



METAFOR

Boğaziçi Üniversitesi
Batı Dilleri ve Edebiyatları Bölümü
&
Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı Bölümü
Ortak Yayını

Editörler

Aslı Tekinay

Fatma Büyükkarcı Yılmaz

We thank Burak Şuşut and FİKA
for designing our cover page...

Kapak tasarımımızı yapan Burak Şuşut ve FİKA'ya
teşekkür ederiz...

METAFOR

Editors and Board of Advisors

Chief Editors

Aslı Tekinay, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Batı Dilleri ve Edebiyatları
Fatma Büyükkarcı Yılmaz, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı

Co-editors

Zeynep Sabuncu, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı
Ayşe Naz Bulamur, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Batı Dilleri ve Edebiyatları

Editorial Board

Olca Akyıldız, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı
Aylin Alkaç, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Batı Dilleri ve Edebiyatları
Ceyda Arslan Kechriotis, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı
Işıl Baş, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Batı Dilleri ve Edebiyatları
Ayşe Naz Bulamur, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Batı Dilleri ve Edebiyatları
Fatma Büyükkarcı Yılmaz, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı
Eda Dedebaş-Dündar, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Batı Dilleri ve Edebiyatları
Tulay Gençtürk Demircioğlu, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı
Özlem Görey, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Batı Dilleri ve Edebiyatları
Matthew Gumpert, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Batı Dilleri ve Edebiyatları
Nur Gürani Arslan, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı
Halim Kara, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı
Özlem Ögüt, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Batı Dilleri ve Edebiyatları
Veysel Öztürk, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı
Zeynep Sabuncu, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı
Aslı Tekinay, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Batı Dilleri ve Edebiyatları
Zeynep Uysal, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı
Cihan Yurdaün, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Batı Dilleri ve Edebiyatları

Advisory Board

Nazmi Ağıl, Koç Üniversitesi
Walter Andrews, The University of Washington
Kristin Dickinson, University of Michigan
Burçin Erol, Hacettepe Üniversitesi
Erdağ Gökner, Duke University
Sibel Irzık, Sabancı Üniversitesi
Mehmet Kalpaklı, Bilkent Üniversitesi
Hakan Karateke, The University of Chicago
Kader Konuk, University of Duisburg-Essen
Esra Melikoğlu, İstanbul Üniversitesi
Mustafa Kemal Mirzeler, Central Michigan University
Emma Parker, Leicester University
Jale Parla, İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi
Meg Russett, University of Southern California
Cevza Sevgen, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi
Selim Sırrı Kuru, The University of Washington
Atilla Silkü, Ege Üniversitesi
Özden Sözüalan, İstanbul Üniversitesi
Baki Tezcan, University of California, Davis
Şebnem Toplu, Ege Üniversitesi

Editorial Assistants

Merve Atasoy, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Batı Dilleri ve Edebiyatları
Ayşegül Pomakoğlu, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı

Layout and Design

Cihan Yurdaün, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Batı Dilleri ve Edebiyatları

Copy Editor

Leila Braverman, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Batı Dilleri ve Edebiyatları

Table of Contents

Emine Fişek

Active Agents or Vulnerable Victim? Representing Migration in Children's Theatre / Faal Bir Etken veya Kırılgan Bir Kurban? Çocuk Tiyatrosunda Göç'ün Temsili-----1

Burcu Karadaş Can

The Woman Question in *the Memoirs of a Survivor* and Güneş Saygılı'nın Gerçek Yaşamı / Hayatta Kalma Güncesi ve Güneş Saygılı'nın Gerçek Yaşamı Adlı Eserlerde Kadın Sorusu-----18

Merve Atasoy

A River's Autobiography: Fusion of Human and Nature in Alice Oswald's *Dart* / Bir Nehrin Otobiyografisi: Alice Oswald'ın Dart şiirinde İnsan ve Doğanın Birleşimi-----30

Aytaç Ören

An Interview with David Lodge/ David Lodge ile Röportaj-----41

M. Tarık Ablak

Edebiyat, Sanat ve Sosyo-Kültürel Tarih Açısından Kastamonu - Çatalzeytin İlçesi Tarihî Mezar Taşları / Historical Tombstone of Kastamonu – Çatalzeytin District in Literary, Artistic and Socio-Cultural Context-----51

Authors' Biographies -----72

Active Agents or Vulnerable Victim? Representing Migration in Children's Theatre

Emine Fişek

Boğaziçi University

emine.fisek@boun.edu.tr

Abstract

The relationship between childhood and migration is often represented through heavily conventionalized tropes. Images of children serve as shorthand for signaling migrant helplessness and the children in question are either depicted as pre-political, universally vulnerable victims or political agents-to-be. This article focuses on French playwright Sylvie Bahuchet's 2006 play, *La Révolte des Couleurs* (The Revolt of the Colors) and argues that children's theatre can avoid the binary that positions the child as either unequivocally vulnerable or politically charged. A thinly disguised retelling of Vichy France's participation in the Nazi genocide, Bahuchet's play is an excellent example of a public discourse that prevailed in France in the early 2000s and linked recent increases in the deportation of undocumented immigrants to memories of the Vichy Holocaust. I argue that Bahuchet's play uses a series of strategies, including distancing effects, the interplay of didacticism and agency, and de-spectacularization to consider children's experiences on their own terms. Ultimately, *La Révolte des Couleurs* serves as a good example of how children's political theatre might approach the question of migration and violence: Bahuchet's choices not only sidestep the recognizable binary that positions children as either victims or agents, they also create a theatrical language for representing an event that is often taken to indicate the limits of representation.

