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### Poetic Constructions of Nature. An Eco-critical Reading of Two Recent Danish Picturebooks

In this paper, I have charted the depiction and discussion of the relationship between nature and culture in two Danish picturebooks, Karen Filskov's *Skoven fra oven* (2015) [The Forest from Above] and *Bring en ting* (2016) [Bring a Thing]. These books are created in a lyric tradition where a partly informative content is combined with a poetic form. The books also belong to the historical tradition of figure poetry where the text in itself is created as a picture. In the first book, the poems are formed for example as an egg, a leaf, a tinker-bell and a mole and in the second book, there are poems formed as a cell phone, an umbrella and a chair. In the book about the forest, this place functions as a fascinating chronotope filled with humorous, grotesque and uncanny creatures. In the line of children's books in general, the forest is looked upon as a place of freedom and adventure (Halldén 2011). Many creatures are anthropomorphized and there are intertextual references to both fictional and non-fictional texts about nature. In the second book, the perspective has changed to a cultural everyday sphere, but still nature is represented in metaphors and allusions.

In the last decades eco-criticism has served as a tool for analyzing literature and other cultural products. This paper belongs to a general cultural ecocriticism with studies of popular artefacts, literature, art, film, TV etc. In eco-criticism attention is given to cultural products in which the complex negotiations of nature and culture take place (Garrard 2012: 5). This paper represents an interest in both symbolic and iconic constructions of nature and therefore Karen Filskov's picturebooks are obvious examples. On the one hand, the combination of visual and verbal representation shows a relationship between the conceptions of nature and language, and on the other hand, the combination of artifacts from natural and cultural spheres deconstructs a traditional opposition between nature and culture. Overall, there is a ludic atmosphere and a play with different perspectives on nature and civilization, and the books commute between a celebrating and a nature problematizing view on nature.

The main questions asked in this paper are: How are different ideas and features of nature and especially the forest represented in the books? How is the interplay between different constructions of nature and child? How do the different genre conventions work together? Which kind of reader do these books presuppose or create? Do they support the creation or education of an eco-citizen?

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