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## From The Wizard of Oz to The Wizard that W(Oz)

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## **From *The Wizard of Oz* to *The Wizard that W(Oz)*: Greek Adaptations of the Famous Fairy Tale.**

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### **Abstract**

The children's fairy tale *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* was written by L. Frank Baum in 1900 and illustrated by W. W. Denslow. It has been reprinted numerous times since then, most often under the name *The Wizard of Oz*. After the well-known 1902 Broadway musical and the 1939 film adaptation, the popularity of this book skyrocketed. Since the tale's first appearance, there have been countless written and illustrated versions for children all over the world. It is remarkable not only that this book stood the test of time for over a century, but that it is still subject to new treatments in addition to being a source of inspiration for developing interactive systems, as well. One way to achieve this goal was by using the methodology of the so-called "Wizard of (W)Oz studies". This essay examines two contemporary Greek adaptations for young children, and compares them with the "pre-text" of Baum's original work. My aim is to attempt a comparative narrative analysis and to investigate the ways in which the story has changed and developed in different illustrative types through intertextuality. I will endeavour to determine how the original text was altered and adjusted to young Greek audiences, and how that process of adaptation was influenced by the cultural, social and ideological components of its time.

**Key- words:** Wizard of Oz, Adaptations, Intertextuality, Picture books, Illustrated Children's Books, Short Stories

## Introduction

*The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* is one of North America's favourite texts of children's literature. It has been translated and adapted into more than fifty languages, including Greek. In the process of adapting the text to all those languages, *The Wizard of Oz* underwent a series of diverse transformations that often incorporated ideological and cultural elements, depending on the target cultures of the host location (Abrams & Zimmer, 2010). Such modifications have also been noted in adaptations for the theatre and television as well as in movies or advertisements. The story has also become a comic book and a tool to promote products in advertising campaigns (Scurman, 2005). The subject of the book, including the deepest ideological messages of the narration, the characters (Carpenter, 1985), the symbolisms and the allegory have widely inspired the fields of science technology, (*Wizard of (W)oz studies*), finance (Hansen & Bradley, 2002) and political science (Parker, 1994. Rockoff, 2009).

For many years, the story of the *Wizard* literally and figuratively enchanted both adults and children. However, it was censored heavily, particularly in regard to the moral and ideological stands that had been disguised - as a challenge, some even state - in the storytelling (Rockoff, 2009). It was even connected with the women's suffrage movement as Dorothy, the protagonist of the story, is a girl who both had adventures and appeared in a quite unconventional role for the social standards of that era (Parker, 1994).

For the centenary of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, in the year 2000, Frank Baum's book was celebrated as many praised its groundbreaking innovations in writing, and even more for the fact that he taught children to love reading through the imaginary literary universe of Oz (Pasino, 2000; Phillip's, 2000). After so many years, it can be said that Baum's ambitions have been well accomplished, since he has once wrote that: "*Modern education includes morality; therefore the modern child seeks only entertainment in its wonder tales and gladly dispenses with all disagreeable incidents. Having this thought in mind, the story of "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz" was written solely to please children of today. It aspires to be a modernized fairy tale, in which the wonderment and joy are retained and the heartaches and nightmares are left out.*" (Baum, Introduction, 1900).

The story is about the imaginary adventures of an orphan girl from Kansas, Dorothy Gale, who is taken from her home involuntarily (Taylor, 2009), when a cyclone picks her up and throws her into the magical world of Oz (Carpenter, 1985). Despite having been taken from her home against her wishes, this turn of events offers her a time-out from the oppressive routine of her life, dominated by her parents' power, which is a situation any child can identify with. The process of the child's identification through the recognition of herself/himself in a hero's circumstances is decisive to both understanding the story and to progressing towards the road to self-knowledge (Jauss, 1995: 103).

Through these processes, the child-readers are given the opportunity to further elaborate on every own feeling similar to what the hero experiences, and subsequently come to a better understanding of their own selves. Moreover, the child-readers are exposed to reactions and behaviour patterns which are different from those that are already known to them, and they can experience events and situations from a different point view in order to learn more about the world.

The hero who leaves her/his home seeking adventures is very popular in children's literature (Kanatsouli, 2004: 50), though usually only with male protagonists (Tom Sawyer, Oliver Twist, Pinocchio, Peter Pan, Harry Potter etc.). Lewis Carol's Alice and Baum's Dorothy are exceptions to the rule, as they are different from the usual female prototypes typically found in children's literature at the time they were published. It becomes clear that Baum's work blends traditional story elements with social and literary considerations of his time.