Keywords: Children's Theatre, Sylvie Bahuchet, Migration, the Holocaust, France

Faal Bir Etken veya Kırılğan Bir Kurban? Çocuk Tiyatrosunda Göç'ün Temsili

Emine Fişek

Boğaziçi Üniversitesi

emine.fisek@boun.edu.tr

Özet

Göç ve çocukluk arasındaki ilişki çoğu zaman alışılmış mecazlarla temsil edilir. Çocukları ön plana çıkaran görseller çocukluğu göçün beraberinde getirdiği çaresizlik için kolay bir sembol olarak kullanır, ve söz konusu çocuklar ya henüz siyasi kimlikler edinmemiş, evrensel mağdurlar olarak, ya da geleceğin siyasi etkenleri olarak temsil edilirler. Bu makale Fransız oyun yazarı Sylvie Bahuchet'nin 2006 yılında yazdığı oyunu *La Révolte des Couleurs* (Renklerin Ayaklanması) üzerinde durur ve çocuk tiyatrosunun çocukları bu ikileme, yani tartışmasız bir kırılğanlık veya siyasi yüklenmişlik ikilemine ihtiyaç duymadan temsil edebileceğini öne sürer. Bahuchet'nin oyunu üstü kapalı bir şekilde Vichy Fransa'sının Nazi Soykırımında oynadığı rolü anlatır, ve 2000li yılların başlangıcında Fransa'da baskın olan ve belgesiz göçmenlerin sınır dışı edilmelerini Vichy Soykırımına bağlayan popüler bir söylemin iyi bir örneğidir. Bahuchet'nin oyunu yabancılaştırma etkileri, didaktiklik ve etkenliğin etkileşimi, ve gösterişçilik karşıtı stratejiler kullanarak çocukların tecrübelerini kendi terimleriyle ele alır. Nihayetinde, *La Révolte des Couleurs* politik içerikli çocuk tiyatrosunun göç ve şiddet konularına nasıl yaklaşabileceğini düşünmek için iyi bir örnek oluşturur: Bahuchet'in seçimleri çocukları mağdurluk veya etkenlik üzerinden konumlandırın ikiliklerden kaçınmakla kalmaz, aynı zamanda sıklıkla temsil ötesi olduğu söylenen bir olayın temsili için bir teatral dil oluşturur.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Çocuk Tiyatrosu, Sylvie Bahuchet, Göç, Yahudi Soykırımı, Fransa

What kinds of representational strategies pattern the relationship between childhood and migration? In many ways, this is a simple query: the figure of the child has long been a cornerstone of humanitarian reportage and representation, serving as an immediate visual index of vulnerability and need.¹ Photographic depictions of suffering children are equally prevalent where mass migration and refuge are concerned; Liisa Malkki has noted that although visual representations of mass displacement often draw on an “imagined sea of humanity,” that is, mass scenes of anonymous crowds, women and children nonetheless emerge as centerpieces of migrant helplessness.² When considered in light of this historical record, the patterns of representation that have surrounded our contemporary “refugee crisis” (referencing the forced movements that have resulted from the international interventions and ongoing political conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as the fallout from the Syrian Civil War), seem less than unique. At the same time, in an age when the advent of digital photography and the widespread availability of social media have fundamentally altered our experience of images, the figure of the child has circulated in unprecedented ways. Turkish photojournalist Nilüfer Demir’s photo of toddler Alan Kurdi, lying face down in the sands off the Bodrum coast made international headlines in 2015, only to be followed a year later by the iconic image of the so-called “boy in the ambulance,” a shell-shocked five-year-old whose dazed expression seemed to capture the terror of the 2016 siege of Aleppo by Syrian government forces.

In the artistic, cultural and political responses to this imagery, children have once again emerged as forced migration’s paradigmatic sufferers, emblematic of the need for forms of international protection that might supersede the political wrangling of individual nation-states. At the same time, the images have been used to criticize the refugee policies of specific states across Euro-America, emerging as political lightning rods in contexts like the pivotal Canadian elections of 2015. This brief outline reveals a dynamic that has been central to depictions of children in Western modernity. On the one hand, children, or the idea of childhood more broadly, are associated with a pre-political realm, endowed with an existence that somehow rests beyond the social and political experience of a given community. It follows, therefore, that the emotional registers through which adults respond to their plight, engage moral principles that are depicted as universal. On the other, children are framed as adults or even citizens-to-be, active agents in the social and political worlds in which they exist, and at times even voices of resistance against its machinations. The figure of the

¹ See Heide Fehrenbach and Davide Rodogno, “A Horrific Photo of a Drowned Syrian Child: Humanitarian Photography and NGO Media Strategies in Historical Perspective.” *International Review of the Red Cross* 900 (2015): 1121-1155.

² Liisa Malkki, “Speechless Emissaries: Refugees, Humanitarianism, and Dehistoricization.” *Cultural Anthropology* 11, no.3 (1996), 388.

child, in other words, can be both paradigmatically universal and politically particular.

