
Ellinger,
*Pippi Lang-
strumpf*,
1988.

Moreover, debates about Pippi still flare up at regular intervals (even in Sweden).⁴¹ But here the review was state-regulated and part of a censorship system. The purpose of the examination was to determine the position of the character in relation to the system. In light of this requirement, illustrations also become important, as they have an impact on the reader's interpretation of the book. The choice of artist is particularly important because the story does not represent a "socialist position", according to Holtz-Baumert.⁴²

Holtz-Baumert describes Pippi's world as a Utopia, a children's counter-world construct and in dialectical opposition to the world of adults.⁴³ Emphasizing that Pippi's world is not only a parallel world, but also a counterpoint to the adult bourgeois world, a world where children's rights are taken seriously, he also suggests that the GDR has come closer to this dream than the West. He claims:

"Let's look at Pippi this way: as an attempt to protect children from a stupid, pedagogic, helplessly evil world [...], from incomprehension and lack of love – as a plea for children [...]. Of course, this is not a socialist position – but it is a humanist one that should absolutely be honored."

In his interpretation, Holtz-Baumert thus confirms the socialist position, although he gives a cautious hint that Lindgren herself may not be aware of the true potential of her story. Whatever the case may be, he claims, the story "embodies Lindgren's notions of a better future" of a socialistic counter-world to the west.⁴⁴ He claims that "The socialist literature embraces everything that is valuable, defends it – sometimes even against itself – and upholds it. Pippi Longstocking can be printed here in this light, absolutely not uncritically. A defence against itself' is also necessary in this respect."⁴⁵

AFTER THIS REVIEW of Pippi's publishing history and consideration of the character as a trickster, and humor in more general terms, it is now time to return to the sketch described above. What first comes to mind is perhaps the position on horseback in which Ellinger has placed Pippi. She cannot really ride in that extravagant position; the character's position on horseback has a purely performative purpose. Her gestures and the composition of the sketch draw the viewer's attention to the character's trickster quality. This is a far-fetched exaggeration (hyperbole) as she does not make the slightest indication of having to hold on. Even in the executed cover image she occupies a similar position, but now she appears to be clinging to the horse.

Like the sketch, the printed image also draws attention to the head of a horse that dominates the image with its patterned coat. In the rhetoric of the visual composition, Pippi herself becomes a mere secondary character. She is still standing on her head on a horse's back, but the dreamy quality has been retouched. Instead of being drawn in soft watercolor, Pippi and her companions stand out sharply against the background. Clear lines separate Pippi's body from her companion's and from the unbleached background. The harsher impression of the cover image is reinforced by the fact that the background is no longer pink but gray-white.

On the printed cover Pippi no longer leans back calmly with her head resting on her arm; instead, she seems to hold on to the horse. She flashes one eye mischievously towards the viewer with an open smile. The horse's spots have turned black instead of gray-blue and Pippi's pink-striped stocking has turned clownish red. In a letter to me, Ellinger explains that she was not particularly fond of this later version. She writes: "All in all, the illustrations were a bit cramped, so I preferred to let it disappear completely in the drawer and never used it for my portfolio afterwards".⁴⁶ However, Katrin Pieper, editor of the publisher Kinderbuchverlag Berlin, had explained that the soft watercolors were not suitable for the coarse paper of the cover. This may not necessarily have been the reason, nor that the style did not fit with the others in the book series, even if it had stood out with its soft brush strokes and liquid colors.⁴⁷

BACK TO THE SKETCH; here Pippi's body is portrayed as incomplete, merging with the horse and the monkey as a mixed human-animal. Comfortably reclining behind the horse's pointed ears sits a monkey. Like the horse, he also looks at the girl. The monkey's shirt is just as yellow, and the short blue pants have the same white dots as hers. The two form a colorful unit. The dots are repeated in the horse's spotted pattern, but now some gray has mixed into the blue color. Pippi and the two animals seem caught in a balancing act together as if they were one. The red color of Pippi's very long stockings blends with the blue color of the horse spots to mingle with the pink background color. The colors flow into each other, indicating a dreamlike state of mind – an open body. These soft movements of the various colors intertwine with Pippi's body, not bound by any limits.

