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THE MARKET FOR CHILDREN'S BOOKS AND THE COMPENSATION OF ILLUSTRATORS IN SOVIET RUSSIA IN THE 1920S AND 1930S

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Abstract: In the USSR of the 1920s and 1930s, the democratization of children's books was based on three phenomena: the boom in picture books along with extensive and intensive growth. The first part of this article traces the evolution of these phenomena in the economic environment and details their relation with editorial policies to uncover how the effort of democratization was intertwined with the definition of the Soviet children's book. The second part of this study reveals how the contexts surrounding the popularization of children's books defined the working conditions of illustrators and the ways of thinking about methods of remuneration. It examines the criteria on which the remuneration of graphic artists was based and how the amounts offered reflected their recognition. In conclusion, this article contributes to research devoted to the status of the artist in the USSR by showing how the recognition of the graphic artist evolved and how the system established in the 1930s laid the foundations for the illustrative activity of the 1960s, when certain visual artists saw it as a financial refuge.

Keywords: “Detgiz”, “Detizdat”, history of the publishing house, children's picture books, “Raduga” (publisher), status of artists.

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РЫНОК ДЕТСКИХ КНИГ И ОПЛАТА ТРУДА ИЛЛЮСТРАТОРОВ В СОВЕТСКОЙ РОССИИ В 1920–1930-Е ГГ.¹

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Аннотация: В СССР 1920–1930-х годов демократизация детской книги основывалась на трех явлениях: буме книжек с картинками наряду с экстенсивным и интенсивным ростом книгоиздания. В первой части этой статьи прослеживается эволюция этих явлений в экономической сфере и подробно рассматривается их связь с редакционной политикой, чтобы раскрыть, как усилия по демократизации были переплетены с определением советской детской книги. Вторая часть этого исследования показывает, как контексты, связанные с популяризацией детских книг, определяли условия работы иллюстраторов и методы вознаграждения. В ней рассматриваются критерии, на которых основывалось вознаграждение художников-графиков, и то, как предлагаемые суммы отражали их признание. В заключение данная статья дополняет исследование, посвященное статусу художника в СССР, показывая, как развивалось признание художника-графика и как сложившаяся в 1930-е гг. система закладывала основы иллюстративной деятельности 1960-х, когда художники видели в ней финансовое убежище.

Ключевые слова: «Детгиз», «Детиздат», история издательства, детские книжки с картинками, «Радуга» (издатель), статус художников.

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Introduction

The market for children's recreational books, in Russia as elsewhere in Europe, began to develop in the 19th century. If the illustrated book remained a luxury object during the pre-revolutionary period, its popularization became a major issue at the beginning of the 1920s. It was a matter of targeting a new readership, until that time little concerned by publishing, both younger and poorer in terms of social class. The interest shown in small children, aged 3 to 7, led to the development of the picture book (*knizhka-kartinka*): a type of work with a limited number of pages (around ten), in which the image proved to be just as important as the text, or even more so. Two other aspects of this popularization were the publication of a greater number of titles (extensive growth) and the increase in print runs and reissues (intensive growth). This last trend responded to the desire to disseminate books more widely by publishing more copies, but also to the wish to reduce the cost of production and the selling price of books, in order to make them more accessible.

The three directions in which the popularization of books unfolded had repercussions on the criteria and methods of remuneration for children's book illustrators, in a context in which their activity did not yet correspond to a profession in its own right. The present article thus combines two studies. The first is devoted to the evolution of the three axes of democratization of the illustrated children's book market in the RSFSR in the 1920s–1930s, and the second to the way in which illustrators' royalties evolved as a result of these first popularization efforts.²

The priority given, simultaneously or not, to the development of the picture book and to extensive and intensive growth is to be understood

² It would be valuable to supplement this article with a consideration of the children's press market, which was growing rapidly at the time. Several titles mark the 1920s–1930s such as *Chizh* (1930–1941), *Ež* (1928–1935), the monthly magazine for Octobrists (7–9 years old) *Muržylka* (1924–1991) and the weekly *Pionier* (1924–1991) for young pioneers, aged 9–12. Such a work calls for a study of specific sources.

in terms of a publishing history divided into three periods, well known in Soviet historiography. During the NEP (1922–1927), there was a simultaneous development of private and public publishing; the years of the Great Break (1928–1932) witnessed the disappearance of private publishers and the implementation of the process of centralization of publishing houses. Finally, during the years 1933–1941, the restructuring of the publishing sector for children and young people was finalized with the creation of the children's literature publishing house ("Detgiz") in 1933 and its attachment to the Central Committee of the Komsomol (TsK VLKSM) in 1936, under the name of Detizdat.

The reconstitution of the state of the children's book market is primarily founded on a statistical study of the two bibliographic collections of Russian-language children's leisure books published in the USSR between 1918 and 1939, compiled by Ivan I. Startsev [31; 32]. This work was supplemented by the examination of the periodical *Kniga Detiam* (1928–1930), an organ of the Scientific and Educational Section of the State Scientific Council of the Narkompros (GUS), the consultation of the bulletin *Novye detskie knigi* (1923–1928), journal of the Institute for pre-school working methods, and the periodical *Detskaia Literatura*. To these readings we added general works on Soviet children's publishing [5; 7; 17; 19], and articles offering case studies, mainly devoted to the "Raduga" publishing house [2; 10; 28]. The definition of the issues and practices of illustrators' remuneration was based on the collection of legislative texts emanating from state bodies and framing the practice of royalties. We defined the positions of the socio-professional organizations on the basis of an analysis of the press organs of the Union of Art Workers (Rabis) for the years 1920–1930, *Vestnik rabotnikov iskusstv* (1920–1926) then Rabis (1927–1934) and the examination of the archives of the office of the graphic arts sector of the Moscow Union of Artists (MOSSKh) for the period 1932–1939. Finally, in order to clarify the amounts of remuneration and the relationship between publishers and illustrators, we explored the archives of the private publisher "Raduga", the State publishing house of children's literature ("Detgiz") and the personal holdings of the artist Nisson Shifrin.³ This article represents the beginning of a long-term statistical study of the organization of the children's book market through the creation of an extensive bibliographic database of children's titles published in the RSFSR between 1917 and 1941.

³ The archival holdings listed are housed at RGALI (Russian State Archive of Literature and Art), with the exception of the "Raduga" collection, which is housed at TsGALI (Central State Archive of Literature and Art of St. Petersburg).

Part 1. Three aspects of the popularization of illustrated children's books

The present work consists first of all in quantifying the changes in extensive and intensive growth and understanding them in their economic and organizational context and in their relationship to editorial policies and the configuration of the market for illustrated children's books. For each of the three periods, we will specify the types of books that dominated the market in order to see how the attempts at popularization fit in with the definition of the Soviet children's book.

The fluctuations of extensive growth

Extensive growth is one of the parameters by which to measure the dynamism of the market. The 1920s are recognized as the years of expansion of the children's book market, as confirmed by this graph showing the evolution in the number of Russian-language titles published each year between 1918 and 1939 (fig. 1).

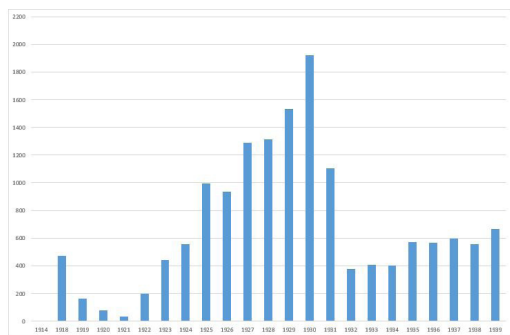
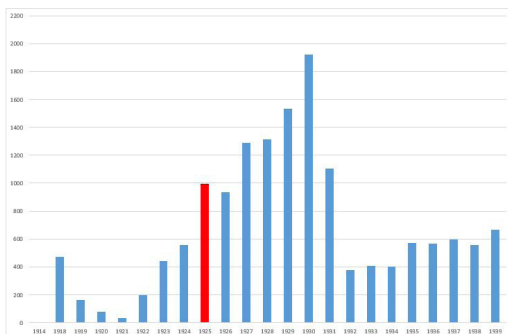


Fig. 1. Number of titles of children's books in Russian published between 1918 and 1939 (including reprints)⁴. Graphic made by the author.

Fig. 1a.



⁴ This graph is a continuation and complement to the one elaborated by Lydia Kon [17]

The curve reveals the following trend: a profound crisis at the time of the civil war, a recovery of the book market from 1922–1923, a marked increase from the mid-1920s onwards, especially at the time of the First Five-Year Plan, before a collapse in 1932 followed by a slow recovery in the 1930s, which, however, failed to reach the significant figures of the turn of the 1920s–1930s. The number of titles published in the 1930s was even lower than in the pre-revolutionary period (fig. 1a).

In fact, the market for children's books in Russian as compared to the pre-war years appears to have recovered in 1925, which would put the number of titles published annually before 1914 at between 800 and 900.⁵ In the 1930s, the number of titles did not exceed 3/4 of this production. A quick examination of Startsev's records shows that between 1918 and 1931 nearly 100 publishers created 10 978 children's titles, including reprints, or 8000 to 9000 new titles according to Marshak's estimates⁶ in 14 years. The next compilation of records, for the years 1932–1939, contains 4183 references. This amounts to an average of 784 books per year for the first period compared to 523 for the second. More precisely, we obtain 736 annual titles on average for the years 1922–1927, 1468 titles for the period 1928–1931 and 518,5 titles for the years 1932–1939.

The number of titles published in the USSR in 1926 and 1927 (936 and 1289 titles), lower than that of Germany, which was clearly at the top of the rankings with more than 1800 titles each year, was close to that of England (953 and then 1365 titles) and exceeded that of the United States (606 and then 751 titles)⁷ and of France, which struggled to emerge

for the years 1918–1929, based on the bibliographic collection of Ivan Startsev [30]. We continued this statistical work up to the year 1939 [31]. Although the works directed by Startsev are not exhaustive, the figures they reveal are consistent with those we found in the press of the time and in the archives for the years 1928–1931, 1934–1936, with the sole exception of the year 1925. This last difference does not call into question the shape of the curve. Our objective here is to give an idea of the general evolution in the number of titles published from 1918 to 1939, rather than to offer exact figures for each year.

⁵ This is our deduction derived from "Ot redaktsii. Detskaia kniga v Piatiletke." *Kniga Detiam*, no. 2–3, 1929, p. 8. This article indicates a recovery of the market in 1926, with 936 titles, but counts only 770 titles for the year 1925, a number much lower than the 993 books counted by L.F. Kon. "Kniga Detiam"'s article estimates that the pre-World War I figure is exceeded with 936 titles.

⁶ Marshak, S. "Za bol'shuiu detskuiu literaturu." *Detskaia literatura*, no. 1, 1936, p. 18.

⁷ Data collected in "Khronika. Novye knigi, vyshedshie za granitse." *Kniga Detiam*, no. 4, 1928, p. 44, in Uzin, V. "Za rubezhom. Na krutom spuske." *Knizhnyi Front*, no. 3, 1932, p. 51, and in "Zarubezhnaia khronika." *Knizhnyi Front*, no. 4–5, 1932, p. 95, for the figures concerning Germany.

from the children's book crisis generated by the First World War, with only 275 titles published in 1925 and 180 in 1929 [25, pp. 4, 77, 79].

In 1931, the gap between the USSR, Germany and the USA narrowed. The USSR published 1104 children's titles in Russian, Germany recorded a decrease with 1365 titles published, while the USA maintained its progression with 1018 titles.⁸ The development of publishing for children and the increase in the number of titles published are therefore not linear and continuous phenomena.

Intensive growth in constant progression

The effort to increase print runs was constant during the 1920s and 1930s. In 1936, at the conference on children's literature, Marshak stated that print runs, which in the 1920s were in the tens of thousands, were now in the hundreds of thousands⁹. What exactly was the situation?

