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A Not so Fairy Tale – Two Readings of the Tale “How Potjeh Sought the Truth”

Mirna Brkić Vučina

University of Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina

In relevant literature, *Croatian Tales of Long Ago* (1916) by Ivana Brlic Mazuranic are usually classified into two thematic groups – the fairy tales of ancient Slavic paganism and the fairy tales of Slavic Christianity. Thus, the tale “How Potjeh Sought the Truth”, which opens the *Tales*, is described as belonging to pre-Christian, proto-Slavic period. This paper deals with the correlations between Slavic mythological and Christian layers in the mentioned tale. As it often happens with such multi-layered texts, the research was added one more dimension. Beside the interpretation of the relationship between Christian and Slavic mythological elements, a different reading key of the tale emerged as the author's intimate autobiography "packed" into a fairy tale (which will be discussed in the second part of the paper).

Keywords: intimate autobiography, Christianity, mythology, correlations.

I. Introductory part

When *Croatian Tales of Long Ago* 1916 have been published, their source and genesis debated. Therefore, Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić, in her letter to her son, Ivan Brlić, from 1930, directly talks about "external connections" with Slavic mythology and "inner connections" with oral literature (Brlić-Mažuranić 1930: 165-166). However, in the aforementioned letter the author rejects the notion of genesis: "I've been often asked of practical genesis of the *Tales*. Word 'genesis' seems to me too narrow. It devastates the concept of 'telling the tale'" (Brlić-Mažuranić 1930:165–166: 166). The stories were "written" (ibid: 165) using "names and characters of Slavic mythology," but "no scene, no fables, no development, no tendencies used in these stories were found already finished in our mythology" (ibid: 166).

Recent research has shown that the primary sources of authors literature were found in Russian folk poetry of Afansjev, *Poetičeskie vozzrenija Slavjan na prirodu* (1865, 1868, 1869) and the mythological-gothic leksikon of Tkany *Mythologie der alten Teutschen und Slaven* (*Mythology of ancient Germans and Slavs*) published in 1827, with occasional references to Croatian oral literature collected in texts written mainly by Valjavec, Kukuljević Sakcinski and Šafařík (Engler and Kos-Lajtmán 2011: 307/308).

Often in the relevant literature studying the fairy tales of *Croatian Tales of Long Ago* the tales are divided into two thematic groups - fairy tales of ancient Slavic pagan times and fairy tales of Slavic Christian period.

So for fairy tales as "How Potjeh Sought the Truth", "Fisherman Palunko and his wife", "Regoč and The Sun Sunset and Neva Nevičica", stated that they belonged to the pre-Christian slavs oral literature and the fairy tales (*Stribor's Forest, Jagor, Brother Jaglenac and sister Rutvica*) dominated by the Christian component.

The intention was to study the interconnections between Slavic mythological and Christian layers of fairytale *How Potjeh Sought the Truth* opening *Croatian Tales of Long Ago* (1916). As it often happens, especially in such multilayer texts, the research has gone one more way. New reading of Christian and Slavic elements in fairytale, using a different key, brought a light on an intimate autobiography of the author reworked in fairytale (which will be discussed in the second part of the paper).

II. The Interferences of Christian and Mythological Layers in “How Potjeh Sought the Truth”

At the beginning of the fairy tale *How Potjeh Sought the Truth* the author acquaints us with the fact that a wise and just grandfather Vijest lives with his three grandchildren. One day all three grandchildren go to the woods. But the noise there causes uneasiness and fear:

But in the woods there was still some darkness and sorrow because the sun was still not grain, no birds or beasts were heard. They became terribly frightened and uncomfortable in this silence before the sunrise, before the sun, because Bjesomar the evil ruler of all the forest would pulle thru the woods from crown to crown (Brlić-Mažuranić 1968: 21).

Entering into the woods gives us an image of grandsons wondering what's in the world. They carry a desire to know, discover the world. Since they have almost no experience to answer this question, good Svarožić appears, showing them the world and revealing the mystery of life. The names of some characters in the stories are known from the literature as names of old Slavic deities, eg Svarožić, Mokoš, Hrs, Stribor (obviously according to Stribog). They entered the story with the intermediation of Afanasjev, but were greatly transformed. According to mythological literature Svarožić is the son of Svarog. In the story of Potjeh, Svarožić is a rising sun in a body of a beautiful young man. He is the morning light that appears above the hills (cf. Bošković-Stulli 1970: 165/166).

The likeness of Svarožić is related to the image of Jesus precisely because of the motif of light (cf. Špehar and Salopek 2015: 117). According to the Evangelist John, the primeval light is the Word, that is, God Himself. So we read in *Matthew's Gospel*:

After six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John with them, and led them up to a high mountain by themselves. There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun and his clothes became as white as the light (Mt 17, 1-2).

The aforesaid biblical citation can be related to a moment in which Svarožić appeared to the brothers as:

(...) a light that has never been seen. Brothers shuddered of wonder, and the light faded from the hills, and appeared closer on the surface of a large stone, then closer on an old lime and finally dawned like pure gold just before them. And a wonderful young man showed before them in a glimpsing dress, beautifully glittering suit shivering around him like a golden banner (Brlić-Mažuranić 1968: 22).

Svarožić shows the brothers material wealth of the world, power and force, army's and army leaders, and finally "they get to see all the stars and the moon and the wind and all the clouds" (Brlić-Mažuranić 1968: 22). But all the same warns them, that no matter what the world offers, they can't leave their grandfather until they repay all his love. Because of excitement and fear, grandchildren got to forget the secret of life that Svarožić has revealed to them. The author at that point in narrative introduces the negative figure of Bjesomar. Bjesomar opposed the old Vijest because he was lightening the eternal fire.

The Holy Fire that burned and continues to burn after the old men's death being fueled by the grandsons, reminds us of the eternal light which burns in all the churches in the name of Christ's constant presence in the mystery of the Eucharist. This light should keep reminding us that we are loved in a ways we love others (Cf. Špehar and Salopek 2015: 117).

Since the grandsons have forgotten Svarožić's lesson, Bjesomar sees the opportunity for himself, the opportunity to separate grandchildren and their grandfather, and so, revenge him. This is an opportunity to devastate the order and conquer the souls of grandsons. He sends "passion" to every grandson to seduce each one. It is an evil spirit that retreats into a man or an animal and urges them to run away. One of the interpretations states that the passions origin from evil demons, namely, the ghosts of nature that at first were one, then divided into good and evil, from indigent souls of dead ancestors, and towards Christianity from all the pagan deities who did not reconcile with the Christian God and accepted the Christian faith or the fallen angels who did not submit to their nature. By the fall of the spirit they are ragged on an animal's appearance, and they grew black hair and feathers, claws and

ears, horns and tail. Fallen angels are ones that are violating and weakening the human consciousness. Man's development is based on his own instincts, but also on the awareness of them and on the abilities of their restraint. Therefore, self-control is a kind of balance between the outer and inner world, the reason and the impulse of that positive and negative force at all, which allows a man to choose between reign and slavery (Cf. Bajuk Pecotić 1999: 172/173). All this would suit the way in which Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić describes the passions:

The small, the freakish, the pushy, the smack, all kind, and every one of them played on a willow. So they whistled, twisted and rattled. They were crazy and ungainly, kind that wasn't meant to do a job nor harm a person until a person wishes to host them (Brlić-Mažuranić 1968: 23).

Therefore, passions cannot rule a man if a man doesn't host them. Since the grandsons have forgotten Svarožić's guidance, passions seek for weaknesses in each of them. They are the incarnation of inner demons of each of grandsons. Marun's passion (anger) promises he will be the richest among the brothers and Marun releases his anger to master him. Ljutiša also subjects to his anger, which is the passion, anger of force and power. These sins, passions, angers are somehow noticeable, obvious. What is sin of Potjeh? Svarožić was demonstrating the world to show the stars. His anger promises, "You will be the greatest sage and you will understand what the winds say, what the stars whispers" (Brlić-Mažuranić 1968: 24]). The star is primarily the source of light. Painted on the ceiling of temple or church, stars determine it's celestial importance. Because of their heavenly characteristics the stars are symbols of spirit, and especially symbols of conflicts between spiritual forces of light or material forces of darkness (Chevalier and Gheerbrant 2009: 1120).

When in "The Stribor's Forest" the mother chooses more likely to suffer wishing to have her son rather than to enjoy infinite happiness, having to forget about her child - acting totally anti-Faustian, as Šegedin once noticed, she fulfills her duty, the toughest but most noble duty in human's life: the duty of parent. Potjeh, on the other hand strives for knowledge, failing to perform duties, so his passion is Faustian. He goes to the world in search of the truth. During that time, the passions ruled Marun and Ljutiša and were looking to kill their grandfather. After a year, Svarožić appears once again to Potjeh saying that he could have already had discovered the

truth within his heart “if you had listened to your heart when it spoke to you at the doorstep of the hut calling you to go back and not leave your grandfather, there was the truth to be found even without wisdom” (Brlić-Mažuranić 1968:32).

That truth will shake and defeat Potjeh, making him an antihero of the fairy tale. The journey doesn't lead to reaching the meaning. Potjeh, as the youngest and grandfathers favorite, consistently for the fairy tale genres, aspires for the status of an ideal hero, whereby this very aspiration makes his effort impossible. Namely, as much as Marun and Ljutiša are actively destructive, because they are possessed by the passions that disables the realization of their human potential and lead them to their own evil caricatures in the service of power and wealth, Potjeh is, as Milanja shows (Milanja 1977: 61), in fact, their counterpart in spiritual and speculative sphere. Himself, as well as his brothers, was led by his anger to the forgetfulness of Svarožić's message (vision), but unlike his brothers who indulge in the extraversion of the virtues (sins), Potjeh goes to seek the forgotten truth. His quest for truth, in fact, is considered by Milanja, ingeniously conceived as erasing the truth that he is tracing (Cfr. Protrka Štimec 2015:658).

Potjeh drowned in a well while he was washing his face thinking of returning to his grandfather. “Stunned and ashamed there was Potjeh left alone by the well ... he leaned too much, slipped and fell into the well” (Brlić-Mažuranić 1968: 32/33). Symbolism of a well or fount is symbolism of revival and purification (Chevalier and Gheerbrant 2009: 1080). The effort of washing does not work. He failed to regenerate and purge from sin and dies.

In that moment passions leave Ljutiša and Marun, and they seem to feel love for their brother and compassion toward their grandfather. They go in search of Potjeh, but they find him dead. The grandfather after his death concludes, “it is been to you, my children, forgiven, because you are standing alive. To the one who was the most righteous one, he had to pay his blame with own life” (Brlić-Mažuranić 1968: 35).

“From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded” (Lk 12: 48). The meaning of this sentence of Jesus is that we are responsible for what was given to us, therefore it was given to us by God. Potjeh is the youngest grandson, but also the successor of his grandfather's tradition and wisdom, “perhaps this child has more wisdom than the old man” (Brlić-Mažuranić 1968: 26). Therefore, his responsibility is greater and his sin tends to increase. Potjeh is crying in front of

Svarožić's palace because they do not let him in as he is a sinner. Svarožić's palace could be a picture of what is waiting for us after death, the image of heaven.