Whereas scholars have long commented on the negotiation of this dilemma in the domain of humanitarianism and photography, in this article my goal is to shift our lens to theatre, with a specific focus on children's theatre, and ask: How does children's theatre negotiate the dilemmas of universality and particularity? What kind of agents does it see in its youthful actors and audience members? In what follows, I pose these questions from within an earlier iteration of migration "crisis": France during the first decade of the twenty-first century, another historical moment during which immigration, childhood, and ideas of citizenship appeared indelibly linked. My focus will be on French playwright Sylvie Bahuchet's 2006 play, *La Révolte des Couleurs* (The Revolt of the Colors), which features a classroom in which each student is an *enfant-couleur* or a child that is represented as a color.³ Over the course of the play, children whose color contains yellow slowly disappear from the classroom and their loving schoolteacher Madame Palette is replaced with the acerbic Madame Acétone, the mouthpiece of the newly established "Permanent Government" of the nation. A thinly disguised retelling of Vichy France's participation in the Nazi genocide, *La Révolte des Couleurs* is an excellent example of a public discourse that prevailed in France in the early 2000s and linked recent increases in the deportation of undocumented immigrants to memories of the Vichy Holocaust.

Bahuchet's choices, I argue, eased some of the tensions surrounding the figure of the child by shifting the issue of universality and particularity on to another register. The play was clearly saturated with the political climate of its historical moment, and sought to protest the immigration policies associated with then-Minister of the Interior Nicolas Sarkozy. In focusing on how these policies impacted undocumented children, however, Bahuchet's play abstracted from its particular political context, gesturing towards what has become a trans-historical context for thinking about political violence and ethical action: the Shoah or Holocaust. Whereas these choices might appear to exacerbate the binary that posits children as either universally recognizable figures of victimhood *or* political agents-to-be, *La Révolte des Couleurs* instead uses a series of strategies, including distancing effects, the interplay of didacticism and agency, and de-spectacularization to consider children's experiences on their own terms. Ultimately, *La Révolte des Couleurs* serves as an excellent example of how children's political theatre might approach the question of migration and violence: Bahuchet's choices not only side-step the recognizable binary that positions children as either unequivocally vulnerable or politically charged, they also create a theatrical language for representing an event that is often taken to indicate the limits of representation.

³ Sylvie Bahuchet, *La Révolte des Couleurs* (Arles: Actes Sud-Papiers, 2006).

Contexts: the *Sans-Papiers* and the Republican School

Although contemporary references to “the refugee crisis” tend to underline the uniqueness of our historical moment, “crisis” was a term that permeated public discourse in France during the first decade of the twenty-first century. This particular iteration of migration-related emergency centered on the figure of Minister of the Interior Nicolas Sarkozy, who had introduced a series of policies that would restrict immigrants’ rights on French soil. Whereas French immigration policy had historically privileged familial reunification for migrant workers, the Sarkozy Laws of 2003 and 2006 limited familial reunification and introduced a distinction between *immigration choisie* and *immigration subie*, in other words, immigration that was identified as serving France’s economic interests, and undesired forms of migration to which the French state was “subjected.” The question of desirable immigration was intimately linked to that of *intégration*, and an abstract set of values associated with French national identity, such as secularism and human rights. Upon his election to the French presidency in 2007, Sarkozy institutionalized these connections in the form of a pointedly named (but ultimately short-lived) Ministry of Immigration, Integration, National Identity and Co-Development, which would take over the management of immigration from the Ministry of the Interior. This crisis reached a peak in 2007 and 2008, when police stations throughout the country were encouraged to fill their deportation quotas by any means necessary. Across urban landscapes in particular, this meant a greater presence of security forces, as well as an overall increase in identity checks and police roundups.

At the time, these developments were met with a robust civic outcry, and one context in particular drew the public’s ire: the classroom. News of *sans-papiers* children disappearing from their classrooms, or even being removed in the midst of an ongoing school day drew immediate comparisons with the roundup of Jewish children during the Second World War. At the same time, legislative changes began to *privilege* and *reward* undocumented students as a particular category of migrant. The Sarkozy Circulaire of 2006, for example, created an “exceptional” legislative category through which undocumented parents with children in the French school system could become candidates for regularization.⁴ Importantly, both the Sarkozy Circulaire and the immigrants’ rights groups formed to lobby on behalf of undocumented students, such as Réseau Education Sans Frontières (Network for Education Without Borders, or RESF) would rely on an image of the French school whose roots went deep in French history.

⁴ For more information, see the “Circulaire du 13 Juin 2006 sur les familles d’enfants scolarisés.”

In Republican ideology, the French school has served as the seat of *le lien social*, or the social bond. In other words, the Republican school is the space where citizens-to-be are cultivated as members of the national collective and participants in a common culture.⁵ The Sarkozy Circulaire sought to reward those children and teenagers who could be identified as the successful products of this cultivation: universal citizens whose identity construction appeared to override the particularities associated with categories of race, gender, ethnicity or religion. RESF, in contrast, underlined the school's historical relationship to citizenship, suggesting that the deportation of undocumented children ruptured the premise of *le lien social des citoyens* or citizenly bonds. In *La Chasse aux Enfants* (The Hunt for Children), an edited volume published in 2008, RESF members argued that the undocumented child-victim and the citizen-child witnessing the removal of this classmate existed in a symbiotic relationship whose rupture would result in psychic after-effects for *all* children.⁶ Needless to say, their comments implied that these early childhood experiences would remain with them well in to their adult lives.

