

Italian Literature for Children Translated into Albanian 1990 – 2014

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Abstract

After the 90s, with the collapse of the communist dictatorship in Albania, there has been published annually more than one book of Italian literature for children in Albanian. The democratization of our country set the foundation of a golden season, in terms of number of translations from Italian literature for children. During this period, there appeared new Italian language translators' names, and have been present many of those who have also been active during the dictatorship. In this article we intend to make a short presentation of the reprinted books, as well as of the new books, which are numerous, belonging to the famous Italian classics and to the contemporary authors. The majority of the translations of the contemporary Italian authors for children, show the contact of the publishers and translators with the updates in the field of children's literature in Italy, which is not recorded in the previous periods.

Keywords: *translation of children's Italian literature in Albanian, post dictatorship period, short chronological overview of the publication of the translations, contemporaneous authors, problems associated with the translation.*

1. Introduction

1990 is the year of the opening of the borders of Albania, not only physically, but also culturally. Translations of foreign literature conquered the market because of the identity crisis of the Albanian literature in the new circumstances of democracy, the great desire to fill the gaps caused by the dictatorial restrictions, and also due to the establishment of the private publishers (during the dictatorship existed only state publishers) that launched children's books on the market. Over the years, a large number of publishers experimented new formats, forms and various typographic characters, giving importance to the book not only with its content, but with its image as well.

The transition period marked a large number of translators, most of whom did not translate passionately. Their work consisted in meeting the economic profit goals of the publisher, which could employ an interpreter without proper preparation, just because they could be rewarded less. On the other hand, translation, a difficult art and profession, remained underestimated because it was not supported by the state institutions. During the communist era translation was characterized by ideological restrictions, but it was really professional, whereas after 90s due to the discretion and freedom of choice, anyone could translate a book and commercialize it, but there was no professionalism. During these two decades, critical assessments about specific books' translations or about translation in general, in order to emphasize the values and weaknesses, have been sparse. However, it must be mentioned that despite the weaknesses, there have also been serious and talented translators, who in the Albanian context, since the 90s until today have made possible the development and flourishing of artistic literature translation.

Further issues were added to the above problems, which are present even for translations of children's literature: in Albania, in the recent years, publishers and booksellers complain about low income and insufficient books' sales, noting the decline of the number of young readers; librarians state that the attendance at libraries is unsatisfactory; teachers, educators professors note an increase of lack of interest of students, especially teenagers, to reading books in leisure time and an increasing inability of decoding and understanding the texts; Parents, on their side, support the view that children read a little or less in comparison with the past. However, during this period there have also been efforts to

sensitize all ages, and particularly, the younger generations. Many publishing houses were aimed at underlining the importance of books and to spreading the culture of passion and pleasure of reading. It is often pointed out by educators, psychologists, sociologists, etc., that the interaction with the book becomes experience, stories that enrich the growing child's psyche, leave in his mind much more vivid and meaningful traces regarding more intensive and emotional events.

In this article we intend:

1. to make a short presentation of the reprinted books, as well as of the new books, from the Italian literature for children translated into Albanian, belonging to the famous Italian classics and to the contemporary authors,
2. to show the contact of the publishers and translators with the updates in the field of children's literature in Italy, which is not recorded in the previous periods,
3. to indicate the problematic issues in the field of translation of Italian literature for children.

2. The Contacts of the Albanian Publishers with the Updates in the Field of Italian Literature for Children

Regarding the Italian literature for children is evident an increasing number of translations in Albanian. New translators' names of Italian language appear, yet there were present those who have been active during the dictatorship, such as: Donika Omar, Elena Gjika etc. During the years 1990 – 2013 were published about 143 titles, mainly in the prose genre. The books are reprints of prominent Italian classics, such as: Carlo Collodi, Edmondo De Amicis, Gianni Rodari etc., but generally are brought new publications, which were not previously translated into Albanian, belonging to the authors of the past generations, as well as to the contemporary ones. Numerous translations of contemporary Italian authors for children indicate the contact of publishers and translators with the recent updates in the field of children's literature in Italy, which was not evident, either during the two world wars, or during the dictatorship. This is confirmed by the fact of the translations of books in a short interval from the time of the original publication in Italy, for instance: "*Matia dhe gjyshi*" ("*Matia and the grandfather*") of Roberto Piumini, is published in 1999 by the publisher *Dituria*, in the same year with the original, titled "*Mattia e il Nonno*", published for the first time by *Einaudi*; the book "*Me hap balerine*" ("*With a dancing step*") of Beatrice Masini is published in 2009, the original "*A passo di danza*" in 2005; the books of the series "*Hëna e Gjashtë*" ("*The sixth moon*") of Moony Whicher, consisting of five novels: "*Vogëlushja e Hënës së Gjashtë*" ("*The girl of the sixth moon*") is published in Albanian in 2008, whereas the original "*La bambina della Sesta Luna*" is published in 2002, "*Nina dhe misterit i notës oktavë*" ("*Nina and the mystery of the octave note*") in 2008, the original "*Nina e il mistero dell'Ottava Nota*" in 2003, "*Nina dhe mallkimi i Gjarprit me pupla*" ("*Nina and the curse of the plumed Serpent*") in 2009, the original "*Nina e la maledizione del Serpente Piumato*" in 2004, "*Nina dhe Syri Sekret i Atlantidës*" ("*Nina and the secret eye of Atlantis*") in 2010, the original "*Nina e l'Occhio Segreto di Atlantide*" in 2005, "*Nina dhe Numri i Artë*" ("*Nina and the golden number*") in 2013, the original "*Nina e il Numero Aureo*" in 2012.

