



# Kronika Events



## *Alice Through the Ages: Revisiting a Classic at 150*

Cambridge, UK, 15 – 17 September 2015

To mark the sesquicentennial of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) many lectures and study days were held throughout the year 2015 in Britain. The largest event was the *Alice Through the Ages* conference at Homerton College, Cambridge, with 85 speakers and 155 attendees altogether. Many of the presenters were in the early stages of their academic careers, so we can look forward to burgeoning research about *Alice* in the future. Maria Nikolajeva, Professor of Education, and Dr Zoe Jaques, both Fellows of Homerton and key organisers of the Conference, pointed out that: “In accepting papers we looked for a broad range of topics, but we didn’t want to lose academic rigour, so it was the most important criterion for acceptance. In several cases we asked people to focus on a particular aspect. The challenge for us was making the sessions coherent. But we also accepted more creative proposals such as poetry recitals.”

The Conference attracted *Alice* lovers and experts from all over the world, who presented aspects of their current work. As Xinwei Zhu from China, who is writing her PhD at the University of Essex, wrote to me: “it was my first experience to present a paper. It was a great chance to meet people from different fields and discuss *Alice* in a blissful atmosphere.” Mark Richards, former Chairman of the Lewis Carroll Society of Britain, was equally enthusiastic: “As well as really enjoying Homerton (as I am sure everyone did), I suspect it has made a significant contribution to Carroll studies.”

As this Conference should make a big difference to research on *Alice*, the challenge for me is to communicate at least some of the content of the presentations as well as the “blissful atmosphere” of concise talks – each one precisely 20 minutes long – followed by questions and answers, and then further discussions in the Great Hall over a meal, under the haughty gaze of a big blue caterpillar. With so many parallel sessions to choose from, no one person attending the Conference could possibly summarize the whole event in detail, so I will have to offer a personal account. A core of papers by scholars applied a wide range of theories of children’s literature, including philosophical approaches, to the *Alice* books. These presentations covered semiotic analysis, frames and embedded stories, the role of the reader and comparison with other texts, to name but a few of the challenging approaches. The pitfalls and pleasures of translating *Alice* into other languages were also treated in depth and had been earmarked as a key theme by the organizers, an apt choice for a Conference with speakers from all over the world. The word-image relationship was addressed by several speakers with reference to Tenniel’s images and later renderings, especially film adaptations. Lessons for *Alice* became lessons for education today.

The first keynote speaker, Professor Dame Gillian Beer, never tires of teasing out the intricacies of Lewis Carroll’s word play and humour. I heard her at a symposium accompanying the Tate Liverpool exhibition “*Alice in Wonderland Through the Visual Arts*” in 2011, delighting a young art audience, many of whom had apparently never read the books in the original. In Cambridge with an audience of all ages and academic aspirations, who all knew the *Alice* books by heart, she focussed on philosophical considerations arising from *Alice*’s thought at the beginning of her adventures in Wonderland: “What is the use of

a book without pictures or conversations?” Gillian Beer traced some rhetorical similarities between Socratic dialogue, in which sycophantic answers were given to a dominant speaker, and Carroll’s literary encounters between Alice and Wonderland characters. I had the good fortune to find myself sitting near her at lunch in the Great Hall, so I asked if she thought that Carroll was actually sourcing Plato. She thought not but, with a twinkle in her eye, added that she might be persuaded to change her mind. In her talk she also spoke about Alice’s efforts to find a basis for community through conversation, pointing to the way Wonderland conversations fail to bring the protagonists closer together and amount to a series of dead-ends.

The nature of Wonderland communication was taken up in a paper by Maggie Meimaridi from the University of Cambridge entitled “‘I don’t think it’s at all a pity’: Violence, Animals and Alice’s Pity”. Using Kant’s concept of personhood, she inferred that “The marginalized child is closer to the irrational animal than the rational adult and this connection between child and animal is felt in *Wonderland* and *Looking Glass*, as is their growing disconnect” (quote from the conference *Book of Abstracts*). According to Meimaridi, the violent shaking of the kitten at the end of Alice’s journey marks the demise of her childlike pity “as she grows into a member of society”.

