Conclusions

From the above peregrinations along the different generic plateaus of children’s literature, and the lines of flight thereof, it becomes quite evident that the poleros between the poetics and politics in the multiplex domain of children’s texts needs not be understood as chaotic as the generic heterogeneity makes us anticipate. We can definitely identify a number of tendencies, commonalities, positivities, even though these might not necessarily enclose the poleros into invariant norms and limits. Beneath the radical disjunct between the “doll-texts” and comic strips, or science fictions and ghost stories, we can look for, analyze, question a number of rhetorical, ethical and ideological composites, corresponding to the ontological, epistemological and veridical dimensions of the symbolized reality.

In Chapter I, I have examined the political closure of colonialism, the poetics of narratorial monopoly and the psychology of melancholic retention in the mnemonic, spectral subjectivity that operate hand in hand in the making and the perpetuation of the Phantornic figure as the incessant rearrivant, making each other tick. In Chapter II, I have inquired the Disneyesque flattening of space and time where the poetics of evening out and compression generates an ideological unity, and the stratification of the optic, corporeal and cultural axes of the Libidinal Americanism in contexts of encountering the Other[s]—the feminine, the Latina/Latino, the exotic, the threatening, the remote. In both of the above cases, the poetics of realigning difference into indifference and re stratification continue to operate side by side. In the case of Phantom, the surplus for stratification as well as the slack of monoculture are generated by the retreat of the colonial within the poetics of a single man/entire jungle dis-proportion an the revenance of Phantom’s parricidal yet paternal interdictional self-fashioning. In the case of the Disney texts, the excess of libidinal energy and the desire to shrink the other into a souvenir, a spectacle and a fetish generate the structures of imperial politics; while on the other hand, the fluid and irreal animation-contours of Donald Duck and the farcical setbacks of Donald himself becoming a sexual victim on many counts generate the indifference of International Eurocentric, androcratic Americanism.

Similarly, in Chapter III, I have examined the science fiction’s emanation of the “next”, which fails to become the “new” because of its reterritorializing or indifferential propensities both in form and political implications. The form of the cautionary tale, for example, harnesses the “strange” within the “morally dangerous” stereotypes. Again, the rhizome of man-machine or the body-
mind like “Snowflake” or the “cyborg-You” restrict the assemblage or assortment I the sense that coalescence implies only conjugation and sometimes even conflictual summation but not a dialogic or pluralized field of particulars; the molecules that go into the machinic or rhizomatic becoming-“next” lose out into either teleologized or inconvenient molars. The indifference of the machines interpreting human beings as “junk” to be dumped in the garbage or rubbish pile, or the reterritorialization of the sonorous Walkman into an unsurpassable nemesis are its best examples from the sample text that I have chosen.

In Chapter IV, the constraints of the economy of reflection that construct both children and the tendency toward sumptuary pleasure as margins of social authority and moral behavior respectively are taken up, along with the anomalous absence/retreat of sexual passion in the original and the reworked fairy tales. Besides gender and sexuality, race and class become some of the other parametrical closures that are re-inscribed or re-called by the fairy tales or fairy tales’ retellings, albeit either through a disappearing appearing [as in the case of Snow White’s somaticity] or through the teratological excess [such as the Witch as the extension of the step-mother].

In Chapter V, I have explored the commercial circuits [most violently competitive and aggressive], ethical standardizations [the healthfulness of purchase and the training-value thereafter] and the political stratifications [epidermalized and gendered] of the dolls and toys for children. I have also considered the case of the doll inscribed by and within the page-text, i.e., the doll as a protagonist of fiction, such as Pinocchio and shown that the bildungsroman of the doll from dead matter to cogito-imago retreats the politics of anthropocentrism as well as rebellion.

In Chapter VI, the most immediately spectral of all child-lit genres, the ghost story, is analyzed as the field of destabilization of the self with the threat or chaos of the other, the alterity and the abject. The closure of the self as a stable entity is challenged and the myth of identity is shaken by the figural otherness of the ghost, but by rendering the event of haunt an abnormal status, a tuche, a catastrophic happening that ruptures the subject, the discourse of the normal self is standardized again. Ghost stories no doubt open up the enclosures of selfhood, canny realism and homely space by radical eruption of the otherness, the uncanny, the unhomely, but the gaping chasms decided by such opening up are presented as undesirable and accidental. Besides, friendly ghosts like Bhootnath are not spectral per se—they do not inhabit the place of the alteirty—but just skew mimesis of the affectionate grandfather who is dead. The ghost stories therefore name the “home” through their unhomely energy, and almost all ghost stories do take up the plateau of domestic architecture as the threshold of ostranenie.
At the same time, the poetics of children’s literature—i.e., its tropes, caesuras, aporias, performativities and other technical strategies including scopophilic formations that open up into the cosmos they represent and the chaos they trace] suggest or prelapse an energy of the subversive, a tectonic displacement along hidden faultlines, a becoming chaemos. For example, the gender codes heavily relied upon by the classic fairy tales are internally challenged by their own teratological and aphroditical excesses and or the aesthetics of the perverse, the shocking and the occult. The illustrations and the re-workings of these would just multiply the hidden eruptions. In the process, most of the moves that are institutionalized into normatives by the social and the symbolic are transmuted, and they function also as the orphalos of lines of new productions whereby they are fasten the new and the open into a knot of givennesses. The politics in children’s literature is therefore always an aprés-coup of a tuché at the level of poetics.