***La Révolte des Couleurs* and the Politics of Memory**

It is thus not a coincidence that the setting of Bahuchet's *La Révolte des Couleurs* is the Republican classroom. In the first scene of the play, Madame Palette invites the *enfants-couleurs* to join in the central ideological refrain of this space: "We are going to state our three keywords," she says, "the magical words of the great family of colors."⁷ As the children respond "*Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité*," Petit Rouge or Little Red is found to be yawning and is invited to re-state the final keyword. "*Mégalité*?" the confused child responds. Little Orange interjects: "Me, Madam! Me, Madam! It is 'fraternity' and this means that in fact we are brothers and sisters from the same family."⁸ The keywords are subsequently written on the board and the scene ends with the children chanting in unison: "Yellow, orange, green, black, blue, pink, red, fragmented stars of humanity!"⁹ Over the course of this episode, Bahuchet employs several categories of sameness, transitioning from the image of fraternity and family to that of a diverse yet ultimately unified humanity, mirroring French

⁵ For more on the idea of a common culture and its complexity in the context of migration and globalization, see Trica Danielle Keaton, *Muslim Girls and the Other France: Race, Identity Politics and Social Exclusion* (Indiana University Press, 2006).

⁶ Miguel Benasayag, Angelique Del Rey, and RESF, *La Chasse aux Enfants: L'effet Mirroir de l'expulsion des Sans-Papiers* (Paris: La Découverte, 2008), 71-72.

⁷ Bahuchet, *La Révolte*, 8.

⁸ Ibid., 9.

⁹ Ibid., 10.

Republicanism's own investment in the continuity between national identity and universal humankind.

This atmosphere of joyful euphoria is interrupted in the following scene, however, when Little Yellow arrives wearing a yellow star on its belly. Madame Palette announces:

Good morning children. Today I have some bad news to announce: Last night, detergent products bombarded out country. We are no longer free. I received orders to erase our first magical word. Take a good last look at it. Close your eyes and inscribe it in secret in a corner of your mind. *She slowly erases the word "liberté" from the board.*¹⁰

The future looks bleak, but the teacher quickly turns to the multiplication table to distract the children. By Scene 3, however, the detergent forces have established a "Permanent Government" and the color yellow has been deemed "disgusting."¹¹ *Enfants-couleurs* with traces of yellow, like Little Green and Little Orange, are also sporting yellow stars on their bellies. Little Blue tentatively ventures that its father has declared "the yellows" to be unclean because they do not wash themselves. As Madame Palette slowly erases "*Egalité*" from the board, Little Black retorts, "Listen to me: without yellow, there would be no sun."¹²

As these brief scenes immediately reveal, *La Révolte des Couleurs* is meant to represent Vichy France during the period of 1940-1944, when the northwestern half of the country was under German military occupation and Marshal Philippe Pétain's national revolution replaced the Third Republic's mantra with the slogan *Travail, Famille, Patrie* (Work, Family, Fatherland). Shortly after the Franco-German Armistice of 1940, Vichy administrators passed a series of anti-Jewish measures that would deprive Jews in metropolitan France, as well as in the French colonies, of their civic rights. Arrests and roundups of Jews began shortly thereafter and by 1942 mass deportations were being organized to extermination camps in Germany and occupied Poland. During the infamous 1942 *rafle* or roundup referred to as *Vel d'Hiv*, thousands of Jews were arrested by the French police and detained in the bicycle stadium *Vélodrome d'Hiver* before being deported to Auschwitz. Historians estimate that during the four years of Vichy rule, approximately 75,000 French and foreign Jews would

¹⁰ Ibid., 11.

¹¹ Ibid., 15.

¹² Ibid., 16.

be deported from France, the vast majority of whom would perish in camps like Auschwitz.¹³

Although consciousness of the Vichy Holocaust was a readily available dimension of French public discourse following the Second World War, *official acknowledgment* of French complicity is a relatively recent phenomenon, and is part of a broader memorial trend that emerged in France during the 1990s and sought to recognize experiences of violence that had been written out of official histories. There were two dimensions to this trend that are important to mention here. First, emerging memories of the Vichy Holocaust were often conjoined with memories of French colonization and slavery, with references to Vichy anti-semitism serving as a gateway for recognizing the racial violence of late colonialism, particularly the Algerian War (1954-1962).¹⁴ A good example of this is the 1997-1998 trial of Maurice Papon. An infamous police official who was revealed to have been instrumental in the Vichy Holocaust, Papon's extended and highly mediatized trial would also underline his pivotal role in the Paris massacre of October 17, 1961, when, as Chief of Police of Paris, he had ordered the deadly repression of Algerian protestors.¹⁵ Second, Papon's trial was indicative of a broader pattern by which the law was used to intervene in the domain of history and memory. 1990 witnessed the introduction of the Gayssot Act, which criminalized the denial of crimes against humanity, including the Holocaust. This would be followed by a 2001 law recognizing the Armenian Genocide and the Taubira Law of the same year, which recognized the Atlantic Slave Trade as a crime against humanity.

In short, Sylvie Bahuchet's *La Révolte des Couleurs* followed on the heels of a phenomenon that Debarati Sanyal labels "a memory war fueled by a hypertrophy of memory and a proliferation of groups jostling in the memorial marketplace for recognition of historical injustices."¹⁶ More specifically, it mirrored a broader set of French cultural products demonstrating that, in France, coming to terms with the Vichy Holocaust has often served as a vehicle for recognizing other forms of injustice. The multiple "uses of Holocaust memory,"¹⁷ for Sanyal, prompt a basic question: "what are the political stakes of bringing together seemingly disparate memories of violence within an

¹³ An important detail is that the vast majority of those deported were foreign Jews. According to Tyler Stovall, 88% of those with French nationality would survive the occupation and war. See Tyler Stovall, *Transnational France: The Modern History of a Universal Nation* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2015), 339.

