The Constraints of Literary Paradigms
Christian Mythology and the Jungle in Ida, a non-fiction picturebook on evolution by Jørn Hurum, Torstein Helleve and Esther van Hulsen

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Abstract
Ida (2011), written by Jørn Hurum and Torstein Helleve and illustrated by Esther van Hulsen, is a non-fiction picturebook for children with an ambitious objective. It presents a fossil, the findings from the study of this fossil, and the dispute over the validity of the results. The composition of the text is threefold: the book opens with an illustrative story about the life and death of the primate that ends up becoming the fossil in question, subsequently introduces a lexicographical section ensuring the credibility of the scientific results of the primate’s research group, and finally provides instructions for appropriate activities that offer the child reader ownership of the presented knowledge.

This article discusses the ambiguity within the book. The discussion has a primary focus on the constraints within the illustrative story that is jointly ruled by scientific aims and the traditions of children’s literature. The purpose of the protagonist is to die, which is rather rare in a children’s book. Nonetheless, the protagonist’s life and death takes place in the jungle environment which, according to Marilyn Strasser Olson “apparently reduces the tension” (Olson 2013: 55). The intertextual use of Christian mythology adds a solid cultural background to the story and the artwork calls to mind Henri Rousseau’s jungle cosmology. It will nonetheless be argued that the literary traditions embedded in the book ultimately blur the validity of the scientific message.

Keywords: Christian mythology; the jungle; non-fiction picturebooks; reading pact

In 1982, a 47-million-year-old fossil of a primate was discovered in Messel in Germany. In 2006, the fossil was presented for sale to Norwegian Associate Professor in Paleontology, Jørn Hurum. As a result of Hurum’s affiliation with the Natural Science Museum in Oslo, the institution bought the fossil in 2007 and assembled a research group with the intention of studying the specimen. In May 2009, the museum displayed the fossil for the first time, giving the specimen the female name Ida after Hurum’s own daughter. In June that year, the museum opened an exhibition on Ida and the conclusions of the research to that date. On 7th November, the research group gave a symposium entitled ‘The early evolution on primates and how to tell the story’. Given the fact that this fossil is 95 % complete and the oldest of this level of completion and species, investigation of the remains contributes a great deal of new evidence to the study of early human life – so much so, in fact, that it calls for a revision of the evolution story. The researchers involved in the study of the fossil also foreshadow that most scholars will dispute their conclusions. The key to this sense of disagreement stems from uncertainty as to whether the fossil is that of an ape or a lemur. Whilst both are examples of early primates, humankind stems only from apes. If this fossil is that of an ape, as the research group concludes, they suggest that she must have been “not our great-great-grandmother, but our great-great-great-aunt”. In 2011, these controversial scientific results were presented to children in the form of a non-fiction picturebook called Ida, written by Jørn Hurum and Torstein Helleve (see ill. 1). Helleve did not participate in the fossil research group, he works in the field of communication at the Natural History Museum. The book’s illustrator, Esther van Hulsen, is an artist specializing in wildlife art, and also has a background in scientific illustration. Hurum, Helleve and van Hulsen have
created a picture book with an ambitious aim; their purpose is to present disputed scientific knowledge, the impact of this new knowledge, and the dispute over the new evidence to child readers.

The book opens with an illustrative story about the life and death of the primate that becomes the fossil in question, subsequently introduces a lexicographical section, and finally provides instructions for appropriate activities.

My initial conclusion is that the book is jointly governed by a sense of inconsistency. According to the informative scientific aims, the protagonist of the illustrative story, known to the reader as Ida, has to die. However, a protagonist does not die in the middle of a book, at least not in a story for children. Thus, different strategies intended to reduce the child reader’s tension are activated. My objective is to discuss these and the potential embedded constraints within them.
**Ida: A Non-Fiction Book for Children**

