



Høgskulen  
på Vestlandet

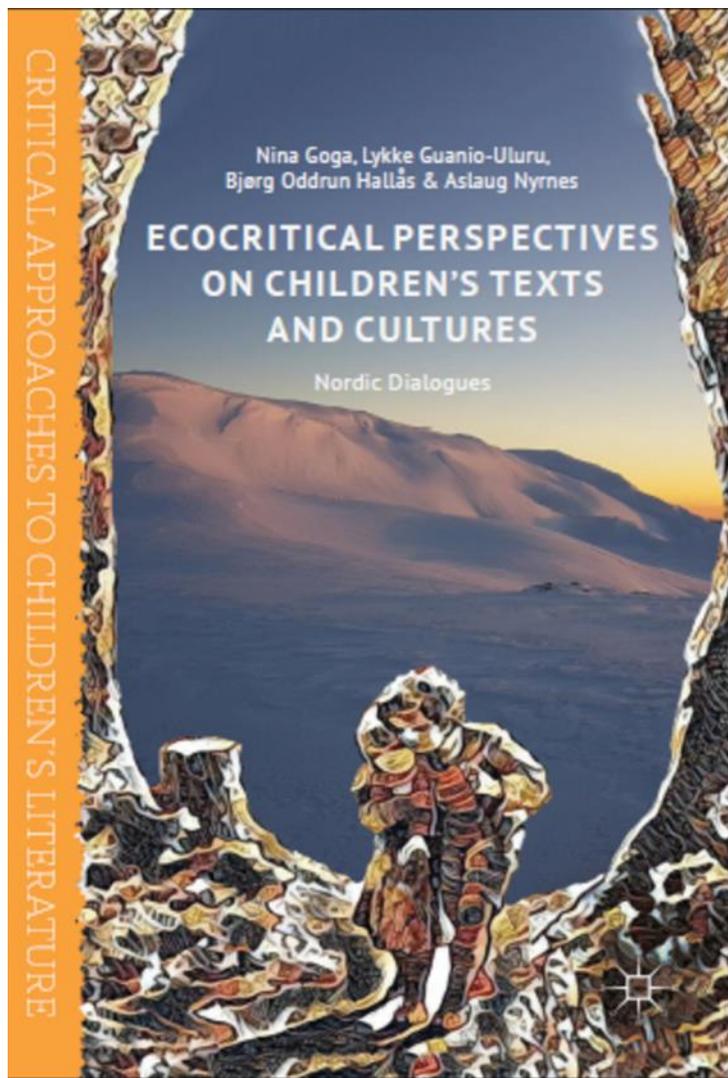
## Children's Literature as an Exercise in Ecological Thinking

Nina Goga  
ngo@hvl.no

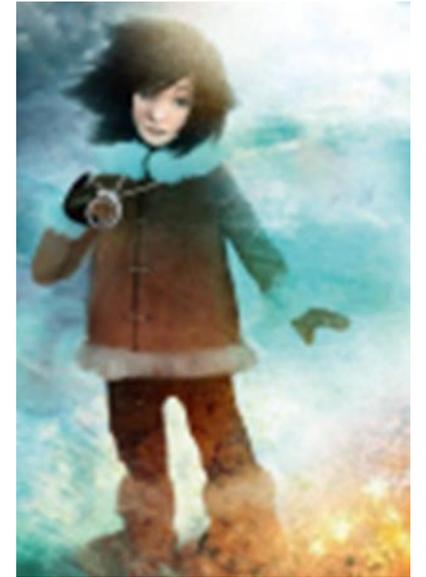
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*Ishavspirater (2015, The Ice Sea Pirates)*





- › Frida Nilsson (text) and Alexander Jansson (illustrations)
- › Nominated for the Nordic Council Children and Young People's Literature Prize in 2016
- › Siri – a 10 year old protagonist
- › Sets out to save her sister Miki from pirate Vithuvud's (Whitehead) coal mine
- › Eco-fantasy



# Theoretical backdrop

- McDowell: “[a]n analysis of the value a writer recognizes in a landscape might begin by looking at the roles which the narrator or point-of-view character plays in the landscape” (386- 87)
- Willett: “alternative forms of belonging across human and nonhuman animal species” (2) in a “biosocial web” (6).
- Meijer: it is not enough to think *about* animals; “we need to start thinking *with* them, in order not to repeat anthropocentrism” (74)

“This story is about the time I went out on the Ice Sea” (p. 11)



## Chapter structure

- 1-4 Blåvik and around
- 5-8 Travels from Blåvik to Vargöarna
- 9-14 Vargöarna
- 14-16 Travels from Vargöarna to Snörosen
- 17-21 Snörosen
- 22 Travels to Seglen
- 23-31 Seglen
- 32 Travels to the island of Vithuvud
- 33-46 The island of Vithuvud
- 47-48 Travels home
- 49 Arrival/homecoming Blåvik