## **Methodology**

In this article, I will examine two modern illustrated adaptations of the story of the *Wizard of Oz* that were published in Greece in recent years (2002, 2008). These will be compared and contrasted to the "pre-text" of Baum's original work. The aim of this article is to investigate the ways in which the story has changed and was developed over time to better suit Greek children as an audience. Through *intertextual analysis* (Genette, 1982. Stephens, 1998), I will also try to show how the story has

been adapted in order to better reflect the standards of the modern times it was transcribed for.

The literary works, which we chose to refer to are modern illustrated short stories. Our aim was that the works being analysed are Greek adaptations and belong to one genre only, in order to examine the ways in which the initial story was transcribed and adapted for younger readers. For the collection of children's books we consulted the electronic database of EKEBI (National Book Centre, [www.ekebi.gr](http://www.ekebi.gr)) and electronic catalogues of publishing houses with children's books series. After research we have found twenty eight adaptations, Greek and translated ones, since 1979. Considering the number of pages, eight of the works were intended for children of preschool and primary school age, while the remaining twenty exceeded the number of eighty pages. Only two works out of the eight corresponded to our chosen criteria and were feasible to find. This literary works are the ones we have analysed.

For the purpose of the comparison between the children's adaptations and the "pre-text", I used the 1990 original edition that is available electronically ([literature.org](http://literature.org)). Before the analysis and the comparison of the texts, I will refer to certain key features of the original.

### **An insight into *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz***

I will turn to the "pre-text" and discuss how a Proppian analysis of the story of *Wizard of Oz* may offer an insight into its organization. The morphology of the folk tale, and in particular Vladimir Propp's theory of the functions noted in folk tales, has widely influenced the study, reception and retelling of stories for children (Propp, 1968)

To begin with, we note the *initial situation* ( $\alpha$ ), (Kansas, Dorothy's way of living near her relatives), the *departure* ( $\uparrow$ ) of the heroine (the cyclone picked up Dorothy) and the sudden disappearance, *absentation* ( $\beta$ ) (the house is violently transported away from Earth and lands on the Land of Oz). Then, we observe the meeting with the first *Donor* (the Good Witch of the North) where Dorothy is *tested by the Donor* (D), earns the first *magic item* (F), the Silver Shoes, and a *mark* (I) on the forehead which conceals magic powers (The Witch's Kiss to Dorothy). Then follows the *hero's*

*reaction* (E) (Dorothy is determined to find the Wizard of Oz). During the journey to the Land of Oz, Dorothy faces a series of problems, obstacles and conflicts which she positively overcomes with the help of Dorothy's fellow travellers (the Tin Woodman, the Lion, the Scarecrow) and *assistants* (flying monkeys, stork, mice). To fulfil her wish to return to Kansas, Dorothy undergoes a *difficult task* (M). She is asked to kill the wicked Witch of the West. She eventually struggles with herself and her moral values, *accepts the challenge* and decides to act (C). The scene is shifted at the site of action (G). She fights (H) the *competitor* (the Witch), *wins* (N) and earns a *second magic item*, the Golden Cap. Finally, a *revelation* (Q) takes place as everyone realizes that Oz is a "humbug" and the heroine *returns home* (W).

The journey that Dorothy and her companions embark on is nothing more than a path to self-discovery. During her journey, Dorothy meets some wonderful fanciful characters who are also seeking something very special. The company consists of the Scarecrow (who is seeking a brain), the Tin Woodman (who is seeking a heart), and the Cowardly Lion (who is seeking courage). Eventually, through the influence of the Good Witch of the North, they enter the Emerald Palace of the Wizard of Oz and meet up with the Wizard, who turns out to be nothing but a "humbug", a fake magician from Dorothy's own home town in Kansas. However, the Wizard does have something of importance to offer to the lead characters: that they need only look within themselves to realize that they already possess the qualities they are looking for. The Scarecrow has developed a brain by having to make a decision on their journey, and learns that experience is the only thing that brings knowledge. The Tin Woodman comes to realise that having a heart means being able to love unconditionally, even to the point of pain. In fact, he finds out that he does have a heart because he has loved Dorothy. The Cowardly Lion learns that courage lies in facing danger when you are afraid, and that he has always possessed that particular quality. He has become courageous because he had to show courage during their adventures. (Osborne, 2013)