The same poéros energizes the melodramatic chasms and magnetisms between the self and the other. The spectral and the abject do not return from the outside as we have seen in the ghost stories and the science fictions but from the inside of the self, to gnaw it [ Young Mortimer], to bolster it [ Phantom] even to teach it a facing [with] alterity [ Dicken’s ghost]. The experience and/or the writing of the interface between the already inter-solvent self and its spectral-intimate or fringed other are/is the poéretical maxima of children’s literature, basically because of its already fantasized mode.

The novum in science fiction cannot actuate an absolute “new” but just futurizes the forces of recognition. The novum most often fails to invoke the powers of the “new”, or arrive at or extract the differences from the unrecognizable terra incognita. The dominatant of futurism in the dystopic science fiction serves only to cover the hierarchized differences hitherto managed by the game of the zero-some self, with a set of further anachronized rehierarchized differences. As a result the innovative is interpellated, re-cognized within the “same”—difference proper is reduced into rehierarchal comedies. There is a failure of science fiction to demonize the new outside the defined limits of the past or the contemporary, and even when they tend to, the registration, the acknowledgement is made in terms of a subject=Wuisis which is firmly rooted in the symbolic-historic of today. The heralding of the overhuman or the non-human, we have seen in the samples, is rendered lactic too soon, by a melancholia, a sense of lament or a sense of alert—all sensed in terms of today’s standards, though the props are of future. The modification of “is” by “may be”—nothing more; the naming of the next but not the new is the closural poéretical limits of the science fictions for children.
The evolution of Phantom, for another example, is simply a realization of its possible image, and the only task of the possible image is to be realized through generations. Phantom’s reality simply gets added to his image-invariant. The evolution of Barbie doll, too, is governed by the rules of resemblance and limitation. Amidst shape-shifting contemporaneities, the image of Phantom or Barbie represent a predictable, purported, pre-formed contour which is modified but never opened up. In the hantomic image, for instance, the intensity or difference between Phantom and his non-Phantomic [because dead] father is realized once and then for ever it is frozen and subsumed into Phantomic phenomenon. The intensity is appropriated by the ipseity.

This is nothing but an entropic state where everu Kit Walker looses his proper and becomes every other Kit Walker—a deathless theatre meaning death because of the zero-ing of intensity. This way seen, Phantom is aptly called a “ghost” and Barbie just a “doll” because they are reified from life’s intensities, refrigerated and abstracted off the flow of becoming.

Phantom offers another enclosure, drawn by the poetics and usurped by the politcs—the collapse of the orality-writer-reader triad. He usurps the readers’ privileged, responsive, responsible spot by reading out aloud and reducing the readers to listeners to his oration/recitation. And he reads what he/his Phantomic predecessor has written—the writer and the reader become one and the same. To top this ultimate privilege, even the orality, which Phantom’s act of oral narration gesticulates but not articulates, is appropriated by the writer-reader figure, away from the real oral traditions of the indigenous folks around him. Phantom’s orality is dub-terranean, anti-oral; Phantom’s reading and writing are monocultural redundants. Thus Phantom minimizes subversion.

In all children’s literature, the primary desire is to unleash the monster but to bring the monster into servitude, to make it work for the anthropo-representative fantasizing child. Be it the spatial regulation of the visitors to Disneyland by managing the trajectory of their desires through pre-defined plots, props and purchases, or the highlighting of ethical constraints in the imago-spectre poleros, the monstrous or the daemonic is recycled into an utterance or a trace of the already existing power relationships that figure the final forms in either the residual, or the dominant or the emergent in today’s episteme. As Pinocchio the nascent human scoffs at the limp body of Pinocchio the erstwhile wooden doll, the erotic or the “reaching out” plunge of rhizoid is withdrawn and the world-views of the disjunctive synthesis are recalled into mutual antagonism, alienation and unresponsiveness. Children’s literature can be thus said to re-install the closural politics through either of the two poetics: a re-occupation of the difference into a hierarchy, or the perversion of difference into indifference.