Children’s literature is characterised by a particular point of view. Even when the narrative voice belongs to an adult, the perspective includes a child’s view of the world, demonstrating the author’s attempt to present the subject matter in a way that children will recognise and with which they can identify. Non-fiction does not differ from other kinds of children’s literature in this respect. What distinguishes non-fiction though, aside from the much-used dialogical narrator’s voice rarely observed in fiction, is the conglomerate of different text types and illustration styles through which the information is duplicated and possibly even triplicated. Thus, diverse narrative tools make up the non-fiction pact. Through the instructive narrative voice and the many different ways of presenting the same information in pictures and words, the authors of *Ida* signal to the reader that the content is to be trusted as appropriate and reliable knowledge, even though parts of the book are fictional. However, the literary paradigms at stake may also give instructions to the reader and affect her ability to countersign the non-fiction pact.

Hurum, Helleve and van Hulsen’s presentation strategies are manifold and disparate. The first 24 pages present a fictional depiction of Ida’s imagined life. Four pages marking the stages in the transformation from primate corpse to fossil follow this story. The final 33 pages present information and activities in a matter-of-fact style, including the history of the area in which the fossil was discovered and the animals that lived in the region, followed by the research questions, a presentation of the results and the wider consequences of these findings. The child reader is then offered suitable activities connected principally to the visual content of the initial story.

The sections of text demonstrate varied character, and the illustrations within the book play a similar role. The life story is illustrated with brightly coloured jungle images. The scenery in which Ida’s life takes place is endowed with a tactile quality by the haptic artwork that entirely covers the doublespreads. As is the case in many other contemporary picturebooks, the artistic expression is essential to the presentation of the content. The words mark the action, but it is through the pictures that the reader gains an understanding of the protagonist’s life and death – where she lives, how she looks, and what she eats, fears and does day-to-day. The illustrations provide Ida with a personality. In a selection of the most dramatic scenes leading up to Ida’s death, though not in that depicting her death, the reader is faced with the image of a fearful, wide-eyed Ida, thus becoming increasingly engaged in her fate. Such identification processes are commonly used in works that are governed by a fictive reading pact.

The four pages in which the corpse becomes a fossil not only mark Ida’s transformation, but also the transformation in the reader’s supposed engagement and the visual style: as the colours and the jungle motif fade into a black-and-white forest that serves as a background for scientific illustrations of the development of the fossil, the reader’s attitude changes from identification to reflection. The text explains that Ida remains under water for such a long period of time that she is entirely covered by dirt, and this dirt then becomes stone. These are reliable facts. The lake that is depicted is also transformed, becoming a diagram portraying the earth’s interior. Even the speed is altered. Until this point the story has developed at a gentle pace, whilst suddenly a single turn of the page indicates the passing of millions of years. Thus, the reader is asked to countersign the non-fiction reading pact, overlooking personal identification and taking an interest in the scientific information that is presented.

Throughout the non-fiction sections of the book, the pictures no longer cover the entire doublespread. Each page contains numerous different pictures, each of which is smaller. The photographs and instructive drawings serve a documentary function, illustrating and thus duplicating the information presented in the text. Thus, the non-fiction reading pact is confirmed.

The key effect of including Ida’s life story is to give the fossil personality and to engage the reader in identification. The non-fiction sections of the book contribute credibility to the depicted life story. The scope of the activities runs throughout the book, even though the instructions are presented at the conclusion. Thus, each of the three sections are vital to the overall impact. The fictional story serves to exemplify the theory that is introduced, ‘seducing’ the readers to learn and to engage with Ida, which is vital to the ultimate impact of the disputed knowledge. As the reader carries out the suggested activities, these come to form a part of her own experience.

Whilst the scientific information benefits the composition of the text, the children’s books tradition is nonetheless challenged. The story of Ida’s life engages the reader in the character, but her scientific purpose is to die. In children’s
literature, the protagonist is not supposed to die: the story’s ending should support the reader’s zest for life, rather than removing this or calling it into question. In *Ida*, four strategies diminish the emotional effect of Ida’s death whilst helping the child reader to come to terms with death as a vital prerequisite to evolution and life. These are the character’s name, the book’s illustrations, the jungle environment and Christian mythology.

