

Tra italiani e stranieri: collane e scrittori negli anni del rinnovamento editoriale

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Abstract

Italian vs Foreign Authors: Writers and series in the years of publishing renovation

The focus of this article is the debate that developed in the mid-twentieth century over the pervasiveness of foreign authors within the Italian literary landscape. The aim is to analyse the choices made by publishers, that, until the late sixties were mainly oriented towards offering young Italian readers Italian works, and that in the context of a children fiction market monopolized by school reading lists, outside of which little space was left for other collections of “free reading” fiction often selling quite poorly. This situation began to be reversed in 1968 when floods of translations poured into the Italian literary market: a torrent of translated literature so consistent that still today a large proportion of kids literature is internationally sourced, leaving the impression of a distinct “xenophilia”. This article explores and analyses the experiences of two specialized publishers that between 1980 and 1990 promoted several highly innovative collections by contemporary Italian authors – milestones marking the renovation that distinguished this specific field.

Keywords: children literature history; Italian literature; foreign literature; publishing renovation; school.