How should the world that Alice enters, in which these dialogues take place, be described? Siddharth Pandey (University of Cambridge) in his talk “‘Stuff and Nonsense’: Wonderland’s Materiality and the Aesthetic of Transformation” examined the way the text of the first *Alice* book reflects “on the body via things, on architecture via animals and trees, and on things via animals [...] this constant state of metamorphosis lends a unique sense of whimsicality to the text” (*Book of Abstracts*). Several speakers talked of a “liminal space” but I was not convinced that they were using the term “liminality” in the strict anthropological sense of “the quality of ambiguity or disorientation that occurs in the middle stage of rituals, when participants no longer hold their pre-ritual status but have not yet begun the transition to the status they will hold when the ritual is complete”, but sailing rather close to “popular usage, where it is applied much more broadly” (*Wikipedia*, accessed 11.11.2015). Fortunately, most speakers went on to try to pin down more precisely the way Wonderland “teeters on the brink of reality” (Kirstin Mills, Macquarie University, Australia). Mills explained how Carroll’s idea of “shutting people up like telescopes” related to radical scientific and philosophical ideas of his day. The reality in which Lewis Carroll lived came into focus in several talks, including Melanie Keene (University of Cambridge) on “Alice’s Adventures Under Glass: Microscopic Practice, Science Education and Travel Writing in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries” and Franziska E. Kohlt (University of Oxford) on “Alice through the Magnifying-Glass: Lewis Carroll and the Victorian Sciences of the Mind”. Sasha Patkin, a graduate from Bard College in New York, traced the influence of Carroll’s own practice as a photographer and his interest in “optical, pre-cinematic, or philosophical toys – toys such as the stereoscope, zoetrope, thaumatrope – which demonstrated how our vision can deceive or mislead us, and literally questioned the way we see the world” (*Book of Abstracts*).

Several speakers assumed that Alice grows up through the books. And yet Humpty Dumpty advised the seven-and-a-half-year old Alice to “Leave off at seven” and the lessons at the end of her journey *Through the Looking-Glass* are more eccentric than edifying.

Does her “in-between” state lead on to a new status and if so, does this advance have proto-feminist implications? It was refreshing to hear Hiroe Suzuki, who had come all the way from Hakuoh University in Tochigi, Japan, to explain that Alice’s role is more like that of a Victorian boy and could represent Carroll himself, writing as an adult to relieve uncomfortable memories from boyhood. Nonetheless, I am open to being persuaded by Anna Kérchy (University of Szeged, Hungary) that the combination of Carroll’s narrative fiction and Tenniel’s accompanying illustrations creates “an intermediary image-textual space that can be read/regarded as a proto-feminist site of heterogeneous semiosis” (*Book of Abstracts*). For Kérchy “the transitory childwoman Alice (is) a metamorphically embodied in-between character impossible to be framed within mature masculine representation” (personal communication). Kérchy gave a masterly account of the way the images logically reflect the story’s illogicality, culminating in Alice’s attempts to tame the Jabberwock/y’s image-textual monstrosity. The monsters that a more mature Alice meets in Tim Burton’s film adaptation (2010) show that she has recently become a “A New Type of Heroine” to appeal to a modern audience as a kind of saviour, according to Emily R. Aguilo-Perez (The Pennsylvania State University), while Stephané Le Roux (North-West University, S. Africa) types this new Alice as a woman warrior akin to Xena the Warrior Princess.

The visual aspect was well-covered by the Conference presenters as well as illustrators and artists. It was fascinating to discuss with Xinwei Zhu how viewing the material from outside British culture can create productive distance: “To me, all the pictures look exotic [...] both the images from the *Alice* books and the illustrated magazines. The subject matters don’t look like traditional Chinese at all.” In her talk she pointed to the significance of the little stars that interrupt the text of *Wonderland* as offering “a few seconds’ flight into a picturing process” creating space for the reader. In her research she is examining “readers’ visual literacy in England during the 1860’s”. With regard to visual literacy in the US, Professor Jan Susina in his plenary talk about Walt Disney’s animated *Alice in Wonderland* had the whole audience laughing at his account of Disney’s despair at translating British humour for an American audience unlikely to find Carroll’s *Wonderland* at all funny. Hence the talking doorknob in the 1951 film.

The figure of Alice and the surreal nature of the fantastic worlds she enters have had a profound effect on popular culture and inspired practitioners of the arts through the ages. The last plenary speech was about fashion, delivered by Dr Kiera Vaclavik (Queen Mary University, London): “Micro to Macro, Maxi to Mini: Alice, Dress, and the International Reception of Carroll’s Classic”.