The extensive growth of the 1920s was coupled with a progressive intensive growth (fig. 2).

One of the concerns of the publishers was to reduce the cost of production, and thus the selling price, in particular by expanding the number of copies, as expressed, for example, in the decree of the office of the Central Committee of the RLKSM dated October 1, 1925 "O rabote 'Molodoi gvardii'".

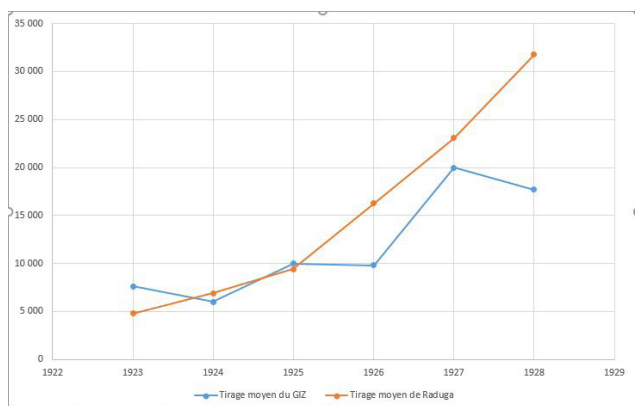


Fig. 2. Average print runs of the GIZ and "Raduga", 1923–1928¹⁰. Graphic made by the author.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Marshak, S. "Za bol'shuiu detskuiu literaturu," p. 18.

¹⁰ The figures for GIZ are from: Meksin, Ia. "Put' Gizovskoi detskoi knigi (K desiatiletiu Gosudarstvennogo izdatel'stva)." *Kniga Detiam*, no. 2–3, 1929, p. 7. Those for "Raduga" are from a calculation based on data published by Shamanova [28, p. 262].

There is a certain disparity between public and private publishers. In 1926, 63,4 % of children's books were produced in quantities of 5000 to 10 000 copies. In that year, high print runs of children's books were observed, on the one hand, by party publishers such as "Iunyi Leninet's" and "Molodaia gvardiia", for their series for pioneers, whose print runs could be as high as 50 000 copies, and, on the other hand, by private publishers [27, p. 69]. In 1927, the average print run of the 29 publishers of children's books in the RSFSR was 20 900 copies¹¹. Average print runs were increasing, but the children's sector of the GIZ was struggling. In 1928, GIZ released an average of 17 000 copies compared to almost 32 000 for "Raduga" and 55 000 for Mirimanov¹².

Intensive growth continued at the time of the Great Break, still alongside extensive growth. Both aspects remained a priority, as evidenced by the decrees of the Party Central Committee of July 23, 1928 and December 28, 1928, "Ob obsluzhivanii knigoi massovogo chitatelia" and "O meropriiatiakh po uluchsheniiu iunosheskoi detskoi pechati." In 1929, GIZ published a series of 24 books with a first print run of 100 000 copies, and even two books with a print run of 150 000 copies. The maximum print run increased, although 45,6 % of GIZ's production still showed print runs of between 10 000 and 20 000 copies¹³. For books in the children's sector of the "Iundetgiz", it amounted to 37 347 copies in 1931 and 43 031 copies in 1932 (average calculated from the figures published in Draudin [5, p. 89]. In 1933, the forecast plan for the whole of "Iundetgiz" indicated an average circulation of 25 980 copies (according to figures published in [5, p. 70]). The increase in the average print run in the state editions thus fluctuated somewhat, but showed a general upward trend, and the range of print runs expanded to reach larger maxima. Moreover, in 1930, the average print run in the RSFSR, all publishing sectors combined, was 17 400 copies. Children's literature ranked second with an average of 24 000 copies, just behind textbooks (25 000 copies)¹⁴.

The creation of the "Detgiz" in 1933 marked a turning point in publishing policy. In its decree of September 9, 1933, the Central Committee of the Party explicitly recommended not to pursue quantity in the number of titles and to concentrate on the publication of validated books with a real mass circulation, the latter being defined as 20 000 copies minimum [5,

¹¹ *Kniga Detiam*, no. 5–6, 1928, p. 56.

¹² T. "Chto predlagaet nam rynok?" *Literaturnaia Gazeta*, December 16, 1929.

¹³ Chupyrina, L. "Produktiia detskoi knigi za 1929 g." *Kniga Detiam*, no. 2–3, 1930, pp. 13–14.

¹⁴ Uzin, V. "Za rubežom. Na krutom spuske," p. 57.

pp. 91–92]. This decision established a new link between increasing print runs and limiting the number of titles, whereas intensive and extensive growth had both constituted key concerns throughout the 1920s.

The low number of titles published in the 1930s appears to correspond to a political will to increase print runs. This new orientation followed the collapse of the number of titles in 1932, which in turn was the result of the severe economic crisis affecting the country, the shortage of paper and printing equipment, the violent ideological campaign against schematism in children's illustration,¹⁵ and the institutional reforms aimed at restructuring the publishing sector. It thus seemed to operate mainly to justify, in ideological terms, the catastrophic economic situation and the difficult organizational reality. The various restructurings in children's publishing were accompanied by frequent changes in the decision-makers and an encumbering of the editorial process. The official censorship exercised by the Glavlit and then by the GUS and the Glavpolitprosvet, which was already very intensive in the 1920s, was now reinforced upstream by the establishment of editorial boards for the examination of texts and artistic boards for illustrations. The latter involved the use of experts from within and outside the publishing house, who issued a report approving, rejecting or demanding modifications to the images. The illustrations were then submitted for a second review. Publication times lengthened. This multi-actor process differed from that of the private publishers of the 1920s, when Lev Moiseevich Kliachko, the director of "Raduga", closed his eyes in order to observe the visual persistence of the images before him and thus decide whether to accept or reject the illustrations [3, p. 89].

In 1933, the "Detgiz" published 168 titles for a total production run of 7 744 000 copies, i.e., an average print run of 46 095 copies. In 1934, the average print run was 59 290 copies, then 72 244 in 1935 and 83 333 in 1936.¹⁶ The average print run and the maxima increased more significantly during the 1930s. In particular, the 1936 plan provided for two groups of books for pre-school children: the first group consisted of fairy tales (Pushkin, Andersen, Grimm), Tolstoy stories, Marshak's and

¹⁵ This was expressed in particular in the open letter to the "Molodaia Gvardiia" editions, signed by A. Stetskii, director of the cultural section of the Central Committee of the Party. The attack mentioned here followed the resolution of the Central Committee on December 29, 1931. Stetskii, A. "Otkrytoe pis'mo k izdatel'stvu 'Molodaia gvardiia'." *Za proletarskoe iskusstvo*, no. 9–10, 1932, p. 10.

¹⁶ Our calculation is based on data published in: Belahova, M. "Vtoroe soveshchanie po detskoj literature pri TsK VLKSM." *Detskaia literatura*, no. 2, 1937, p. 1, for the year 1936 and, for the years 1933 and 1934, in [14, p. 140].

Chukovski's books with large print runs of 100 000–500 000 copies, and the second group consisted of picture books with print runs of up to 500 000 copies. The hundreds of thousands of copies that Marshak mentions were reserved for safe bets. The correspondence between artists and the "Detgiz" most often mentions print runs of 25 000 and 50 000 copies.

The consideration of intensive and extensive growth thus invites us to define more precisely which types of books are concealed behind these figures. Which age groups were given priority at which times? Which subjects dominated editorial production? What was the share of reprints and new books? And what place did the recreational book occupy in relation to the other types of illustrated children's books available on the market? The 1920s are known as the period of the rise of the picture book for young children, in particular thanks to the action of private publishers. This was followed by efforts to politicize children's books at the time of the Great Break and then a return to the classics in the 1930s.

The flourishing of the picture book during the NEP

In the 1920s, the market was reconstituted under the NEP, in particular thanks to the appearance of private publishers. Although these publishers, all sectors combined, became less and less numerous from the middle of the decade — they represented 30 % of Soviet publishers in 1923 [3, p. 25] and then 20 % of the 2055 publishers in the USSR in 1925 [19, p. 35] — they left their mark on publishing activity, in both qualitative and quantitative terms.

In 1927, 29 publishers, both private and public, published children's books in the RSFSR¹⁷ either regularly or occasionally. Four of them were mainly or exclusively dedicated to this sector and provided 76 % of the total production of children's books¹⁸. These were public structures — the state publishing house GIZ (whose children's department was founded in 1924), a publishing house attached to the Communist Party — "Molodaia gvardiia" (established in 1922 under the aegis of the VLKSM Central Committee) and two private publishers — Mirimanov (1923–1930) in Moscow and "Raduga" (1922–1930) in Petrograd-Leningrad. According to our calculations, "Raduga" published up to 14,4 % of children's titles, compared to 25 % for the GIZ in 1926.

Each publisher occupied a particular segment of the market. The definition of a Soviet children's book and the idea of its popularization

¹⁷ "Khronika. Novye knigi, vyshedshie za granitsej," p. 56.

¹⁸ Zak, E. "Detskaia knizhka v 1927 g. Opyt statisticheskogo obzora." *Kniga Detiam*, no. 4, 1928, p. 34.

were interpreted in different ways. The GIZ as well as “Molodaia gvardiia” first targeted an older reader in accordance with the Bolshevik tradition, which attached more importance to discourse, and its capacity to convince, than to images. The GIZ, in an effort to make culture accessible to as many people as possible, favored the reissue of pre-revolutionary Russian and foreign classics.¹⁹ The decree of the VTsIK dated December 29, 1917, reserved the monopoly of reissuing classics to state publishers for a period of five years [29, p. 111]. “Molodaia gvardiia” specialized in the publishing of edifying literature containing political content and few illustrations. Private publishers took over a sector that had been neglected by the State and the Party and focused almost exclusively on pre-school children (3 to 7 years old) and younger schoolchildren (7 to 9 years old), for whom pictures are highly important. The growth of the recreational book, and of the picture book in particular, depended largely on the activity of private publishers.²⁰ “Raduga” opted for original texts, especially poems, written by Soviet authors. It showed a concern for the artistic quality of the text and the image, in a spirit of bringing art to the masses and educating children in art and aesthetics. Some of the works quickly met with success and reissues occupied an important part of a publisher’s activity, between 14 % and 27 % of production from 1924 to 1928 inclusive [28, p. 262]. Mirimanov approached the democratization of books from the perspective of mass production through large print runs. It associated reprints of classics and original Soviet texts, offering books of varying quality, the most notable of which were those devoted to animals [6, pp. 51–52].

From the mid-1920s, with the founding of the children’s literature department and the arrival of the author Samuil Marshak as its head and the artist Vladimir Lebedev as its artistic director in Leningrad, the GIZ’s editorial policy became increasingly similar to that of Mirimanov and “Raduga”²¹: the publisher increased the number of books for children aged

¹⁹ We do not go into the details of the definition of this category here; for more on this subject, see Maslinskaya [20].

²⁰ The contribution of private publishers to the development of a Soviet picture book of high artistic quality has been discussed in various studies (among them Balina and Oushakine [1]; Blinov [3]; Fomin [7]; Gankina [8]; Gerchuk [9] and numerous exhibition catalogs).

²¹ The question of the relationship between private and public publishers requires a study of its own, which is beyond the scope of this article. Current sources emphasize the control exercised by the GIZ over private publishers, who could not hold their own printing materials and were forced to pay for access to those held by state publishing houses. The GIZ also oversaw the programs and advance planning of private publishers [7, pp. 599–600]. The roles of Marshak and Lebedev, an author and illustrator publishing with “Raduga” and responsible for the children’s literature section of the Leningrad “Gosizdat” and the artistic direction of the “Lengiz” art sector, respectively, from 1924 onwards, also remain to be clarified.