Kansas is presented as a grey state, while the world of Oz is presented full of colour and vitality, a place where a child's wildest and supernatural fantasies can become reality. The heroine, however, chooses to return to the grey state because it is there that her home and foster parents are. As it is commonly said and noted in the book,

“*There is no place like home*” (Baum, 1900: 46). Dorothy’s positioning in the real world puts forward both her regeneration and maturity. She returns home from a trip to the world of Oz with a new awareness of magic. In the end, the tests she undergoes and the conflicts with several supernatural powers that she manages to overcome make her more independent than ever before. The impulse to return home is every child’s need for emotional safety. The deepest ideological message of this narrative is possibly that happiness is a state of mind, where everyone can time travel by using imagination. It is a hymn to life and friendship; it is about optimism versus pessimism.

### **Textual analyses: comparisons and contrasts**

A textual analysis of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* reveals that, although the two versions adhere to the basic plot of the original tale, there are many differences between them, on many levels.

The first adaptation I will discuss was published in 2002, under the title *The Wizard of Oz*, and has sold eight thousands copies so far. This text was adapted by Stella Koutsoukali and illustrated by Lampros Katsadonis (Kedros, 2002). On the back cover, the author states that this is an adaptation of the original tale and gives some brief information on Baum. One of the main reasons why we have decided to refer to this specific adaptation is the peculiarity that distinguishes this narrative with regard to the way it addresses the implied reader, as it can address simultaneously two types of readership, namely both children of primary school age and younger preschool-age children.

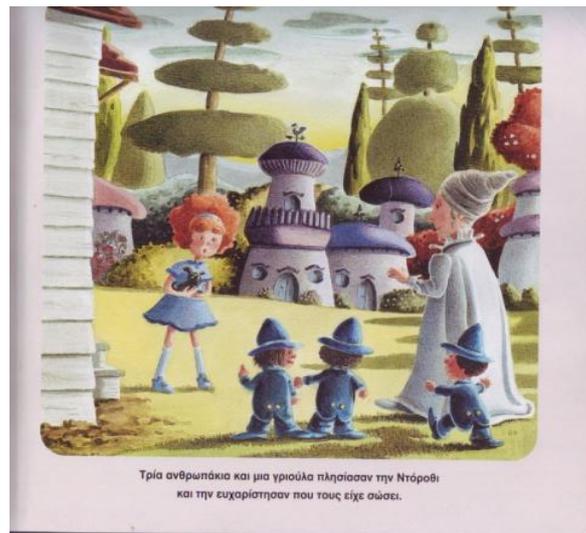


Figure 1. Dorothy, Munchkins and the Good Witch of the North. Illustration by Lampros Katsadonis, from Stella Koutsoukali, *The Wizard of Oz*, (Athens, Kedros, 2002). Copyright© Kedros Publishing.

The layout of the *ouoioe* open pages places text and small details on the left side, and pictures on the right, where each large illustration is accompanied by a two-sentence caption. With this distinction, it's possible to follow both the text on the left, and the pictures on the right. A younger reader, or a young child who reads with an adult, can focus on either side, benefitting from the longer text and its full details, while the youngest can still follow the story by concentrating exclusively on the large illustrations on the right-hand side and their simple captions.

The *para-text* elements of the book (Genette, 1991) refer to the pre-text of Baum's work but with significant differences, on many levels. It is mentioned neither that Dorothy is an orphan and because of that she lives with her uncle Henri and aunt Em, nor that Kansas is presented as a grey vast state. The narration is simple, time is linear and the unfolding of the plot is in the form of dialogue. Furthermore, the plot serves the *basic plot* outline well, since it is characterized by an action circle with *climax* and *resolution* (Nikolajeva, 2005: 101). In the adapted book, the shoes (the magic object) that the heroine puts on are red and not silver, and the Munchkins – the people that Dorothy saves from the authoritarian rule of the Witch of the East - are not adults but blue-clad children that look like dwarves. Judging by the way fictional characters are represented in literary works, we tend to believe that they are young children probably of the same age as the target reader, that is to say, children of preschool age to whom

the specific short story is addressed. Thus, the book illustration promotes the active identification of young readers. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that even the size of the supernatural creatures, for example that of the witch, is corresponding to that of the heroine who is a young child. Therefore, the witch's negative personality traits, which constitute the visual representation of the object of fear, do not pose a threat to the young child. According to the children's perception of the world, this is because the witch's small size corresponds to the "small" danger that she represents. (Bang, 1993: 134). In the pre-text, the wicked witch is described as omnipotent, with a supernatural eye looking like a "telescope" which is able to observe everything from afar (Baum, 1902: 124). In the adapted text, the supernatural eye has been replaced by a glass eye, while the tremendous hardship that the main characters suffer because of the wicked witch of the West is omitted. The only point of convergence is the manner in which the witch was killed that is by using pure water.