The visual-spatial aspects of the *Alice* story can also influence architecture. Justyna Deszcz-Tryhubczak and Katarzyna Korsak (University of Wrocław, Poland) presented an Alice-themed hotel in Wrocław, where: “The combination of mirrors, walls with images of Alice, the white rabbit, upside-down tables hanging from the ceiling, geometric abstract patterns, and garish colours, is aimed not so much to faithfully recreate Carroll’s fantastic universe but rather to activate the guests’ cognitive and affective associations and responses” (*Book of Abstracts*). For Jaya Beange (Canada), who focussed in her talk on Carroll’s exploration of scale and proportion, “nonsense may be considered the mechanism that reveals the arbitrary nature of our prejudices and sparks the curiosity to imagine new and uncharted territories. My quest is to determine how to translate Alice’s



“The Cat only grinned when it saw Alice” at the Cambridge 2015 conference *Alice Through the Ages*. © Siddharth Pandey\*

“Mačka se samo nacerila kad je vidjela Alicu” na Konferenciji *Alice Through the Ages* u Cambridgeu 2015. © Siddharth Pandey\*\*

curious experience of Wonderland into the design of a building which questions stale and conventional practices” (personal communication).

A relatively new aspect in *Alice* studies is the thought-provoking possibility that the sense of dislocation in Wonderland might be due to Lewis Carroll’s undiagnosed autism. This angle was explored by Joanne Limburg (UK) in her ‘Autistic Alice’ poems. Limburg, who writes from her own point of view as a girl who grew up with undiagnosed Asperger’s, added a personal note to the discourse. A creative combination of experience and academic erudition was evident in the Conference as a whole, which was transformed into a “transmedia experience by allowing different events, like a Mad Tea Party, a concert, a teacher’s workshop, a magician’s performance, a book fair, and the exhibition of beautiful artwork to make their contribution to the unfolding of the Wonderland story” (Anna Kérchy, personal communication).

Last but not least I would like to mention the session “Critically Neglected Motifs & Influences” to which my own account of “The Influence of Antiquity on Alice’s Adventures” was allocated. Christopher Tyler (London and San Francisco) delved into the mediaeval aspect of Carroll’s text and Victorian culture and traced “some remarkable parallels between the travails of the fictional Alice and a historical Alice who lived in the time of the knights and castles, duchesses and chess games that figure so largely in the narrative”, namely Alice of the Vexin, daughter of King Louis VII of France. For me, this was a completely new angle and an exciting opportunity to expand the scope of *Alice* research. The subject matter of the contribution by Carl F. Miller (Palm Beach Atlantic University, Florida) – “‘Sentence First – Verdict Afterwards’: The Influence of Reformed Christianity on Carroll’s Alice Stories” – was more familiar but definitely deserving of more attention.

It remains for me to beg forgiveness for failure to cover all the contributions to the Conference. As Siddharth Pandey wrote, “I think everything imaginable about Alice got covered through one or the other way.” Undoubtedly, there will be no lack of themes to explore further in future conferences and we can look forward to more exciting combinations of artistic and academic approaches to the Wonderland that is *Alice*.

*Celia Brown*

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\* *Libri & Liberi* is grateful to Siddharth Pandey for permission to publish his photograph in this issue and for acquiring the permission of Phoebe Chen, who appears in the photograph.

\*\**Libri & Liberi* zahvaljuje Siddharthu Pandeyu na suglasnosti za objavljivanje fotografije u ovome broju, kao i na pribavljanju suglasnosti od Phoebe Chen koja se nalazi na fotografiji.

## *Alice150* – First-Hand Reports

The *Alice150* Conference

New York, USA, 7–8 October 2015.

*Alice in a World of Wonderlands: The Translations of Lewis Carroll's Masterpiece.* The Grolier Club Exhibition

New York, USA, 7 September – 21 November 2015.

### **The Translations of *Alice* and the *Alice150* Celebration**

In September 2009, Joel Birenbaum, former president of The Lewis Carroll Society of North America, phoned to ask if I was interested in participating in a 2015 event in New York to celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the publication of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and my answer was yes. It turned out that what was to transpire took all of the six years remaining.

In discussing this event Joel and I agreed that a number of exhibitions would add great depth to the celebration and the understanding of just how powerful the attraction of *Alice* is to cultures world-wide. *Alice* is truly the “Universal Child”.