It was the golden palace of Svarožić. From the court there is a thousand shades of blush: made of rosy cloud, made of glass pile, and that of dry gold, and most of the light came from the windows of hall. Because there are Svarožić's guests sitting together and pouring from the golden cup to the every one who joins them (Brlić-Mažuranić 1968: 36).

At the end of fairy tale, sin is forgiven and Potjeh enters Svarožić's palace with his grandfather and Ljutiša and Marun continue to live on the blessing of the earth, maintaining eternal fire.

III. The intimate autobiography of the author has been transformed into a fairy tale

(...) each text speaks about its creator (Lovrenčić 2006: 283)

As we have already emphasized in the introduction, writing about one, imposed a new approach to reading this fairy tale – as an intimate autobiography of the author transformed into a fairy tale. Therefore, the work is conceived in two parts.

Brlić-Mažuranić was the heiress of her grandfather's mental and intellectual education. Judging by her sister Alka's record of their childhood, Ivana was an early-matured girl. At twelve years of age, she was considered an adult. It is said that by the age of eighteen she was fluently speaking and writing German, French and English and could read Italian and Russian.

By Alka, Ivana literally adored her parents, but often came across with them in conflicts. An intimate prayer for parents perfectly mirrored her attitude towards them, but also towards herself. Her prayer is a prayer for the parents, but also a prayer for herself. A prayer that they don't underestimate her aspirations and ideas, her writing:

And for father, mother? For them, God, I have to thank you so much! So good a full love. But will you hear me? Give me something to add to that happiness, give them, that they understand, my maybe sometimes, maybe always crazy

thoughts... let them understand ... they can not. No, indeed, Father, it is so painful, pain ... (Lovrenčić 2006: 74).

But Ivana, very soon, becomes aware of what is she expected to do and what are the "duties of a woman". She is equally aware that she wishes to write. And there is a conflict that will torture her whole life (ibid.: 70).

My thinking was early led to the conclusion that writing disagrees with women's duties. This struggle between the strong desire to write and between these (correct or incorrect) guarding of duty, has been a part of my public literary work for 15 years (ibid.: 244).

Sanja Lovrencic states that it is difficult to find out when Ivana wrote the first page of her diary, but that it is enough "to browse her youth diaries so to see how deep and personal her writing was" (ibid: 62).

With eighteen years of age, Ivan was engaged to Vatroslav Brlić, with whom she exchanged only a few letters during the engagement. She marries and moves to Slavonski Brod. Although she loved Zagreb, books, theaters and freedom, she did not complain to her parents. For her, her family was the most important thing in her life, and in that manner she behaved all her life.

The first book by Brlić-Mažuranić *The Valid and Ineffective* was published in 1901. The author's permanent and pervading desire for writing was reconciled with her permanent perception of duty when the possibility of writing for her own children appeared [2006: 173] Her first book was really written for four of her underage children, but for *Croatian Tales of Long Ago* don't seem to applies to that rule nor they are stories for children. Well, the author says herself, "I'm an adult, I wrote to myself, to an adult person" (ibid. 2006: 218).

The fairy tale "How Potjeh Sought the Truth" opens the *Croatian Tales of Long Ago* and at the same time we enter the intimate world of Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić. Since the moment the three grandsons leave into the woods at the beginning of the fairy tale as if we were called to psychoanalytical reading. Just the fact of leaving grandchildren in the woods builds up the sensation of discomfort in us, the readers. Contemporary psychoanalysis of dark and deep woods symbolizes the area of

unconsciousness. Fear of the woods, as well as panic fears, Jung says, exacerbates the fear of unconscious disclosure (Chevalier and Gheerbrant 2009: 947).

It is not surprising, therefore, that the psychoanalytic potential of this story is recognized in both literature and literary science. In the novel by Dubravks Ugrešić *The Ministry of Pain* (2004), in which the author deals with exile, memory and forgetting, Igor, one of the students of South Slavic Literature at the University of Amsterdam, chooses an entirely unexpected work for problematizing of the exile theme:

Fairytale of Ivana Brlić Mažuranić «How Potjeh Sought the Truth» considering her "psychoanalytically ingenious". He writes an essay stating that this fairy tale is a deviation from the genre, as it ends with Potjeh's death. According to Igor's interpretation:

-By all laws there is no place like home - a fairy tale genre should end with happy ending. But the Mažuranić was still a devil preventing him from completing the story as it should. The main heroes of fairy tales get their mind, heart and courage, wealth and princess, but do not fall into the well.

-Potjeh finally ends in Svarožić's courts ...

-Brlić-Mažuranić raises the throne in the heavenly courts, which is a happy end to death. It's a false end, because heaven or hell are like this or that kind of bribe. Technically speaking, the story is bullshit, but it is psychoanalytically genius ... (Ugrešić 2004: 224).

On the other hand, Vivijana Radman fairy tale *How Potjeh Sought the Truth* it is considered to be a real autobiography, an undressed, non-conformist expression on the conditions of her own being, a matrix of the entire creation Ivane Brlić-Mažuranić. The dominant note, the basis and the condition of all her texts, is a patriarchal society with which Ivana avoids an open conflict, and, pleasantly pleasingly, invariably inflicts a virus of confrontation pervading all prose and all authoritarian procedures. Grandfather as a moral vertical in the life of Ivan Brlić-Mažuranić appears as such in the fairy tale of grandpa Vijest. Radman states that Potjeh discusses the struggle to separate his own "self" from the "superior self". Analyzing this story as an autobiography of Ivana about "the development of a thought creature" assumes that Potjeh is the author's alter ego. He argues that assumption is that Potjeh a male, is

not a grandfather's first born, he is a third, a third and in the operating system there is no inheritance in the story, so he is legally in the same position as a woman.

While the older brothers are hefty boys, he is a beloved child, a rose on a large sheet, which are stereotypically female attributes. Brothers were given to see all the treasures, all the power and all the wisdom of the world, three cravings outsourced through three anger, forest freaks. Potjeh is resisting the trials of gold and weapons, but he does not resist the supreme trials, trials of knowledge and creation. He desires a grandfather's possession of wisdom and holiness, but he does not acknowledge his wish. Without recollection Potjeh is realized in search as an independent mode of existence. By not sinning really, Potjeh efficiently separates his "self" from his "superior self," exercising his own will, forming his own identity (cf. Radman 1998: 150-155).

From the diary records, it is evident that Ivana had been fascinated by books and observation of the stars since the earliest years. In the various periods of her life she starred at stars with her father, husband, children, grandchildren and friends. This star motif also appears in the story "How Potjeh Sought the Truth". In the story Svarožić will show the material riches and power to Ljutiša and Marun, and will show the stars to Potjeh. Looking for the stars, Potjeh moves in search of truth and search for oneself. He urges to have control over his destiny. His sin is a desire for knowledge. And in this sense, we find a strong link between Potjeh and Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić. The author in her diary writes this way to herself:

My mistake is not to think but to think too much ... I want to live. I want to act. Do not work with a cooker or needle because I do not know. I want some benefit ... I want to get away with this sad life. I will build it with my own strength, when no one will help me, no one will understand ... (Lovrenčić 2006: 77).

But when he abandons his grandfather and his duty in his search of truth and knowledge, the righteousness will make every decision painful, because with one he will forfeit his grandfather and with the other himself. As D. Jelčić observed, the entire ethical code of Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić rests on one principle and stems from it - that is a sense of duty. All the key female characters in *Croatian Tales of Long Ago* (grandmother, Milojka, Rutvica, Neva Nevičica, Palunko's wife) have a strong sense of duty associated with incredible self-indulgence. But in order to fulfill your duties,

you often have to give up your wishes, dreams, ideals, freedom, or as Ivana, her writing.

She fulfilled the duty of obedience to her parents, the duty to accept the female role assigned to her by the society and family, but she did not fulfill her duty to herself and her abilities (Lovrenčić 2006: 91). "With more interest in life, no one had ever been born into this world - and in the worst slander no one has ever gone through the best days of her life like me" (ibid. 2006: 189).

In the first few years of Ivana's marriage, writing is not mentioned almost anywhere and later she writes in short sermons between motherhood and household duties. "My literature, my most beloved kindness, barely concealed, could not have taken me a part of the time" (2006: 306/307).

The one who fulfilled the duty, as a grandmother in the *Stribor's Forest*, feels the fulfillment, but the one that has not fulfilled the duty is feeling sorrow, shame, defect and the vast emptiness of life and ending as Potjeh.

If Potjeh did not endure so fatally, the story would be an interpretation of the biblical parable of the prodigal son, but the death abducts Potjeh away from Christian ornamentology. Such a sudden death turns him into a bad guy. Beginning a fairy tale as a hero moving on a journey, it loses our expectations, even more because the Potjeh, as well as the author, has very great expectations of itself. It experiences deep disappointment. There is no answer at the end of the road, there is no reward in the hands of the king, and everything he did was in vain.

The pursuit of Potjeh for truth is, in fact, the quest for spirit and spiritual perfection. He inevitably has to end fatally because in this world he doesn't find a way to reach spiritual satisfaction. Let's take another parallel between the author and Potjeh. Here's how she describes her life search in diaries:

May I describe my self to you? So what else do I need you for?

There is no change on better for me. I'm still a striving for something that has never been done, a certain prevalence, as if I could attain something like that, and feeling the shame that I was not even in the least, or far from being in the way of doing this, even though I still do not know about it (Lovrenčić 2006: 77).

In addition, it seems extremely important, it's with this fatal ending of Potjeh author leaves the opportunity to interpret Potjeh's fatal end in the key we want. That is why

we can find such diverse interpretations of this story, ever since problematizing of the exile theme to search for identity and hidden autobiography. Let's ask ourselves a question: why there is an open possibility that Potjeh did not fall accidentally into the well, but killed himself? Is Potjeh an image of suicide and is this fairy tale actually meditation of suicide formulated as a children's story? Is it possible by reading the authorship of the diaries that originated before writing *Croatian Tales of Long Ago*, to find an incentive for this kind of reading the story and the interpretation of character of Potjeh?

Ivana, according to her diary records, from the earliest age meditates on God, talks with him, but meditates on both evil and death. Around Easter 1892, shortly before her marriage, at seventeen years of age, she made a very serious record:

Our Father, only one thought, only one sin frightens me the most. I believe it was my most loyal silent companion since the early youth. A mute companion! God, thought of death, early death, this thought is hot and praiseworthy ... but you know it too well (2006: 85/86).

When Ivana was twelve years old, a "French" came to her family, Marietta. She was very young; she was sleeping in the same room with Ivana and a close friendship developed between them. But because of love she dived in Sava. This left a deep mark on Ivana's soul and she recorded that was the moment she ceased to be a child. But there was another person in Ivana's life who left the world in the similar way: it's unknown who was Zvonko is, but it's him and Marietta that Ivana speaks as of her "two dead ideals," two angels in heaven (ibid. 2006: 81/82). In one small note from 1889, Ivana addresses only God:

My Father, I believe - perhaps it is sinful – in You, in eternal Love, it's not necessarily the sin everything that is considered a sin according to the particular principles of faith. For whoever can count all the circumstances under which sin is taking place, all countless thoughts of You, immeasurable love and faith in You, all pain, and all contempt and awe, just in the hour of sin (ibid. 2006: 83).

