

Forlaget Hjulet (The Wheel Press), 1976 - (2016)

Hjulet was founded in Denmark 1976 when Vagn Plenge published three picture books from Singapore with Asian folk tales. The programme was - and has remained - primarily to publish books with stories from "the Warm Countries", i.e. Africa, Asia and Latin America, as well as non-European cultures elsewhere.

In 1980, Vagn Plenge expanded his publishing to Sweden and Norway. Whereas he had to stop in Norway in 2001, he continues to publish in Denmark and Sweden.

So far, Hjulet has published about 300 books, mostly picture books for children in Danish or Swedish, besides fiction for adults in Danish. Besides being the only employee, Vagn Plenge is the translator of most of the picture books, besides some novels, short stories and poems from English, French, German, and Thai.

He has published a collection of folk tales collected in villages in Northern Thailand, in Thai (Bangkok, 1976). His thesis in Thai Studies centred on the various versions of the Ramayana in Northern Thailand.

He was a consultant to Sub-Saharan Publishers (Ghana) 1999-2006, and to Editorial Nicobis (Bolivia) 2004-2006. He has attended the Bologna fair every year since 1980, as well as the Frankfurt fair. Outside Europe, he has attended books fairs in Accra, Beijing, Cape Town, Guadalajara, Harare (several times), São Paulo and other places.

Vagn Plenge has been involved with the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) since 1984 when he participated in the congress in Nicosia, Cyprus. Since then he has attended every IBBY congress. He was an active member of the Executive Council 2002-2006, e.g. proposing what has become known as the Tsunami Appeal, and conducting a survey of taxes on printing material that led to a petition to Unesco. He was the organiser and president of the congress in Copenhagen 2008. He has been the president of IBBY Denmark since July 2013, and is again a member of the EC since 2014.

Vagn Plenge has been awarded three Danish prizes: by a club of journalists interested in the Warm Countries, by the Association of Librarians, and by IBBY Denmark.

Since 2008, he has been married to the Philippine author Lakambini Sitoy. He has two sons with his late wife, and seven grand children.