The protagonist, Ida, is named after the author’s child. In the lexicographical section of the text, under the heading “Primate evolution”, the reader can see a portrait of the young girl on her father’s shoulders under a tree (p. 50). The effect is that the primate Ida’s death in the jungle is proposed to have provided the necessary foundation for the child’s existence. The ape is her ancestor, and as such, the protagonist’s death is but one stage in the journey towards the portrayed child’s happy life.

The illustration that depicts the death of the primate known as Ida is one of the few in which she is not central to the image (see ill. 2). The text adopts a vertical, wave-like form which requires greater effort to read, diverting the reader’s attention from the falling body. The gas that causes Ida’s death forms part of the illustration, but is carefully concealed behind the text. The reader’s gaze is directed at the larger plants and fishes in the water. Even though Ida’s death forms the culmination of her life story, the reader’s engagement is ‘disrupted’ by this picture. There is no great emotional outburst. When the reader turns the page, the full double-page spread is devoted to Ida, with her appearance akin to that of a sleeping dog. The text also suggests that she looks as if she is sleeping. The warm colours and the hair on her body created by the discernible brush strokes give the scene a rather comforting atmosphere. Thus, the reader may not experience sorrow when bidding farewell to the primate Ida, instead having the opportunity to attend to the scientific information on early human evolution that has made it possible for the young girl known as Ida to enjoy life.

The young girl does not live in the jungle, and nor does she leap from tree to tree in the manner of her predecessor, but she may be placed on her father’s shoulders beneath the canopy of a green tree. Thus, evolution has taken place in the environment, as well as among its inhabitants, and the connection between life and death has been made explicit to the reader.

With respect to the connection between nature and death, children’s literature habitually makes use of artwork with a jungle setting, according to Marilyn Strasser Olson (2013: 55). The landscape known today as Messel was a jungle
47 million years ago, and this fact is reproduced in the illustrations. As such, *Ida* benefits from the children’s books jungle topos. Nevertheless, the topos also has a drawback that will be further explored in a subsequent section of this work after the disclosure of the Christian mythology within the narrative. In the final part of the article I will return to the effect of the illustrations and discuss the different strategies intended to diminish the emotional effect of Ida’s death and the effect these have on the information conveying the research result.

**Genesis Evoked in the Story of Ida’s Life and Death**

In the Book of Genesis, one can read about the beginning of life: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering - over the waters.” Time and place exist before mankind, who has been gifted with the power to name that otherwise belongs only to God. *Ida*’s life starts in the atmosphere from the Book of Genesis.\(^6\) This religious approach to evolution is intertwined throughout *Ida*. At the beginning (see ill. 3), the reader is directly addressed - *we* give name to Ida:

*It is night in the jungle. / The jungle has no name. There are no humans there to give it a name. / But one day the area will be called Germany. / The night is full of sounds. / One sound distinguishes itself from the others. / It is a small whimper, almost as if someone is crying. / A little whimper from a small animal that greets the world for the first time. / Her mother lifts her carefully up in her arms and lays / her close to her own body. / She is fed from her mother’s breast for the first time. / She has no name. / But we will call her Ida.*

It is night in the jungle. / The jungle has no name. There are no humans there to give it a name. / But one day the area will be called Germany. / The night is full of sounds. / One sound distinguishes itself from the others. / It is a small whimper, almost as if someone is crying. / A little whimper from a small animal that greets the world for the first time. / Her mother lifts her carefully up in her arms and lays / her close to her own body. / She is fed from her mother’s breast for the first time. / She has no name. / But we will call her Ida.

The jungle is not further described within the text, but is brought to life through the haptic illustrations. In spite of the action taking place during the night, deep green foliage and large water droplets on the leaves lend the images a tactile quality. Paired with the equally sensory description of the many sounds and the one whimper to be heard during the night, the jungle scenery becomes a sheltered virgin forest. The birth is not described in detail, but is instead invoked through the two mentions of “for the first time”. There are echoes of the Book of Genesis in which the animals were created before man.\(^7\) Even though it is Ida’s birth that is depicted, and it is not explicitly suggested that she is the first animal on earth, the repetition of “for the first time” calls to mind the concept of beginnings that is reinforced by the images.