The sin with which Ivana is trying to go to an end is not her own, but Zvonko's and Marieta's. But to those who were so good, God will surely forgive their weakness and take them to Him. At the next moment, Ivana sees them as her advocates, as those who convey to God her hot, sincere prayers (ibid. 2006: 83).

After the fall in the well, Potjeh cries, hoping for forgiveness. He who was so good, even though he had committed sin and failed his duty, took his grandfather's hand was led to Svarožić's court. Sins, even sin of suicide, are forgiven.

IV. Instead of a conclusion

The fairy that is not «How Potjeh Sought the Truth», it surprises both modern readers with their multitude, psychoanalytic potential, and calls us again over to the new readings of this text. With the fatal ending of Potjeh, Ivan Brlić-Mažuranić may give us the freedom to interpret our destiny and the end of the key we want. Starting with one interpretation, the relationship between Christian and mythological elements in the fairytale, they forced reading this fairy tale in a different way - as the intimate autobiography of the author, so that, in the end, questions remain open. When we raise a layer, something new appears beneath it ... And we are like Potjeh in search of the truth ... Here is the magic of the story through the ages and its untraceable value.

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(Интер)текстуални селидби

Марија Ѓорѓиева Димова

Универзитет Св. Кирил и Методиј, Скопје

Врз фонот на теориските перцепции на постмодернистичката проза можна е рецепцијата на расказот *Мојот непријател Итар Пејо* од македонската авторка Калина Малеска. Расказот артикулира дел од репертоарот метафикциски постапки преку коишто на преден план се поставуваат онтолошките теми. Конкретно, станува збор за постапките коишто го демонстрираат судирот помеѓу два или повеќе светови и коишто, на тој начин, го оголуваат плуралитетот светови и го свртуваат вниманието врз границите меѓу нив: судирот помеѓу фикцискиот свет и историскиот факт на реалниот свет, транссветовните идентитети и интертекстуалните постапки.

Клучни зборови: Малеска, Итар Пејо,

Теориските дескрипции на постмодернизмот понудени од страна на Брајан Мекхејл поаѓаат од тезата за онтолошката доминанта на постмодернистичката проза во смисла на тоа дека постмодернистичките текстови ги актуализираат т.н. посткогнитивни прашања кои се однесуваат или на онтологијата на книжевниот текст или на онтологијата на светот којшто се проектира во него, или „Што е светот? Кои видови светови постојат? Како се тие конструирани? Како се разликуваат? Што се случува кога различните типови свет се поставени во судир или кога границите меѓу нив се нарушени? Кој е модусот на постоење на текстот и кој е модусот на постоење на светот (или световите) што се проектираат? Како е структуриран проектираниот свет, итн“ (McHale 2001: 10). Онтолошките тематизации упатуваат на можните проблематизации на границите помеѓу световите и помеѓу текстовите, генерирајќи го т.н. „онтолошки скандал“ (McHale 2001: 85), како индикатор на „онтолошката имплозија“ (Oraić 1996: 111) со којшто се опишува состојбата на слободно поместување и движење во различни насоки и паралелното поставување на мноштвото облици на постоење, односно како индикатор на светот „којшто станува на сите подрачја несигурен, кревок или на кој било друг начин разнишан“ (Oraić 1996:111). Со оглед на тоа што имплодираноста го генерира и отсуството на какво било цврсто упориште, идеја или стварност кои би служеле како ориентир, следствено, се отвора можноста за движење во бескрај, како и можноста за мултиплицирање на облиците на постоење. Неминовно, во тие процеси е вклучена и книжевноста чијшто онтолошки статус, подеднакво, е разнишан, а што се потврдува преку двете доминантни одлики на постмодернистичката проза: интертекстуалноста и проблематизираниите релации факт - фикција. Во првиот случај, примарен станува односот со другите текстови, така што книжевноста повеќе не се сооднесува непосредно на стварноста, на референтниот свет и на неговите значења, туку до нив доаѓа посредно и интерпретативно упатена кон другите текстови. Додека, пак, во вториот случај, прелевањето меѓу подрачјата на фикцијата и на фактот ја осведочува дестабилизираноста на границите меѓу книжевноста и стварноста, меѓу фикциското и фактичкото, со можност за слободно движење во двете насоки. „Очигледно е разнишувањето на границата фикција - стварност и доминацијата на фикцијата над стварноста ... Колку е посилна конструкцијата и

фикционализацијата на стварноста, толку се посилни и одговорите на стварноста – 'стварна' или конструирана“ (Oraić 2006:187).

Во конкретните книжевни текстови онтолошките теми се артикулирани преку метафикциските постапки коишто ги оголуваат модалитетите на кршење на рамките/границите помеѓу световите и/или текстовите, со цел проблематизирање на дихотомниот однос помеѓу светот на фикцијата и емпирискиот свет, односно проблематизирањето на односот помеѓу текстовите. „Кршењето на рамката е ризична работа. Намерата е да воспостави апсолутно ниво на реалност, но, парадоксално, ја *релативизира* реалноста; намерата е да обезбеди онтолошки стабилна основа, но уште повеќе ја дестабилизира онтологијата“ (McNale 2001:197). Следствено, овие постапки ја афирмираат онтолошката плуралност и нестабилност: го оголуваат постоењето на мултиплицирани светови, процесите на конструкција и на дестабилизација на светот проектиран во текстот, како и нивелациите на меѓутекстовните граници.

Токму врз фонот на овие теориски перцепции на постмодернистичката проза можна е и рецепцијата на расказот *Мојот непријател Итар Пејо* од македонската авторка Калина Малеска. Расказот артикулира дел од репертоарот метафикциски постапки преку коишто на преден план се поставуваат онтолошките теми. Конкретно, станува збор за постапките коишто го демонстрираат судирот помеѓу два или повеќе светови и коишто, на тој начин, го оголуваат плуралитетот светови и го свртуваат вниманието врз границите меѓу нив: судирот помеѓу фикцискиот свет и историскиот факт на реалниот свет, транссветовните идентитети и интертекстуалните постапки.

Јуриј М. Лотман ја посочува разграниченоста на текстот како една од неговите конститутивни одлики, заедно со изразеноста и со структурноста (2005: 88-90). Но, актуелноста на границите се потенцира единствено преку нивната подвижност, преку динамичното преместување и поместување, како на надворешните граници (оние кои го одделуваат текстот од нетекстот), така и на внатрешните граници (оние кои ги распределуваат единиците на различното кодирање во текстот). Иако врамувањето на текстот не се внесува внатре во него (врамувањето секогаш игра улога на предупредувачки сигнал за почетокот/крајот на текстот), сепак, книжевно - уметничката практика (особено онаа од постмодернистичка провиниенција), честопати ја осведочува постапката на внесување на рамката внатре во текстот што, пак, ефектуира со

поместување на читателското внимание „од пораката врз кодот“ (Лотман 2003: 58-59). Токму структурата текст во текст во којашто „разликата во кодирањето на разните делови на текстот станува откриена со факторот на авторската конструкција и на читателското восприемање на текстот“ (Лотман 2003: 52-53) претставува еден механизам за оголување на присуството на границите на/во текстот. „Преминувањето од еден систем на семиотичко осознавање на текстот во друг, на некоја внатрешна структурна граница претставува основа за генерирање на смислата“ (Лотман 2003:53). Според Лотман, структурата текст во текст има повеќекратна функција во однос на оголување на структурната релевантност на границите, интензивирајќи го „моментот на игра во текстот: од позиција на друг начин на кодирање текстот добива црти на зголемена условност, се потцртува неговиот карактер на игра - иронична, пародична, театрализирана и друга смисла ... како и играта на спротивставувања 'реално/условно', својствена за секоја ситуација текст во текст“ (2003:53). Покрај варијантите кога текстот и врамувањето се преплетуваат, така што секој се појавува во определен однос и како текст кој врамува и како текст кој е врамен, вообичаени се и структурите при којшто „еден текст се дава како непрекинато раскажување, а другите се воведуваат во него во посебен фрагментарен вид (цитати, упатувања, епиграфи и сл.)“ (Лотман 2003: 58-59).

Вторава варијанта е артикулирана во расказот на Малеска, каде што се модификува како структура текстови во текст. Имено, во расказот се интерполирани фрагменти од осум раскази од збирката *Итар Пејо* на Стале Попов (конкретно, расказите *Итар Пејо момок кај попот*, *Итар Пејо и гостилничарот*, *Итар Пејо*, *мариовците и дождот*, *Рибина чорба*, *Итар Пејо лекува селанец укасан од змија*, *Итар Пејо позајмува казан од комшијата*, *Итар Пејо и селаните риболовци*, *Пејо со туѓи чизми на оро*). Во расказот на Малеска овие интертекстови се интегрирани цитатно, алузивно, реминесцентно, евокативно, парафразирано (станува збор за интертекстуални постапки типологизирани од страна на Зоран Константиновиќ), сочинувајќи една типично цитатна конструкција, која се темели врз интертекстуалната релација на (цитатна) „еквиваленција меѓу текстот и интертекстот“ и врз „експлицитната интертекстуалност според принципот текст во текст“ (Oraić1990:14-15). Функционално преосмислени во новата наративна целина на расказот овие интертекстови се мимикрирани како „шифрирани цитати“ кои

користат „внатрешни цитатни сигнали“ (Oraić 1990:16) од типот цитатно реферирање на ликови и на мотиви од друг прототекст. Една постапка на интервенција во интертекстот се однесува на употребата на индиректен говор (во расказот на Малеска) како замена на директниот говор во дел од расказите на Попов, односно употребата на прекажувањето како замена на дијалогските реплики во прототекстот. Ваквата структура на расказот не само што ефектуира со оголување на границите помеѓу световите на реалноста и на фикцијата, повеќекратно поместувајќи ги, туку ефектуира и со бројни мултипликации на текстовните рамништа и на границите помеѓу нив, па покрај елементарната структура текст во текст, евидентни се и варијантите текст покрај текст, текст под текст и текст зад текст.

Интертекстуалната конструкција на *Мојот непријател Итар Пејо* има дополнителни онтолошки импликации и во однос на онтологијата на текстот и во однос на онтологијата на светот којшто е проектиран во него:

1. Структурата текст во текст ја потенцира играта „реално - условно“ во расказот: „Ако двојната кодираност на определени единици на текстот која се изедначува со уметничката условност, води кон тоа основното пространство на текстот да се восприеми како реално“ (Лотман 2003:53), тогаш фикциските приказни за Итар Пејо на Стале Попов (фикцискиот универзум проектиран во неговите текстови) стануваат дел од „реалниот свет“ на ликовите во светот проектиран во расказот на Малеска. Префокусирањето од пораката врз кодот, што резултира од таквата интертекстуална структура, генерира асиметрично удвојување на спрегата „реално – условно“ што е особено видливо од позицијата на читателите на расказот за коишто двата света - и „реалниот“ и фикцискиот, се еднакво фикциски. (Оваа постапка е илустрирана и во драмата *Хамлет* на Вилијам Шекспир, којашто е структурирана според истата постапка текст во текст, односно драма во драма). Во таа смисла, интертекстуалните постапки, како дел од метафикцискиот репертоар, претставуваат комплексна онтостратегија која ефектуира со динамизирање на границите помеѓу текстовите и помеѓу световите.

