

Renáta Lengyel-Marosi: *Mary Poppins in Popular Culture*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2024. 165 p. ISBN: 978-1-0364-0268-6.

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Renáta Lengyel-Marosi's monograph titled 'Mary Poppins in Popular Culture' is an exciting attempt to approach the Mary Poppins universe from several new perspectives. Beyond reviewing the book series and examining the most important works related to P. L. Travers' oeuvre in scholarly literature, it places the series at the centre of an extensive network. While the focus throughout remains on the Mary Poppins series, Lengyel-Marosi not only analyses its individual pieces, but also addresses its derivatives, its intertextual relationship with other contemporary works, and emphatically, the afterlife of Travers' work. In individual chapters, we move from literary text to a transmedial universe.

The monograph is divided into four major chapters. In the first one, the author explores the concepts of culture and popular culture, as well as the background and formation of the fantasy genre, which can also be presented as one of the defining pillars of children's and young adult literature. According to Lengyel-Marosi's assessment, the success of the Mary Poppins series is rooted in the protagonist's distinct personality traits, the societal issues addressed in the volumes (e.g., feminism, belief in scientific progress), as well as the rich network of intertextual and medium-related relationships and the afterlife of the work.

The second chapter of the book therefore focuses on Mary Poppins' personality and her relationship with other outstanding works of contemporary, Victorian and Edwardian children's literature (*Alice in Wonderland*, *Peter Pan*, *The Enchanted Castle*, *Winnie-the-Pooh*).

In the third chapter, Lengyel-Marosi examines the question of adaptations, fidelity to the source text, and the consequences of deviations from Travers' original work in the 1964 Disney adaptation. Since even Travers herself had concerns about the film musical, the chapter pays more attention to the aspects related to the creator's family background. However, it is already revealed here that this adaptation has also contributed significantly to the afterlife of Mary Poppins' world, as it may be just as important of a focal point in the transmedial network as the book series itself, even though there are significant differences between the original text and the film musical.

The fourth and most extensive chapter focuses on the process of Mary Poppins becoming a transmedial multitext and analyzes its significant milestones. The basis for connections here can be a motif, a significant adapted story element, or even an alternative appearance of the iconic nanny character (as an archetype). The works introduced by Lengyel-Marosi sometimes belong to other literary worlds (e.g., J.K. Rowling's Wizarding World or Neil Gaiman's dark fantasy universe), other times they are comics or various types of motion pictures, from animated films to sitcoms.

The monograph 'Mary Poppins in Popular Culture' by Lengyel-Marosi pays attention to both the past and present of P. L. Travers' iconic series. The author of the book writes with mature language and in an engaging style. In addition to focusing on many exciting aspects of the chosen topic, she also works with a very rich scholarly base, which is further proof of the author's expertise.

'Mary Poppins in Popular Culture' is not the first academic work related to the Mary Poppins series, but it will undoubtedly become an essential resource for future scholarly research about the topic.