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presented: a primate mother and child are presented in the position made iconic in paintings of the Virgin Mary and the Baby Jesus that have since become central to art history.

On the next double-page spread, the reader learns that Ida and her mother belong to a group of primates. Their life among the birds and the insects appears harmonious and rich: the spider’s web in the center is filled with water droplets, and whilst some primates play in the branches, others eat and one sleeps. Ida is safe on her mother’s back. However, whilst all is depicted as well in this Eden, the presentation of Ida focuses on her anxiety. This could be considered a foreshadowing of the predicted fall that is central to the myth. After five months, Ida is able to leave the family group and search the forest on her own. The illustrations gradually build towards a climax, and the sixth double-page spread is one of the few that is dominated by a linear perspective that expands the scene and signals that other locations exist beyond that which is familiar to Ida and the reader (see ill. 4). Yet again Eden is brought to mind by the sense of harmony between the different animals by the water. Nonetheless, a potential dynamic between them is carefully indicated: the reader’s gaze is directed towards the leopard, whose gaze in turn is directed towards the crocodiles, and the crocodiles’ attention focused on the otter. The subsequent attack is not depicted. Neither is Ida visible at this point, but an attack on her is presented within the text:

One day she finds some tasty / and rich leaves in a tree. / She hears a rattling in the leaves / by her side. / Afraid, she jumps off. / She only just manages to avoid the bite / of a snake. (p. 15)

The inclusion of the snake further roots Ida’s story in the Book of Genesis. However, the predicted fall is not one of temptation, as in the biblical story, but a real fall (see ill. 5). This event has been foreshadowed on a previous spread in which the reader observes Ida’s mother performing a controlled fall with her baby on the back. Ida avoids the snake’s attack but nonetheless loses control. The fall results in a broken arm. Ida can no longer live the same way the other primates do, effortlessly leaping from one branch to another, and she is forced to leave Eden and the familiar dangers.

According to the Christian myth, life outside Eden is hard. Ida must adapt to life on the ground all by herself, learning what she can eat and where to find safety during the night. She must teach herself survival skills. She falls for a second time, and on this occasion the fall is fatal (see ill. 2).

In the Holy Bible, Eve’s sin is to take a bite of an apple from the tree of knowledge. Thus, she earns
the knowledge that God had reserved for Himself. As a result of this, man was expelled from Eden. This is interpreted as constituting mankind’s cultural condition: without the fall, man would not have the knowledge of life and death.

The research team claimed that the story of early human evolution has to be revised. Here, in *Ida*, the cultural context for the revised edition is made explicit. The primate Ida’s life and death is constructed in a way that forges an explicit connection to the creation myth and that pertaining to original sin. Thus, *Ida* makes a bold cultural statement: As the story’s perspective widens in this mythological manner, the reader is invited to interpret the myth in accordance with the new insight into evolution. The research results seem to affect the cultural paradigm as well as the scientific.

**The Jungle in *Ida*: Discourse and Paradigm**

The jungle setting also adds a cultural context to the story. According to the book, Ida was born during the night in the jungle, giving rise to new knowledge about human evolution. However, night in the jungle is also a metaphor that calls pre-colonial natural science to mind. When the explorers of the 18th and 19th centuries set out with cartographical tools in hand to draw up maps of the foreign continents, the jungle became a literal setting for the study of original living before civilization, or at least the western version of this.

Africa was regularly described as the ‘dark continent’, with this name referring to the unknown hinterland and signified darkness of mind defined as (white) man’s lack of knowledge. In order to increase enlightenment, several exploratory expeditions were deployed. Their efforts were regarded as hazardous due to the high risk of death. The travelogues and depictions that followed not only provided scientific results, but also served to document the hardship that the men met throughout their journeys. Several travel journals were published and translated into different languages in the late 19th and early 20th century, with this type of non-fiction literature accounting for many bestselling titles at the time. Thus, the jungle also became a literary setting for the presentation of knowledge. The scientists and explorers became well-known as authors and were regarded as heroes. There was also an increased interest in adventure stories as a result.

