

Editorial

Children's literature has a long history in Iran. The establishment of Children's Book Council of Iran in 1962 (Shora-ye Ketab-e Koodak) and the Institute for the Development of Children and Young Adults (Kanoon Parvarsh Fekri Koodakan va Nojavanan) in 1961 had a great impact on the production of books, films and animation for Iranian children.

Shiraz University Center for Children's Literature Studies founded in 2006 was the first academic center for children's literature. Earlier that year Dr Morteza Khosronejad had presented his PhD dissertation on children's literature—the first in Iran—I was a member of his dissertation committee. The same year he proposed the initial project. He approached Dr Kavous Hasanli and me for the project, which was accepted by Shiraz University. He was at the helm of the center for almost a decade and a half to see it flourishing and reaching all the goals set at the beginning. Morteza khosronejad retired in September 2018 but he is still involved with the center and the student life at Shiraz University. What he managed to carry out during these years is only possible through devotion, perseverance, and thoughtfulness.

The Center had ten goals:

1. Starting an MA program in children's literature at Shiraz University. The first group of students started their classes in 2010.
2. Publishing an academic journal of children's literature. The first issue was published in 2010.
3. Writing and translating prominent works of criticism and theory in children's literature. Several volumes have been sent to the publishers and some are published.
4. Establishing a children's literature library. Shiraz University now has a specialized children's literature library situated in the central library.
5. Proposing research projects. Seven research projects have been carried out.
6. Organizing national and international conferences. The first conference was convened in 2009 and the seventh conference will be held in 2019 in Shiraz University.

7. Biennial festival of research. Five festivals have been carried out in which the best PhD and MA theses have been selected and awarded.
8. Suggesting offering a course on children's literature in BA programs of Persian language and literature at the universities in Iran.
9. Encouraging PhD and MA students to choose topics from children's literature. The number has increased significantly in the past 5 years.
10. Connecting with children's literature organizations outside Iran.

Morteza Khosronejad has been instrumental in carrying out every single one of the above and has overseen every detail carefully. This thematic issue is dedicated to him for a lifetime of selfless, generous, magnanimous work on children's literature.

I would like to thank Prof. John Stephens and Prof. Amir Ali Nojournian for accepting my invitation to write a paper for this issue.

Students of Dr Khosronejad have written some of the papers in this issue.

I would like to thank Dr Laleh Atashi, the new member of Shiraz University Center for Children's Literature Studies (CCLS), who is the editor of this thematic issue.

Editor-in-Chief
Farideh Pourgiv