¹⁴ Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 229.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 234-235.

¹⁶ Debarati Sanyal, *Memory and Complicity: Migrations of Holocaust Remembrance* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2015), 216.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.

artwork?”¹⁸ When posed from within the context of Bahuchet’s play, the question becomes: what are the political stakes of referencing the Holocaust to address recent changes in immigration policy?

As abstract as these questions may be, they served as points of concrete debate during Nicolas Sarkozy’s tenure. A topic of particularly heated discussion was the use of the term *rafle* and references to the deportation of Jewish children to describe the roundup of undocumented students.¹⁹ RESF members, for example, were pointed in their position on this matter. On the one hand, they argued that the comparison was unfounded. On the other, they noted that what was significant about this comparative trend was that it supposed the French public to be so indifferent to injustice that “they could no longer react to anything other than to conditioned reflexes evoking genocide and Nazis.”²⁰ Upon his election to the French presidency, Sarkozy himself joined the fray, arguing that whereas violent political conflicts were abundant in human history, the Shoah was exemplary of *racist violence*. In 2008, he drew a direct link between memories of the Shoah, French school children and historically-minded citizenship, proposing that each primary school student would be assigned the memory of a Jewish child who had been deported from France and killed in an extermination camp. The public outcry that followed included the voices of prominent survivors, pushing Sarkozy’s office to retract the original proposal, even as they stated the need to “prevent the conflation (*amalgame*) between the Shoah and other tragedies.”²¹

Although these discussions were concerned with the universality of Holocaust memory and its connection to other experiences of loss, violence, and injustice, equally at stake was the role that children’s education should play in either highlighting or in downgrading these connections. Activists who used the memory of the Holocaust were in fact seeking to capitalize on the unambiguous outrage that the image of undocumented children’s *raffes* would trigger; meanwhile, Sarkozy’s administration underlined the uniqueness of this history, even as it argued for its universal usefulness as a tool of civic education in the multicultural French classroom. Whereas both groups were invested in underlining the Holocaust as *the* paradigm of recognition in French history, the first group targeted adult-citizens, the second, child citizens-to-be.

¹⁸ Ibid., 3.

¹⁹ This pointed use of the term *rafle* references earlier borrowings as well. As Rothberg notes, images of the *Vel d’Hiv* roundup were used to contextualize images of Algerian protestors who were held at the Palais des Sports in the days following the October 17, 1961 massacre, demonstrating the manner in which references to the Nazi occupation would serve as a vehicle for expressing outrage at other injustices (*Multidirectional Memory*, 242).

²⁰ Bensayag, Del Rey, and RESF, *La Chasse*, 82.

²¹ “Shoah à l’école: Sarkozy a ‘la volonté de ne pas céder’.” *Libération*, 17 February 2008.

Representing Children: Appropriating Agents

How did Bahuchet's play navigate this larger terrain? How did *La Révolte des Couleurs* negotiate the perceived universality of childhood as well as that of Holocaust memory? The answers to these questions necessitate a broader comment on children's theatre, as they resonate with the key questions that have occupied this domain. Perhaps not surprisingly, the study of children's literature and culture has traditionally been organized around the identification of educational goals, that is, the particular didactic purposes with which *adults* have endowed a variety of cultural artifacts (such as songs, picture books, novellas and performances) targeting children. As Marah Gubar notes, however, children's theatre occupies an awkward position within this didactic tradition, as it invites scholars to consider both reception and embodiment, and the multiple ways in which child audiences interact with, respond to, and in turn, shape both the development of a live performance and its intended educational uses.²² This scholarly shift corresponds to a broader transformation visible in the strategies of governments or arts funding agencies: Katya Johanson and Hilary Glow argue that since the 1980s, approaches to children's theatre have shifted from an "instrumentalist" method highlighting educational goals to an "intrinsic" method highlighting the values associated with aesthetic experience.²³ For Johanson and Glow, this shift negotiates two approaches to child audiences: the first emphasizes "becoming," that is, the idea that children are apprentice adults in need of cultivation; the second emphasizes "being," and thus the idea of children as receptive and responsive audience members already capable of aesthetic meaning-making.

Bahuchet's play necessitates a further question, however: how might we evaluate the strategies and processes of *political* children's theatre? A brief return to the premise of *La Révolte des Couleurs* will remind us of the play's pointed intervention. In 2006, Bahuchet was deeply critical of the French state's immigration policies, as well as how it sought to instrumentalize the memory of the Vichy Holocaust. Her own interest in the deportation of Jewish children had begun in 2003, when she had become involved with a civic association that sought to document the names, images and school records of students who had

²² Marah Gubar, "Introduction: Children and Theatre." *The Lion and the Unicorn* 36, no.2 (2012), v-xiv.