3. The 90s

From 1988 to 1993, there was a decrease in the number of translations for children from Italian, due to historical circumstances, beginning of political changes from one-party to multiparty system, anyhow after this period to the present days, there have been translated into Albanian annually more than one book of Italian children's literature.

"*Xhipi në Televizor dhe ndodhi të tjera në orbitë*" ("*Gip in the TV and other stories in orbit*") of Gianni Rodari, published in 1990, opens the series of the books translated from Italian after the '90s, that year after year mark a quantitative increase never distinguished before. During the first half of the 90s were published books of prominent Italian classics, generally reprints, new editions and adaptations. In 1993 is published "*Aventurat e Çipolinos*" ("*The adventures of Cipollino*") of Gianni Rodari; in 1994 from the Italian literature for children are translated 3 books: "*Pinoku*" ("*Pinocchio*") of Carlo Collodi, translated in dialect from C. Simoni, brought in today's literary language from his son Z. Simoni (1928 – 2009); an adaptation of "*Pinoku*", of the publisher *Toena*, which opens the series of various adoptions done in the following years to this book; "*Torta që ra nga qielli*" ("*A pie in the sky*"), a novel of Gianni Rodari, translated by O. K. Grillo.

The second half of the 90s are the years of the great turning referring to the translations for children from Italian literature regarding the editions of the books from Italian contemporary authors. In 1995 is published the novel "*Kujtimet e Adalbertos*" ("*Memories of Adalberto*") of Angela Nanetti, translated by E. Ymeri; in 1996 is published for the first time a poetry book from Italian literature for children titled "*Kukafshehti*" ("*Hide-and-peek*"), of the authors Zaira Zuffetti and Paola Bona, followed by two other poetry books "*Pushimet*" ("*The holidays*") and "*Tek mjeku psikanalist*" ("*At the psychoanalyst*"), of the same authors; still during 1996 is also published the fairytales book "*Leopardi zemërmirë*" ("*The kind hearted leopard*"), translated and adapted from the Italian by A. Mici; in 1997 are published: "*Kalimero në plazh*" ("*Calimero on the beach*") of the authors Nino and Toni Pagot, translated and adapted by A. Mici; in 1999 are published

"Pema misterioze" ("The mysterious tree") of Donatella Bindi Mondaini, translated by E. Kristo and "Matia dhe gjyshi" ("Matia and the grandfather") of Roberto Piumini, also translated by E. Kristo. Besides the books of contemporary authors, there have continued the publication or reprint of the books of the prominent Italian classics. In 1996 is published "Pinoku", an adaptation with fairytales; in 1997 is published "Princesha gazmore: si përralla" ("Princess Allegra"), of Gianni Rodari, translated by K. Mahilaj, "Zemra" ("The heart") of Edmondo De Amicis, translated by V. Xhixha; in 1998 is published "Treni i vargjeve" ("Train of nonsense rhymes"), poetry of Gianni Rodari, is published K. Mahilaj; "Torta që ra nga qielli" ("A pie in the sky"), novel of Gianni Rodari, translated by O. K. Grillo.