Впрочем, ваквите онтолошки игри се тематизирани и во самиот расказ: имено, еден од ликовите е прикажан како собирач и запишувач на приказни – и на оние старите, веќе постојните коишто ги запишува врз основа на усното кажување на останатите ликови, но и на приказните коишто се инспирирани од

настаните што тој ги осведочува за време на својот престој во селото, а коишто му се чинат доволно атрактивни и интригантни за да бидат забележани, односно запишани: „ ... дошол да ги слушне нашите приказни, некои случки од минатото што останале низ поколенијата или случки од сегашноста. Се вика Марин ... И јас му раскажувам некој настан што сум го запомнил од пред повеќе години. Потоа Марин ме поттргнува настрана и ме прашува дали сум го прочитал некаде. Одрекувам. Објаснувам дека не сум писмен, иако како дете многу сакав да ги разгледувам книгите кога одевме на гости кај некого што имаше ниџи. Убаво раскажуваш, ми вели Марин“ (Малеска 2016:7). „Му раскажувам неколку приказни што се раскажувале во нашето село низ годините. Марин запишува, сето време запишува“ (Малеска 2016:11). И во продолжение, како дел од приказната што ја раскажува нараторот, а ја запишува Марин, се вклопува дел од приказната содржана во расказот *Рибина чорба* на Стале Попов. „Марин ми раскажува дека запишал многу интересни приказни за нашето село, дури и поинтересни му биле тие што ги видел со свои очи, отколку оние за дамнешните времиња што сме му ги раскажале“ (Малеска 2016:18).

Овие онтолошки тематизации во *Мојот непријател Итар Пејо* се пошироко имплицативни. Тие упатуваат на наративизацијата на стварноста како еден начин на создавање на текстот (миметички принцип), но, исто така, упатуваат и на текстуализацијата како палимпсестен запис (препис/допис) на веќе постоечките наративизации и текстуализации (интертекстуален принцип). Во таа смисла, расказот на Малеска ја потврдува тезата за интертекстуалноста како индикатор на постмодерната онтолошка доминанта, а којашто го демонстрира разнишаниот онтолошки статус и на книжевноста: таа нема непосредуван однос кон референтниот, екстратекуалниот свет и неговите значења, туку до нив доаѓа интерпретативно упатена кон другите текстови, т.е. низ филтерот на претходните текстуализации.

2. Структурата текст во текст ги потенцира пародично - ироничните игри во расказот: структурата текст(ови) во текст ја открива својата функција на пародично - иронично поигрување со интертекстовите што, пак, е во дослух со покомплексните функции на постмодернистичката интертекстуалност да воспостави дијалошки однос кон традицијата, но филтриран низ интерпретативните дистанци на пародијата и на иронијата. „Традицијата-

благодарение на новото дело – добива нова, дотогаш неоткриена смисла, а со тоа и способност за денешниот свет – заедно со новото дело – да проговори на релевантен начин“ (Pavličić 1989:41). Пародичната интертекстуалност, како носител на ревизионистичкиот дијалог на постмодернистичкиот текст со книжевното минато, подразбира паралелна афирмација и проблематизација на традицијата и на нејзиниот текстовен корпус. Оваа димензија ја посочува и самата авторка: „Сметам дека е многу важно и да си го знаеме нашето културно наследство. Преку овој расказ се обидувам и тоа да го промовирам. Но познавањето не значи дека секогаш треба да го пофалиме или славиме, туку може да има и поинакви начини на надоврзување – пародија, иронија, гледање од друг аспект“.¹

Иронично - пародичната дистанца од традицијата дополнително е нагласена во расказот преку присуството на т.н. ексцентриран наратор. Од една страна, тој е единствениот кој ја регистрира нелогичноста и апсурдноста на постапките на Итар Пејо, за разлика од останатите членови на заедницата кои, напати, и со восхит ги одобруваат досетливоста и итроштината на заштитникот, макар и на сопствена штета. Во таа смисла, ексцентрираната перспектива на нараторот во однос на традиционалните книжевно - фолклорни перцепции на Пејо е сугерирана како своевидна одбрана на индивидуалното паметење (наспроти колективното), како одбрана на потребата од постоење на (раз)личната перспектива и на нејзините верзии и вистини.² Од друга страна, проблематичниот идентитет на безимениот наратор дополнително ја нагласува неговата ексцентрираност: позицијата на оној кој е исклучен од секавањето и од приказните, позицијата на заборавениот и на безимениот, не само што го алибира неговото непријателство со Итар Пејо, туку и неговото право да афирмира ревизионистички интерпретации на постојните приказни и вистини, дотолку повеќе што тој не е обврзан со вклученоста во некаква официјализирана вистина. „Не можам да се сетам како се викам. Не знам ни како изгледам. Знаам дека живеам во Мариово со жена ми Лена и со трите деца. Секојдневно се обидувам да се сетам на своето име и на моментот кога сум го заборавил, но никако не ми оди – како никогаш да не сум го знаел“ (Малеска 2016, 5). „Прочитај ми ги приказните за Мариово. Најпосле ќе го откријам своето име во приказните што ги запишал Марин. Не мина ден откако е дојден без да се види со мене, сигурно моето име е во сите негови приказни ... Марин

ми ги чита сите овие приказни - а јас сум избришан од секоја од нив. Итар Пејо е мојот непријател, но изгледа дека јас не сум неговиот. Не сум доволно впечатлив да постојам, дури ни како противник на Пејо. Моето име е отсутно од сите приказни за Мариово“ (Малеска 2016: 18-19).

3. Пародичната интертекстуалност, втемелена врз реторичкиот механизам на иронијата, ја интензивира прагматичката димензија на расказот. Неговата рецепција го условува присуството на т.н. „критички читател“ (Есо 2001:29) кој, благодарение на својата „интертекстуална енциклопедија“, ќе ги детектира интертекстовите интерполирани во расказот, но и нивната функција во онтолошките игри со границите помеѓу световите и помеѓу текстовите. Впрочем, и насловот на расказот *Мојот непријател Итар Пејо* има типично паратекстуален статус, како „привелигирано место на прагматичната димензија на делото, т.е. на неговото дејство врз читателот“ (Женет 2003:66), сугерирајќи ја и олеснувајќи ја рецепцијата на расказот врз текстуалниот топос за Итар Пејо.

Втората онтостратегија, т.е. постапка со којашто се оголуваат онтолошките теми во *Мојот непријател Итар Пејо* се однесува на присуството на т.н. транссветовни идентитети „помеѓу ликовите во проектираните светови и историските фигури од реалниот свет“ (McHale 2001:17).³ Транссветовните идентитети и нивните миграции се варираат, било преку присуството на историски личности во фикцискиот свет, било преку претставувањето на историски невозможната средба меѓу историски фигури во фикциски свет, било преку позајмување на фикциски ликови од други фикциски светови. „Ако ентитети може да мигрираат низ полупропустливата мембрана која го дели фикцискиот свет од реалниот, тие исто може да мигрираат и меѓу два различни фикциски светови“ (McHale 2001:35). Во секој случај, овој мигрирачки ентитет којшто се движи во различни насоки и којшто се појавува во различни светови/текстови, недвосмислено, го индицира навлегувањето на еден свет во друг, како и дестабилизирањето на онтолошките граници меѓу световите, испраќајќи „шок бранови низ онтолошката структура на тој свет“ (McHale 2001:85). Дополнително, трансмиграцијата на лик од еден фикциски универзум во друг е еден начин на истакнување на интертекстуалниот простор и на неговото интегрирање во структурата на актуелниот текст. Тезата на Мекхејл дека во овие миграции најчесто се вклучени фигури кои поседуваат широк

спектар асоцијации за мноштвото читатели и коишто предизвикуваат силни реакции, било на атракција, било на одбивност се потврдува во изборот на Малеска токму на ликот на Итар Пејо. Во контекст на македонската книжевна традиција тој може да се интерпретира како т.н. фигура на меморија која е „дел од колективната меморија на еден народ и на еден субјект кој се стреми да се олицетвори во различни дискурзивни практики“ (Ќулавкова 2009:44). Во таа смисла, Итар Пејо е своевидно „споделено наследство“ помеѓу фолклорната традиција (народните, хумористично - сатиричните приказни за Пејо) и книжевната традиција (расказите на Стале Попов),⁴ но и историската стварност (извесни сведоштва го потврдуваат постоењето на оваа историска личност, родум од мариовското село Градешница). Итар Пејо, од позиција на транссветовен идентитет, во расказот на Малеска го обезбедува симултанизмот помеѓу текстовите и световите низ коишто трансмигрирал како своевиден фон врз којшто се исцртува неговата функција во новиот (кон)текст. Во таа смисла, структурата текст(ови) во текст ја афирмира и структурата текст покрај текст. Мигриран во фикцискиот свет на расказот и сопоставен на постојниот (интер)текстуален комплекс, ликот на Итар Пејо доживува целосна демистификација, што, според авторката, е една од целите на расказот.⁵ „Отсекогаш сум имала потреба за демистифицирање на сè, така што пред отприлика една година кога во еден контекст прочитав петнаесеттина приказни за Итар Пејо сосема природно ми дојде да го прикажам овој лик од еден сосема поинаков аспект, односно да го демистифицирам. Имено, кога сме ги читале расказите за Итар Пејо, барем јас така го доживував тоа кога бев во основно училиште, цело време се провлекуваше една слика за Итар Пејо, според која Итар Пејо е еден итар, снаодлив човек од народот кој секогаш успеава да се извлече од се со својата итрина т.е. да се извлече од разни ситуации и проблеми. Кога го читам сега, многу години подоцна, гледам дека веќе не би го опишала со тие зборови Итар Пејо. Сега го доживеав како лик кој секогаш се обидува да ги исмее своите соселани, да ги надмудри, па дури и некогаш да ги доведе до живото-загрозувачка ситуација и тоа само затоа што во некои случаи не ги послушале неговите совети, го налутиле со нешто или едноставно некогаш направиле нешто што тој сметал дека е глупаво. Тој со тоа ги исмева и станува еден јунак од фолклорот. Поради тоа почувствував потреба да воведам и еден друг лик кој ќе биде негов антипод и ќе биде за преведност и

чесност, па на тој начин да се сврти перспективата од друг агол“.⁶ И како што интертекстуалниот слој интегриран во *Мојот непријател Итар Пејо* го означува неопходниот контекст во однос на којшто ќе ефектуира демистификацијата на Итар Пејо, така и перспективата на нараторот и неговите коментари се сопоставени на перспективите и на гласовите на останатите членови на заедницата. Наспроти убеденоста на попот дека Пејо „сигурно ќе смисли некоја итроштина за да нè спаси“ (Малеска 2016:11), нараторот констатира „ако дошло до тоа Пејо да нè спасува, значи сме осудени на пропаст“ (Малеска 2016:11), токму како што тој е единствениот кој „гледа гнев во очите на Итар Пејо. Пејо е многу навреден од критиките на селаните“ (Малеска 2016:17).⁷

Низ призма на имплицитниот (пародично - ироничен) дијалог со традицијата и ревизионистичко - демистификаторскиот однос кон неа, *Мојот непријател Итар Пејо* покрај интертекстуалните артикулации текст во текст, текст покрај текст и текст под текст, ја артикулира и структурата текст зад текст. Имено, расказот се поставува како имплицитен метатекстуален коментар на традицијата (оралната и книжевната) и на туѓите текстуализации. Конечно, онтостратешките игри со границите помеѓу световите и помеѓу текстовите коишто се демонстрирани во *Мојот непријател Итар Пејо* ја фокусираат и онтологијата на светот проектиран во расказот: тие го оголуваат и модусот на постоење на светот и на текстот во којшто тој е проектиран, изложувајќи го, меѓу другото, процесот на наративизација на стварноста, процесот на интертекстуално надоврзување на приказните, односно оголувајќи ги процесите на конструкција на светот и на текстот. Интертекстуалните структури, метафикциските постапки и нивните метатекстуални функции ја откриваат конструираната природа на текстот на Малеска - неговата артифициелна природа, што е типичен облик на метафикциска самосвест на текстот: неговиот самосвесен однос кон постојните текстуализации, неговиот придонес во палимпсестното дообликување, но и разобличување на една палимпсестна фигура на меморија, каков што е Итар Пејо.

