

Motivating Materiality.

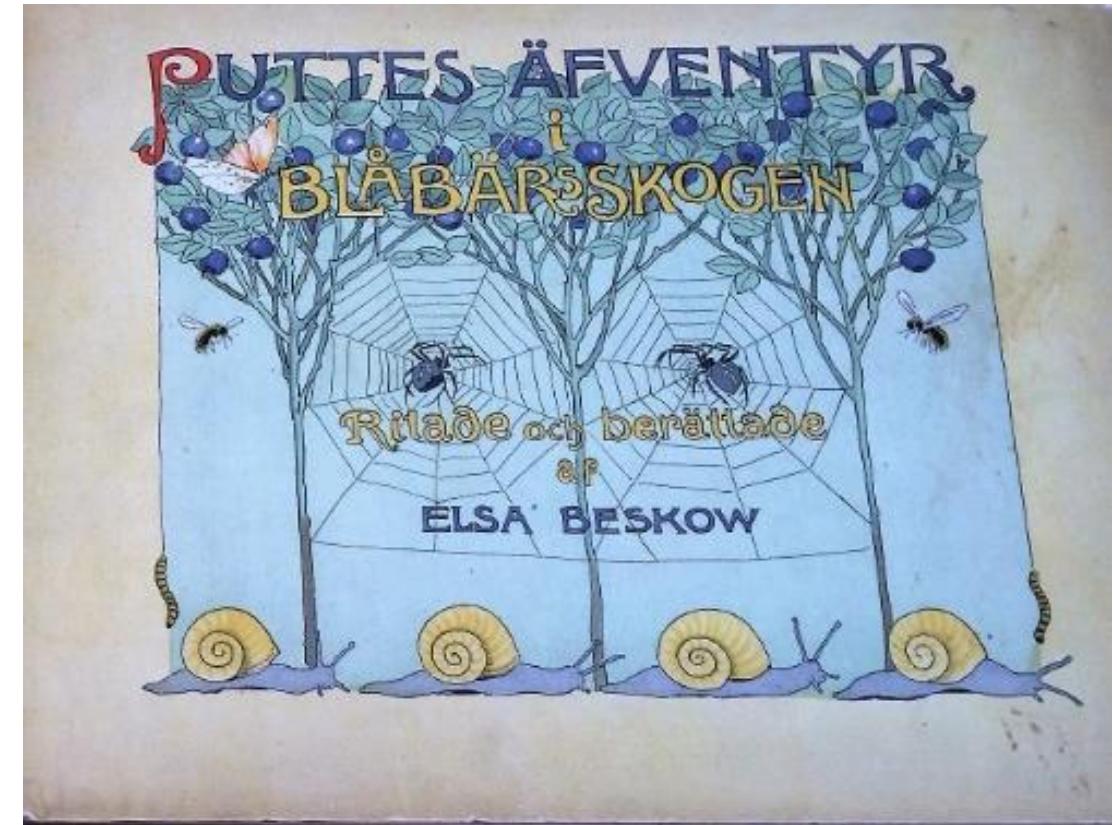
Elsa
Beskow's *Puttes äfventyr i blåbärsskogen* as an example for motivation in early literacy

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Puttes äfventyr i blåbärsskogen. Central tryckeriet: Stockholm 1901. Cover

Puttes äfventyr i blåbärsskogen (1901, 2009, 2012)

Peter in Blueberry Land (
Lasse im Blaubeerland (2012))

Hänschen im Blaubeerenwald (1903, 1946, 1968)

Pikku Puten seikkailu mustikka mestässä (190xx?)

Pikku Matin marjamatka (2015)
Na Jagody (ca. 1968)

...



Content

- Picturebooks in early literacy (literacies)
- Elsa Beskow's work
- Materiality matters: Putte as an example
- Postdoc.-Project *Pippi och Putte i världen*
- Summary
- Discussion and questions