I soon lined up The Morgan Library and Museum as an exhibitor and they, in turn, convinced the British Library to loan them the original *Alice* manuscript and one of Charles Dodgson's diaries. Columbia University agreed to mount an exhibition about their 1932 conference and exhibition which Alice Hargreaves herself attended, then age 80, for her only trip to America. At Columbia she received an honorary degree. New York Public Library titled their exhibition “Alice Live” and focused on stage plays, ballets, films and music about *Alice in Wonderland*. New York University mounted a large exhibit of *Alice* ephemeral objects – toys, games, posters etc.

At the New York bibliophiles club, The Grolier Club, I proposed an exhibit of the translations of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. I had some 500 translations in my collection at the time in over 80 languages so I felt it would be a fairly straightforward task. In 1998 at Grolier, on the occasion of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Lewis Carroll, I had mounted an exhibition and produced a 127-page catalogue. (It is still for sale online at “ViaLibri,” at Oak Knoll Press, and on Amazon, titled *Yours Very sincerely C. L. Dodgson: Alias Lewis Carroll.*) So I had some experience.

But this translation project, later to be titled “Alice in a World of Wonderlands: The Translations of Lewis Carroll's Masterpiece” soon grew in scope – in fact it got enormous.

My plan was to recruit a writer for each language for which there was an *Alice* translation. Each participant would do three things: 1. Write a 2000 word essay about his or her language and some of the translation issues encountered. 2. Take two different editions in their language and back-translate into English with footnotes for the eight pages from Chapter VII of *Alice*, starting with the “Twinkle” poem and ending with the Dormouse being stuffed into the tea-pot. These pages were selected as they contain many of the most difficult text examples in the book and would be a good indication of the quality of the translation. 3. Compile a checklist of all editions of *Alice* and *Looking-Glass* in their language. In





The Exhibition Banner at The Grolier Club in New York. © Alan Tannenbaum.  
Najava izložbe na stijegu nad ulazom u Grolierov klub u New Yorku. © Alan Tannenbaum.

addition to these writers, I recruited translators for many new *Alice* languages, and these new people also needed to write an essay and do the back-translation for my book, adding a significant dimension to their task.

When published, my book had 251 contributing writers (for many languages a team worked together), and there were translations in 174 languages. I defined a translation as any rendering of *Alice* that one who could only read English couldn't read – so Braille and shorthand were included, as were invented languages such as Esperanto. I believe that my book is the most extensive analysis ever done of one English language novel in so many languages.

To add a personal dimension, and to bring many of the writers together, face to face for the first time, I convened a two-day translation conference in New York at The Grolier Club that preceded the now expanded city-wide three-day *Alice150* celebration. Speakers came to the Conference from Germany, Spain, China, India, South Africa, Hawaii, Scotland and Ireland. Writers attended from around the world. The Conference was a scholarly, linguistic event and was highly praised. There was a concluding dinner for 175 to celebrate the Conference and thank the many writers in attendance.

My book, *Alice in a World of Wonderlands: The Translations of Lewis Carroll's Masterpiece*, is in three volumes, 2656 pages, and weighs in at a hefty 9 kg. It reflects the enormous scope of the project and the fact that Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is a world-wide phenomenon.

Jon A. Lindseth

### ***Alice in a World of Wonderlands: A Book, an Exhibition, a Conference, and a Phenomenon***

Aficionados of Lewis Carroll and *Alice in Wonderland* have long talked of how widely known, quoted, adapted, and translated this influential book has been since its first appearance, 150 years ago. Its archetypal characters and situations, creativity, surrealism, subversiveness, and cleverness have been the catalysts for every kind of artistic and commercial adaptation and adoption imaginable, including advertisements, avant-garde performance art, tattoos, operas, ballets, fashion, puzzles, continual references in books, articles, and other media, and so much more. Translation into languages other than standard English is of course well-known as a major aspect of this joyful appropriation and reuse of *Alice*, but until now collectors and scholars have had very few resources for understanding and working with *Alice* in other languages. Warren Weaver's slim 1964 study, *Alice in Many Tongues*, has been the sole reference work, and English-speaking people have been left to their own devices, gleaning information from serendipitous acquisitions, institutional collections, and overseas friends.