Ellinger tells me she was particularly pleased with how Pippi looks like she is prepared to kick off the letters making up the title, thereby freeing herself from the restrictions of the book cover and the world of fiction. This detail has been removed on the printed cover: as if the words "wanted to push down Pippi's legs again, which were stretched up in the air", Ellinger writes.⁴⁸ Instead, the changes from sketch to finished cover image can be explained by a strengthening of the character's uniqueness, with a kind of superfluous ambiguity. The dreaminess of the illustration is gone, replaced by the clear lines and strong colors that were so typical of the publisher. Pippi gains a clown-striped sock. She also winks mischievously with one eye as if to emphasize to the reader that this fairy tale is not real. With its clear contours, the illustration does not invite the viewer to linger, but to quickly turn the page to get to know this funny girl.

Conclusion

In this article, I have compared a sketch for the second edition of the GDR book *Pippi Langstrumpf* drawn by Cornelia Ellinger with the printed cover image, drawing on the humor that a trick-

ster character can engender. As a trickster, Pippi stands out in the small town where she lives. In her individualistic behavior, she becomes a peripheral character, marginalized by the majority culture while moving within it. Carnival, according to Bakhtin, offers a form of symbolic protest and criticism of existing ideologies and socio-political systems. From the vantage point of "normalcy", carnivalesque behavior appears eccentric and inappropriate.⁴⁹ If we apply this argumentation to Ellinger's sketch, we could argue that this interpretation emphasizes Pippi's carnivalesque characteristics (although these

may be much milder than in Cervantes stories about Gargantua which Bakhtin discusses in *Rabelais and his World*).⁵⁰

The literary scholar Maria Nikolajeva notes that the discussion about the carnivalesque features of Pippi Longstocking has often stopped at the grotesque, the upside-down qualities, the scatological humor, and histrionics.⁵¹ She reminds us that the deeper meaning of carnival goes beyond these superficial details. It is also about the rebellion of the individual against the demands of society. Claiming the intensity of the aesthetic experience,

"the emotional function of the aesthetic artefact", we can, with Bakhtin, talk about how the trickster frees us from the weight of the realization of the lack of overarching meaning in life. The rhetorical power of Ellinger's depiction of Pippi is not only due to the assumptions about girlhood that come across, but also its potential to create its own movements and temporalities. Pippi's trickster-ness does not only have to do with such aspects as braids and shoes that are too big but arises above all in the interplay between what we see and what we perceive as possible. In this sense the trickster invites us to change perspective, and in this way this rhetorical figure can also encourage resistance – this too is a rhetorical device. ✖

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"HOLTZ-BAUMERT DESCRIBES PIPPI'S WORLD AS A UTOPIA, A CHILDREN'S COUNTER-WORLD CONSTRUCT AND IN DIALECTICAL OPPOSITION TO THE WORLD OF ADULTS."