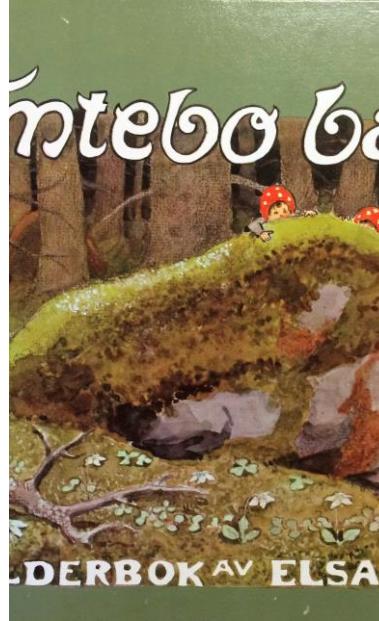
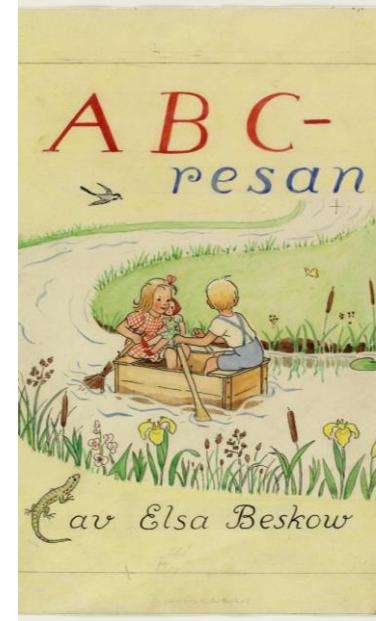
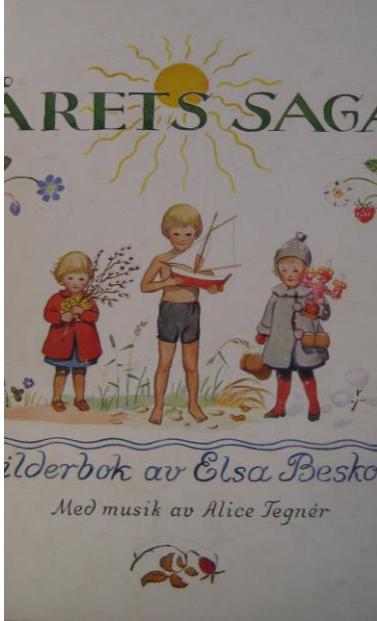
Picturebooks in early literacy – Elsa Beskow's work

"Given, that picturebooks are generally the focus of children's first encounter with narrative and textual artifact, these have a significant impact on the way in which a child learns not only about the world and story but also about books and reading." (Arizpe et al. 2018, 373)

- 1970ties: Literacy as "basic skills of decoding and writing printed scripts"
- Today: Literacy/literacies as a broader concept with subtypes as : "emergent literacy", "visual literacy", "media literacy", "digital literacy", "critical literacy" etc.

→ Picturebooks have an influence on cognitive, linguistic and aesthetic behavior

→ children need worthful, animating, complex picturebooks



Beskow's work

Elsa Beskow (1874-1953),
influenced by Ellen Key (1849-1926)
and *Barnets Århundrade* (1900)
[*The Century of the Child* (1903)]

- knowledge of pedagogy and art
- knowledge of the current political, technical, and social happenings
- knowledge of the discussion about printing
(Arts-and Crafts-Movement)





Reading and writing as a main topic in
Beskow's work

Elsa Beskow-a work of interest from material theorie's point of view

- Materiality in a strong context to teach children reading and writing
- A lot of material: editions from 1901-2019 in German and Swedish
- Letters in the archive of Bonnier and the Centrum för näringslivshistoria (Stockholm)
- Concrete materiality such as typography, format, paper and colours
- How did the books change in the time since 1901 until today (questions of bookhistory, publishing history, materiality)



2019

Materiality matters

- Material theories in many disciplines since over 20 years
- Benne: no common definition of the keyword «materiality» (2015)
- Including handling of the new media and its impact on reading as in the neurosciences: What is materiality? (Meibauer/Kümmerling-Meibauer, 2019): research of the materials themselves and impact on the reading process
- The Embodied Child: reading positions, brain activity, including new media (Mackey, Kokkola 2018)
- Overviews on the whole material discussion in children's literature (Wassiltschenko/Hombrecher 2020)
- Material analysis as part of the picture book analysis (Kurwinkel, Veriery Alaca 2018)
- New key word: AI

Materiality – Reading – Literacies

- In the focus of my interest is though the **aesthetical approach** (Druker, 2008, Müller-Wille 2017/2020, Bäni Rigler 2019, Field 2019, Hubli 2019, Källström 2020, Tomkowiak 2019, Schmitz-Emans 2019, Lötscher 2020...): **concrete materiality** and the poetic of the materiality in the texts, picture books
- High connection between **reading theories** and **material theories** in children's literature research because many texts are about the teaching the cultural techniques to the child reader (Müller-Wille, 2020)



Puttes äventyr i blåbärsskogen (ca. 1950)