With the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1865 first edition of *Alice* in the offing, Lewis Carroll Society of North America president emeritus and collector Joel Birenbaum began brainstorming ideas about a worldwide celebration, featuring exhibitions in New York City on a variety of topics. In 2009, he started talking with Jon Lindseth, a collector and member of the Grolier Club, about what kind of an *Alice* exhibition would be suitable for the Grolier. Lindseth enthusiastically moved forward with the idea of a Grolier show on *Alice* in translation, and as the Club expected a substantial catalogue documenting an exhibition, he also began exploring the parameters of how best to write about translations. This is the genesis for what became *Alice in a World of Wonderlands*, a three-volume, 2638-

page work of essays, back-translations, and bibliographical checklists; a spectacular Grolier Club exhibition running from 16 September through 21 November, 2015; and two days of conferences, 7 and 8 October, bringing together translators, scholars, and enthusiasts from twenty-four countries.

**The book** is the work of over 250 of volunteer writers, recruited by Lindseth through message boards, personal connections, and dogged inquiry. Connections branched into more connections, and soon all over the world, people were searching out books that had been known to exist in institutions but had not been documented, books rumored to exist, and many, many hundreds of books known only to their translators, publishers, and the children who read them. Books were found by methods ranging from Lindseth's asking a university scholar to coordinate a search within his/her country and report back with the bibliographical information and write a master essay for volume one, as Zongxin Feng of Beijing University did, for instance, to Lindseth's phoning the social media officer at the US embassy in Ulaanbaatar and asking her to find a Mongolian *Alice*, which she did on her lunch break. He also recruited proofreader/copy editors through a message board (and me, through the Lewis Carroll Society of North America – LCSNA, to coordinate this aspect), to bring the work of all these writers into a standard style for all three volumes.

The most important partner in this enterprise was Alan Tannenbaum, who undertook the creation of the master computer files, bringing data in more than 60 fonts from almost 300 sources into unity, standardizing the bibliographical checklist, handling the complex issues created by the back-translations and their footnotes, writing over 168 programs and 6000 lines of code, and so much more, delivering 2638 camera-ready pages to the printer. A president emeritus of the LCSNA and a collector, Tannenbaum is credited as the Technical Editor of the book, as no pre-existing job description covered the combination of expertise required for this unique project. He also co-curated the exhibition at the Grolier Club.

In order to make the most of this opportunity to bring together previously uncollected knowledge about *Alice* in translation, Lindseth decided that three volumes were necessary. The third volume provides a record, in the form of bibliographical checklists, of over 7000 editions of *Alice in Wonderland*, plus nearly 2000 editions of *Through the Looking-Glass*, in 174 languages, for a total of 8484 books. These checklists identify each book by date, original title, that title translated back to English, publisher, city, translator, and illustrator, with options for notes and holdings. There is also the first-ever index of illustrators of translated editions, documenting 1200 names. The largest numbers of editions are found in Japanese and Spanish, with over 1200 editions each, followed by German at 562, Chinese at 463, and French at 451. Not only are languages from all over the world represented (Azerbaijani, Tongan, Xhosa, Icelandic, Montenegrin, Oriya, Jèrriais), but there are also extinct languages (Old English), dialects (Orkney Scots), constructed languages (Blissymbols, Lingwa de Planeta), and alternate orthographies (Shavian, IPA).

The next feature of the book intended to capture data for English-language readers is the volume of back-translations. The intention of the project was to create and share understanding about the significance of *Alice* as a worldwide phenomenon, and the bibliographic census tells only one kind of story, albeit an extremely useful one. What makes the extraordinary numbers so interesting is the very intransigence of *Alice* to translation. The nonsense words, the parodies of Victorian poems, the puns and wordplay, the cultural

embeddedness – apparently the very difficulty of translation has served as a siren call. While not necessarily a strategy used in the professional linguistics world, back-translations offer the general audience of this book a window into the kinds of decisions about these matters, and more, made in rendering *Alice* into other languages. The same passage from Chapter IV, the Mad Tea-Party, can be seen in 207 back-translations, including both an early and a recent one in many languages, and supported by substantial footnotes illuminating a myriad of linguistic and cultural decisions.

Lastly, the first volume takes this project from a collection of data to an extensive scholarly study, with essays on the story of *Alice*'s presence in each of 174 languages, numerous general essays, about 250 book covers shown, and appendices collating data in several different ways. It is hard to overstate the fascinating stories told in the essays: politically repressed languages such as Galician reclaiming their status, cultural differences in the acceptance of children's books, complex interplays of politics, language, identity, and literature, etc. The book has its own web site, so that more information can be found at <http://aliceinaworldofwonderlands.com/>.