The type of narration and the whole structure are organized from a child-centered viewpoint. The characters of the story are *flat* (Nikolajeva, 2002: 129), and their roles very clear as they lack all the multiple attributes that graced the heroes of the original book. In the adapted text, events are connected more associatively rather than by cause and effect. Many of the tasks that the heroes carried out in Baum's text are omitted. This seems to be due to the different target audiences of both texts. As a result, the narrative of the adapted text contains simplified meanings in comparison to the pre-text which contains more complex meanings and it is addressed to older readers. The narrative's transition from an older target reader to a younger one results in the omission of several action scenes of the original story, while the narrative of the adapted story primarily focuses on the aspect of the adventurous wanderings as well as the development of self-awareness of the characters in the magical world of Oz. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that although several action scenes, which are described in detail in the pre-text, are omitted in the adapted text. One typical example of this omission is the captivity and maltreatment of Cowardly Lion from the wicked witch of the West (Baum, 1900: 129, 131-133) which, from our point of view, reflects the educational and ecological beliefs of the time when the specific Greek adaptation was written.

In this adaptation, most of the fantastic and supernatural characteristics of Baum's text are not mentioned either. In the pre-text, along the way to the Emerald City and the Wizard's palace, Dorothy and her friends have to endure numerous trials and tribulations, during which evil forces seek to destroy them or simply test their patience and endurance. More specifically, there are wicked witches (for example Wicked Witch of the West) as well as good witches (Glinda the Good). In addition, there are dangerous wild creatures and natural hazards, such as the river that reverses, the road that slides back, the trees that seize people and mountains that twirl around even poisonous flowers (Chapter VIII. "The Deadly Poppy Field, Baum, 1900:77-86). Taking into consideration the above mentioned features, the point of convergence between the two literary works is the general moral conflict between good and evil forces, the prevalence of good forces and, last but not least, the optimistic and cathartic ending, which is Dorothy's return home.

The colourful illustration plays a determining role in the development of the plot since it fills in the narrative gaps. Colours are vibrant and the shapes and figures are round without angularities. The lines are smooth, and give a sense of peace and tranquillity. The entire illustration reminds us of a childlike drawing and the choice of colours projects a dreamy atmosphere. In fact, the colours do express the exuberant and cheerful ebullience of children's life. (Nodelman, 1988: 99). The ideological messages are clear and focus on friendship, cooperation, self-esteem and optimism. The author did not select to attribute the original story in this particular way at random. On the contrary, his way of addressing the text depends on a set of determining factors such as the literary genre: it is a short-story and it is addressed to young children, who are part of a very special target audience.

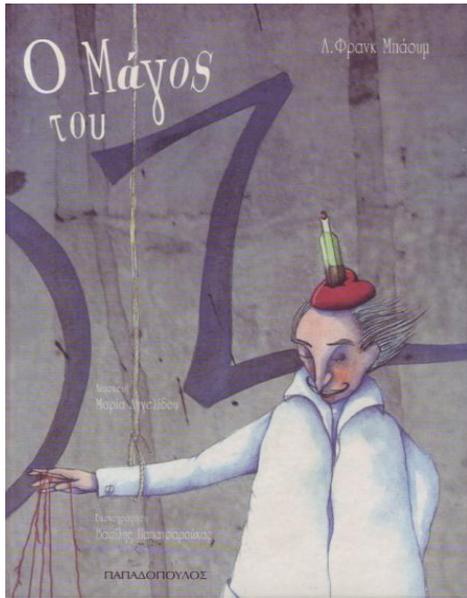


Figure 2. Book jacket illustration by Vasilis Papatsarouhas from Maria Aggelidou, *Wizard of Oz*, Copyright© (Athens: Papadopoulos, 2008), Papadopoulos Publishing.