²³ Katya Johanson and Hilary Glow, "Being and Becoming: Children as Audiences." *New Theatre Quarterly* 27, no.1 (2011), 65.

been deported during the Second World War.²⁴ The association's goal was to produce commemorative plaques with the children's names and place them at the entrances of the schools that they had attended. *La Révolte des Couleurs* was the result of her search for a theatrical language that would integrate this period of French history into primary school students' consciousness in meaningful ways. When I met Bahuchet to discuss the play in 2008, she told me:

We must not traumatize them [the children], we must not make them feel culpable, we must not make them afraid, we must simply tell them to pay attention to the fact that racism can have very grave consequences, and that they must not engage in it. This is not the approach of our current president. His approach, which places the weight of a dead child on a living one, is absolutely catastrophic.

La Révolte des Couleurs, in other words, walked a decidedly delicate line. The goal was to introduce students to the vicious effects of racial othering; at the same time, the playwright had to do so without evoking registers of trepidation or alarm, or culpability or complicity. In many political children's theatre productions, artists achieve this effect by drawing on the visual excitements of puppetry, striking sets and imagery, and rhyming songs and intimate spaces. As Jack Zipes argues, however, this emphasis on the aesthetic can often work to negate political theatre's radical potential, absorbing the child in to "the culture industry, where it would be subjected to the forces of globalization, which turn everything into spectacle."²⁵ Instead, Zipes draws on Walter Benjamin's "Program of a Proletarian Children's Theatre" to call for "unspectacular dramas" that emphasize political awareness and even didacticism, but without negating children's intuitive agency, autonomy or spontaneity.

A hard bargain indeed, but I would argue that *La Révolte des Couleurs* achieves this in a number of ways. The play employs a series of Brechtian distancing strategies that evoke a basic meta-consciousness in the audience member. The setting of Bahuchet's play is Madame Palette's classroom, and the scenes feature *enfants-couleurs* engaging in basic learning tasks: the multiplication table, vocabulary exercises, etc. Bahuchet's portrayal of the learning process thus creates a template for considering the learning experience that is the play itself, and the kind of interactions and discussions that will follow the conclusion of the performance. Equally importantly, the *enfants-couleurs* represent children, but adult actors bring them to life on stage. This juxtaposition achieves another distancing effect that enhances Zipes' desired didacticism but also negates a rigid distinction between child and adult. Of course, the precise

²⁴ Bahuchet, Personal Interview with the Author, 21 February 2008.

²⁵ Jack David Zipes, "Political Children's Theatre in the Age of Globalization." *Theater* 33, no.2 (2003): 3-25.

reception of the Child Character-Adult Actor juxtaposition is impossible to evaluate without a broader consideration of child audiences' aesthetic experiences²⁶, but suffice to note that the *enfant-couleur* troubles the binary in which the child emerges either as a figure of universal victimhood, or a political agent-to-be. Bahuchet's Little Yellow is not depicted as an unidentified victim encountering a universal experience of racial violence, nor is Little Black an agent of political propaganda. Rather, the *enfants-couleurs* are depicted producing their own identity; they "appropriate [political prescriptions] on their own terms and use them to create their own world, one that functions according to relatively new rules."²⁷

This is visible in Bahuchet's use of the trope of revolt and rebellion, at once a nod to the political idioms of French Republicanism, and a broader gesture meant to underline the *enfants-couleurs*' agency. By the play's second act, the *enfants-couleurs* find themselves in an increasingly unbearable classroom. Madame Acétone, named after the flammable solvent, carries a cleaning spray and has already announced that she will disinfect the *enfants-couleurs*' classroom, just as the "Permanent Government" has disinfected the nation. With time, it is revealed that this intervention does not merely implicate the physical space of the classroom but language itself: Madame Acétone announces that words that end with the suffix "ette," like "Palette," have been banned. In the final scene of the play, Bahuchet's *enfants-couleurs* are uncontrollably chanting words that end in "ette": lunette, allumette, sornette.²⁸ In response, Madame Acétone takes out a giant white eraser and proceeds to erase part of Little Black. This is when the students stage their revolt and chase the teacher out, amidst calls to have their friends Little Green, Little Yellow and Little Orange reinstated. As the teacher flees, Little Blue retorts, "You can send us to the country "over there" but you cannot stop us from thinking. You will end up all alone in a world without color!"²⁹ At stake here is the collectivity, spontaneity and agency that Zipes expects of a radical children's theatre, but the representation is simple, unspectacular and lacking investment in the figure of the child as an elevated representative of victimhood or humanity.

Representing Violence: Staging the Unspectacular

If Bahuchet's play attempts to ease some of the tensions surrounding the figure of the child, equally significant is its representation of Holocaust memory. If we return momentarily to Zipes's call for an "unspectacular" children's theatre

²⁶ Jeanne Klein, "From Children's Perspectives: A Model of Aesthetic Processing in Theatre." *The Journal of Aesthetic Education* 39, no.4 (2005), 40-57.

²⁷ Zipes, "Political Children's Theatre," 7.

²⁸ Bahuchet, *La Révolte des Couleurs*, 28.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 31.

that sidesteps consumer ideology, we might note that Bahuchet's decision to stage the Shoah, a historical event whose commodification has long been at stake for survivors, artists and scholars alike, presents a particularly delicate problem. Given the paradoxical trend that renders the Shoah "as both an irreducibly singular event and a universal paradigm of racialized violence in the public sphere,"³⁰ how might a playwright go about de-spectacularizing its representation? Furthermore, how can children's political theatre represent an event that is often taken to defy representation, or at the very least, embody its limits?