The Panorama of the Exhibition *Alice in a World of Wonderlands: The Translations of Lewis Carroll's Masterpiece* at the Grolier Club in New York, 2015. © Alan Tannenbaum.

Panorama izložbe *Alice in a World of Wonderlands: The Translations of Lewis Carroll's Masterpiece* u Klubu Grolier u New Yorku, 2015. godine. © Alan Tannenbaum.

**The exhibition** at the Grolier Club is a remarkable sight, being essentially the project brought to life, telling the story through objects and curation. There are cases about Lewis Carroll himself, including the first book to use his pseudonym, and about translating *Alice*, with translations from the collection of the real Alice. Carroll was active in the process of bringing *Alice* to other languages, and one case is devoted to translations during his lifetime, beginning with German and French in 1869. Seven cases display translations by geographical region, creating very interesting conversations among materials.

**The two-day Conference** at the Grolier Club was part of a week of *Alice150* celebrations in New York which saw approximately 120 writers from the project and other guests come together for nine talks and opportunities to interact. Children's literature scholar Emer O'Sullivan, author of *Comparative Children's Literature* (2005) and the *Historical Dictionary of Children's Literature* (2010), opened the Conference by situating Warren Weaver's 1964 work and his belief in the possibilities of machine translation in his

scientific career. She outlined the development of translation studies from its earlier homes in linguistics, where it was contextualized as a transaction between two languages, and in comparative literature, with its normative and prescriptive assumptions about fidelity, to its still developing presence as an independent field concerned with the cultural and political as well as linguistic creation of meaning, undertaken by an international, interdisciplinary network of scholarly communities. She concluded with a quotation from David Crystal's "Foreword" about the translations community that had been created by this project. This was highly in evidence for those two days, as people from many different language backgrounds, scholarly interests, and worldviews made connections among themselves and among the ideas that were flowing so wildly. Represented in the room were 39 different languages!

The next of our speakers was Gabriel López of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, who surprised us with the news that many Spanish-language readers believe that a chapter about a horse, created by a translator in 1952, is part of the original text, a good example of the kind of information that this project has brought to light: something well known to many, but not to English speakers. We also learned that only 10% of the world's Spanish speakers live in Spain, and thus Spain is the third-largest exporter of books in the world. The first complete Spanish-language *Alice* was actually published in 1921 in a newspaper in Mexico City, which specifically positioned her as a revolutionary hero; politics once again came into play when Franco forbade languages other than Castilian, bringing on a two-decade drought of Spanish *Alices*. Undaunted, *Alice* in Spanish now reigns with the second-largest number of editions in the checklist, at 1223.

Derrick McClure, MBE, of Aberdeen gave us a tour of Scots dialect versions, in which the Owl and Panther may dine on haggis, taties, and neeps. Prof. McClure explained that some of these dialects have a substantial literary tradition, notably Shetland, Doric, and Ayrshire, and made it clear that identity issues around language are prominent considerations. While the Glaswegian version is more exuberant and more culturally specific, for instance, the Ulster Scots version reflects the current struggle for recognition as a separate language.

Next, University of Hawai'i professor Keao NeSmith told us that Hawai'ians, who have been highly literate since the 1820s, have a strong tradition of publishing foreign stories and prefer foreignizing translations, as a way of understanding another culture (as opposed to domesticating translations, which try to replicate for the reader the experience of reading a book situated in one's own culture). Today, Hawai'ian is an endangered language, with only about 200 native speakers, and Prof. NeSmith is especially excited about the potential of this project to generate both interest and literature to combat that. He reported that the "wow" factor and prestige of a Hawai'ian *Alice* was sensational enough that he went on to translate *Through the Looking-Glass* as well, and *The Hobbit*, which has gotten more publicity. The first day concluded with a panel discussion among the four speakers and the audience, which included conversation about the role of translations in reviving endangered languages but also in repressive colonialism. Prof. O'Sullivan remarked that *Alice* has two axes of foreignness – place and time – affecting translations considerations and also the experiences of English-language readers.