Nevertheless, Günther Packendorf (2003) argues that a degree of the knowledge gained through exploration may be disputed. Travellers’ preconceptions were transformed into ‘truth’ through the many depictions. In some cases, visual
presentations were formed in advance of written eyewitness accounts (Packendorf 2003: 32). However, critical discourse analysis is not only a recent phenomenon. The correction of their forerunners is such a dominant theme in the explorers’ own accounts that it may be said to characterize their stories. At the beginning of Captain Tuckey’s journal, for instance, the reader is introduced to a discussion of the low-grade scientific practice of the expedition’s predecessors (Tuckey 1818: xii).

The Tuckey expedition that sailed out from England in 1816 is notorious for its death toll: when the ship returned in 1818, only a few of the sailors remained. The captain himself and the entire crew of scientists had perished, but their logbook was published in 1818 and revealed the scientific findings of their expedition. The published logbook also revealed a scientific paradigm: in order to obtain valid knowledge, they were equipped from the very beginning with detailed lists of what they wished to describe, collect and bring home.

Thus, the expedition intended to carry out comprehensive studies of life and nature in the jungle region of the Congo was well-prepared to satisfy the needs of the scientists’ own scientific paradigm, but not particularly receptive to discovering that which they did not anticipate finding.

Professor Carsten Smith was a scientist on Captain Tuckey’s expedition. His diary reveals that he was very aware of the mortal danger in which he had placed himself. The jungle signified probable death. However, for a long time he seems eager to explore the tropical flora and enjoys the foreign culture that he encounters. The purpose of adding new knowledge of all kinds of life to the civilized world made his sacrifice worthwhile. Smith’s efforts contributed greatly to the Botanical Garden in Oslo, which was founded in order to obtain valid knowledge, they were equipped from the very beginning with detailed lists of what they wished to describe, collect and bring home.

As a result of Ida’s jungle setting, the colonial scientific discourse are called to mind. The question is whether Ida continues to transmit existing preconceptions.

In “Beyond Occidentalism: Toward Nonimperial Geohistorical Categories”, Fernando Coronil argues that even natural science is dependent on cultural conceptions, necessitating one to renew the language of science in collaboration with the mythological verbal text.

The subjective world order of the painted jungle

During the early 19th century, several expeditions collected samples from jungle environments and brought these back to Europe. Botanical and zoological collections were established. Living animals and humans were displayed only in the major cities, initially primarily for scientific research and education. In this way, the scientific expeditions gave rise to a colonial, exiled form of knowledge. When the displays opened to the public in the late 1830s in Paris and 1847 in London, the jungle was reconstructed as having been tamed, separated from its original conditions. This was intended to give the public a thrilling but safe experience of nature (Olson 2013: 38).

The knowledge of the connection between life and death is inscribed in the exhibited plants, animals and humans, but the mortality is transformed into adventure in popular magazines, postcards, novels and paintings from the second half of the 19th century and well into the next.

Henri Rousseau (1844–1910) was a frequent visitor to the Paris zoo and botanical gardens. He never saw a jungle, yet made a living painting jungle scenes. Postcards of taxidermy animals were his models, as Christopher Green (2005) documents. Rousseau’s first jungle painting, _Tiger in a Tropical storm (Surprised!)_ from 1891, is inspired by the great Paris World Fair of 1889, which celebrated technological development and colonial expansion. Frances Morris describes the World Fair as a display of domestic settlements from Cairo to the Americas, from the Congo to Cochinchina, from Tunisia to Java, from Annam to Algeria (Morris 2005: 15). In short, Rousseau’s jungle motifs are modelled on a jungle brought to Paris by colonial explorers: that which he saw had already been tamed, transformed and mediated.