The second Greek adaptation is by Maria Aggelidou, illustrated by Vasilis Papatsarouhas (Papadopoulos, 2008), and presents an innovative “performance” of the classical story both in terms of narrative techniques and as regards the aesthetic qualities of the illustrations. This book is an excellent example of the newest developments in children’s literature in Greece. Examining the *para-text* elements, there is a reference to Baum and the original book on the end-pages, where short biographies of the author/re-teller and

The title plays a vital role in the reading r the illustrator are also included (*factual* into the illustration by merging the work *para-text*, Genette, 1991).

2001). The messages of the front cover function in a *multimodal* way, since the borders between word and picture have become blurred. Under the title is an illustration of the Wizard of Oz, the magician of Omaha, which adds a causal relationship between the *signifier* and the *signified*.

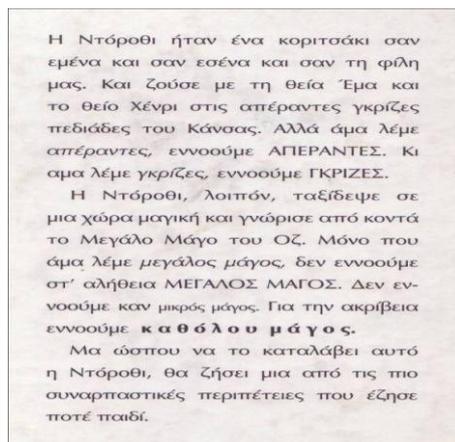


Figure 3. Back cover from Maria Aggelidou, *Wizard of Oz*, Copyright© (Athens: Papadopoulos, 2008), Papadopoulos Publishing

Moreover, on the back cover there is some important information about the book that addresses the young target readers stimulating their connection with the narration imaginatively and creatively. The wordplay, the size and the colour of the letters, the background illustration, altogether and each one separately, merge transmitting multimodal meanings to reach a new dimension of contemporary illustrated children's books. This humorous and playful mood towards the young readers, does not only affect their mood, but it also contributes to the familiarization of young children with different kinds of literary conventions, allowing them to get used to how visual elements may relate to the form of the text. The child-centered viewpoint of this book is further reinforced by the narrator's comments when she introduces Dorothy: *"Dorothy is a little girl like you like me and like our friend ...."*. With reference to the target readers, this is a self-referential and playful comment, while it brings the rules and conventions of fiction to their attention.

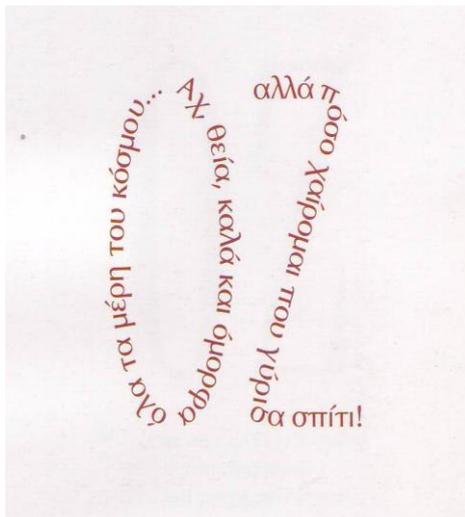


Figure 4. Flyleaf illustration by Vasilis Papatsarouhas from Maria Aggelidou, *Wizard of Oz*, Copyright© (Athens: Papadopoulos, 2008), Papadopoulos Publishing.

Another point of great interest is the front pages just before the beginning of the narration, which rather innovatively function as a prologue. On the first page, (set if/it by prologue, Aggelidou, 2008: 5) the reader sees the word OZ. Observing this word better and attempting to read it clockwise, the reader notices that this word encloses a deeper ideological *visual-linguistic* message. The word OZ is a visualized convention containing Dorothy's ending words that convey this message: *"Oh, my aunt, all the places around the world are nice and beautiful, but I'm so glad to be at home again..."* Through this *metafictional* technique the writer and the illustrator "play a game" with the narrative choices of beginning and ending the story.