4. The 2000s

From 2000 to 2013 is included the largest number of publications from Italian literature for children. Almost every year of this period have been published (except for 2003, where was not published any book, and 2006, where was published only one book) over 4 titles, reaching the largest number in 2009 with 21 books published. As demonstrated by our contemporary writers in 2000 have been published a series of adaptations of classical texts, frequently of the ancient Greek literature, such as: "Odiseja" ("Odyssey", 2000), a book with stories and novelettes, adapted for children by Stelio Martelli, translated by M. Ymeri, with illustrations of Libico Maraja; "Iliada – Lufta e Trojës" ("The Iliad – The war of Troy", 2000), a book with stories and novelettes, also adapted by Stelio Martelli and translated by K. Ymeri, with illustrations of Libico Maraja; "Eneida – Aventurat e Eneas" ("The Aeneid – The adventures of Aeneas", 2000), stories and novelettes, adapted by Stefania Stefani, translated by N. Lera, with illustrations of Piero Cattaneo; in the range «Hotel Olimpi» ("Hotel Olympus") are published many books of Sabina Colloredo: "Zeusi, mbreti i hyjnive, i burrave dhe i shumë grave" ("Zeus, the king of the Gods, of men and many woman", 2009), "Hera, mbretëreshë e hyjnive dhe grua shembullore ... deri në një farë pike" ("Hera, Queen of the Gods and a model wife, to a certain extent...", 2009), "Poseidoni, hy i detit gjithnjë mbi dallgë" ("Poseidon God of the Sea, always on crest of a wave", 2009); "Athinaja, aventura, beteja dhe shumë medalje" ("Athena adventures, encounters and battles", 2009) – the fourth translated by the same translator A. Shkreli –, whereas both books "Afërdita, hyjnesha e dashurisë që vjen dhe shkon" ("Aphrodite, the Goddess of love which comes and goes", 2009), "Apolloni, hy i këngës së bukur dhe i sjelljeve të këqija" ("Apollo, God of nice singing and bad manners", 2009), of the same author, are translated by H. Bregu.

Furthermore, in 2000, were published a large number of books of foreign authors belonging to adult's literature, and adapted for children by Italian authors, such as: "Oliver Tuist" ("Oliver Twist", 2000) of Charles Dickens, adapted for children from Paola Colombati, translated in Albanian by M. Ymeri; "Kuzimodo dhe Esmeralda" ("Quazimodo and Esmeralda", 2000) of Victor Hugo, adapted in the form of stories and novelettes by Stefania Molinari, translated by E. Tafa; "David Koperfild" ("David Copperfield", 2001) of Charles Dickens, adapted by Francesco Castello, translated by A. Sheldia; "Kalorësit e tryezës së rumbullakët" ("The knights of the round table", 2007), adapted by Stelio Martelli, translated by N. Lera.

There are many adult's authors who have written children's books as well, such as: "Vizatimet e çmendura" ("The crazy drawings", 2001), fairytale of Italo Calvino, translated by F. Andrea; "Përralla të zgjedhura" ("Selected tales", 2004) of Alberto Moravia, translated by T. Tafa, included in the series «Nobelistët» ("Nobel laureates"); "...miliarda vjet më parë" ("A billion years ago", 2004), fairytale of Alberto Moravia, selected by T. Tafa, translated by E. Tafa etc.

The largest number of Italian literature books for children translated during the 2000s belongs to the contemporary Italian authors. The year 2002 marks the edition of the first book of Bianca Pitzorno "Shtatë Robinson në një ishull të çuditshëm" ("Seven Robinson on a strange island"), novel translated by A. Spahiu. By Susanna Tamaro are published in Albanian: "Zemër tuli" ("A heart made of fat", 2002), novel translated by V. Lisi; "Rrethi magjik" ("The magic circle"), novel published in 2002 translated by V. Lisi and in 2012 translated by E. Goga. By Maria Marccone is published: "Anija kozmike e Alekut" ("The spaceship of Alek", 2003), novel translated by A. Bishqemi. By Moony Whicher are published: "Nina dhe misteri i notës oktavë" (përkthimin e titullit bëje në kllapa, 2008), novel translated by A. Nexhipi; "Vogëlushja e Hënës së Gjashtë" (përkthimin e titullit bëje në kllapa, 2008), novel translated by A. Doksani; "Nina dhe mallkimi i Gjarprit me pupla" (përkthimin e titullit bëje në kllapa, 2009), novel translated by A. Doksani; "Nina dhe Syri Sekret i Atlantidës" (përkthimin e titullit bëje në kllapa, 2010), novel translated by A. Nexhipi; "Nina dhe Numri i Artë" (përkthimin e titullit bëje në kllapa, 2013), novel translated by A. Nexhipi. By Roberto Piumini is published: "Ditari i Lasë" ("The diary of La", 2009), novel translated by N. Poroçani, with illustrations of Emanuela Bussolati. By Angela Nanetti is published: "Gjyshi im gazmor" ("My grandfather is a cherry tree", 2009), novel translated by N. Poroçani, with illustrations of Anna Balbusso. By Augusto Vecchi are published: "Lulu në mbretërinë e përrallave" ("Lulù in the kingdom of fairy tales", 2009), fairytales translated by T. and E. Tafa; "Lulu, zana blu" ("Lulù, the blue fairy", 2009), fairytales translated by T. and E. Tafa, with illustrations of Maria Rita Gentili; "Zana Lulu ndihmon xhuxhin plak" ("Lulù fairy and the old dwarf", 2010), fairytales