4 to 10, offering original Soviet texts devoted to subjects related to everyday life (byt) and animal themes. These two themes largely dominated the children's book market in the second half of the 1920s. In 1926, they represented respectively 31,1 % and 10,9 % of all books published. The third place was occupied by instructional books for pioneers, dealing equally with rules of conduct and games, as well as with the ways of making this or that object (10,3 %). These three sectors accounted for 52 % of the editorial production [27, pp. 73–74]. This trend was even more pronounced in 1927, when 38 % of books published were devoted to everyday life and 16 % to natural sciences and animals, making up 54 % of the total number of books published²². At the GIZ and Mirimanov, the combination of these two themes even amounted to 65% of the published titles²³. In addition, in 1926, 80.4% of children's books from all publishers were first editions, 8% were reprints of books published after 1917 and 11.6% were pre-revolutionary works [27, pp. 70].

The statistics collected to date show that the proportion of books for children aged 4 to 10 increased overall in the second half of the 1920s, reaching 42% of production in 1927²⁴ (fig. 3). The extensive growth of the 1920s thus largely favored the picture book for small children and

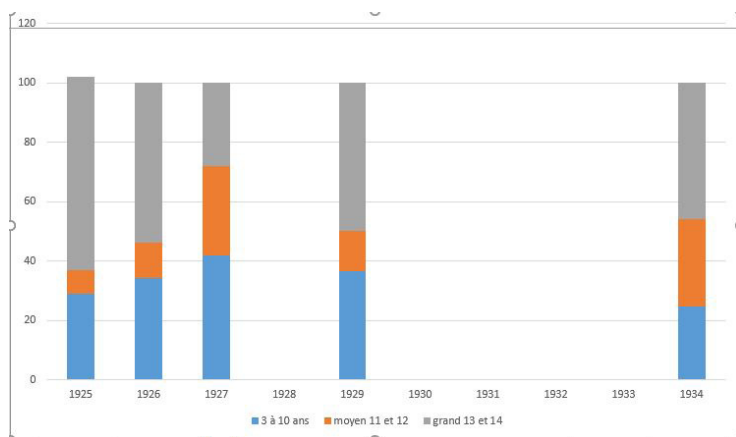


Fig. 3. Number of children's book titles published; sorted by age group for the years 1925, 1926, 1927, 1929 and 1934. Graphic made by the author.

²² Zak, E. "Detskaia knizhka v 1927 g.," p. 30.

²³ Ibid., p. 35.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 35.

very young readers. The image assumed a much greater importance, a new status that allowed it to compete with the text, paving the way for the recognition of the profession of illustrator. The market was dynamic in terms of the creation of new products and was dominated by subjects related to daily life and animals. The question of anthropomorphism stirred up the Soviet children's literature scene and this theme also created a real craze in other European countries such as France, where we encounter, for example, the figures of Gédéon (created by the author-illustrator Benjamin Rabier), followed a little later by Babar, André Hellé's toy animals and Félix Lorient's colorful beasts.

From 1927 onwards, public and Party publishers became even more concerned with picture books and books for small children. That year marked the beginning of the process of the nationalization of publishers. The GIZ took over the most popular titles published by "Raduga". The objectives were to recover the money generated by the sales of these successful works, to reach the private clientele until then served by private publishers²⁵ and to capture this very substantial readership consisting of young children.²⁶ Also in 1927, "Molodaia gvardiia" began, albeit modestly, to publish books for Octobrists and not only for pioneers.²⁷ Despite these early efforts, private publishers together still held 56,3 % of the production of books for preschoolers, with "Raduga" and Mirimanov alone accounting for more than half of the publications for this age group (52,8 %).²⁸ The expansion of illustrated books for small children continued at the time of the Great Break. In 1929, it constituted 1/3 of total GIZ publications²⁹.

The expansion of the Great Break years and efforts to politicize the illustrated book

The extensive growth of the Great Break was rooted in two phenomena. The first was the reprinting of the bestsellers of the 1920s and of earlier

²⁵ "Khronika. O produktii otдела detskoi i iunosheskoi literatury GIZa po dokladu t. Startseva." *Kniga Detiam*, no. 5–6, 1928, p. 56. In 1927, the GIZ and "Molodaia Gvardiia" primarily supplied public purchasers such as schools, libraries, and pioneer organizations (and thus schoolchildren between the ages of 10 and 14), which accounted for 60 % of total demand.

²⁶ Children aged 4 to 9 years accounted for nearly half of the Soviet population of children at the end of the decade: of the 32 million children living in the USSR, 10 million were of pre-school age, 13 million were between 7 and 9 years old and 9 million were between 10 and 16 years old (Lilina, Z. "O deshevoi detskoi literature." *Kniga Detiam*, no. 1, 1928, p. 21).

²⁷ Ibid., p. 24.

²⁸ Meksin, Ia. "Put' Gizovskoi detskoi knigi," pp. 8–9.

²⁹ Chupyrina, L. "Produktsiia detskoi knigi za 1929 g.," pp. 7–16.

books. In 1929, 44,6 % of GIZ's output consisted of reprints, and these accounted for 26,7 % of all books published, a figure that probably underestimates the reality, as several GIZ works glossed over the fact that they were reprinted books.³⁰ The leading authors of the 1920s, such as Marshak and Chukovski, wrote few new titles. In 1929 Marshak published only one new book (*Otriad*) out of the 14 released authored by him.³¹ The violent critical campaigns of the period, such as the one led in particular by Nadezhda Krupskaja against the tales of Chukovski, hindered the creativity of these writers. In addition, their favorite subjects were rather removed from the editorial demands of the time, which were primarily related to the First Five-Year Plan.

The second phenomenon, quantitatively more significant, was thus the creation of numerous books on these themes. The desire to multiply publications with socio-political and technical content aimed at children and youth in order to meet the strong need for propaganda at the time can be seen in the decrees of the Central Committee of the VKP(b) dated July 23, 1928 and December 28, 1928, which insist on the development of political books for the masses. If the *byt* theme concerned 31,1 % of children's books in 1926, then 38 % in 1927, it applied to 23,9 % of books in 1929. Technical books increased from 7,2 % of the production in 1927 to 9,7 % in 1929 and socio-political works climbed from 5 % to 8,3 %. The *byt* showed a significant decline but it remained the main subject of illustrated books in 1929, still ahead of animals which accounted for 11,9 % of publications [27]. This dynamic of politicization and technicalization of books for children of all ages was reflected in the appearance of new collections and series such as the "udarnye knigi" published by "Molodaia gvardiia" [16]. These works made use of photography and responded to the need to quickly produce a large number of books on current topics related to industrialization, major construction projects or the development of means of transport. A large number of authors and occasional illustrators were recruited to support the development of these sectors of children's publishing.

The importance of reprints and the fact that 35,8 % of the books published in 1929 were still related to *byt* or animal life show the persistence of these subjects dear to children and point to the difficulty of politicizing children's recreational reading and situating children's literature in relation to other types of existing works. The hesitations surrounding the place of children's literature and the definition of its political content are reflected

³⁰ Ibid., p. 12.

³¹ Ibid., p. 15.

in the reversals that affect the restructuring of the publishing sector: a succession of mergers, splits and changes in the choice of supervisory bodies for children's publishing, which alternately moved from the State to the Party. The nationalization of the publishing industry was completed in 1930, with the closure of private publishers. This was followed by the integration of the children's section of the GIZ into "Molodaia gvardiia". The latter became part of the Union of State Publishers (Ob"edinenie Gosudarstvennykh Izdatel'stv — OGIZ), which was founded pursuant to the decree of the Central Committee of the Communist Party on July 30, 1930, with the idea of centralizing the publication of children's and juvenile literature. This merger within "Molodaia gvardiia" is an indication of the desire to further politicize children's literature. This was not without its difficulties, and a vast critical and restructuring campaign took place throughout 1931 [5, p. 87]. In 1932, the transfer of certain sectors of "Molodaia gvardiia"'s production to other state publishers, in particular the Party ("Partizdat") and "Komsomolskaia Pravda" editions, testifies to a reversal of direction and the decision to dissociate the publishing of leisure works from those with socio-political content. This transfer can be considered the prelude to the foundation of the "Detgiz", which took place on September 9, 1933, with the decree of the Central Committee of the Party "Ob izdatel'stve detskoï literatury" ("On the publishing of children's literature"). A founding that resulted from the merger of the children's sectors of "Molodaia gvardiia" and the educational department of the GIKhL (Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo Khudozhestvennoï Literatury) [5, p. 86–92]. This involved the creation of a new entity within the OGIZ, headed by Maxim Gorky [18] and Samuil Marshak, which can be understood as a resurrection of the GIZ children's department of the 1920s. The decision was made to create a state publisher entirely dedicated to children's literature, offering works separate from scientific, technical, educational, political and social publications, which continued to be released by publishers specializing in these sectors. In 1933, there were still nearly 60 organizations publishing children's books in an uncoordinated manner [22, p. 54]. In 1935, the "Detgiz" became the "Detizdat", coming under the authority of the VLKSM and thus of the Communist Party.

In addition, children's literature played a modest role in the Soviet publishing scene. If we calculate the share of children's recreational books in the total Soviet publishing production,³² we obtain at best 5,6 % in 1930

³² Percentage obtained from the number of annual titles deducted from Startsev's compendia [30] and the total number of books published in the RSFSR and the USSR provided by Uzin (Uzin, V. "Za rubezhom. Na krutom spuske").

and 3,5 % in 1931. These figures are far below those of the USA, where the children's book market represented between 9 % and 10 % of the editorial production during these years, and behind those of Germany, which remained more or less stable at around 5,6 %³³.

The role of the recreational book in education, and especially in political education, was subject to diverse assessments. The definition of a Soviet children's book limited to technical, socio-political and popular science subjects dominated the years 1928–1932 and fueled an unprecedented extensive growth — but without prevailing. It resurfaced at different periods and continued to be the subject of differing interpretations, as in other artistic fields such as painting [24]. Thus, at the beginning of the 1930s, the return to the classics marked juvenile publishing while at the same time finding its ideological justification.

The return to the classics and to books for older children in the 1930s

In its decree formalizing the founding of the “Detgiz” in 1933, the Central Committee of the Party advocated, for pioneers, the reissue of classics of world literature related to communist education (*Robinson Crusoe*, *Gulliver's Travels* or the works of Jules Verne) and, for the youngest, the publication of leisure books (stories, games and charades) [5, p. 91–92]. The propaganda book dedicated to the First Five-Year Plan was no longer in fashion; this return to the tried-and-true titles and to entertainment was part of the vast Stalinist movement to revive classical culture in the 1930s. The double objective of increasing print runs and republishing classics of Russian, Soviet and foreign children's literature underpinned the entire publishing policy of the “Detgiz” in the 1930s. If the production of the GIZ in 1929 included 44,6 % of reissues, these climbed to over 65 % in 1934.

The emphasis placed on the republication of pre-revolutionary and foreign classics helped to limit production costs, as no author had to be paid; in addition, the policy fulfilled a profitability objective by ensuring sales. It was accompanied by a certain disinterest for the picture book. Because although the classics were supposed to be suitable for all age groups,³⁴ the books published were mainly aimed at readers over 10 years old (fig. 3).

³³ Uzin, V. “Za rubezhom. Na krutom spuske,” pp. 51–52.

³⁴ The 1936 plan indeed specified, for children from 7 to 9 years old, 10 individual tales by Pushkin, Andersen, Grimm, Perrault, Kipling as well as Russian folk tales, and for children from 10 to 14 years old, 10 volumes of Russian and foreign classics (Pushkin, Lermontov, Gogol, Turgenev, Krylov, Shakespeare, Maiakovskii, etc.), Chekhov having already appeared. See “Doklad direktora “Detizdata” tov. G.E. Tsykina, 15 ianvaria 1936 g.” *Detskaiia literatura*, no. 1, 1936, pp. 15–16.