This story is shorter than the original text; the writer manages to condense the scenes without altering the most important messages of the book. The adapted text maintains the fundamental ideological principles of the original text and in particular, the values of friendship and cooperation as well as the values of family and the warmth of home. The patterns of the characters' group wanderings and the quest for the fulfillment of dreams and desires are maintained, as well. The narration is mostly in third person, with several dialogues among the characters following the original ones to the letter. The basic plot of the adaptation sticks to the original plot, while maintaining its own independence, since it is not a simple *imitation*. On the contrary, it is rather a new version which updates and complements the original text. Maria Aggelidou said: "*The adaptation is not a summary. It is a new work with its own "balance".....*".<sup>1</sup> Although the adapted text reproduces the basic ideological principles of the original text, these principles are extended and linked to the social and cultural *context* of the time in accordance with the setting of the adaptation. In particular, the diversity of characters - the Scarecrow who seeks brain, the Tin Woodman who seeks a heart and the Cowardly Lion who seeks courage - reflects the multicultural ideology of today. As a result, these characters represent the *unprivileged "Other"*<sup>2</sup> (McGillis, 1997) and the quest for the magical Land of Oz ("surrealistic land of the Other") symbolizes not only a process of identification, awareness and acquaintance with the "Other", but also a process of reconciliation of each character with both inner and outer world.

Furthermore, the detailed and emphatic description of the grey plains of Kansas with numerous similes and metaphors could be associated with the environmental destruction and the discolored buildings caused by the pollutants of modern cities. Both in the pre-text and the adapted text, the use of grey equally fulfils a literal as well as a figurative function. Literally, grey is attributed to the adverse weather conditions in Kansas, "*In those plains, there was nothing but cracked, grey soil on which the blazing sun and the rain was beating down*" (Aggelidou, 2008: 5). Figuratively, grey performs an interpersonal function according to which it is used to

<sup>1</sup> From our personal interview with the author.

<sup>2</sup> Julia Kristeva refers to "Other" as the "foreigner" who lives within us. She describes the foreigner as "the hidden face of our identity, the space that wrecks our abode, the time in which understanding and affinity founder". Kristeva, J., *The Stranger to Ourselves*, Rodiez, L. Trans. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991, p.1. McGillis uses the term 'Other' as an alternative to "stranger" or "foreigner". McGillis, R., "Self, Other, and Other Self: Recognizing the Other in Children's Literature", *The Lion and the Unicorn*, vol. 21 (2), 1997, 215-229.

express feelings of sadness, isolation and abandonment (Nodelman, 2009: 108). “*Aunt Emma was wearing a grey scarf and a grey apron – she had grey eyes and grey hair, as well. As for Uncle Harry, he was grey from head to toe. So were all the people in the vast grey plains of Kansas – tired, unsmiling and grey*” (Aggelidou, 2008: 6). The figurative use of grey could be associated with the social isolation and the emotional gap among people linked to the modern lifestyle in big cities.

Ideologically, it is an illustrated short story which is addressed to preschool-age children. Both in the latter adaptation and the former one to be analyzed, the *intertextual connection* between the adapted texts and the original text is the transformation of the text into a more simplified form so that it suits the needs of a younger target audience. Therefore, the language is simpler without any complex meanings and long descriptions. At the beginning of each chapter, there is a short paragraph which summarizes the main content in an explanatory and humorous way. This way, the author both attracts the readers’ interest and makes it easier for young readers to keep the consistency among the different chapters in mind. Furthermore, the authorial intent of adaptation is implied as it is indicated that: “*In the opening chapters, we find out about who Dorothy is and how the cyclone picks her up. We also find out that she has a problem, a pair of silver shoes and three companions*” (Aggelidou, 2008: 5). Due to the above mentioned technique in combination with the narrator’s direct forms of address to young readers and the explanatory comments inserted into the narrative (often in brackets), there is a sense of “*polyphony*” (Bakhtin, 2000) while the sincerity of the omniscient narrator is undermined. Moreover, the implied reader is able to know even the feelings and thoughts of the characters which they themselves are not able to express. For example, there is a description of Toto’s (Dorothy’s dog) mood when he had to enter the hiding place in order to protect himself from the cyclone, “*But at the last minute, naughty Toto (who didn’t like being squeezed into the dark hiding place at all) ...slipped from Dorothy’s grasp and rushed out of the house barking in the air.*” (Aggelidou, 2008: 7). Furthermore, there are narrative gaps that readers fill in with personality involvement. (Iser, 1974). Through these techniques, child-centered theory is applied once again, and enriched by explanatory comments that appear throughout the narrative and are addressed directly to the target reader. “*That’s the way the story goes and decide for yourself whether you believe it or not*”.