In *La Révolte des Couleurs*, Bahuchet responds to this conundrum by employing a narrative dynamic that Rothberg calls "the mutual implication of daily life and mass murder," that is, the depiction of acts of extreme violence from within the quotidian routines of everyday neighborliness.³¹ For example, Scene 4 begins with stage directions that underline the fact that Little Yellow, Little Orange and Little Green are gone. When Madame Palette inquires after her missing students, their classmates reveal news of entire families who have disappeared and trains leaving for countries "over there," although nobody knows exactly where.³² Little Pink provides an eyewitness account:

Little Green, he lives close to me. I saw everything. The police came. They banged on the door and they said, "exit one by one." So, the entire family stood on the landing. The father, the mother, Little Green and his little one-year-old sister. They sent them. Little Green's mother was crying. Little Green's father was carrying the little one in his arms. Before climbing into the truck, Little Green turned around and made me a little sign with his hand. Their door was left open. Later, I entered their apartment. In the kitchen, their plates were still on the table, all cold. I saw that the little sister had not had time to finish her puree.³³

As this passage makes clear, Bahuchet chooses not to represent the event itself, relying instead on the narrative of Little Pink, whose eyewitness account creates a vivid documentation without calling for the arrangement of bodies in theatrical space. This dynamic of presence and absence is replicated in the substance of the narrative, the final portion of which focuses on the contents of an empty apartment, one whose threshold (the door) has been left open, symbolizing the

³⁰ Sanyal, *Memory and Complicity*, 218.

³¹ Michael Rothberg, *Traumatic Realism: The Demands of Holocaust Representation* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 143.

³² Bahuchet, *La Révolte des Couleurs*, 17.

³³ *Ibid.*, 18.

violation of the former inhabitants' privacy, security, and self-certainty. The plates and the one-year-old's leftover puree testifies to the recent presence of consuming bodies, but also to the passage of time that has left their utensils and food items, literally, cold and functionless.

Juxtaposing the ordinary with the extraordinary allows the playwright to refrain from "traumatizing" the children while nonetheless cultivating an awareness of the continuity between everyday complacency and mass violence. Indeed, in Little Pink's narrative, the sounds that surround the herding of bodies into the police truck are marked as extraordinary (the loud banging, the crying) yet the brief communication between Little Pink and Little Green carries the familiarity of an everyday interaction. The familiar accompanies the strange and the ordinary accompanies the extraordinary, such that Little Pink's narrative both depicts the appalling and folds it into the reassuring image of an apartment that remains in place. These choices resonate with Zipes's call for the "unspectacular," but they are equally indicative of how references to the Shoah as paradigm or analogy for thinking about other experiences of injustice need not block such experiences from view. Instead, the play's aesthetic strategies draw on the historical circumstances of the Vichy Holocaust to produce a broader language for thinking about difference. In the process, neither the Holocaust, nor childhood are elevated into exemplary tropes of victimhood.

What, ultimately, do we make of *La Révolte des Couleurs*'s strategy for depicting difference? In many ways, the play's use of the idiom of *enfants-couleurs* for thinking about racial or ethnic difference appears a relatively straightforward choice: the students embody diverse points along the color palette but the colors yellow, orange, green, black, blue, pink and red are clearly not meant to be associated with any biological reality. The *enfant-couleurs*' diversity is reflected in their teacher Madame Palette, whose white outfit contains splashes of all of her students' colors. In contrast, Madame Acétone is depicted wearing a pristine white blouse, a black hood covering her hair and neck, dark sunglasses and bright red lipstick. Whiteness thus occupies a contradictory position. In Madame Palette, it embodies a color-neutrality. In Madame Acétone, a colorlessness associated with political violence and oppression. In a nation with a lengthy history of color blindness, these choices are rife with meaning. In French Republicanism, French national identity is often posed as commensurate with the universal values of the Revolution, like individual liberty and moral autonomy. In this framework, French citizens are first and foremost abstract subjects organized around a national identity, itself considered a placeholder for universal ideals. This means that they are unmarked by the forms of particularistic belonging associated with categories like sex and sexuality, ethnic or racial particularity, or religious affiliation and community. A concrete manifestation of this abstract political tradition is the fact that the French state does not gather ethno-racial statistics.

Needless to say, this political tradition has begged the question of how minority populations in France can lobby for the recognition of experiences of racist discrimination and violence when race itself is not an available category of political recognition.³⁴ *La Révolte des Couleurs* is an excellent example of how these conundrums are translated into the everyday idioms of cultural production. Madame Palette embodies the promise of Republican universalism, as she represents a classic Republican institution, the school, as a neutral space of universal inclusion. Madame Acétone, on the other hand, renders visible the dangers of assigning *whiteness* a seemingly neutral, un-raced universality, and the historical connection between this assignment and episodes of racial violence. These connections might, at times, prove too subtle for child audience members to fully grasp, but suffice to note that Bahuchet's play invites them to think of the social constructedness of racial identity, even as this constructedness is shown to have material effects.

Conclusion

When I met Bahuchet in 2008, the playwright had been touring with the play for almost four years. She had overseen productions in countless elementary schools, had participated in hundreds of showings, and reached thousands of students. Over the course of this time, the post-performance dialogues that accompanied the play's showings had intensified, turning what had begun as a meditation on Holocaust memory into a pointed critique of French immigration policy. Bahuchet remembered countless talk-back sessions that had underlined these parallelisms, revealing that memories of the Vichy Holocaust had become central to conversations on the immigration politics of twenty-first-century France. Despite these fraught cross-references, however, Bahuchet was quick to let me know that the play often elicited laughter, particularly in moments of commotion like the students' final revolt. She found that educators would reprimand the students' laughter, but she herself was a fan of these moments of euphoria, arguing that it would enhance the play's call to action.