The “Detgiz” thereby revived the tradition of the state and party editions of the 1920s. In 1935, during a discussion about the “Detgiz” production in the office of the graphic arts sector of the MOSSKh, the troika of the Union of Artists in charge of evaluating the 1934 production of the publisher reported that the production of books for preschool children was very limited: only 15 titles.³⁵ That is, according to our calculations, 3,7 % of the total production of children’s books in that year. One of the members of this troika, Mogilevski, noted that very few children’s books were being released; only 40 titles were expected for 1935.³⁶ As for the 1936 plan, it anticipated the publication of 500 titles including 80 new ones with, for preschool children, tales by Pushkin, Andersen, Grimm, stories by Tolstoy, books by Marshak and Chukovski as well as 15 picture books. The limited number of books for young children and their small print runs was also pointed out in the report of the VLKSM Central Committee to the Komsomol Congress in 1936 [14, p. 141]. In 1938, the plan anticipated 200 titles for pre-school children for Moscow and Leningrad combined. This shows a definite increase, but the share of the picture book remained modest, since out of this total only 10 picture books and 10 books for toddlers (*knijek-malyshek*) were planned.³⁷

In addition, it seems that the picture books published were in fact mostly reprints of the successful Soviet works of the 1920s, with illustrations that had been conserved or modified. These became part of the corpus of classics. In 1936, the young Melnikova, a pioneer in class 4 of School 184, spoke on behalf of other children at the meeting of the VLKSM central committee dedicated to children’s literature. She stated that the older children read adult books, such as those of Sholokhov, in class and that only the books of Marshak, Chukovski, Barto and Perovski, published a long time previously, were available for the younger children.³⁸ Beyond the rhetorical aspect of encouraging the production of more and more new books, the statement seems plausible if we compare it to the share of reprints in the production of Lebedev’s books, for example: of the 36 books illustrated by the artist and published between 1932 and 1939, 72,2 % were reprints. Some of them had different illustrations, such as *Baggage*, others were reproduced in an identical form: *O glupom myshonke*, *Pudel*,

³⁵ RGALI 2943/1/1584. MOSSKh Graphic Arts Area Office Meeting Protocol of March 4, 1935.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ RGALI 630/5/21, p. 16. Protocol on the organization of editorial work for July — August dated July 13, 1938.

³⁸ RGALI 630/5/8, p. 22.

Kto silnei, Vchera i segodnia, Usatyi polosaty, Kak rubanok sdela rubanok. Chukovski book *Moidodyr*, illustrated by Annenkov, was one of the biggest successes of the 1920s. It was republished 20 times between 1923 and 1935. Its illustrations were modified in 1939 when it appeared in a new collection. The culture of the 1920s thus remained intact into the following decade, providing income for a number of leading authors and illustrators.

Part 2. From craft to profession: a study of the remuneration of children's book illustrators in the RSFSR in the 1920s and 1930s

The forms of the book and the evolution of intensive and extensive growth determined working conditions and encourage us to think about the modes of remuneration of illustrators. In what ways do the criteria governing the remuneration of illustrators and the amounts they were offered reflect the forms of social recognition enjoyed by these individuals? Nathalie Heinich distinguishes three modes of remuneration within the system of royal patronage: by meter, by master and by service. The first type concerns craft, indexed on the product and technical elements, the second type concerns art, and the third type concerns professions. This last type is an intermediary between the two first; it is no longer a question of directly compensating the work done, but rather the talent demonstrated, according to criteria that are indexed on the individual but nevertheless standardized. In the remuneration of art, compensation is based on the personal value of the artist, as attested by the recognition of amateurs, specialists and peers. Renown becomes, for a few, select individuals, the primordial criterion; a regime of singularity is embraced [13, pp 23–24]. We investigate here the evolution of the status of the children's illustrator via the pecuniary recognition of his/her work, and examine how this activity evolved from a craft to a profession. This study allows us to consider the polyactivity of artists, characteristic of these years, from the point of view of their income.

The rise of the picture book as well as extensive and intensive growth marked the years of the NEP. The multiplication of reprints and the new importance of images in children's books led to a new appreciation of the illustrator's involvement. Private publishers specialized in this type of work were a driving force in the implementation of new copyright practices. At the time of the Great Break, significant extensive growth implied a massive recourse to the services of occasional illustrators, while the reflection on the compensation of reprints continued. Finally, in the 1930s, intensive growth made circulation an essential argument in the negotiation of fees. Rampant inflation and the move towards volumes for older readers,

featuring long texts interspersed with various types of images, led to a revision of the existing fee structure.

The components of illustrators' remuneration: between technical criteria and recognition of know-how

- The rise of the illustrated book and its consequences on the terms and amounts of remuneration for illustrators

In the 1920s, the rise of the illustrated book and the importance given to images in children's books led to a better recognition of the work of the illustrator. This resulted in new remuneration practices, established mainly at the initiative of private publishers, who were responsible for this unprecedented development. Socio-professional organizations were confronted with the great diversity of activities related to the visual arts in their attempts to define principles and amounts of remuneration. These organizations formalized proposals for fee schemes, but the complexity and general nature of these schemes made them inapplicable.³⁹ Matters were therefore decided on the ground, according to each sector.

In 1927, Lev Moiseevich Kliachko, the director of the "Raduga" publishing house, laid claim to three advances in the way illustrators were

³⁹ As early as 1919, the Union of Art Workers (Rabis, 1919–1924, and then Vserabis, Soviet Professional Union of Art Workers, 1924–1934) was in search of common denominators that would allow for the calculation of the remuneration of the miniature, fresco, easel painting, theater set or illustration. In the spirit of left-wing artists, who regarded creation as work, a special commission of the Tariff Standards Department (TNO) of the Rabis claimed a scientific basis for pricing through the analysis of work processes, and took various parameters into account in its calculation. It was a question of evaluating the time spent in the realization of a work according to its media, its dimensions and the process of creation (manual or mechanical). The commission decided on an hourly rate that applied to each step of the realization of a work (initial project, sketch, final project, execution of the work) and allowed, if necessary, to precisely calculate the participation of each participant in a collective project. The price of the work was the sum of these different phases. The quality of the work was taken into account thanks to a multiplying coefficient. Thus, the basic hourly rate, defined for an artist of average qualification, could be increased by 25 %, 50 % or 100 % according to the artist's mastery. Creators were classified into four categories. The commission underscored the flexible use that had to be made of these categories and the difficulties in defining them. The criteria put forward here raised heated debate. See, for example, Kandinsky's reaction in this regard in the pictorial field "Doklad v muzeinuiu komissiiu o stavkakh na proizvedeniia grafiki", in [15, pp. 525–527]. The dissatisfaction of visual artists with the Rabis persisted, and at the turn of the 1920s–1930s, artists joined other socio-professional organizations such as the newly established Russian Cooperative of Khudozhnik Artists (Vsekhudozhnik). See Khvoynik, N. "Stroenie novykh tarifov khudozhestvenno-izobrazitel'nogo truda." *Vestnik rabotnikov iskusstv*, no. 4–6, 1921, pp. 39–46. We thank Juliette Milbach for providing us with this document.

paid. He is said to have been the first to pay authors and illustrators equally for the same book; to pay illustrators for reprints, whereas previously only authors received money; and to increase the fees for these reprints to 100 % of the initial fees for both authors and illustrators, whereas authors had received only 50 % of this sum previously [28, pp. 252–253].

It is important to put these observations into context. The equal treatment of the author and the illustrator was achieved thanks to the very form of the picture book, which accords equal importance to the text and the image. Moreover, the use of a flat rate corresponded on the one hand to the fact that the images filled a large part of the pages, and were no longer divided into covers, frontispieces, vignettes, full-page compositions and chapter-end vignettes according to the hierarchy in force in the traditional illustrated book, and on the other hand to the standardization of “Raduga”’s production from 1925. This suggests that the system of remuneration of illustrators for the traditional illustrated book may have differed from that of the picture book. The importance of the image in the picture book and the recognition of its importance paved the way for the recognition of the illustrator’s work.

Finally, the enhancement in the value of reissues and thus of print runs mentioned by Kliachko is correlated with the progression of the intensive growth of the 1920s. Some popular books were reissued almost every year between their creation date and 1931, such as *Bagazh*, *Pudel*, *Vchera i Segodnia* or *O glupom Myshonke*, to cite a few examples of Samuil Marshak’s works, illustrated by Vladimir Lebedev. Some books were even published twice in the same year, such as *Bagazh* in 1929. And *Moidodyr*, Chukovski success illustrated by Iuri Annenkov, was republished 13 times between 1923 and 1928, that is to say 2,2 times a year on average. According to Kliachko, the payment of 100 % of the fees to the illustrators and authors at the time of the re-editions allowed him “to assert his qualitative requirements and to thus express the success of a work with readers: the better the book, the further it will go, the higher the fees for the author and the artist.”⁴⁰ Although this principle of remuneration for reprints was also observed in 1930 within the state publishing house (GIZ),⁴¹ it continued in the form of payments of a lower percentage, on the order of 50 % or 60 %. In any case, this was an important step in the recognition of the success of a work in the remuneration of the illustrator. A success that was measured by the number of copies sold and raised the question of the recognition and financial valuation of a “work of art in the

⁴⁰ Quote from TsGALI RSFSR, f. 1575, inv. 10, file 686, pp. 287–288, in [28, p. 252].

⁴¹ Quote from TsGALI RSFSR, f. 1575, inv. 10, file 686, pp. 287–288, in [28, pp. 254–255].

age of its mechanical reproduction,” to quote the title of Walter Benjamin’s 1935 essay.

However, Kliachko seemed unable to apply his principles consistently. The account books preserved in the “Raduga” archives for the years 1925–1928 reveal an operating system according to which most authors and illustrators received around 150 rubles per completed work, confirming a progress in the recognition of the illustrator’s work.⁴² Having said that, there are many disparities which show that this practice was not systematic and that there was persistent unequal treatment between authors on the one hand, and between authors and illustrators on the other.

To begin, let us consider the case of a first edition: Zhitkov received 125 rubles per manuscript in 1926, while Chukovski, the leading writer of the house and the author of its first published book, received up to 334 rubles for *Mukhina svadba*.⁴³ In 1927, Marshak and Chukovski most often received 200 rubles for a first manuscript. The price range was thus generally between 125 and 200 r. Higher sums remained exceptions. This suggests the existence of a scale of value related to the author’s fame and profitability. In 1925, Chukovski even mentioned, in his memoirs, a monthly salary of 500 rubles that Kliachko did not adhere to [32, pp. 403–404] although we have not established a link with the archives to date.

The comparison with fees for illustrators reveals three possibilities:

1. An equivalence in earnings: Vladimir Lebedev and Samuil Marshak were both paid 150 rubles for *Pudel*⁴⁴;
2. A more highly paid author: in 1926, the illustrator Konashevich was paid 125 rubles for *Mukhina Svadba* and Chukovski, the author, 334 rubles; in 1927, Marshak received 200 rubles for *Pochta* and Tsekhanovski only 150 rubles for the book’s illustrations.⁴⁵
3. Much more rarely, a better paid illustrator: in the exceptional case of *Kak rubanok sdelať rubanok*, Marshak received 450 rubles and Lebedev, initially paid 400 rubles, received an additional 210 rubles.⁴⁶ For the moment, we have no explanation for the considerable amount of money spent on this book, nor a justification for the discrepancy.

This inequality between authors and illustrators deepened considerably in the case of reprints. The sums mentioned in “Raduga”’s account books are in fact generally higher than the initial fees and the differences

⁴² TsGALI, 237/1/1, 5, 6, 13, 14, 15, 19, 20, 24.

⁴³ TsGALI, 237/1/1.