Конечната импликација на онтолошките тематизации во расказот е потврдата на нужната конверзија автор – читател: афирмацијата на писателот и како читател на сопствените и на туѓите текстови, чиешто читателско искуство свесно/несвесно се трансформира и се проектира во сопствената авторска

креација. Впрочем, таа конверзија ја признава и Калина Малеска: нејзиното читателско искуство со лектирата за Итар Пејо во претходните фази од образованието и подоцнежните читателски „средби“ со книгата на Стале Попов ќе бидат (ре)креирани во (новиот) текст *Мојот непријател Итар Пејо*.

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¹Цитирано според интервјуто со Калина Малеска, достапно на www.nekojneogasneka.de.wordpress.com

²Оваа димензија ја констатира и Малеска: „Веројатно постоеле и такви луѓе, но не доаѓале до израз и затоа беше таа идеја за да нема идентитет и име. Мислам дека таквите луѓе секогаш биле потивки и историјата едноставно ги премолчувала, затоа што не доаѓале до израз“. Цитирано според интервјуто со Калина Малеска, достапно на www.nekojneogasneka.de.wordpress.com

³Терминот е преземен од студијата на Умберто Еко: „Lector in Fabula: pragmatic strategy in a metanarrative text“, *The Role of the Reader: Explorations in the Semiotics of Texts*, Bloomington and London:Indiana University Press, 1979, 200-266.

⁴Книжевната традиција познава богат текстуален корпус посветен на овој лик: стихозбирката *Евангелие по Итар Пејо* (1966) на Славко Јаневски; комедијата *Солунски патрдии* на Миле Попоски којашто има и своја театарска адаптација во режија на Коле Ангеловски, како и адаптација во форма на телевизиска серија снимена во 1985-тата година. Во 2015-тата година е издадена и стрип книгата *Итар Пејо* од Диме Илиев Димано.

⁵ И покрај очигледната демистификација на овој лик, расказот ја задржува основната портретна скица на Пејо, веќе позната од прототекстот на Попов: „Ги гледам неговите големи уши и испакнато чело, неговото бело капче и долгите засукани мустаќи“ (Малеска 2016:12). „ По кажувањата на 'очевидци' кои никогаш не го виделе) Пејо бил ваков. на слика: низок, шишкав со голема глава одоколу бричена, на средето кинеско перче, со широко испупчено чело, со големи широки уши... со надолу наведени рунтави мустаќи“ (Попов 2004:5).

⁶ Цитирано според интервјутото со Калина Малеска, достапно на www.nekojnekoegasneka.de.wordpress.com.

⁷Овој аспект е присутен и во расказот - интертекст *Итар Пејо, мариовците и дождот*: „Така им враќал Пејо мило за драго на сите што го навредувале и штоси играле со него, па не ги штедел и своите селани“ (Попов 2004:19).

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The Problem of (Non)Creation: *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry and *The Sad Happy Vladimir* by Olivera Nikolova

Kristina Atanasova

Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, Skopje

The aim of this article is to make a comparison between two books for children -“The Little Prince” by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry and “The Sad Happy Vladimir” by Olivera Nikolova. The main focus is on the problem of (Non) Creation and the children characters in these novels.

The article develops by exploring the child’s need to create different worlds in order to escape the one of the adults and the conflict between these two viewpoints. This article also explores the two different upbringings in which the characters are trying to create their own emotional literacy. In the conclusion of the article there is an overview of the children characters adventures into the unknown. The wanted results of this free interpretation is to raise questions about the emotional state of the child reader or listener and how they learn through the journeys of the characters of the narrator, the Little Prince and Vladimir.

Keywords: creation, literature, children, Nikolova, Exupéry

The Little Prince (first published in 1943) is one of the most popular and most translated books in the world. The book is available to a large audience and has been printed in almost 300 different languages. It is the most famous work by the French author Antoine de Saint-Exupéry (writer, aviator, publicist and journalist). *The Sad Happy Vladimir* was published about 40 years later (1984) and is not Olivera Nikolova's most famous work. *Zoki Poki* remains her most popular book in Macedonian literature for children. So, with all this in mind, how can we compare these two books whose only common characteristic is their audience, the children? Every story written for a child is a universal search for the truth in oneself. These works also "problematize" the question "To whom does the text belong?" The author opens up numerous philosophical and substantive topics in *The Little Prince*, so the main dilemma is the question of the audience and if the topics are more suitable for children or for adults. We can also ask the same question for *The Sad Happy Vladimir* where Nikolova writes about a character of Vladimir's mother, who acts as his companion. This book can represent not only a story for the child but a literary "manual" for the parent.

In this text, several issues will be considered in relation to the already discussed problems of literature for children, such as the question of the adult reader, who acts as intermediary between the book and the child. It would also be interesting to consider how the characters of two children grow in two different cultures - the 'Western' (France) and the 'Eastern' (Macedonia) - and two different families. All literary questions for adults can also be rejected and we can respond to a genuine childish question: How can a prince be so little, yet so smart, and how can the happy Vladimir be sad?

1. Learning through traveling

The authors of these two children's books, similar to the tales, remind us that we can learn more about the world through the various temptations offered by the trip. The more exciting and the more frightening and risky the way is, the greater the lesson. According to Vesna Mojsova Čepiševska (Mojsova-Čepiševska 2015) such a confrontation of the child with the rough reality is a form of bibliotherapy for the child listener or reader. Through the adventures of the main heroes, the little readers explore new and unknown worlds and raise new questions about them. The child

listener or reader should get out of his/her everyday life and learn, so the lessons can make them bold and wiser. The Little Prince travels off his planet, the asteroid B 612, while in *The Sad Happy Vladimir* the journey happens at home through play. Sometimes the journey can be imaginative, through a story, or through a children's game, but it is always, just as instructive.

The Little Prince follows the journey of two passengers: the narrator and the Little Prince. The narrator is in a life or death situation when his plane plunges into the desert. In this situation, he encounters the little prince and the two of them immediately become friends because they realize that they are wanderers looking for two existential "goods": the meaning of life and survival. Nikolova writes about other two passengers, Vladimir and his mother. They travel together in the stories they tell to each other. Unlike the motive of a lonely traveler in *The Little Prince*, the mother respects the child's ability to fantasize and becomes his companion and friend in this imaginative odyssey.

The journey found in *The Little Prince* is initiated by the feeling of isolation and ignorance on the part of the adults.

I showed my masterpiece to the grown-ups, and asked them whether the drawing frightened them. But they answered: "Frighten? Why should any one be frightened by a hat?"

My drawing was not a picture of a hat. It was a picture of a boa constrictor digesting an elephant. But since the grown-ups were not able to understand it, I made another drawing: I drew the inside of the boa constrictor, so that the grown-ups could see it clearly. They always need to have things explained. The grown-ups' response was to advise me to lay aside my drawings of boa constrictors, whether from the inside or the outside, and devote myself instead to geography, history, arithmetic and grammar (Saint-Exupéry 2004: 8).

The creative persecution of the narrator by the adults occurred during his childhood. While alone in the desert, the Little Prince appears to replace him while in the role of an exiled traveler chased away by the disappointment and creative curse of the serious and "practical" adults. The prince's quest, outside the asteroid, for universal human values ended up being unsuccessful. Values are destroyed and adults are corrupt by the false glory of fame and wealth. Their existence is shown as

punishment, and this sentence is the constant idling with false ideals. Introducing the absurd characters living on the asteroids and the planet Earth, the Little Prince will find some sense only while on one of the smallest asteroids where there is room for only one lantern and one man who kept the lantern on, the lamplighter.

It may well be that this man is absurd. But he is not so absurd as the king, the conceited man, the businessman, and the tippler. For at least his work has some meaning. When he lights his lantern it is as if he brought one more star to life, or one flower. When he puts out his lamp, he sends the flower, or the star, to sleep. That is a beautiful occupation. And since it is beautiful, it is truly useful (Saint-Exupéry 2004: 46).

In this quote, we can recognize the thoughts of Albert Camus about the myth of Sisyphus. Just as the lamplighter on the smallest planet was constantly keeping the lantern on, Sisyphus was condemned by the gods to endlessly push a huge stone from the beginning to the top of the mountain, but whenever he approached the top, the stone fell. The gods gave him this punishment because they felt that there was no cruel punishment than that of hopeless and futile work. Camus writes that Sisyphus is absurd, but we can see him as a happy man because his labor, desire for life, and the hard work silences even the gods. Through man's devotion to the only thing he has (in this case the lantern) we can also notice the motive of the rose and the treatment that the Little Prince has towards this flower with a strange character. The Little Prince constantly misses his rose that he left to his small asteroid. Perhaps the rose has its own requirements, weaknesses and imperfections, but it is still his. The rose keeps the memory of world absurdity, has strict demands, complains, boasts and silences. But it's his home: the part of the universe that he has accepted. "It's the time that you've spend for your rose that makes your rose so meaningful for you," the Fox tells him.

The story of *The Sad Happy Vladimir* is divided into two parts, which tell two different adventures sprinkled by the imagination of Vladimir and his mother. In the first part, Vladimir "travels" while his mother bathes him. The mother is using Vladimir's overwhelming cheerfulness and temper to creates a game out of these emotions. In the second part, the journey is again initiated by the mother, but this

time it is used to cheer up Vladimir when he is sad. Through the characters he meets in the second part, he teaches about the character of the adults, but he also learns something about himself.

Through these books the child reader can identify with the little "world and imaginative traveler" and collects "souvenirs" from their adventures in the adult world. The Little Prince, through the introduction with the characters of adults from different asteroids and planets, teaches children how not to, but at the same time reminds the adult of the most essential and purest.