Haruki Murakami was a kid interested in the sea! When  
The cub pulled and struggled to come to me. You could see he  
I saw his eyes were, every once in a while, he  
wanted to play so I slid a little closer. I stretched out my hand to  
see what the cub would do so he could just reach my fingertips  
[...]. The cub started licking my fingers. It was so lovely and soft  
and warm that I burst out laughing. (Nilsson 2017, 70)

about the little cub difference between them. They're just  
(Nilsson 2017, 106)

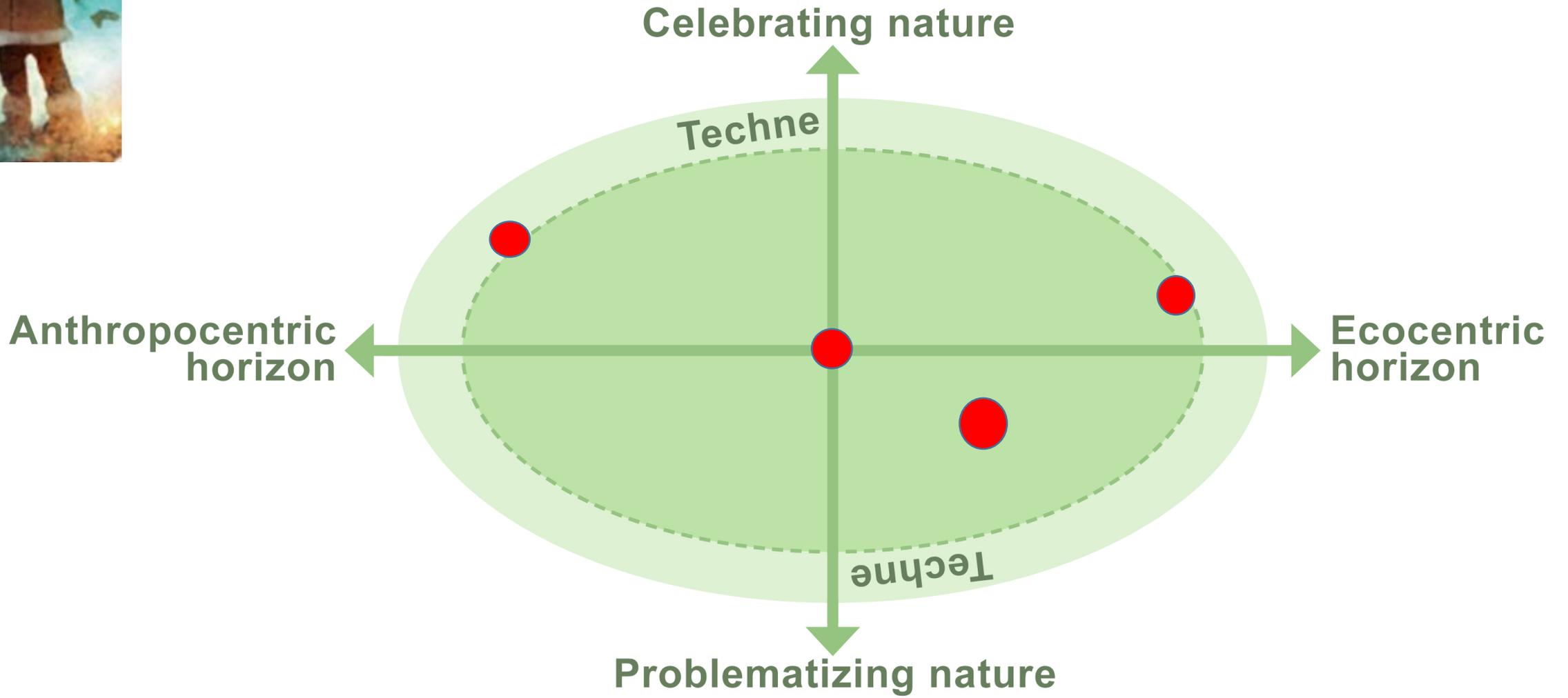
survival. (Nilsson 2017, 96)



The merchild woke me by pulling my hair and sucking and chewing on it. He sounded unhappy and after a while began climbing onto me. Whining and snuffling, he scratched and pulled at me. He was heavy and ungainly and still so tired he could barely hold his head up. Time after time his little forehead banged into me, and time after time he uttered that sorrowful *Na-naa*. I assumed that was what he called his mother. [...] “I don’t have any food for you,” I said. “Nor for me, for that matter.” The child whined even more. He seemed to understand exactly what I said but had no way of answering. (Nilsson 2017, 136)

# Children's environmental literature (Massey and Bradford (2011))

- ... texts which thematize contemporary ecological issues – reflect shifting global agendas and predict future possibilities. One of their primary functions is to socialize young people into becoming the responsible and empathetic adults of tomorrow by positioning readers as ecocitizens ... (109).



# References

## Primary references

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