The unpredictability of child audiences' reactions to the *enfants-couleurs*' revolt embodies the both the possibilities and the limitations of children's political theatre. On the one hand, Bahuchet's play is premised on the idea of children as mini-adults who cannot yet exercise civic rights yet who will one day be able to wield the full powers and responsibilities associated with democratic citizenship. On the other, the play refuses to trap child audiences in a process of endless "becoming," and acknowledges that they can speak a significant

³⁴ For an excellent volume addressing this issue, see Trica Danielle Keaton, T Denean Sharpley-Whiting, and Tyler Stovall, eds., *Black France: France Noire: The History and Politics of Blackness* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012).

political-theatrical language of their own. Ultimately, in situating child audiences as both “being” and “becoming,” *La Révolte des Couleurs* achieves something far more important: it undoes the seemingly naturalized representational strategies that emerge at the intersection of childhood and migration. The *enfants-couleurs* are neither paradigmatically universal victims, nor vehicles of particular political propaganda. Instead, they are intuitive agents who, when faced with events of historical magnitude, navigate their own awareness of difference and loss.

References

- Bahuchet, Sylvie. *La Révolte des Couleurs*. Arles: Actes Sud-Papiers, 2006.
- Benasayag, Miguel, Angélique Del Rey, and RESF. *La Chasse aux Enfants: L'effet Mirroir de l'expulsion des Sans-Papiers*. Paris: La Découverte, 2008.
- Fehrenbach, Heide and Davide Rodogno. “A Horrific Photo of a Drowned Syrian Child: Humanitarian Photography and NGO Media Strategies in Historical Perspective.” *International Review of the Red Cross* 900 (2015): 1121-1155.
- Gubar, Marah. “Introduction: Children and Theatre.” *The Lion and the Unicorn* 36, no.2 (2012), v-xiv.
- Johanson, Katya and Hilary Glow. “Being and Becoming: Children as Audiences.” *New Theatre Quarterly* 27, no.1 (2011), 60-70.
- Keaton, Trica Danielle. *Muslim Girls and the Other France: Race, Identity Politics and Social Exclusion*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006.
- Keaton, Trica Danielle, T Denean. Sharpley-Whiting, and Tyler Stovall, eds., *Black France: France Noire: The History and Politics of Blackness*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2012.
- Klein, Jeanne. “From Children’s Perspectives: A Model of Aesthetic Processing in Theatre.” *The Journal of Aesthetic Education* 39, no.4 (2005), 40-57.
- Malkki, Liisa. “Speechless Emissaries: Refugees, Humanitarianism, and Dehistoricization.” *Cultural Anthropology* 11, no.3 (1996), 377-404.
- Rothberg, Michael. *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009.
- . *Traumatic Realism: The Demands of Holocaust Representation*. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2000.
- Sanyal, Debarati. *Memory and Complicity: Migrations of Holocaust Remembrance*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2015.
- “Shoah à l’école: Sarkozy a ‘la volonté de ne pas céder’.” *Libération*, 17 February 2008.
- Stovall, Tyler. *Transnational France: The Modern History of a Universal Nation*. Boulder: Westview Press, 2015.
-

Zipes, Jack David. "Political Children's Theatre in the Age of Globalization."
Theater 33, no.2 (2003); 3-25.

Authors' Biographies

Emine Fişek is Assistant Professor in the Department of Western Languages and Literatures at Boğaziçi University in İstanbul. She is the author of *Aesthetic Citizenship: Immigration and Theater in Twenty-First-Century Paris* (Northwestern University Press, 2017), which explores the relationship between immigration, citizenship and national identity as they have played out in French theatre. She is currently developing a research project on the impact that cultural memory, urban transformation and international migration have had on Turkish theatre in the twenty-first century.

Burcu Karadağ Can graduated from Fatih University with a B.A. in English Language and Literature in 2013. She also did a double major on Political Science and Public Administration. She spent one semester at Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica, Slovakia as an Erasmus student. She completed her M.A. at Ege University in 2017. Her M.A. thesis is titled as Representations of Men and Masculinities in British World War I Poetry. She is currently an English Language and Literature PhD student and works as a research assistant at the same university.

Merve Atasoy received her M.A degree in English Literature from Boğaziçi University in İstanbul in 2015. Currently, she is a PhD candidate and a research assistant in the same department. Her interests are contemporary British and American drama, documentary theater, media, and human rights.

Aytaç Ören born in Ankara in 1972, graduated from Ataturk University and received his master's and doctorate degrees there. He is interested in novel, especially postmodern novel and campus novel, metafiction and David Lodge. He is at University of Health Sciences now.

M. Tarık Ablak İstanbul'da dünyaya geldi. 29 Mayıs Üniversitesi'nin İslam ve Din Bilimleri Bölümü'nde lisans ve Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı Bölümü'nde yan dal eğitimini tamamladı. İngilizce ve bilimsel hazırlık döneminin ardından şu anda Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Eski Türk Edebiyatı Bölümü'nde yüksek lisans ders dönemine devam etmektedir. İngilizce, Arapça ve Farsça bilmektedir. Evli ve bir çocuk babasıdır.