2. The conflict between the adult and the child

The conflict between the adult's viewpoint and the child's viewpoint is represented through the struggle of different value systems. The child is the emotional, creative, curious subject, and the adult is practical, static and indifferent. So, children think that adults are strange, boring and constantly busy with unnecessary things. And the problem that adults have with children is that they have forgotten that they, too, were once children. Of course, the writer takes the child's side and his creative experiences in the world. The writers through the characters of Vladimir and the Little Prince ask naive questions, but these questions hide the essence that somehow always eludes the hands of the adult.

"Children's literature is a communication between the adult speaker and the recipient-child, who in a certain period only partially mastered the experiences of reality and with linguistic, intellectual, emotional and other structures that are typical of the adult person" (Dimova 2012: 40)¹. The character of Vladimir's mother, when needed, is closer to the child's world than to that of the adult. She is interested in the emotional world of her son and the changing attitudes of cheerfulness or sorrow through which she passes. Using his rich imagination in the second part, she becomes more and more his friend than his parent. The stories they tell together build the bridge of their communication. Vladimir's father is trying to be present even though he is in a meeting. Through a telephone conversation he tries to "travel" with the mother and Vladimir, but he is an adult, and adults go to work. *The Sad Happy Vladimir* shows the child's repulsion by the word "meeting" and similar words that describe activities of the parents outside of home.

The second journey leads Vladimir to a palace where the child meets characters that resemble some of his emotions and Vladimir has no choice but to face an incredible storm of emotions. Therefore, this trip is less of an escape, and more like a confrontation. Mom and Vladimir return home at the moment when his father returns from work. Vladimir's is suffering due to the absence of his father. In the scene in which the prison guard says that he is imprisoned because this prison is the most unstable of the world, Vladimir will also speak his mind:

"It's the same as downstairs with us, on the floor. And is sometimes quite dark, like in prison, especially when there is no one at home. It is like being in the darkest prison in the world" (Nikolova 1986: 62).

"The Emotional Literacy can be learned at any point in life, but it is best learned in childhood. (...) It is in this critical period of learning that children, who, by then, learn from the example of their parents, establish their attitudes that remain their whole life. They begin to see themselves as good or bad, as skilled or ignorant, as happy or unhappy. They can even imagine themselves as characters from the stories or from the movies" (Steiner 2014: 198).

"I demand an apology from children because I have dedicated this book to a grown-up. I have a serious apology: this grown man is the best friend I have in the world. I also have a second apology: he can understand, even books for children. I also have a third apology: he lives in France in which he is hungry and cold. He certainly needs comfort. If all these apologies are not enough, then I would gladly like to dedicate the book to the child from whom this grown-up grew. All grown-ups once children (But few among them remember it.) So I correct my first dedication:

To Leon Werth

when he was a little boy

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry creates a new "school" in which adults should learn from the example of children. Learning is mutual: as children have grown by observing the adults, the adults need to be reminded of what it means to be a child again. We should visit our inner child more often and sometimes we should let the child to ask questions for us. Mojsova-Čepiševska, in her text "What Really is the Latest in Children's Literature", dedicated to her daughter Sarah, answers the question about the relationship between the adult reader and the literature for

children claiming that "sometimes [she] think[s] reading stories before bedtime is more intended for the adult reader, rather than for the child-listener" (Mojsova-Čepiševska 2015: 153).

3. Creation and noncreation

In *The Sad Happy Vladimir* there are two more characters who contribute to capturing the emotional world of the child Vladimir. The first character is the one of the Epsymania. This wise old woman serves as a frame for both stories (trips) and announces the moods of Vladimir. The character of Epsymania can be associated with the character of a grandmother - the one who knows everything - from common fairytales. She is located "in the seventh house on the street, behind seven yards and behind seven gates locked with seven patent keys." Her intuitive knowledge is that of the eldest women. She understands the world and, more importantly, understands the child. When Vladimir's parents are worried because he laughs for no reason, Grandma Epsymania tells them to record everything he does, although he is obviously just being cheerful. Contrary to this wise, folk, old-fashioned understanding of things in a culture that teaches through a tale is the culture of the narrator in *The Little Prince*, and that is the culture of material growth: against every imagination, perfection and childhood creation. The frustration of the narrator by the forbidden excursions through the worlds of the impossible results in a metamorphosis in the Little Prince.

The children's characters, Vladimir and the narrator-child from "The Little Prince" build their emotional literacy and the need for creation and imagination based on their two different upbringings. Is there a need to think about what kind of upbringing will be more successful in the marathon of life? Is it possible for the child and the grown-up child to find their creative expression despite the problem of (non) creation represented by their parents? Does Mamma protect Vladimir too much during the terrible challenges? When should the child be left alone to perceive the world, and when will the parents cease to be the third, auxiliary wheel of the children's fast moving world? Does the narrator learn to better understand the world at the moment when he becomes acquainted with his absurdity, that for the character of the child Vladimir is non-existent and hidden?

The second character is one happy and sad Kate, for which Epsymania predicts that she will become the future companion of Vladimir in the world of both eternal sad and eternal happy. Kate will replace Mamma, and Kate better than Mamma will understand what it means to be sad, and what makes one feel cheerful. We do not meet Kate in the narrative, but we feel that we already know everything about her. In one sentence, under each of the headlines, we learn how she feels while the adventures of the sad cheerful Vladimir being told. In the first part Kate is cheerful, as is Vladimir, and confirmation of this are the following situations: "At this moment the merry Kate split her doll, to see if she and the inside could be smiling" (Nikolova 1986: 34). In the second is sad: "While the sad Kate refused to admit she loves dad and mom" (Nikolova 1986: 80).

"Oh, said thoughtfully grandmother Epsymania, do not worry! They will surely know each other one day. (for Vladimir and Kate) Remember my word. And then we will not think why they are sad or why they are happy, everything will be theirs, they will be sad and cheerful, they will be happy, as they say. If I was not Grandma Epsymania, if it did not happen!" (Nikolova 1986: 87).

The dream journey in *The Sad Happy Vladimir* has a goal and the motive is companionship. Kate is the target of this trip because with her Vladimir will learn life as grandmother Epsymania knows it. Saint-Exupéry does not create any ultimate goal, the answer is at the starting point, which is the home asteroid and the rose of the Prince. "Ethics in children's literature does not appear as a necessity, but as an opportunity for the formation of positive patterns of thinking and behaviour" (Dimova 2012: 63). These books introduce children with uncertain space outside the safety of their home. But the one who should be the most affected by the emotional reaction of the child when faced with people and events outside the familiar comfort are the adult readers. If a child learns about the "outside", adults learn about the "inside" and their inner child, which is sometimes forgotten and hidden "under the rug".

Why is Vladimir sad? Because he's not happy! Why is the Prince little? Because it's wise enough not to grow up. "What matters is not seen" (Saint-exupéry 2004: 81). In the children's world of Exupéry and Nikolova, the most significant things are invisible and hidden for adults because they are too busy with the outer material world. Being a child means living in a world of different possibilities from the material

and the practical: it means exploring the possibilities of imagination, to create and dream, but also to be vulnerable and openly demonstrate the disappointment of the visions.

Who is lonelier: the child who shows dissatisfaction with the process of growing up or the adult? Throughout their respective journeys, the Little Prince and Vladimir have learned what is perhaps the most important lesson: this world or the worlds outside of this one will most likely break your heart. But when keeping the child within and the ability to create and imagine his world, everything will be okay.

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From Pippi Longstocking to Zoki Poki and Back

Monika Ilkova

Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, Skopje

This article is a comparison of the most famous Macedonian children's book, *Zoki Poki* by Olivera Nikolova, and one of the most famous children's books in the world, *Pippi Longstocking* by Astrid Lindgren. These two books in many ways are the opposite and differ, but they are also similar in many ways. Both books cover several very important topics for children such as growing, friendship, independence, kindness, power, etc. This article attempts to compare the ways in which the authors of these two books and the main and secondary characters, are trying to bring these topics closer to children. Pippi is an expression of the children's desire for freedom and power, and Tommy and Anika are here to keep the children on the ground. In fact, readers will rather identify with them, although they will undoubtedly want to be like Pippi). But Pippi is here to awaken their research spirit and encourage their curiosity. Pippi should only be a "tool" for understanding and reassessing society, both by children and by adults. She should cause the society to be questioned, whether everything must be the way it is, to make the children ask and think. Both books in the last chapters speak of growth in a completely opposite way, but many years later they remain interesting, fun and educational for children.

Keywords: children's literature, Pippi, Zoki Poki, growth, comparison

No doubt *Zoki Poki* by Olivera Nikolova is the most known and read children's book in Macedonia. It is translated in around ten languages. *Pippi Longstocking* by Astrid Lindgren is unquestionably one of the most well-known and read children's books of our time. It is translated into more than 70 languages. These debut books of both authors are part of the Macedonia's elementary school reading curriculum, for Grade 1 (*Zoki Poki*) and Grade 3 (*Pippi Longstocking*). In order to make comparison between these two cult children books it is important to have in mind the age groups that these books are written for and their purpose, but also, the place and time of their production. *Zoki Poki* (1963) and *Pippi Longstocking* (1945) are different and contrasting in many aspects but yet they show many similarities as well. Both books are collections of short stories: Pippi Longstocking of eleven longer and Zoki Poki of fifteen shorter stories that can be read individually but still revolve around the main characters, which makes them more attractive to the readers.

To write the book *Zoki Poki* Olivera Nikolova gets inspiration from a real child named Zoki (who is now the author of the monthly newspaper "Debar Maalo Times"). *Pippi Longstocking* gets her name from Karin, the daughter of Lindgren, who was suffering from pneumonia and asked her mother to tell her stories for recovering. In Swedish language Pippi is a children's name for a bird (something like diminutive), affectionately "chick peck". The name can tell a lot for the freedom that Pippi has, but keeping in mind that it was given from the daughter of Lindgren it might be just a coincidence.

The full name of Pippi is Pippilotta Delicatessa Windowshade Mackrelmint Ephraim's Daughter Longstocking. Zoki is affectionately for Zoran. So, the first thing in common for both characters is that they both have a nickname, and to have a nickname means to be recognizable and unique. Neither Pippi is an ordinary Pippi, nor Zoki is an ordinary Zoki. Pippi Longstocking got her nickname by her appearance i.e. by the high socks (one black and one brown) or simply her appearance had to be like that because of the name that the daughter of Lindgren gave to her. Zoki got his nickname from his friend Lydia, as "[t]here would not have been Zoki Poki, if this Lydia did not exist. Lydia who is tall to my knee and has eyes like marbles" (Nikolova 1984:1)¹.

It would not have been for Zoki Poki, but there would have been a child with an ordinary name- Zoran.

When they first met, Lydia said to him:

- What's your name?

And he said: - Zoran.

- No, - she said, - you're Zoki.

- Why Zoki?

- Short. It's nicer. You're Zoki, Zoki... Poki. Ok?

- Ok,- he agreed a little confused; but happy at the same time because he's going to have a new name.

- See, you like it. It is a name.