Analysis

- **Big horizontal format:** sitting in a lap pf the parent and holding the book
- **Off-white, stable but soft paper:** enable a slow thumbing through the book, white left- handsided pages give space and time to look at all the details in the right-hand sided picture
- The **doublespread** supports a reading direction from left to right: see the snails on the cover in function of pageturners (Nikolajeva/Scott 2001, 153)
- **Typography:** adapted on the demands of the pedagogical requirements and the aesthtetical ideas about making books (handicraft – Arts- and Crafts-Movement, Morris)
- **Colour:** chosen as for small children ideal in the tone, adapted at small children's view (Krusenstjärna 1958, Lange Konrad)

→ these analyses can be made with many of her books, and it can be seen, that materiality matters



Putte/Peter/Lasse/Janek...

- Putte as “The first child of the century in the Century of the Child” (Nix 2002)
- fantastic story
- adventure and fantasy in nature
- empowerment (far from parents)
- learning to read and write
- format, paper, colors, typography are consciously selected by Beskow to animate children to learn reading and handling a book

- > A book about reading and social practices
- > A book about literacy
- > A book about empowerment and freedom
-and therefore, still very actual!

Kinderbuch - Lesebuch - Künstlerbuch

Books as Aesthetics of Materiality

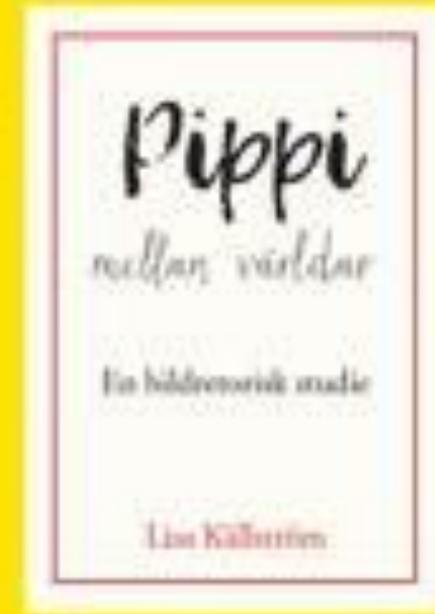


FRAGE ZUR NORDISCHEN PHILOLOGIE

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Pippi och Putte och i världen (Pippi and Putte in the World) – Interest in different editions of one story

- Project together with Dr. Lisa Källström since 2021, financed by Ridderstads Stiftelse, Stockholm
- Bookhistory, Publishing, Materiality
- Of interest: Changes of the books around Putte and Pippi Longstocking in different cultures, countries and languages (concrete materiality: colours, paper, typography, format).
- Changes of childhood concepts and their impact on pictures and visual material
- Planned was to look at editions from Sweden, Germany, Finnland, Poland, Russia and Israel: Corona-Pandemic and War made us change the plans.
 - > fokus on Sweden, (East)Germany/Switzerland and Poland
- Highly interested in a Co.-work with Eastern Countries (GWC)
- → Which impact does changes in editions have on the literacies?



Putte in Poland

Putte (1901) and *Na Jagody!* (1903)

- Maria Knopnicka (1842-1910),
Gebethner i Wolff Verlag,
Warschau 1903



What happened to the text?

- Text of Konopnicka is inspired by the illustrations of Beskow: but it is far longer: 371 verses in Polish and 138 verses in Swedish.
- The illustrations in Konopnicka's book are secondary – in Bweskow's book there is a tight connection between text and image.
- Konopnicka wrote a „poem“ or a „song“ which is known for the whole nation
- Under the 1980ties: schoolbook
- In the 1990ties: *Na Jagody* was a set book for the secondary class.
- Since 1903 until 2022: 91 editions from many famous illustrators

Variations



Summary

- **Motivating materiality** is to use paper, format, colours, typography, etc. CONSCIOUSLY in the production (illustrator-author) and to pay attention on these aspects by teaching them CONSCIOUSLY (teacher, lector, parent, librarian...) for the reception.
- Beskow's books offer a possibility to learn reading and writing (basic understanding of literacy) AND to experience books as artifacts and aesthetic objects.
- The book as an object including all material has an impact on literacies in all forms.
- Literacy in a broader understanding: materiality is always part of literacy (teaching)
 - but we have to put the focus on it.



"Along with the respect due to the picturebook as an aesthetic and cultural object, teachers can encourage students to consider the relationship between words, images, material aspects and other modes, promoting a critical reflection on literature, language and related social practices."

(Arizpe et al. 2018, 377)

Thank you!



Kasia Minasowicz 2022

Discussion



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