references

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- 2 Regarding the international depiction of Pippi, see Lisa Källström, *Pippi mellan världar. En bildretorisk studie* [Pippi between worlds. A pictorial study] (Media-Tryck, 2020).
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- 30 Cf. Roeder "Archivalisches zur Astrid Lindgren: Rezeption in der DDR", 91, Steinlein et al, *Handbuch zur Kinder- und Jugendliteratur*, 555.
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- 32 Ellinger states that: "When Pippi Longstocking appeared on German television in the early 70s, we were able to watch ARD at home – in black and white. I was the same age as Pippi at the time and loved the series right from the start. No episode was to be missed. Once there were almost tears because we had to go to a family party" ["Als Pippi Langstrumpf Anfang der 70er Jahre im deutschen Fernsehen auftauchte, konnten wir zu Hause ARD schauen – in schwarz-weiß. Ich war damals im gleichen Alter wie Pippi und habe die Serie von Anfang an geliebt. Keine Folge durfte verpasst werden. Einmal gab es fast Tränen, weil wir zu einer Familienfeier gehen mussten"], Ellinger e-mail 2014-11-18. See also Ulrike Gahnz, "Edition schwedischer Literatur in der DDR", (Leipzig Jahrbuch zur Buchgeschichte 9, ["Edition of Swedish Literature in the GDR"], (Leipzig Yearbook on Book History 9), (1999), 333–375, (364).
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- 34 "Es war wunderschön gelb; aber weil der Stoff nicht gereicht hatte, war es zu kurz, und so guckte eine blaue Hose mit weißen Punkten darunter hervor. An ihren langen dünnen Beinen hatte sie ein Paar lange Strümpfe, einen geringelten und einen schwarzen" cited in *Pippi Langstrumpf*, (Kinderbuchverlag, 1988). Silke Weitendorf at the former FRG-publishing house Oetinger told me that the first German illustrator, Walter Scharnweber, had a "whim" about how Pippi should be drawn before he had read the story and that the author agreed to change the text. Interview with Silke Weitendorf December 8, 2022, cf. Email Gerlinde Mühle, (Oetinger Verlag, October 3, 2018).
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- 38 Gerhard Holtz-Baumert, Gutachten (Expertise), dated March 3, 1973, in: SAPMO Bundesarchiv, DR 1 (Ministerium für Kultur) 2275a, Bl. 269.
- 39 Holtz-Baumert, Gutachten, SAPMO Bundesarchiv, DR 1 (Ministerium für Kultur) 2275a, Bl. 269.
- 40 Doreen Zippel, ed., *Erzähl mir vom kleinen Angsthasen. Die schönsten Kindergeschichten der DDR*, [Tell me about the little scaredy-cat. The most beautiful children's stories of the GDR], (Kinderbuchverlag, 2009); Katrin Pieper: "Die besten Helden. Literatur für Kinder und Jugendliche in der DDR nach sowjetischen Vorbildern", in eds., Karl Eimermacher & Astrid Volpert, *Tauwetter, Eiszeit und gelenkte Dialoge. Russen und Deutsche nach 1945 (= West-östliche Spiegelungen. Neue Folge, 3)* ["The greatest heroes. Literature for Children and Young People in the GDR based on Soviet Models"], in eds, Karl Eimermacher & Astrid Volpert, *The Thaw, the Ice Age and Guided Dialogues. Russians and Germans after 1945 (= West-East Reflections. New Series, 3)*, (Fink, 2006), 1033–1056.
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- 42 Holtz-Baumert claims, "Betrachten wir Pippi so: als Versuch, Kinder vor dummer, pädagogisierender, hilflos-böser Welt [...], vor Unverständnis und Lieblosigkeit zu bewahren – als Plädoyer für die Kinder [...]. Sozialistische Position ist das natürlich nicht – aber eine durchaus zu würdigende humanistische" [Considering Pippi as an attempt to protect children from a stupid, pedagogical, helplessly evil world [...], from incomprehension and lack of love – as a plea for children [...]. Of course, this is not a socialist position – but it is a humanist one that should certainly be recognised], my translation. Holtz-Baumert, Gutachten, SAPMO Bundesarchiv, DR 1 (Ministerium für Kultur) 2275a, Bl. 269.
- 43 Holtz-Baumert, Gutachten, SAPMO Bundesarchiv, DR 1 (Ministerium für Kultur) 2275a, Bl. 269.
- 44 Holtz-Baumert, Gutachten, SAPMO Bundesarchiv, DR 1 (Ministerium für Kultur) 2275a, Bl. 269.
- 45 Holtz-Baumert claims: "Die sozialistische Literatur nimmt sich alles Wertvollen an, verteidigt es – manchmal auch gegen sich selbst – und hebt es auf. In solchem Sinne, absolut nicht unkritisch, kann man Pippi Langstrumpf hier drucken. Dazu ist auch die 'Verteidigung gegen sich selbst' notwendig" Holtz-Baumert, Gutachten, SAPMO Bundesarchiv, DR 1 (Ministerium für Kultur) 2275a, Bl. 269.
- 46 Ellinger tells me that she was not very happy about it. She writes: "Die insgesamt etwas verkrampft geratenen Illustrationen habe ich deshalb lieber komplett in der Schublade verschwinden lassen und auch anschließende nie für meine Portfolio genutzt". Ellinger November 18, 2014.
- 47 The fact that not all book covers at Kinderbuchverlag Berlin were drawn in the same way, with clearly marked outlines and bright colors, is shown by the series "Ein Tag im Leben" ... which consisted of a total of 29 books (published between 1975 and 1992). In contrast to the Pippi books, these books were printed in high gloss in the size of 22.0x24.5cm.
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