At the beginning of day two, we heard from Zongxin Feng, a professor of linguistics and English language and literature at Tsinghua University, Beijing. He maintains that

of all Western classics published in China, *Alice* has the most editions (462), despite the three-decade gap of the Cultural Revolution. His own academic interest in it was sparked because linguistics scholars took it seriously and cited it, and also because of the Lewis Carroll/Martin Gardner/Warren Weaver link between *Alice* and mathematics. Then, Russell Kaschula of Rhodes University in South Africa spoke about issues around literacy in minority languages. He is very concerned about the creation of more literature for young people, quoting Nelson Mandela that in speaking to someone in a language they understand, you speak to their mind, but if you speak to them in their own language, you speak to their heart. Prof. Kaschula has coined the term “technauriture” to refer to the combining of technology, aural language, and literature to develop African languages, and is interested in creative and sensitive ways of doing so. He sees this project as a springboard for the expansion of written literature for Africa’s young people.

In the afternoon, Sumanyu Satpathy, chairman of the English Department at the University of Delhi, described the web of political and cultural issues involved with translation in a country with 22 official languages and 1600 more spoken. He told us of Rabindranath Tagore’s interest in *Alice* and writing of a similar fantasy himself, and he also related *Alice*’s revolutionary role in fighting fascism, as we had seen with China and Spain. Publisher Michael Everson of Everttype closed the second day with a tour of some of the more unusual orthographies represented on his *Alice* list, including Deseret, IPA, Shavian, Unifon, and Ñpel. We were all very entertained by his bravura readings from a variety of languages, featuring Scouse, Icelandic, Old English, Middle English, Ladino, and Gothic.

The second day also concluded with a panel discussion, in which questions flew about what was next for us. The project has created a huge trove of data to be mined, a scholarly network has been established, priorities have been articulated about putting books in the hands of young speakers of minority languages, major lacunae for *Alice* have been identified (Native American languages, most of the languages of Africa, and many more), many people called for a similar work on illustrators of *Alice*, and many other effects on attendees’ own work were evident. The question was raised, in light of the global nature of this enterprise, if English is still a negative, colonializing, and oppressive force. The panelists agreed that at this point, it is no longer a matter of either/or, but of both/and – both one’s own language and English. The translations portion of the Conference came to an end Thursday evening with a gala dinner at the Cosmopolitan Club. Michael Suarez, S.J., from the University of Virginia’s Rare Books School closed the Conference with an after-dinner speech in which he celebrated the creation and renewal of meaning through interpretation, translation, and localization. Video of the Conference is available on the Grolier Club’s website <<http://www.grolierclub.org/>>.

Even for those of us who had worked closely on the book, everything was a revelation. Political and social factors in translation mixed in with linguistic factors, and one of the themes that quickly became evident was how closely tied all those choices are for a translator. Examples include Kimie Kusumoto’s observation that it was culturally impossible not to change the Mad Tea-Party when interaction between a young girl and a grown man has specific semiotic content in Japan, and López’s revelation of the first Spanish use of *Alice* as a revolutionary figure in a newspaper in 1921 Mexico. The complex, interdisciplinary nature of translation and the range of considerations, from technical to



Joel Birenbaum and Stephanie Lovett, former and current presidents of the LCSNA, celebrating *Alice150* at one of the year-around events. © Deb Birenbaum.

Joel Birenbaum i Stephanie Lovett, prijašnji predsjednik i sadašnja predsjednica LCSNA-a, proslavljaju *Alice150* na jednome od događaja tijekom jubilarne godine.  
© Deb Birenbaum.

philosophical, were prominent throughout the two days. The Conference closed with much discussion of the future of indigenous languages and the good and bad sides of globalisation, a sense that English has moved from a colonizing either/or language to an empowering both/and language, and eager talk of a similar project for *Alice* illustrations and of the many languages, from Tibetan to Lakota, yet to have their own *Alice*.\*

*Stephanie Lovett*

\* *Libri & Liberi* is grateful to Alan Tannenbaum and Deb Birenbaum for permission to publish their photographs in this issue.

\* *Libri & Liberi* zahvaljuje Alanu Tannenbaumu i Deb Birenbaum na suglasnosti za objavljivanje njihovih fotografija u ovome broju.



The Mad Hatter Giving Evidence. Sir John Tenniel.  
*Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, 1865, p. 170.

Ludi Klobučar svjedoči. Sir John Tenniel.  
*Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, 1865., str. 170.