translated by E. and T. Tafa, with illustrations of Maria Rita Gentili. By Beatrice Masini are published 5 novels translated by N. Poroçani: *“Me hap balerine”* (2009), *“Shoqëri e ëmbël”* (“A matter of character”, 2009), *“Mes miqsh”* (“Old and New friends”, 2010), *“Balerina të vërteta”* (“Spring notes”, 2011) and *“Një tutu më shumë”* (“The guest with a Tutu”, 2012). The largest number of books of the same author, translated into Albanian during the 2000s belongs to Elisabetta Dami. Her books – that have Geronimo Stilton mouse as protagonist, a lovely character to the little readers in Italy, and to many other countries of the world – contain on their cover page Geronimo Stilton as author, on the contrary they are written by Elisabetta Dami. Her first book in Albanian was published in 2012, whereas in Italy its books appeared in the late 90s, and ever since have been amongst the best-selling books, and continues to be even nowadays. Some of her books published in Albanian, all translated by Agim Doksani, and included in the series «Aventurat e Jeronim Stiltonit» (“The adventures of Geronimo Stilton”) are: *“Dorëshkrimi misterioz i Nostramusit”* (“The mysterious manuscript Nostratopus”, 2012), *“Një superfurgon ngjyrë djathi”* (“A cheese colored camper”, 2012), *“Në mbretërinë e fantazisë”* (“The kingdom fantasy”, 2012), *“Fantazma e metrosë”* (“The phantom of the subway”, 2012), *“Katër miushë në xhunglën e zezë”* (“Four mice deep in the jungle”, 2012), *“Misteri i thesarit të zhdukur”* (“The mysterious cheese thief”, 2012), *“Larg ato putra, more surratgjizë!”* (“Paws off, cheddarface!”), 2012), *“Një limonadë me miza për kontin”* (“Red pizzas for a blue count”, 2013), *“Anija e maçokëve piratë”* (“Shipwreck on the pirate islands”, 2013), *“Misteri i syrit prej smeraldi”* (“Lost treasure of the emerald eye”, 2013), *“Gjithë fajin e ka një kafe me ajkë”* (“All because of a cup of coffee”, 2013), *“Buzëqeshja e Mona Miushizës”* (“The Mona Mousa code”, 2013), *“Unë quhem Stilton, Jeronim Stilton”* (“My name is Stilton, Geronimo Stilton”, 2013), *“Janë Krishlindjet, Stilton!”* (“Merry Christmas, Geronimo!”), 2013), *“Një fundjavë e çmendur për Jeronimin”* (“A fabulous vacation for Geronimo”, 2013), *“Mirë se erdhët në fortesën koprracia”* (“The haunted castle”, 2013), *“Dashuria është si djathi...”* (“Love is like cheese...”, 2013).

Some other authors of the Italian literature, whose works are translated into Albanian are: Silvia D'Achille; Anna Casalis, Simone Frasca, Francesca Lazzarato, Guglielmo Milani (recognized with several nicknames: Mino Milani, Stelio Martelli, Eugenio Ventura and Piero Selva) etc.