At the time, Rousseau was ridiculed for his childlike paintings. Olson provides another angle to their interpretation. Rousseau’s paintings belong to the subjectivity paradigm of modernist art “conveying – ‘inventing’ as well as ‘conceiving’ – a reformed Nature” (Olson 2013: 45). From the stepping-stone of the mediated jungle, Rousseau creates a new image. His vision possesses its own cosmology or world order, according to Olson.

When Olson claims that “[t]he incorporation of the jungles into children’s books apparently
reduces the tension by reducing the extent to which nature and mortality are intertwined, although the theme is not abandoned”, she refers to the impact that Rousseau’s jungle motifs have had on children’s literature since their conception (Olson 2013: 55). The jungle motif gives the child reader a consolatory perspective on death. “True, death happens, but it is part of an organized whole. True, life ends unexpectedly sometimes, but beauty is much more common. […] In Rousseau the message can seem to be as consolatory as a folktale or homily” (Olson 2013: 47 – 48).

Rousseau’s iconic monkeys, plants and use of colour are brought to mind by viewing Esther van Hulsen’s artwork within Ida, with illustrations particularly reminiscent of Rousseau’s Exotic Landscape (1910). In light of this, one may gain the impression that the jungle discourse within children’s literature has remained the same for the last century. Through the various stages of colonial scientific research, popular displays, adventure stories and great art, the jungle remains a literary environment well-suited to explanations of mortality without causing undue distress to the audience. However, as Rousseau’s subjective world order gave rise to a tradition within children’s literature, Esther van Hulsen’s jungle scenery also has a performative effect. The haptic, sensuous caliber invites the reader into primate Ida’s universe to participate in the production of this within the reader’s own mind.

An esteemed, aesthetic quality exist within post-modern picturebook play (Nikolajeva 2008: 53). But reader performativity does not necessarily strengthen the reader’s ability to countersign the non-fiction reading pact.

Closing Remarks

My purpose has been to discuss the strategies used to convey current scientific information for children based on the ways in which this one book on early human development engages its reader in a life story. The aim has been to clarify the kind of literary paradigms that the scientific information makes use of and to discuss the impact they have on the issue under discussion.

Through the inclusion of Ida’s specific life story, the book leaps directly into the heart of the seemingly unavoidable constraints of non-fiction for children. Through the name, a line is drawn from the dead primate to the researcher’s child, thus resisting the tragic dimension of the death, but the effort is not sufficient. And the remedies at hand contradict each other. The Christian myths on creation and original sin disguise the tragedy whithin an established cultural context. However, the same context makes man’s knowledge a crucial question. And the jungle setting adds the burden of colonialism to the knowledge under discussion. The references to Rousseau’s iconic images transforms the story into exoticism as well as inviting the child reader to partake in the creation of the cosmology itself.

Whilst the team who created Ida claim to be telling the story of the early human evolution in a new way, Ida essentially repeats the world order inspired by Christian mythology, displaying colonial collections and mediated adventures. These cultural paradigms and their political implications dizzy the spectacle of the scientific information in Ida. As the child reader is invited to partake in a fictive performative reading pact on one hand and a non-fiction one on another the author’s quest for a language with which to engage children in new science may have been met, but not in a way that convinces the reader of its scientific validity.

The equivocation which undermines the book’s information value may not diminish is artistic value and might even be the key to its success.16

Notes

1. The conference lectures are no longer accessible, but were originally available at http://www.nhm.uio.no/besok-oss/utstillinger/faste/ida/seminar/
2. See the television interview with Jørn Hurum at http://www.vgtv.no/#video/22541/se-video-av-av-the-missing-link
3. In ‘Er fagbøger en del av børnelitteraturen’ (2011), Anna Karlskov Skyggebjerg argues that non-fiction for children combines narratology from both fiction and non-fiction to such a degree that Dewey, the classification system used in many libraries, is rendered meaningless.
4. In Le pacte autobiographique (1976), Philippe Lejeune asserts that the accepted definition of an autobiography is a “retrospective prose narrative written by a real person concerning his own existence, where the focus is his individual life, in particular the story of his personality” (Lejeune 1989: 4). He argues that this definition is dependent on an “implicit or explicit contract proposed by the author to the reader, a contract which determines the mode of reading of the text and engenders the effects which, attributed to the text, seem to us to define it as autobiography” (Lejeune 1989: 29). Inspired by Lejeune’s concept autobiographical pact, I define the non-fiction pact as a contract proposed by the author to the reader through the work to interpret the content as appropriate and reliable knowledge. In ‘Lesekontrakter i faglitteratur for barn og unge’ (2014), I demonstrate some of the many different ways that a non-fiction reading pact may be activated.