⁴⁴ TsGALI 237/1/6.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ TsGALI 237/1/1.

between authors and illustrators are obvious. On the whole, illustrators received 100 % of their basic fee, sometimes a little more, while the amounts paid to authors were often much higher. The artist Petrov-Vodkin received 125 rubles for the 1st edition of Marshak's *Zagadki* and 150 rubles for the 2nd, while the author received 330 rubles for the 3rd.⁴⁷ Marshak and Chekhonin both received 225 rubles for the 2nd edition of *Knizhka pro knizhki*⁴⁸ but for the 3rd and 4th editions of Pozhar, Marshak received 330 and 270 rubles, while Konashevich received 125 rubles both times, which probably corresponded to 100 % of his fees.⁴⁹ In the case of "Raduga"'s biggest success, Moidodyr, Chukovski received 300 rubles for the 8th edition compared to 150 rubles for Annenkov, 600 rubles for the 9th edition compared to 300 rubles for Annenkov, then 460 rubles for the 10th edition compared to 330 rubles and 429 rubles for the 11th edition compared to 221 rubles for the illustrator. This is one of the few cases in which the illustrator's compensation was so high, yet it remained well below that of the author.

The rates offered to illustrators by "Raduga", around 150 rubles per book, were similar to those found at the GIZ in 1927.⁵⁰ Margarita Genke-Shifrina received 125 rubles for the illustration of a picture book by Sofia Fedorchenko.⁵¹ According to Komarov's memoirs, Mirimanov offered the lowest remuneration on the market [7, p. 613], which is yet to be specified for purposes of comparison.

A progression is indeed noted in the recognition of the work of visual artists. The guidelines were established: the illustrator was paid for the production of the images and according to the success of the book, measured by its print run. His/her emoluments were similar to those of the author, without equaling them. The success of a book and the artistic value of a work were taken into account in financial terms mainly for authors. Although illustration was gaining in importance, it remained an art form that was subordinate to the text, which presided over its *raison d'être*, and was not fully perceived as a determining element in the success

⁴⁷ TsGALI 237/1/1, 5.

⁴⁸ TsGALI 237/1/1.

⁴⁹ TsGALI 237/1/1, 6.

⁵⁰ RGALI 2422/1/451. Account book of the art worker of Margarita Genke-Shifrina, Moscow, 1927–1935. This booklet was made compulsory for artists who had temporary employment activities and worked from home by the postanovlenie of the NKT of the USSR dated June 16, 1927, no. 136, "O raschetnykh knizhках dlia rabotnikov iskusstva, zaniatykh na vremennykh rabotakh ili rabotaiushchikh na domu".

⁵¹ TsGALI 2422/1/451, p. 15.

of a book. Vladimir Lebedev occasionally earned more than the fixed fee, but this was exceptional. Were these discrepancies justified by practical reasons, or did they express the existence of room for negotiation?

In the USSR of the 1920s, the method of remuneration of the illustrator was clearly indexed on the product and was a question of craft, although Kliachko was also concerned by the artistic quality of the image. At the time of the Great Break, the practice of lump-sum payment evolved, as extensive growth benefited the picture book as much as it did the traditional illustrated book, and as nationalization and centralization of publishing eliminated the specialization of publishers according to type of book. The question of remuneration according to print run persisted, in a context where intensive growth continued.

- Image size and print run: two factors used to determine illustrators' remuneration at the time of the Great Break

In 1929, the fees offered by the GIZ exceeded those offered by "Raduga", then facing bankruptcy, and the diversity of the amounts found attests to the abandonment of the fixed price in favor of another method of calculation. Margarita Genke-Shifrina received 292,35 rubles for the picture book *Pesenki* by Agnia Lvovna Barto (plus 50 rubles in advance for this work), then 191,09 rubles for a book by Sofia Fedorchenko and 166,5 rubles for an picture book by P. Palmer.⁵² In the wake of "Raduga"'s financial setbacks, the amounts offered to illustrators decreased and two flat rates were introduced, based on the size of the book. In a letter to Nikolai Stepanovich Troshin dated January 29, 1929, Kliachko informed the artist of the new rates according to the size of the book: "Please note that we are now applying new fees: the author and the artist receive 125 r. for a book of 15x20 cm and 100 r. for a book of 11,5x15 cm."⁵³ The 150 r. of the 1920s were a thing of the past. In addition, the director of "Raduga" also stipulated that any reprint was to be paid at 60 % of the initial fee instead of 100 %. A "Raduga" contract dated October 3, 1929 (fig. 4) states these new terms of remuneration for reprints:

4. The print run is *fifty thousand copies*, which may be divided into several batches and released at different times.

5. For the printing of this first edition, "Raduga" will pay the author *one hundred and fifty* (150) rubles [...].

7. In the event of a reissue, "Raduga" will pay *fifty rubles* for every 10 000 copies,

⁵² Ibid., p. 3, 13–15.

⁵³ TsGALI 237/1/27, p. 50. An additional 50 rubles were added to this amount for color.

and will release the money no later than two months after the date of the reissue.

Note: the print run is defined by “Raduga.”⁵⁴

These practices are best understood in a context marked by legislative efforts to regulate the activity of authors and illustrators in publishing in general

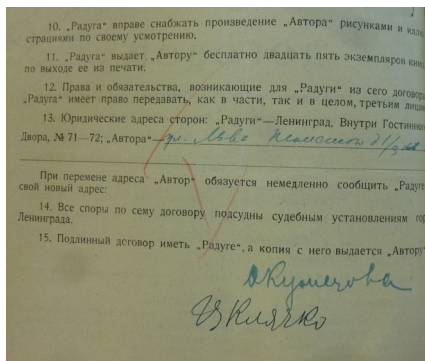
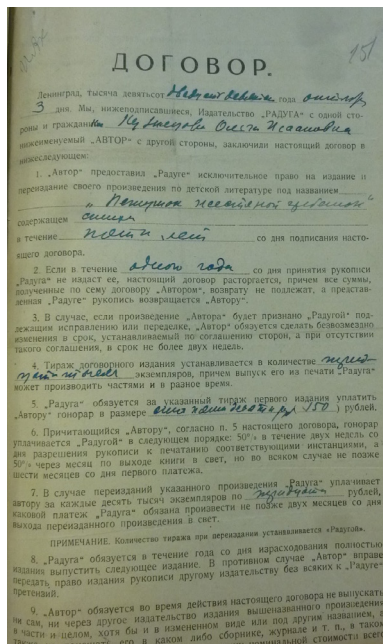


Fig. 4. A “Raduga” contract dated October 3, 1929 (TsGALI, 237/1/28, p. 151–151 ob.).

and indeed incorporating the size and number of images as criteria, indexed on the print run of the book. The publication of new decrees of the National Executive Committee of Russia (VTsIK), of the Council of People’s Commissioners (Sovet Narodnykh Komissarov — SNK) and the Council of People’s Commissioners on Education (NKP), revised the original decree of January 30, 1926, framing copyright. The decrees of the VTsIK and the SNK set out the main lines. The SNK delegated to the NKP the determination of minimum amounts of remuneration, in particular for visual artists.⁵⁵ Two important criteria appeared at that time: the size of the illustration in the book and the indexation of rates on the print run of

⁵⁴ TsGALI 237/1/28, p. 151 and 151 ob. The words in italics correspond to handwritten additions.

⁵⁵ See decree no. 506 of the SNK dated August 26, 1930 “Ob izdanii NKProsmom RSFSR instruktsii o minimal’nykh stavkakh avtorskogo gonorara za izdanie proizvedenii izobrazitel’nykh iskusstv”, *Sobranie zakonov i rasporiazhenii*, October 18, 1930, no. 42, p. 657.

the book in question.⁵⁶

The "Instruction of the Narkompros of the RSFSR on the minimum



Fig. 5. The "Instruction of the Narkompros of the RSFSR on the minimum amounts of author's fees for the edition of a work of visual art and the norms governing print runs" of September 22, 1930.

№ 84			— 21 —			Ст. 896		
	тыс.	тыс.	руб.	коп.				
с каждой 1 000 экз. сверх	200	200	1	—	а) Календарных стонок:			
» » » » » 300 » 500 »	200	200	1	—	при издании до 100 тыс. экз. — 100 руб. за все			
» » » » » 500 »	200	200	1	—	издание и			
б) Картин и лубков размером в одну восьмую печатного листа:					с каждой 1 000 экз. сверх	100	до 200	— 50
при издании до 50 тыс. экз. — 200 руб. за все					» » » » » 200 » 300	—	300	— 25
издание и					» » » » » 300 »	—	300	— 10
с каждой 1 000 экз. сверх	50	до 100	2	—	в) Эскизов, эстампов и эмблем из всякого рода			
» » » » » 100 » 200	—	100	200	1	томографических и технических:			
» » » » » 200 » 300	—	200	300	1	при издании до 50 тыс. экз. — 50 руб.;			
» » » » » 300 » 500	—	300	500	25	сверх 500 тыс. экз., но не свыше 1 млн. экз. до-			
» » » » » 500 »	—	500	500	25	полнительно 25 руб.;			
Б. За издание картин и лубков всех размеров					свыше 1 млн. экз. — дополнительно по 10 руб. за			
односторонних и так называемых дуплетов эквивалентно					каждый миллион экз.			
ставки гонорара устанавливаются в 75% вышеуказанных.					з) Настенных учебно-методических таблиц (пла-			
а) Портретов полихромных (интеркрасных) и					катных пособий):			
печатных по способу офсет размером в один и					при издании до 30 тыс. экз. эквивалентно —			
половину печатного листа:					150 руб. и			
при издании до 25 000 экз. — 500 руб. за все					с каждой 1 000 экз. сверх	30	до 60	2
издание и					» » » » » 60 » 100	—	100	1
с каждой 1 000 экз. сверх	25	до 50	10	—	» » » » » 100 » 200	—	200	50
» » » » » 50 » 100	5	—	5	—	» » » » » 200 » 300	—	300	25
» » » » » 100 » 200	2	50	—	—	» » » » » 300 »	—	300	10
» » » » » 200 » 300	1	25	—	—	Примечание. В тех же размерах (основ-			
» » » » » 300 » 500	—	50	—	—	ных) устанавливаются эквивалентные ставки го-			
» » » » » 500 »	—	500	—	—	норара за издание перечисленных выше (рубри-			
б) Портретов таких же цветом печатаемых по					«А») произведений в составе художественных			
способу офсет размером в одну четвертую и одну					альбомов с текстом или без него и выданных			
восьмую печатного листа:					подписанных серий, выпускаемых в свет под			
при издании до 50 тыс. экз. — 300 руб. за все					одной общей обложкой и под общим общим на-			
издание и					именованием при тираже одного издания не			
с каждой 1 000 экз. сверх	50	до 100	3	—	свыше 5 000 экз. Минимальные ставки гонорара			
» » » » » 100 » 200	—	100	200	1	за портреты издания устанавливаются в раз-			
» » » » » 200 » 300	—	200	300	1	мере 50% для 2-го издания, 25% — для 3-го из-			
» » » » » 300 » 500	—	300	500	25	дания и 10% — для каждого из последующих			
» » » » » 500 »	—	500	500	25	изданий.			
Б. За воспроизведение в кинтах и брошюрах:					Б. За воспроизведение в кинтах и брошюрах:			

	тыс.	тыс.	руб.	коп.				
с каждой 1 000 экз. сверх	50	до 100	3	—	а) Полихромных рисунков, иллюстраций и т. п.			
» » » » » 100 » 200	1	50	—	—	размером в 1 страницу или в три четверти стра-			
» » » » » 200 » 300	—	200	300	75	ницы:			
» » » » » 300 » 500	—	300	500	40	при издании до 15 000 экз. — 25 руб. за все из-			
» » » » » 500 »	—	500	500	10	дание и			
Минимальные ставки гонорара за портреты					с каждой 1 000 экз. сверх	15	до 30	50
односторонних и дуплетов, а также офсет устанавли-					» » » » » 30 » 100	—	100	25
ваются в размере 60% вышеуказанных.					» » » » » 100 »	—	100	10
в) Плакатов — независимо от размеров и спо-					Размеры в одну четвертую страницы:			
соба воспроизведения при каждом издании до					при издании до 15 000 экз. — 15 руб. за все из-			
100 тыс. экз. — 250 руб. за все издание и					дание и			
с каждой 1 000 экз. сверх	100	до 200	1	25	с каждой 1 000 экз. сверх	15	до 30	30
» » » » » 200 » 300	—	200	300	60	» » » » » 30 » 100	—	100	15
» » » » » 300 » 500	—	300	500	30	» » » » » 100 »	—	100	05
» » » » » 500 »	—	500	500	10	Размер в одну четвертую страницы:			
Минимальные ставки для плакатов торго-					при издании до 15 000 экз. — 10 руб. за все из-			
вых (рекламных) устанавливаются на					дание и			
20% выше указанных.					с каждой 1 000 экз. сверх	15	до 30	10
г) Открыток иллюстрированных:					» » » » » 30 » 100	—	100	05
при издании до 50 тыс. экз. — 50 руб. за все из-					б) Одноцветных рисунков, иллюстраций и т. п.			
дание и					размером в одну страницу и в три четверти стра-			
с каждой 1 000 экз. сверх	50	до 100	1	50	ницы			
» » » » » 100 »	—	100	—	50	при издании до 30 000 экз. — 15 руб. за все из-			
Минимальные ставки гонорара за открытки					дание и			
односторонних и дуплетов устанавливаются в размере								
75% выше указанных.								

