

**UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA**

**CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOK IN IRAN:  
A STUDY OF FORM AND CONTENT  
FROM 2000 TO 2011**

**FAEZEH KHEIRI**

Thesis submitted in fulfilment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
**Doctor of Philosophy**  
**(Art and Design)**

**Faculty of Art and Design**

**July 2019**

## ABSTRACT

The modern children's picture book does not have a long history in Iran. It begins with the establishment of the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adult (IID-CYA) in 1965. The illustrations in Iranian picture books have been a subject of scholarly inquiry since the 1990s, often with an interest in attempting to understand how they work, their history and literature; few have attempted to look at particular visual motifs as cultural products. Illustrations could portray different aspects of society and culture and educate children about their roots and identities. Iranian artists have never been far from their past artistic and cultural heritage and have been trying to explore and practice them in varied new and modern approaches. This study explored the form and content of Iranian children's picture books, and how Persian art, culture, and society reflect on illustrators' themes of innovation and tradition in their works of art. This study took a qualitative approach through the content analysis to analyze the form and content of Iranian picture books by providing the categorized data of 165 samples which were published from 2000 to 2011 for the children's age group of 7 to 9. This approach along with semiotic and iconography method lead the researcher to have a comprehensive interpretation. As an explanatory study, the investigation identifies genre of literature, style, techniques and mediums, and characteristic of Persian art and culture. Modern fantasy is the dominant presented genre in the sample picture books, and naïve is the most popular style among the Iranian illustrators. The illustrators frequently utilized the painterly techniques with the water-based mediums such as acrylic. Most of the patterns and designs in children's book illustrations diverged from those of traditional and historical symbols, motifs, and objects found in Persian art and culture. Book production in Iran is influenced by the social, political, cultural, economic conditions, and even participation in international fairs. Through the open-end interviews with illustrators and some members of picture book community, this study demonstrates that illustrations reflect illustrators' personal, economic, social, and cultural concerns. Also, this study indicates that state's policies, publishers' criteria, market, lack of competent art directors, editors, and professional critics have great impact on the quality of picture book.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

This study would not have been possible without the support of many people. From the formative stages to the final draft of my thesis, I owe an immense debt of gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Mulyadi Mahamood, Professor of the Department of Visual Culture Studies, my co-supervisor, Doctor Mumtaz Mokhtar, and the Department of Post-Graduate Studies, Faculty of Art and Design, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM). I also would like to thank my parents for their love and support throughout this study. A special thank you to the member of the Iranian picture book community, the men and women who work as illustrators, designers, authors, art directors, and publishers. I am overflowing with gratitude for the encouragement, and support of my spouse, Amirreza Zarrabi, who has been the best reason for finishing this study.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
<b>CONFIRMATION BY PANEL OF EXAMINERS</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>AUTHORS DECLARATION</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	<b>ix</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background of Study	2
1.3 Problem Statements	5
1.4 Objectives	6
1.5 Significance of Study	6
1.6 Research Questions	6
1.7 Scope and Limitation of the Study	7
<b>CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1 Introduction	9
2.2 Children Literature in Iran	9
2.3 History of Children Book in Iran	10
2.3.1 Appearance of First Children Book Illustration	11
2.3.2 Children Book Development In Iran	13
2.3.2.1 <i>Color Printing and Development of Children Book</i>	19
2.3.3 The Beginning of New Era	19
2.3.3.1 <i>Franklin Publication Atelier</i>	23
2.3.3.2 <i>The Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults</i>	24
2.3.4 Children Book After Islamic Revolution	30
2.3.4.1 <i>Post Iran and Iraq War (1988)</i>	33
2.4 National Identity	42
2.5 Iranian Illustrator in the Last Decade (2000 – 2011)	43
2.6 Shabaviz Publishing House	46
2.6.1 Shabaviz In The Bologna	47

2.6.2	Shabaviz In The Bratislava	47
2.6.3	Shabaviz In Belgrade	47
2.7	The Policies and Process of Issuing Permit in Iran	51
 <b>CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY</b>		 <b>57</b>
3.1	Introduction	57
3.1.1	Analysis of Children Book	58
3.2	Investigation One	60
3.2.1	The Research Site	60
3.2.2	Picture Book Selection	61
3.3	Investigation Two	63
3.3.1	The Research Site	63
3.3.2	Parameters for Chosen Interviewee (Participants)	64
3.4	The Methodology of Investigation	64
3.4.1	The Multiple Case Study	65
3.4.2	Iconography	66
3.4.3	Semiotic	69
3.4.4	Content Analysis	71
3.4.5	Statistical Analysis	72
3.4.6	Interviews	74
3.5	Conceptual Framework	76
 <b>CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION</b>		 <b>78</b>
4.1	Introduction	78
4.2	Analysis of the First Investigation	78
4.3	Part One: The Form and Content of Children Books in Iran	79
4.4	Descriptive Categories	82
4.4.1	Genre of Literature	82
4.4.2	Style	90
4.4.3	Technique and Medium	100
4.4.4	Characteristics of Persian Art and Culture	101
4.4.4.1	<i>Human Character</i>	103
4.4.4.2	<i>Ancient Art</i>	107
4.4.4.3	<i>Motifs</i>	112
4.4.4.4	<i>Animal and Plant Motifs</i>	119
4.4.4.5	<i>Cultural and Traditional Symbols</i>	142
4.4.4.6	<i>Objects</i>	147
4.4.4.7	<i>Musical Instrument</i>	153