Really, that was a name." (Nikolova 1984: 1)

And this is how the adventures of Zoki Poki and his friend Lydia began.

Pippi Longstocking starts with her moving into the old Villa Vilekula, on the periphery of the town, with a rather neglected garden. After sailing through the seas with her father and after the accident in which he went missing, Pippi comes to live in Vilekula. She believes that he had swum to an island and that there he had become the king of the black people. Pippi, just like all fairytale's heroes, does not have a mother. Her mother died when Pippi was a baby and she believes that her mother is now an angel. And that is how Pippi, at the tender age of 9, lives alone, with no parents in Villa Vilakuela. There is no one to make her go to sleep when it is most interesting, and there is no one to make her eat fish pate when she wants to eat caramels. The absence of parents in her life is seen as the reason for the future attributes of Pippi, the most interesting being her independence (Vladova 2001: 137). Unlike her, Zoki Poki lives in a family with a mother, father, and even a grandmother. In contrast to the Villa Vilekula and its abandoned garden, Zoki lives in an apartment building, somewhere in the city.

Pippi differs from the others is her appearance as well, having "hair with a color like a carrot was braided in two braids that were sticking up. The nose, that looked like a small potato has freckles. Hidden under her nose is a really big mouth lined with healthy white teeth" (Lindgren 2016:10). The hair with carrot color is a rare, but still exists.

However, 'braids that stick up' - now that is something, says Vladova. This resistance against gravity categorically marks Pippi Longstocking as unusual (Vladova 2001: 139).

Pippi is unusual and unique in other ways too, for example:

... her dress was strange. She sewed it herself. She had intention to make it blue but the blue cloth was not enough, so she put some red pieces here and there. On her skinny legs she had high socks, one brown and the other one black. She wore shoes much bigger than her feet. Her father bought her the shoes from some journey in South America with the intention to wear them for more years, and now she did not want to separate from them (Lindgren 2016: 10).

This is probably not the only reason why are Pippi's shoes big. Lindgren might wanted to say that Pippi is too small for the path she is walking, i.e. for the life she is living, or the life she has is too big for her age. They speak of Pippi's emotional attachment to her father, and Vladova writes that they can be understood to be anticipating motive for growth. Pippi's independent life, with no limits, orders, or school, looks attractive both to her new friends Tommy and Anika and to the young reads. Pippi introduces the theme of freedom, doing what you want and not obeying written and unwritten rules. From the very beginning of the book Pippi is walking backwards saying "isn't this a free country? One can walk as one pleases" (Lindgren 2016: 11). Pippi sleeps "upside down" with her legs on the pillow and her head under the blanket, she makes cookies on the floor, keeps a horse on the balcony, she decides herself when is bed time, she wrangles herself and she sings good night songs to herself. The fact that Pippi is alone and "completely free and released from all the conventions of the children's status in the world of the adults – in the family, in school, in the relations with the known and unknown that make up that world" makes Pippi's character an unusual representative of a child, different than the other child characters in the text. Pippi Longstocking's character – both physical and psychological – is built from stylized attributes, that exist suppressed in every child's nature" (Vladova 2001: 140).

Pippi is not a child like her friends Tommy and Anika, nor like Zoki Poki and Lydia, but she does things that she and every other child would like to do. Pippi is all that children want to be, she lives in her world, with her truth, against everything that

compels and limits her freedom. In the eyes of her children readers she is a creator of a new world, all that they want to do, but were not allowed to do. Therefore, Pippi, Vladova writes, "with her attributes as a whole, no matter how dangerous they might be separately, is exactly the positive example in the integration of the child personality" (2001: 142).

It is to no surprise that the novel, after its publication, caused a divided opinion, because Pippi, at the very least, has controversial attitudes towards society. She mildly scoffs at the police officers, and with them to the order and the law, as well as to the school and the institutions in general (does not want to go to the orphanage) and social conventions that limit the freedom of the child and man in general. To emphasize Pippi's disagreement and separation, Lindgren places her in a world that is familiar to us and ordinary. She places her together with Tommy and Anika who are good, educated and obedient:

"Tommy never bite his nails and was always trying to listen to his mother. Anika never frowned when a desire was not fulfilled to her, she always kept an eye on her beautiful cotton dresses not to get dirty. "(Lindgren 2016: 7)

They go to school; they follow the law and respect the authorities. Pippi, on the other hand, is their opposite. Tommy and Anika are here to remind us of what must be accepted, and that is that parents, school, rules still exist and that despite all, you have to go back to them and that it's not so bad.

But even though Pippi is portrayed as the voice of many children's wishes, it is clear that this is not the real childhood. Lindgren incorporates the balance of escapism (Pippi is a dreamer, a who lives out of reality), but sets it on the same level with other 'real' ordinary children and therefore she does not give readers a false hope. Pippi is an expression of the children's desire for freedom and power, and Tommy and Anika are here to keep the children 'on the ground'. In fact, readers will rather identify with them, although they will undoubtedly want to be like Pippi. But Pippi awakens their inquisitive spirit and encourage their curiosity. Pippi should only be a 'tool' for understanding and reassessing society, both by children and by adults. She should cause the society to be

questioned, whether everything must be the way it is, to make the children ask and think. Pippi is an outlet from authorities and everyday life.

It is clear that Lindgren had no intentions to write about an ordinary girl, so in Pippi's character she combined features that are otherwise considered masculine, with which she probably wanted to avoid sex divisions and stereotypes for children and for people in general. Pippi is unusually strong, which is the only fantastic moment, but in this case, her power only represents the child's desire for power. Pippi is a little messy, which is another characteristic that is usually attributed to boys, but she is also brave, full of enthusiasm, caring, humane, compassionate and unselfish. On many occasions she gets protective to other children, resembling a mother or an older sister.

Unlike Pippi, Zoki is a good and tidy boy just like Tommy and Anika. Zoki, similar to Pippi has best friends, like every child should have. Pippi has Tommy and Anika, and Zoki has Lydia. Another common characteristic is their generosity, Pippi continually gives presents to Tommy and Anika, and Zoki Poki gives the whole world to Lydia.

Both books are full of riddles and humor. In *Zoki Poki* the main character says, "fine, granny, beat me, beat me well! Just please talk to me. I can't live if you do not talk to me" (Nikolova 1984: 8). In *Pippi Longstocking*, Pippi is her own tutor, so when they ask her who tells her when to go to sleep, she answers "I'm telling myself. First I say it with a friendly voice. If I do not listen, I repeat it once more, and if I do not listen then, you know, it even comes to rubble" (Lindgren 2016: 11).

Lindgren leaves room for children to disagree with Pippi's behavior. Even Pippi sometimes complains about some actions and she acknowledges herself. So it does not necessarily mean that all her actions are an example of how it is supposed to be, some of them are an example of how it is not supposed to be. The lessons in *Pippi Longstocking* come from Pippi herself, in *Zoki Poki* they come from other characters. His mother teaches him that it's not politely to eat cookies when they have guests. His father teaches him that the sky on his drawing should be blue, the shingles red, and the grass green. From the little guest from the village Zoki learns that it does not matter where are you from and where do you live, that everything has its own beauty.

It is clear that every child, even Zoki Poki, dreams of his own Villekula, where only his rules will matter, his order, going to sleep and getting up when he wants, leaving

things where he wants, having his own space outside of the adult world. Zoki Poki has this experience when he goes on a holiday at the lake for the first time. Zoki "thought that he would do whatever he pleases" (Nikolova 1984: 27). There is that desire that more or less, exists among all children. Pippi at one moment says, "[t]he day when you hear that a child is sad because there is no adult nearby, I will learn the multiplication table" (Lindgren 2016: 224).

Zoki Poki's holiday did not go as he planned because he was only allowed to swim in the shallow area in the presence of the adults, and "[t]he lake was nice, but ... he could not swim in it! ... Friends were good, the beds were soft, but what's the point of all that when you have to get up, eat and sleep at a certain time" (Nikolova 1984: 27). Here, again, we witness the yearning to do what is desired and when it is desired, the desire for greater freedom, less limits, the desire for life like that of Pippi Longstocking. But, Olivera writes:

Do not forget one thing: Zoki Poki was alone, without his family, and it was still something! On the other hand, there was no one to complain to: no one to get angry with, and he had to look after himself. It was both nice and tricky: if he was wrong, he was guilty himself (Nikolova 2001: 27).

According to this, it's clear that Zoki Poki, like any other child, would enjoy the company of Pippi.

It is interesting to note that in the last chapters both books speak of growth in a completely opposite manner. Pippi does not want to grow up, neither Tommy nor Anika. At one occasion Pippi says:

I think it's nothing special to be an adult. Adults never have fun. They are constantly rushing to finish something boring. They also wear stupid clothes, have corn on their toes and pay communal taxes (Lindgren 2016: 268).

Pippi has a cure for growing up – Krumelur pills which she got from an Indian chieftain in Rio. All she needs to do is say the magic words "beautiful little krumelur, I do not want to grow up" after dark and that is it. She gives the pills to Anika and Tommy, and after

they take them, Pippi says that “the pills stayed in the closet for a very long time and I am afraid that they have lost some of their power. Still, let’s hope for the best (Lindgren 2016: 260). This shows that Pippi, or Lindgren, does not want to give false hope.

With Zoki Poki it is a little different. The last chapter in the book is called "Discovery". He returns from vacation and to Lydia he is no longer Zoki Poki, but Zoran. At home they look at him strangely and tell him that he has changed and that he has grown. Zoki excitedly looks for the rope to measure himself and realizes that he has grown up two whole inches. His grandmother even cries from joy. Zoki does not need a krumelur, he would not drink it even if he had it.

The question remains: Will Pippi outgrow her shoes like Zoki who rolled up the rope? However, one thing is certain: even after 73 years since the release of *Pippi Longstocking* and 55 years since the release of *Zoki Poki*, they remain interesting, fun and educational for children.

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With Poetry to Every Corner of the Mundane: A Review of the Macedonian Youth Poetic Scene

Lara Mihovilović

Ljubljana, Slovenia

In this review of the Macedonian youth poetic scene we speak of poetry that is free from the old traditional frames, one that represents new literary tendencies. The poetry is analyzed on the basis of three types of love – erotic, love towards the city and the family and love towards poetry. Love is polysyllabic, with each lyrical subject reflexive of their perspective towards a specific type of love and each verse triggers an emotion. This young Macedonian poetry reinvigorates literature with a new, fresh spirit, grows into a powerful force of society and a strong blast of new artists and poets.

Keywords: poetry, love, everywhere, reflexive, young

In a country where everyday life is overwhelmed with political, social and economic issues and frustrations, poetry is an excellent means for an escape from reality. The Macedonian youth poetic scene – as vibrant, potent and refreshing as tidal waves with love rhymes – serves as proof of this retreat. It is about poetry rooted in the old traditional frames, unconfined by the characteristics of style of glorified authors, representing new literary tendencies, which heralds a new era in the Macedonian literary space.