⁵⁶ Suppress *Sobranie zakonov i rasporiazhenii*, April 18, 1930, no. 21, p. 397. The SNK also instructed the Councils of People's Commissars of Republics to define minimum fees for artists whose works were reproduced on postcards, books, etc. according to the print run in its postanovlenie "O merakh k sozdaniuu blagopriiatnykh uslovii raboty khudozhnikov" of March 30, 1930.

amounts of author's fees for the edition of a work of visual art and the norms governing print runs" of September 22, 1930 (fig. 5), distinguished between color and black and white illustrations. For each of these image types, the document spelled out three pricing categories based on the size of the illustration: full page and 3/4 page, 1/2 page and 1/4 page. And for each size, prices were indexed according to the print run. A full-page and 3/4-page multi-color illustration was thus paid 25 roubles for up to 15 000 copies, plus 0,50 roubles for each additional 1000 copies up to 30 000 copies, then 0,25 roubles for each additional 1000 copies up to 100 000 copies, then 0,10 roubles for each additional 1000 copies over 100 000 copies. The same system applied to other sizes of polychrome and black and white illustrations. Covers were allocated an additional 20 % of the fee for a full-page illustration.

If we consider that Margarita Genke produced a cover (30 roubles) and ten full-page color drawings (250 roubles) for *Pesenki* by Barto, which had a print run of 30 000 copies (75 roubles), she should have received 355 roubles, which corresponds to the 357,75 roubles fee calculated by the GIZ.⁵⁷ For the cover (30 roubles) and the 9 half-page color drawings (135 roubles) for *Leshka 1-yi* by Sofia Fedorchenko, printed in 25 000 copies (30 roubles), the artist would have received at least 195 roubles according to our estimate, which is indeed close to the 201,15 roubles probably received for this work (whose title is not mentioned in the account book but whose description corresponds to the date).⁵⁸ The NKP instruction was published in the year following the preparation of these works, but the cross-referencing of these sources gives an idea of the method of calculation that may have been applied at the time, probably in a simplified fashion.

The comparison between the GIZ and "Raduga" rates reveals different ways of integrating print run and image size in the calculation of illustrators' fees. At the same time, it demonstrates that these were the two elements that determined the amount of remuneration. These criteria, at once technical and integrating the success (actual or anticipated) of the book, are in line with the practices of the 1920s. The insistence on circulation reflects the interest given during this period to intensive growth, and the various options chosen to integrate circulation into the calculation method reflect the trial and error involved in taking this new parameter into account. These criteria, which were to be further refined,

⁵⁷ RGALI 2422/1/451. The difference between this amount and the one previously indicated as received by the artist can be explained by the 5 % deduction made by the GIZ for amortization.

⁵⁸ RGALI 2422/1/451, p. 15, 18–19.

formed the basis of practice in the decade that was beginning. They would then be accompanied by a reassessment of fees and by a recognition of the artistic quality of the work, thereby transforming the work of the children's illustrator from craft to profession.

- The revaluation of the compensation of illustrators during the 1930s

In 1935, a proposal for a fee structure for illustrations was discussed in the graphic arts sector of the Moscow Union of Soviet Artists (MOSSkh). The artists emphasized the importance of increasing the amounts of money paid, which would allow them to support themselves and would take into account the time and material costs (making sketches, buying or consulting documents, researching the theme, paying models, buying materials, etc.) necessary for any original artistic production (fig. 6).⁵⁹ The grid established new prices for the different types of original graphic work, the details of which attest to a return to the traditional book: illustrations and small format portraits (10x6 cm), frontispieces, title and half-title pages, covers, dust jackets, bindings, book cases, flyleaves, illustrated initials, vignettes and tailpieces, illustrated margins, leaves reproducing a painting or an etching, as well as labels, packaging (for chocolate, cookies and other three-dimensional objects) and commercial brands. The mode of remuneration of the craft, indexed on the product [24, pp. 23–24] and already in force in the preceding years, was fine-tuned by means of more detailed scales.

These new scales were accompanied by a remuneration linked to the notion of profession, indexed on service, without going as far as a remuneration of art, indexed on fame and glory. In the MOSSkh grid, each type of image is broken down into three categories of creators, heirs to the four classes of artists established by the Rabis in 1919, and which do not seem to have been used in the field of children's illustration in the 1920s.⁶⁰ And each of these categories was in turn divided into two tariffs, depending on the degree of complexity of the work. The degree of complexity was defined, according to the MOSSkh, by the technique used and in particular by the treatment of the theme of the images (fig. 6).⁶¹

In the second half of the 1930s, the correspondence and contracts

⁵⁹ RGALI 2943/1/1585, p. 18, 18ob, 19.

⁶⁰ These categories seem to disappear afterwards, to be replaced by a simple range of possible prices. See "Iz prikaza Glavnogo upravleniia izdatel'stv Ministerstva kul'tury SSSR no. 44 ot 20 avgusta 1955 g." [33, pp. 211–214].

⁶¹ This degree of complexity will be detailed, in the 1950s, in terms of figurative composition, ornamental composition, typographic composition and ornamental line composition, in color or black and white [33, pp. 211–211].

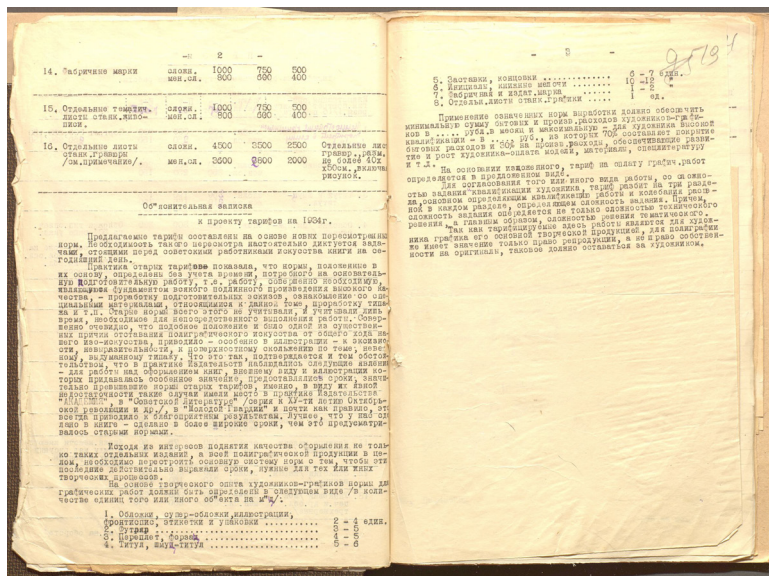


Fig. 6. Scheme for original graphic works fees, established by the graphic arts sector of the Moscow Union of Soviet Artists (MOSSkh) in 1935 (RGALI, 2943/1/1585, p. 18, 18 ob., 19, 19 ob.).

between the “Detgiz” and its illustrators show amounts consistent with this fee structure and confirm the method of calculating fees by adding up the different types of drawings produced. Thus, in 1935, the illustrations created by Konashevich for *Skazka o rybake i rybke*, published by Grzhebin in 1922, were bought by the “Detgiz”. The contract amounted to 1850 rubles, a sum calculated by adding up the types of illustrations produced, as for new projects. The total can be broken down as follows: 350 rubles for the cover + 200 rubles for a full-page drawing + 200 ro rubles oubles for the title page + 300 rubles for two half-page drawings + 800 rubles for eight vignettes and end-of-chapter illustrations.⁶²

In addition, contracts specified the dimensions of the images, the technique used (lithography, woodcut, mezzotinto, pen-and-ink, etc.) and indicated the number of colors, if applicable.⁶³ These elements contributed to the definition of the price of an image. It remained harder to evaluate the treatment of the subject of the illustrations, the quality of the work or the degree of mastery of the artist. Given the difficulty inherent in assessing

⁶² RGALI 630/1/2173, n.

⁶³ Ibid.

the complexity of an image and its artistic quality, artists sometimes endeavored to negotiate their fees, but the margin was slim. They strove above all to ensure that their rights were respected.

- The negotiating tools to protect artists' rights

The price of the drawing and the print run were recurrent topics in the discussions between the “Detgiz” and its illustrators. At the beginning of 1936, the art editor at the “Detgiz”, Pavel Suvorov, offered to pay the artist Alexander Pakhomov 300 rubles for a full-page drawing instead of 250 rubles in order to compensate for the planned print run of 25 000 copies in place of the 10 000 copies requested by the artist.⁶⁴ The illustrator’s request for 10 000 copies refers to the new print-run norms defined by the decree of the SNK of the RSFSR dated August 17, 1934 [11, p. 35]. This decree specified that, for children’s literature, the reference print run of an edition is 10 000 copies and that each additional copy is considered a reprint and must therefore be paid for at 60 % of the fee payable for the first edition.

Illustrators had to ensure that the “Detgiz” complied with the rules. In 1935, at the meeting of the MOSSkh graphic arts sector board dealing with illustrators’ rights, the artists reiterated the importance of the legal obligation for the publisher to indicate in the contract, from the first edition, the number of copies expected. This implies that the obligation was rarely respected.⁶⁵ That same year, Charushin submitted a complaint to the “Detgiz”: having signed a contract for 50 000 copies of the book *Zver Buruduk*, he expressed surprise that he had not received any payment for the 100 000 copies finally printed.⁶⁶

Depending on the editorial projects and the people involved, the illustrator was able to influence the number of images to be produced, their size and content. In December 1935, the correspondence between the “Detgiz” and Vladimir Konashevich about Chukovski’s book *Katausi i Maus* shows that the author and the illustrator together examined the publisher’s proposal on these points and suggested changes.⁶⁷ Konashevich wished to produce 38 small and 11 large drawings. Of these large drawings, some would be in the form of compositions of smaller images. He asked for 5000 rubles for his work for a book with a planned print run of 50 000 copies. The “Detgiz” let him know that this sum was too high and had never before been paid to anyone for equivalent work. The publisher

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 65.

⁶⁵ RGALI 2943/1/1584.

⁶⁶ RGALI 630/1/2173, p. 63.