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5. In "Moral og børnebøger" (1969), the Danish theologian K. E. Løgstrup explained the ethical argument in favour of this practice, claiming that narration depends on identification and distance as the reader identifies with the protagonist's thoughts and feelings whilst remaining conscious of the fictional content. Authors that write for adults may concede to the story's aesthetic principles, even if this leads to a disastrous outcome for the protagonist. Authors that write for children are obliged to make an ethical consideration, though: child readers are better at identification than reflection. Even though aesthetic rules may be broken, there must be some form of happy ending. Løgstrup demanded that children's literature not eradicate the child reader's zest for life. See Løgstrup [1969] 1997: 43–44. Løgstrup's impact on Nordic children's literature has been immense.

6. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light 'day', and the darkness he called 'night.' And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day." (Genesis 1:1–5)

7. "And God said, 'Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: the livestock, the creatures that move along the ground, and the wild animals, each according to its kind.' And it was so. God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground, according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, 'Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.'" (Genesis 1:24–26)

8. H.M. Stanley called one of his travel books Through the Dark Continent (1878) and another In Darkest Africa (1890). Frits Andersen's doctoral dissertation Det mørke kontinent? Afrikabilder i europæiske fortellinger om Congo (2010) presents a thorough discussion of Stanley's presentation of the 'dark continent', as well as the Stanley heritage to be found in work such as Joseph Conrad's novel Heart of Darkness (1899) and more recent authors' fictional and documentary travel accounts.

9. This argument is developed in Ørjasæter 2011a: 236–237, 289–290 note 11.

10. The argument is developed in Ørjasæter 2011b: 289.


13. Coronil owes a degree of his argument to the work of Edward Said. The main thread of the argument is that science is made up of categorisations. These are structured as a binary dichotomy. As long as the scientists themselves are governed by the binary dichotomy of the imperialist self-understanding, their capacity for objective knowledge will be indistinct.

14. See the postcard Senegal Lion Devouring an Antelope, taxidermy display prepared for the 1889 opening of the Zoological Galleries, in Green 2005: 34 and Rousseau's imitation in The Hungry Lion Throws Itself on the Antelope (1905).

15. Horse attacked by Jaguar (1910) is one of her main examples. "The leaves on the plants are painted in such a way that they have individual texture and depth – they have a solid, sculptural appearance, [...] The leaves are, moreover, [...] much larger than the juxtaposition of jaguar and horse in the center and middle of the picture. The effect is of a huge tropical landscape of great orderliness and varied beauty, oddly intersected by a tiny death in its midst. To the educated eye, the presence of a horse in a jungle is also an unexplained mystery" (Olson 2013: 45–46).

16. When this article is written the book is being translated into Dutch, French and Chinese according to information given by Esther van Hulsen in conversation on September 22nd 2014.

LITTERATUR


Packendorf, Günther. “Travelers at the Cape and what they saw”, in Carlotta von Maltzan (ed.): Africa and...
Tuckey, James Kingston. Narrative of an Expedition to explore the river Zaire, Usually called the Congo, in South Africa, in 1816 Under the direction of Captain J. K. Tuckey, R.N. London: John Murray, Abenarle-Street, 1818.
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The Natural History Museum, University of Oslo: http://www.nhnm.uio.no/ [read on June 22, 2014]
VGTV: http://www.vgtv.no/ [read on June 22, 2014]