Narrative time is not linear, as the author “plays a game” with tenses giving, thus, a sense of a *multiple temporality* (Nikolajeva, 2000: 126-130). For instance, at the point where Kansas is described to be often struck by cyclones in the past tense, it is indicated in brackets that (“*and sometimes, they still strike*”). The narrative time is coalesced into the real time “*As to whether she saves him... she did so, but it took her too long. In fact, it took her much longer than it would take us to tell this story*” (Aggelidou, 2008:7).

The illustrations by Vasilis Papatsarouhas are of exceptionally great interest not only for their aesthetic value but also for the unique way in which they support the written text. The *metafictional* illustrated version of Dorothy uses techniques that represent the visual equivalent of *metanarration* (Yannicopoulou, 2008: 145). In Dorothy’s depiction, the illustrator has selected to present the girl’s figure dressed in purple. The illustrator “dresses the protagonist in her narrative”. In particular, on the dress, there are little sentences from the original text, in black hand-written/ embroidered letters.



Figure 5. Dorothy by Vasilis Papatsarouhas from Maria Aggelidou, *Wizard of Oz*, Copyright© (Athens:Papadopoulos, 2008), Papadopoulos Publishing

This style contributes to the multilevel narrative complexity, as it adds another narrative level to the already existing level of illustrated narrative. Apart from the use of metafiction as a device to enhance the complexity of the plot, there are also inter-visual references that render the multimodal story enjoyable for a wider readership. Almost all illustrations contain short comments at the margins either with a piece of information, for example cyclones that take place at Kansas or references to Shakespeare, Aesop, or Thomas de Montegna about whom it is noted that “*The first depiction of glasses was made by Thomas de Montegna in 1552* (Papatsarouhas, 2008: 31). Thereby, both the marginal use of letters and sentences and the visual details within the space of the thematic illustration, create an independent visual language. In addition, there are *inter-visual allusions* (Beckett, 2001) concerning Baum’s original text which remind us that it is a *meta-narrative*.



Figure 6. Inter-visual detail, *L. Frank Baum, The Wizard of Oz*, by Vasilis Papatsarouhas from Maria Aggelidou, *Wizard of Oz*, Copyright© (Athens: Papadopoulos, 2008), Papadopoulos Publishing.

## Conclusion

Each of the two adaptations discussed above have used the same pre-text of different degrees of fidelity to the original text. A common feature of these adapted texts is the transcription and the transformation of the original text into a “more simplified form” so that they could be accessible to younger target audiences, that is to say preschool and primary school age groups. Furthermore, the adapted texts comply with the rules of the new ideological context at the time they were written, as both adaptations belong to the same genre (target audience adaptation). As a result, the elements of simplification, omission and meaning condensation are distinct in the adapted texts in comparison with the original text. Despite the short form of meta-narratives, the basic ideological beliefs of original text are not omitted, which confirms the timeless and universal value of these messages. Moreover, numerous ideological assumptions are made in the adapted texts according to the context of the time they were written. In particular, ecological, anti-war and anti-racist beliefs are expressed in accordance with the multicultural ideology of today. The core of these beliefs focuses on the meta-narrative schemas applied during the time when the adaptations were written which Stephens and McCallum call *meta-ethic* (Stephens & McCallum, 1998: 5-10).

It is also remarkable that because of the illustration options of each illustrator-adaptor, there is a big difference not only between the two adapted texts, but between the adapted texts and the original texts, as well. The biggest alteration regarding the pre-text is the use of contemporary narrative techniques of referring to the implied reader. With emphasis on the illustrated adaptation by Aggelidou and Papatsarouhas different sorts of innovative strategies are adopted including meta-fictional interventions, polyphonic and multileveled narration, blending of historical and realistic features with fantasy, multimodality, narrative and typographical techniques as well as self-reference inventions.

What becomes of central importance is understanding how authors, illustrators and translators read and reproduced Baum’s *The Wizard of Oz* under different literary, social, cultural system. Of particular interest is the way in which the adapted text conveys its own cultural characteristics onto another culture acquiring sets of particularities and inter-cultured terms. The story of the Wonderful Wizard of Oz and its adaptations for Greek children is, in our opinion, a small indicative example of the

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way foreign literary texts are transferred into the Greek cultural environment and into Greek children's literature itself.

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