⁶⁷ Ibid., pp. 1–3.

offered him two options: a work contract [trudovoi dogovor] for 6225 rubles, including every additional copy, or a publishing contract [avtorskii dogovor] for 3600 rubles, plus 50 % of this amount for every additional 50 000 copies.⁶⁸ This alternative between two types of contract appears regularly in the archives and served to circumvent the question of the print run.⁶⁹ Standard contracts generally stipulated payment for re-edits at 60 % of the original fee.

The question of how to take into account the print run in the remuneration of authors and illustrators raised ideological difficulties. In 1957, a book devoted to the relationship between author and publisher made a distinction between the Soviet system, which protected its authors and limited the commercial risks, and the practice of the majority of capitalist countries, in which royalties usually took the form of a percentage on each copy sold [33, pp. 109–110].

Finally, the illustrator could try to negotiate the amount of the advance granted at the signing of the contract. This amounted to 25 % of the total fees (compared to 50 % in the 1920s). From the end of the Great Break, the advance was used to cover expenses related to the realization of the work; the office of the graphic arts sector of the MOSKh, in their draft fee scale, estimated that the expenses related to the execution of a work (materials, time spent) were equivalent to 30 % of the agreed-upon fees (fig. 6), an amount slightly higher than that applied in actual practice. Alexander Pakhomov, for example, wrote to the “Detgiz” that he wanted to receive 60 % of his royalties as soon as the contract was signed because the illustrations were already completed.⁷⁰ The percentage might also be higher if the artist needed to travel, for example, to work on a particular subject, in order to cover expenses. The negotiation of the amount of the advance was important because it was kept by the artist in the event of non-publication of the book, of rejection of the drawings by the artistic council of the publishing house and in the case of the possible refusal of the artist to proceed with the modifications requested by this council.⁷¹ In these three cases, the contract was terminated and the illustrator received no further

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 2. The artist finally chose the second contract (ibid., p. 7).

⁶⁹ The different types of contracts held in the “Detgiz” collection attest to this (RGALI 630/1/174. Example of a contract from 1939). The terms indicated on the official documents are then *trudovoe soglasenie* and *izdatelskii dogovor*.

⁷⁰ RGALI 630/1/2173, p. 67.

⁷¹ We found only one example of an author refusing to accept drawings, and that was Marshak, probably one of the few writers who could really influence the choice of illustrations for his works. This refusal concerned Laptev’s works for *Vot kakoi rasseiannyi*, in 1938 (RGALI 630/5/19, p. 16).

payment,⁷² which is why Pakhomov also asked to receive the remaining 40 % of the amount due upon receipt by the “Detgiz” of the photographs of the illustrations.⁷³ The publisher demanded the reimbursement of the advance if the illustrator failed to provide any images.⁷⁴

To this day, it remains difficult to establish the extent to which an illustrator’s remuneration depended on the type of children’s text to be illustrated, as in the 1960s, when the poems of the authors from the Soviet republics were paid below the minimum tariffs, while storybooks were highly valued⁷⁵. It is certain, on the other hand, that illustrators were paid very little for works in which the image was considered to be quite secondary and was less complex in its execution. Thus, while the most common rates at the “Detgiz” were approximately 200 rubles for a full-page color drawing, 150 rubles for a half-page drawing and 100 roubles for a vignette or an end-of-chapter illustration, the latter two elements, probably purely decorative, were remunerated at between 8 and 12 rubles each for Stanislavski’s book *Moia zhizn v iskusstve*, published by “*Ekonomicheskaja zhizn*”. This payment amounts to about 10 times less than the going rate. Moreover, the range of fees paid by the “Detgiz” did not match the amounts paid for easel works in the project of the MOSSkh (fig. 6). The reproduction of paintings and engravings pertained to the publishing of art books. The hierarchy of illustrations according to the type of book is clear.

In the 1920s, the recognition of a book’s circulation, particularly through the remuneration of illustrators for reprints, was a step forward and an achievement that was consolidated thereafter. The following decade was marked by the emergence of a greater margin of negotiation for illustrators and by an increase in the amount of their fees. From at least 1935 onwards, the amount received by artists almost always exceeded 1000 roubles and sometimes even attained impressive levels. In 1939, Iuri Pimenov received 5600 rubles for Marshak’s *Khoroshii Den’*, which was already high, but still modest compared to Vladimir Lebedev’s 26 600 rubles for Marshak’s *Azbuka* and Konashevich 21 300 rubles for illustrating Kvitko’s poems. In addition, Konashevich received 6150 rubles for the illustration of Olesha’s *Three Fat Men*. Deineka received 10 700 rubles for nine full-page pictures (seven of them in color) and nine half-page black-and-white illustrations for *Nasha aviatsia* by I.P. Mazuruk.⁷⁶

⁷² RGALI 630/5/19.

⁷³ RGALI 630/1/2173, p. 67

⁷⁴ RGALI 630/5/19.

⁷⁵ Kabakova, G. “‘L’illustration nous a permis de survivre.’ Entretien avec Eric Boulatov.” *La Revue des livres pour enfants*, 2005, no. 221, p. 125.

The increase in the amount of money received resulted from a reassessment of the activity and, to a large extent, from the multiplication of the number of images following the decline of the picture book and the return to the traditional book composed of many pages for children who could already read. It also corresponded to a greater workload, which makes it difficult to compare the data from the 1920s and 1930s concerning the financial situation of illustrators. Nevertheless, it seems safe to say that the occupation had become more and more profitable.

Children's illustration: an increasingly profitable activity

In the 1920s, the most common payment for the illustration of a picture book at "Raduga" was 150 rubles. This amount was about half of the average price of a painting acquired by the Glavnauka purchasing commission in 1926, which was 250–300 rubles, and then 300–500 rubles in 1927–1928 [24, p. 55]. It was equal to the monthly salary of the secretary and head of the propaganda section of the VKP (b) organization in Tomsk, which totaled 144 rubles and proved to be the highest in the organization [12]. The average wage of a worker in the Saratov region in all sectors was 44,09 rubles in 1925–1926 and 48,64 rubles in 1926–1927. Construction workers received the highest wages: 57,75 rubles [4]. In general, the average wage of a Soviet worker was 28,57 rubles in 1925–1926 [21, p. 111]. In order to earn a decent salary and earn a living wholly on illustration for children's books, it would have been necessary to publish about one book per month, or at least one book every two months.

This phenomenon was further intensified at the time of the Great Break, when the explosion of extensive growth created a need for many illustrators. The fees paid were in line with the inflation of these difficult years. In 1929, Margarita Genke-Shifrina received 292,35 rubles for illustrations for a picture book by A. Barto, and 191,09 rubles for another by Sofia Fedorchenko. She also received 196,65 rubles from the publisher "Molodaia gvardiia." In that year the average salary of a worker in the capital was 93 rubles [34, p. 59]. The average price of a painting was still 500 rubles, if we use the figures cited in the Narkompros plan to organize a lottery involving paintings or the contracts signed with painters for the anniversary exhibitions of 1928 [24, pp. 205, 246]. In 1931, the average wage for a worker in the capital was between 120 r. and 140 r. [24, p. 56], the monthly pay for a contracted work assignment in the Izogiz was between 200 and 300 rubles; in 1932, the average wage of a Moscow worker reached 158 rubles [34, p. 260]. The prices of certain

⁷⁶ RGALI, 630/1/2554.

paintings soared. In the same year, Deineka sold his painting *The Mother* for 3300 rubles to the Gorzdravotdel. Inflation, the upgrading of the artist's status and the increase in the value of easel painting were all cumulative in the phenomenon. The increase in illustrators' fees followed the growth in the price of easel paintings and the prizes awarded at major exhibitions, which also reached several thousand rubles.⁷⁷

From the 1930s onwards, the disparities between professions clearly widened. The revaluation of the remuneration amounts in 1935 certainly incorporated inflation and reflected a relative economic recovery, but it also translated the valorization of the status of the artist in general and the recognition of children's illustration as a profession. Soviet society was becoming structured around figures of heroes, examples to follow, models, and no longer around the notion of masses and typical figures. The artist belonged to the new intellectual and social elite. This is certainly indicated in the comparison of the amounts earned in illustration and the average salaries of the time. While the illustration of a children's book could fetch several thousand rubles, the average monthly salary of a worker in the capital was 240 rubles in 1935 [24, p. 320], which corresponded to the average price of a full-page color illustration. Even considering the fact that the illustrators' fees corresponded to the execution of a greater number of pictures than in the 1920s, their remuneration increased significantly: if in the 1920s the payment for a picture book at "Raduga" was 5,2 times the average worker's salary, in 1939 the 10 700 rubles fee received by Deineka for illustrating the work of Mazuruk corresponded to 32,4 times the average salary, which was then 330 rubles, not to mention the gulf that separated the artistic professions from the peasantry, which was in a tragic situation with an average annual salary of 479 roubles for a kolhozian [26, pp. 230–231].

The importance of these amounts needs to be qualified. First of all, the termination of the contract when the drawings were refused meant that the illustrator did not always receive the amounts agreed upon at the outset. It is thus interesting to quantify the number of unsuccessful projects in order to determine the real situation in which illustrators found themselves. A quick look at the protocols of the meetings of the contract inventory commission for the year 1938 shows many instances of non-publication.⁷⁸ Furthermore, Suvorov maintained that the amounts paid for illustrations

⁷⁷ RGALI 2943/1/67, p. 4. Stenogramma obshchego sobraniia MOSSkha po obsuzhdeniju vystavki "40 khudozhnikov," 28.02.1936. The document mentions four levels of awards: 10 000, 7000, 5000 and 3000 rubles at the exhibition of women artists held March 8, 1934.

were modest, but were generally compensated by the large print runs and frequent reissues.⁷⁹ Illustration was therefore quite lucrative, provided the book was actually published.

Finally, as we have pointed out, these sums corresponded to a type of book that involved an apparently more significant workload than the production of a 1920s picture book. Measuring the time spent, however, remains challenging. Assuming that the execution of the 18 images by Deineka may have required two to three times more time than that of the ten or so pages in a “Raduga” book, the difference in remuneration is still considerable.⁸⁰ Especially since Deineka was able to switch easily from one medium to another and gained in efficiency thanks to his familiarity with the theme of aviation, which he used in other illustrations, in his paintings and in his monumental works, such as the mosaics in the Maiakovskaia metro station in Moscow. In the 1970s, Eric Bulatov spoke of the difficulty of illustrating four books in six months when they required, for example, a great deal of ethnographic research into the poems of the republics that were to be put into images. His words provide an idea of the possible pace of work, confirm that the rates of the 1930s were high, and above all open up the question of the place of children’s illustration in the overall activity of visual artists.

Illustration for children in the multiple activities of artists: regular or occasional practice?

To make a decent living from illustration for children’s literature in the 1920s, it was necessary to publish about one book per month. The averages were in fact far below this figure: between 1923 and 1930, “Raduga” published about 444 new books or 612 children’s books, including reprints, by 113 artists and 123 writers [28, pp. 249, 262]. That figure amounts to 0,8 books per illustrator per year (including reprints). According to the index of the first bibliographic collection of children’s books compiled by Startsev, 906 artists created 10 978 children’s titles between 1918 and 1931 (new and reprinted works combined) [30, p. 8]. That is an average of 0,9 books per artist per year over this period. The

⁷⁸ RGALI 630/5/19.

⁷⁹ RGALI 630/1/2173, p. 170 ob.

⁸⁰ If we make an estimate according to the time frames provided by the MOSSkh (fig. 6), suggesting the realization of one easel work and two to four smaller illustrations per month, we can hypothesize that the creation of the nine full-page illustrations and the nine vignettes would require a maximum of nine months, and that the images for a 10-page picture book for “Raduga”, considered as small illustrations, would require a maximum of four and a half months.

calculation of averages here points to the great number of artists involved in children's illustration and the fact that it was, for the vast majority of them, a part time activity, just one among others.