Simultaneously with the publications of contemporary authors are also translated books of classic Italian literature for children, generally titles unpublished previously in Albanian, and also reprints. A considerable number of books translated into Albanian belong to Gianni Rodari: *“Aventurat e kukullave mirëbërëse”* (“Freewheeling puppets”, 2001), novelette translated by G. Ariani; *“Na ishte dy herë baroni Lamberto”* (“Twice upon a time there was a baron Lamberto”, 2002) fairytale translated by E. Çela; *“Aventurat e Çipolinos”*, 2001), novel translated by Gj. Zheji; *“Rrëfenja italiane”* (“Italian Nursery rhymes”, 2002), stories and novelettes translated by A. Selenica; *“Libri i gabimeve”* (“The book of errors”, 2002), poetry, funny stories and novelettes, translated and adapted by E. Biba; *“Xhipi në televizor dhe ndodhi të tjera në orbitë”*, 2002), stories translated by N. Turkishi, included in the series «Llampa magjike» (“The magic lamp”); *“Xhelsominoja në vendin e gënjeshtarëve”* (“Gelsomino in the land of liars”, 2002), novel translated by A. Bishqemi; *“Torta që ra nga qielli”*, 2002, novel translated by O. K. Grillo; *“Tregime të tjera”* (“Other stories”, 2006), stories and novelettes translated by T. Tafa and E. Tafa; *“Atalanta”* (“Atalanta”, 2007), legends translated by D. Bishqemi; *“Përralla dhe fantazira”* (“Tales and fantatales”, 2007), fairytales translated by T. Tafa and E. Tafa; *“Xhipi në televizor dhe ndodhi të tjera në orbitë”*, 2007), stories, novelettes and fairytales translated by T. Tafa and E. Tafa; *“Përralla në telefon”* (“Tales on the phone”, 2007), fairytales translated by E. Tafa and T. Tafa; *“Xhelsominoja në vendin e gënjeshtarëve”*, 2007, novel translated and adapted by A. Bishqemi, with illustrations of Alberto Ruggieri, included in the series «Dy lindje dhe Dy perëndime» (“Two sunrises and two sunsets”), *“Torta që ra nga qielli”*, 2008), novel translated by T. Tafa and E. Tafa; *“Aventurat e Çipolinos”*, 2010), novel translated by T. Tafa and E. Tafa, included in the series «Shkrimtarët më të shquar të letërsisë botërore për fëmijë» (“The most prominent writers of world literature for children”; *“Kopshti zoologjik i përrallave”* (“The zoo of stories”, 2010), fairytales with illustrations of Fulvio Testa; *“Shigjeta e kaltër”* (“The blue arrow”, 2011), fairytales translated by H. Bregu; *“Udhëtimet e Xhovanino Perdixhornit”* (“Giovannino Perdigorno’s travel”, 2014), poetry and fairytales translated by K. Mahilaj, with illustrations of Francesco Altan.

“Pinoku” of Carlo Collodi is reprinted in 2002 translated by I. Toçi, whereas in 2005 is brought in Albanian the novel *“Piratët e Malezisë”* (“The pirates of Malaysia”) of Emilio Salgari, translated by G. Shyti.

The novel *“Zemër”* (“Heart”), of Edmondo De Amicis is published five times in the interval of seven years, by four different translators, once titled *“Zemër”* “Heart”, and once *“Zemra”* “The heart”. In 2004 is published titled *“Zemër”* “Heart”, translated by A. Doksani, in 2005 titled *“Zemra”* “The heart”, translated by K. Kodra, in 2007 titled *“Zemra e fëmijës”* “The child’s heart”, translated by E. Lluçaj, in 2011 is reprinted the translation of K. Kodra titled *“Zemra”* “The heart”, and in 2011 is published titled *“Zemra: ditari i një nxënësi italian”* “The heart: Diary of an Italian pupil”, translated from English by J. Buzi.

The promoting campaign of the children’s literature books, that are in the first months of their life in Italy, is reflected in Albania through the translation of numerous books addressed to the ages 0 to 6, such as: *“Tregime të*

shkurtëra me qenushë, lepurushë dhe maçokë ("Short stories with puppies, bunnies and tomcats", 2004); *Tregime të shkurtra me qenushë* ("Short stories with puppies", 2004); *Tregime të shkurtra me këlyshë* ("Short stories with puppies", 2004); *Tregime të shkurtra me maçokë* ("Short stories with tomcats", 2004); *Gjyshe na trego një përrallë: përrallat e Gjyshe Arushës* ("Grandma tell us a story: tales of Grandma Bear", 2010); *Grandma tell us a story: tales of Grandma Bunny*, 2010) etc.

5. Conclusions

Although the translation of Italian literature for children into Albanian during 1990 – 2014 met new dimensions, and the Albanian National Library was enriched with numerous reprinted books, as well as with new books, which belong to the famous Italian classics and to contemporary authors, except the evident and aforementioned problematic of literature in general, we may add that the same weaknesses regarding the data publication not only follow, (we noticed them in the period between the two world wars, and during the dictatorship, too) but they were further extended:

1. in many books is not written the name of the illustrator, either Albanian or foreign,
2. some books miss the name of the translator, and more often the name of the adapter,
3. there are just a few books on which are noted the publication data and the language from which they are translated.
4. many translations after 90s miss even the editorial control of the book.
5. the democratization of our country would set the foundations of a golden season, in terms of number of translations from the Italian, but with some deficiencies in the quality of the books translated.

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