This polyvalence, whether or not it was theorized in the context of the ideal of a synthesis of the arts characteristic of the 1920s, proved to be necessary for the survival of creators of the day. Except perhaps for a few rare artists, no discipline alone could ensure sufficient income (see the case of painting, [24]). The money earned from children's illustration supplemented the income earned from other types of work, teaching activities and the performance of consulting and administrative tasks. Authors and illustrators also had to deal with unpaid bills and numerous delays in payment, as Chukovski reported about the publisher Kliachko as early as 1924–1925 [32, pp. 307, 318, 403–404, 408, 435], and with the terms of payment in instalments, which did not always yield the hoped-for amounts in the 1930s.

What about the most committed artists in the field of illustration for children? And first of all, who were they? Writing about the 1920s, Fomin makes a distinction between the situation in Moscow and that in Leningrad. In the latter city, the figures of Konashevich and Vladimir Lebedev dominated. Lebedev was a mentor who gathered artists around him and trained them to illustrate children's books at the GIZ, where he was the artistic director from the creation of the children's department in 1924 until the mid-1930s. In the Soviet capital, no single figure really stood out and illustrators came and went according to opportunities [7, pp. 123–124]. Moscow publishers largely relied on easel artists, happy to find commissions in a context of crisis in painting [7, p. 595]. According to the index of Startsev's bibliographic collection, which takes into account only new titles and whose comprehensiveness remains to be verified, the most prolific illustrator of this period was A. Komarov, who illustrated 154 new titles, that is, 11 books per year on average, almost one book per month. The second most prolific illustrator, Vatagin, was far behind with 88 new books illustrated between 1918 and 1931, an average of 6,3 books per year. Konashevich came in third place, with 78 new books, or an average of 5,6 books per year. Between 1925 and 1931, Lebedev published only 15 previously unpublished titles, with a maximum of 6 new books in the year 1925, for "Raduga". Children's illustration enabled a very small number of artists to make a rather modest living. Even if the payment for reprints boosted their income, Konashevich managed to publish a book per month only once, in 1927, and Lebedev remained far from this goal (figs. 7–8).

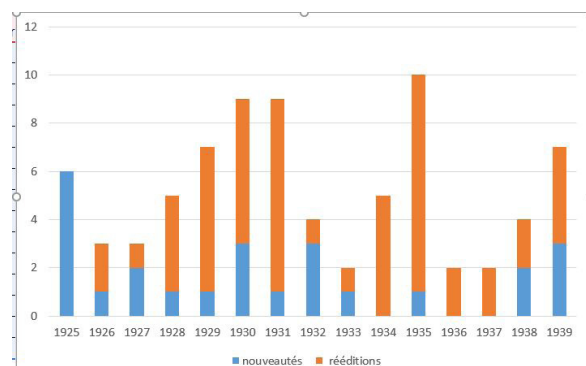


Fig. 7. Number of books illustrated by Vladimir Lebedev between 1925 and 1939, new and reprinted. Graphic made by the author.

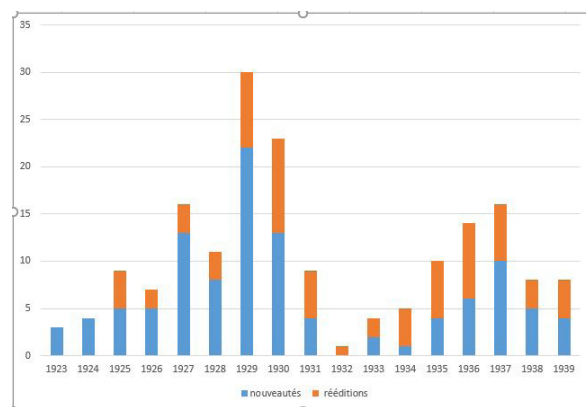


Fig. 8. Number of books illustrated by Vladimir Konashevich between 1925 and 1939, new and reprinted. Graphic made by the author.

The occasional nature of illustration for children's books was even more evident at the time of the Great Break. The extensive growth characteristic of these years supplied work for artists, while opportunities petered out in the adult press, which enthusiastically welcomed photography, and in easel painting, which experienced a major material crisis and was very hard hit by the ideological campaign waged by the Communist youth [24]. Most members of the Society of Easel Artists (OST), for example, published all or almost all of their children's books during this period [24]. A situational transfer of skills thus occurred.

The magazine *Kniga Detiam* drew up a report on the involvement of illustrators in children's books for the year 1929. The illustrators who published the most books for the GIZ in 1929, new and reprinted books combined, were: Konashevich (27 books),⁸¹ Tyrsa (12), Lapshin (12),

⁸¹ We counted a total of 30, according to Startsev's collection [30].

Kupreianov (10), Kuznetsov (9), Staronosov (7), Lebedev (7), Gerasimov (7), Bekhteev (7) and Mitrokhin (5). The majority of illustrators, including Evenbakh, Kulikov and others illustrated between two and four books. The extensive growth of the time benefited both newcomers and illustrators already active in the 1920s. And for the latter, the share of reprints was also significant: these accounted for almost 1/3 of Konashevich's books published in 1929, half of his works for the following years and almost all of Vladimir Lebedev's books (figs. 7–8).

It is in this context that the specialization of artists according to subject matter emerged more clearly. In the 1920s, an illustrator worked on different themes, and certain artists were especially noted for their collaboration with specific writers: Lebedev co-created several successful books with Samuil Marshak, Tyrsa illustrated several works by Zhitkov, and Konashevich regularly collaborated with Chukovski. These particular cases do not obscure the fact that they were exceptional instances and that the choice of the illustrator rested with the publisher.⁸² At the time of the Great Break, the importance given to Soviet themes in all artistic fields led to the promotion of subjects related to industrialization, to the major construction sites of the First Five-Year Plan or to the collective farms. With the focus of creative missions on the important sites of industrial and kolhozian construction, artists produced works of different natures on the same theme. They even reused certain images. The examples offered by the OST speak for themselves: Sterenberg depicts the tea kolkhoz he visited in 1930 in paintings and in a children's book (*Chai*); the same is true of oil production, which was depicted by Shifrin in paintings, press

⁸² Kornej Chukovski diary records his friendly relations with Iuri Annenkov (who illustrated in particular his best-selling *Moidodyr*), the writing of *Barmalei* inspired by Dobuzhinskii's work and intended to be illustrated by him, and his indifference, even contempt, for the work of Konashevich, who nevertheless illustrated several of his texts published at "Raduga". This situation continued throughout the period and into the 1930s. At the end of the 1920s, the standard contract at "Raduga" publishing stated that "'Raduga' is entitled to embellish the author's work with drawings and illustrations of its own choice" (see TsGALI 237/1/28, p. 151 ob.). On April 19, 1938, at the "Detgiz" preschool sector meeting with artists and writers, children's author A. Barto explained that one of the purposes of the meeting was to meet with artists other than those connected to the publisher, as the author often discovered the drawings for her books after they were finished, when they had already been submitted to the Art Council. She expressed the wish to meet the artists, to get to know them, to discuss what interested them, because it was difficult to work without such an exchange. According to her, the official contacts did not lead to real relationships, citing in contrast the books co-created by Marshak and Lebedev, fruit of genuine friendship, mutual understanding, reciprocal criticism and open discussion about the book. Barto asked what it would take to have such a collaboration (RGALI 630/1/920, pp. 9–10).

illustrations and illustrations for children [23]. Deineka represented skiers and a girl at a window in oil on canvas; these figures also featured in his work *Hubbub*. Artists privileged certain themes according to their centers of interest. They could thus solicit children's publishers to illustrate books on subjects related to these themes and conversely, publishers could call upon them to illustrate certain projects.

In the 1930s, Lebedev continued his work with Marshak, mainly via reprints and by modifying the drawings for certain works. Konashevich enjoyed the income from reprints but also brought out many new works. In the continuity of the years of the First Five-Year Plan, painters also participated in one-time projects related to their favorite subjects. Alexander Deineka declined his industrial subjects at the time of the Great Break and published two books for children on aviation in the 1930s. Vatagin continued his work as an animal illustrator and Aleksandr Pakhomov distinguished himself with his depictions of figures of children.

Illustration continued to be an occasional activity for some and a regular one for 15,5 % of the illustrators active between 1932 and 1939, according to a cursory examination of Startsev's bibliographic collection for the period 1932–1939 [31]. Over these eight years, A. Brei illustrated the greatest number of new titles, 36 in total, just ahead of Konashevich who produced 35 works and K. Kuznetsov with 34, that is to say an average of more than 4 books per year for these three illustrators. The vast majority of artists (84,5 %) illustrated less than five new books, that is to say about one book every two years on average. Children's illustration remained largely an occasional activity but one that was much more profitable than in the 1920s for at least two reasons. First, more illustrators working on an occasional basis contributed to books whose subjects were similar to their usual working themes. The investment was therefore less. Secondly, the revaluation of their remuneration enabled them to obtain comfortable earnings, especially when the book was indeed published.

Conclusion

The rise of the picture book, conferring a new status on the image, associated with the rise in intensive growth and the fluctuations in extensive growth, transformed the children's book into a commercial object, aimed at an ever-growing public. These phenomena also led to a greater appreciation of the illustrator's contribution and to his or her recognition in financial terms, first by taking account of the print run and then by increasing the amounts of the various fees paid to illustrators. From the October Revolution to the end of the 1930s, this process acknowledged

children's illustration as a craft, and then introduced into its mode of remuneration elements that constituted the activity as a profession, with more or less negotiable rates, indexing the illustration to the product and, to a lesser extent, to the person and his or her talent. This revaluation testifies to the recognition of illustration among artistic activities and especially to the change in the status of the artist in the USSR of the 1930s. Artists at that time numbered among the intelligentsia and enjoyed a much greater social recognition. It was primarily a question of collective recognition of children's illustrators, as illustrators did not fall into a regime of singularity with their status indexed to the personal value of the artist. This intermediary position was an indication of the particular place of illustration: an activity practiced by artists but not totally considered as art, whose definition remained bound up with the idea of a unique work. In short, illustration was a semi-artistic activity.

The improvement in the financial situation of illustrators laid the foundations for the organization of the 1960s-1980s: children's illustration was then able to serve as a refuge to ensure an income for artists and allow them to pursue a parallel creative activity, independent of the official circuits, as was the case for Ilya Kabakov, Eric Bulatov or Viktor Pivovarov⁸³. In the 1930s, the creation of theater sets also played this role of financial refuge for artists like Petr Williams or Alexander Tyshler and allowed them to pursue their pictorial endeavors. During the 1920s, it was difficult to find a field of activity that was sufficiently remunerative and offered enough work opportunities, and the polyactivity of artists became a necessity to earn a living. During the following decade, artists more clearly displayed a specialization, a dominant activity that, depending on the case, suited them or allowed them to pursue the artistic practice that was important to them. If children's illustration or theater design had an economic function, the recognition that artists enjoyed in these fields also protected them and allowed them to better weather the criticism to which their paintings might be subjected. As Tyshler, a noted theater set designer, asserted to challenge attacks of mysticism leveled in 1936 against his paintings, "If I were a mystic, there would be mysticism in my theater sets too!" [24, p. 381]. It was therefore their multiple activities that protected artists, allowing them to adapt to the context, more than a lightweight ideology that would typify a field considered secondary or semi-artistic such as children's illustration: the 1936 campaign against formalism did indeed

⁸³ Kabakov, I. "Y a-t-il une continuité de l'avant-garde dans l'illustration?" *La Revue des livres pour enfants*, no. 221, 2005, p. 121.

begin by an attack on the illustrations of a children's book, those created by Vladimir Lebedev for a collection of Marshak's work, published by "Academia". More exceptionally, simultaneous success in several artistic fields meant an accumulation of activities ensuring a substantial income. This was the case, for example, of an artist like Alexander Deineka, who is known for his paintings, illustrations and monumental works, especially for the Moscow subway, from which he derived substantial privileges and income.

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