The poetic youth – dissatisfied with the status of poetry in the country has turned this very dissatisfaction into a type of a creative rebellion. If poetry was deemed available only to those artists involved with it before, now that's changed with the emergence of a new wave of poets. This entire process happened in a time when poetry and literature in general were undervalued as art form, when the broader literary and artistic audiences perceived poetry as a marginal activity, a hobby, not a very serious and significant creative activity. Poetry has left its nest and started spreading its wings through society and from elitist turned avant-garde. The numerous bohemian sites, cafes, parks and streets accept the poetic verse of the youth. A number of events were initiated, where young poets can present themselves to the general public: Astal Projections, Poetry Slam Macedonia, 1,000 Poets for Change, Young Struga, Nights without Interpunction, etc. Apart from these events, poetry is spreading through social networks, as well. Firstly, those poets who didn't study comparative literature started creating and through *blog.mk* got the opportunity to share their poems. Afterwards, with the emergence of the social network Facebook, the blog scene shifted there, where it remains.

The representatives of this young poetic scene are the authors born in the 80's (between 1980 and 1990) but in this bunch we can also add some young authors born earlier, yet incorporated into this very scene. Each author has their unique style, but of all of them we can say they follow and accept the short, concise, postmodern style of expression.

Escape from reality is an escape to the internal, lyrical, romantic, religious, spiritual realm, where the lyrical subject seeks their way, speaks of the beauties and sorrows they face, ponders of the true life values and shows their love towards their loved ones.

From the perspective of a foreign observer it's interesting that the Macedonian poetic youth doesn't have many poets engaged in social themes. Out of the entire generation, only Istok Ulchar can be considered as such. He formidably speaks on current affairs, human entrapment, the environmental issues of his city, as well as other places. In the poem *Moloch* he wrote, *"it turns our hearts into factories whose chimneys smoke through our ears. Our homes fill with smoke and the liquid chemical waste pours through our kidneys"*.

For other authors, the social and human problems are incorporated in the romantic, reflexive, intimate poetry where the romantic and intimately reflexive lyrics dominate, thus in this article I shall focus on that.

»All loves are like shoes – a review on love poetry«

Marta Markovska wrote, *"[a]ll loves are like shoes, those we carefully treasure"*. In the Macedonian youth poetry we stumble upon different aspects of the romantic verse, like we do with different kinds of shoes in shop windows.

1. Erotic – corporal love

The songs of corporal or erotic love are full of potency, tenderness, pain and jealousy, love, childishness and playfulness. Loving is 'masculine' and 'feminine', which doesn't mean all men love in this 'masculine' way, and vice versa. What's interesting is that there are men with such smooth, tender poetry like Josip Kocев who romanticizes and openly speaks of the suffering of love and temptation towards a loved one. He wrote, *"I'll treat you love. With the sleeves of that pretty nightgown pick up all the bits of pride, left from dinner"*. The second romanticist of the 21 century is Mitko Apostolov who injects his romantic spirit through the use of wordplay, constantly hovering between fire and water, passion and pain, *"Each lock coming from that home joined into your rivers"*. On the other hand, in the poetry of Aleksandar Vasilij Stanojkov we find poems with mightily erotic motives. In his poem "On All Languages", he wrote, *"You smell like pines, you taste like the sea. On my tongue you're waving rising yourself; from the depths... You're*

breathing. I'm breathing. Keep on like this. Like this". Stanojkov metaphorically bows to her femininity, to her eroticism and to joining with a woman.

Gjoko Zdraveski, using wordplay, neologisms, incredible rhythm and powerful vivacity rises above the usual approach to a specific person and creates an image of general love energy:

With you I am learning to love.

Learning that love is one thing and passion another.

That it's one thing to love. To make love, another.

In 'feminine' loving we come across poetesses who present their soul and softly, playfully build their verses with an erotic touch. One such poetess is Snezhana Stojchevska. She writes of the transformative power of love and the ever-changing female nature, "*Lick my lips and hear my insides knocking loudly, as I say your name*". Through the poems of D.A Lori we enter an intimate world, "*look for me in the summer sunset where the colour of my loud heart pulsates*". In quite an interesting and innovative way, in the form of a personal, intimate atlas likening love relations to notions of colonialism, nature and geography. Slavica Gadzova Sviderska compares love relations to natural beauties intertwined between themselves, which cannot function separately; e.g. the water flow from Lake Prespa into Ohrid:

I need you like Lake Ohrid needs the water from Prespa

we have found the secret passage to Galichica.

In the work of the debutant Katerina Gogova we encounter precise lyrical expressions along with powerful visualisations: *I recall not how red rains brought me to your forest house and don't know whether I managed to gather the lake algae that led me on my way*. In this Macedonian youth poetry, love expresses itself playfully and magically, multicoloured like a rainbow. Such is the kind of love portrayed in the works of Ana Golejska – playful as a child, enamored, lost and sometimes mature and passionate, "*We'll make love in front of the mirror and then order a reality to get lost in together*". Biljana Stojanovska compares love to a romantic tragedy, which is not only pretty, light, but has dark days that love overcomes:

*If Romeo and Juliet had not killed themselves,
their love would be much like ours
the day after, as though nothing had happened,
they would have had their coffee ritual*

The complexity of mixed amatory feelings, the balance between the sexes, the quest for the meaning of love and the life companions are subjects found in the works of the other poets (Elena Prendzova, Stefan Markovski, Tomislav Karanfilovski, Marjan Minov etc.)

2. Love towards the home, family and the city

»**Home is everywhere, where people love people**« says the lyrical subject in one of Elena Prendzova's poems. Home is not defined just by an address, a place of birth, limited by borders, but it's found where the heart feels at home. Emotional connections are built through interactions with loved ones, with the people who surround us and the cities through which lyrical subjects travel. In the same way the lyrical subject appeals to his or her lover does the lyrical subject to the home, family or city weave an unusual love connection.

A special relationship and unconditional love between the lyrical subject and the mother is depicted in the song "Mother" by Josip Koccev: *Only you are one who writes off my debts without reprimand and gives, without taking.* Snezhana Stojchevska's poem *Genetics* is also interesting, where genes are compared between three generations – grandmother-granddaughter-great-granddaughter: *The genes are a divine thing... every time I look at my granddaughter, It's as if I see myself in a mirror from the past.* The lyrical subject of Nikolina Andova Shopova from the poem *Flour and Stars* describes the generation gap and the relationship between a deceased grandfather and his granddaughter: *And now, they're peers... Her life and his death.*

»Skopje, my lover«

The personification of the city in the following poem by Ana Golejska functions as a loving invocation. She wrote: *I want to hide in your secret corners.* Nenad Joldeski

transfers the city into the body of the poet: *A neighborhood grew in my head*. In Davor Stojanovski's poem - *The City Puts on Your Nightgown* – the city is presented and compared to the body, the lyrical subject - the city – is compared to the body of the loved one and merges the city landscape with the romantic: *the snow banjos whiten the hills close by like bedcovers... and the city puts on your nightgown*.

As is every human relationship quite unique, subjective and unrepeatable, such is the one between man and the city, as well. So, Bistra Kumbarovska addresses Ljubljana, considering its characteristics and perceives it as its life guru: *I am right to call you my messy alphabet... to see you as my first penmanship exercise book*. Snezhana Stojchevska wrote about the same city and describes her realization of it with the words: *the first touch with an unknown city matters greatly... whether I fall in love or leave... that's how I fell in love with Ljubljana*.

All of these tours through homes, family relations and cities are voyages through memories and riches of life, hidden in our homes, families and cities.

3. Love towards poetry

»We would do anything for poetry«

This is a generation for which literature is not just a sanctuary to tame the inner world, not just excitement or a means to express thoughts and ideas, but one for which literature has become a lifestyle, besides the fact it's not something you can live from, yet it's worth living for. This love is so strong that these poets, as Snezhana Stojchevska wrote in her opening line –*would do anything for poetry*. The relation between the poet and poetry is a special kind of love. Julijana Velichkovska defines poetry as an open book: *You're an open book, he said... A beautiful, special book... an illustrated book of poetry... I read you when I like to treat myself...* Aneta Popova asks us: What should a poet do? Intriguing and maybe a bit absurd, but legitimate, nonetheless. Why is the one in love not asked – What should a person in love do? Because it goes without saying, as it should be with poets too. Popova didn't give a clear answer, but wrote, "*When it gives you all the beauty it brings forth, along with all the pearly navels of it's legacy*". Love towards poetry is multilayered; can be gentle, passionate, painful, disappointing, but this

special relationship is best described by Istok Ulchar, *“Poetry is the music of the heartbeat”*.

»When reality asks the impossible from me, I stop and turn into a butterfly « - a review on reflexive and intimate poetry.

Reflexive poetry reveals the inner world of the lyrical subject, asks important life questions, seeking self in the world and in the soul, dwells with the metaphysical and real, life and death, I and God, soul and body, transience and present, light and darkness etc. In his latest collection *Dedikar Ikaral*, Gjoko Zdraveski enters the inner world of the lyrical subject and reexamines the relations between body and soul, life and death. In the poem “Fragment”, he wrote *“a newly embodied suicide bomber. When I close my eyes, I see my last death”*. Ivan Antonovski ponders about sense and senselessness, about the meaning of life, the essence of the world, *“Do not make a metaphor out of me, to give meaning to the myriad of meaninglessness”*. The lyrical subjects in the poems of Dushko Krstevski speak of sorrow, disappointment and pain. In the poem “Flashback Notturmo” in a subtly ironic way relates: Sorrow is like cough mixture, served in tiny portions, prescribed for a lifetime. In the kind of a prayer, the lyrical subject in Josip Koccev’s poem “My Psalm” cries to God, begging for purity, truthfulness, modesty all those other values that lack in this capitalist world. He says,

*“let me be meek in poverty and a slave in opulence
to love them for what they are not and to be loved for what I am”.*

»How do you stay calm when someone flirts with your intimacy«

Personal, inner, intimate experiences in intimate lyrics are revealed with the help of metaphors, symbols, wandering the inner realm, in thoughts. Dragana Evtimova with the aforementioned verse asserts exactly that – that we cannot remain collected, when someone steps into our intimacy. She constantly plays with the relationship between the past and present, journeying the past, memories, that which is behind us, with the loneliness of the lyrical subject. In the poem, “Life with a Limited Use”, she writes, *“There are days when old clocks tick our lives”*. All experiences, dreams, memories and wishes we carry with ourselves. In his poem, “We Have All Left the Lights On”, in a metaphorical

sense Mane Manushev tells us: *We have all left the lights on, so our shadows don't leave us.* Manushev also writes on the theme of past and present, turns back to the past, travels through life, looking for his place. Mitko Gogov dwells with similar topics as well, fiercely criticizing the owner and his function in life, his attitude, his reasoning and so in the poem *The Big Picture, The Window and a Rocking Bus*, he wrote: *are we but weeds and dead wood living in dense fog or are we an idea reflecting on the waves.* About traveling the past, passing and passing by, memories and all that rooted in the past, but still relevant to the present writes Mira Smakjoska Taneska who bows to her late loved ones through her poetry: *Now, the dead hang their clothes out is how my grandma described rain to me... No need to seek for each other. In the end we're always here.*

»I feel a poem coming. I let it run wild, wherever«

Poems from contemporary Macedonian youth poetry are bred in various places and run wild through the cruel reality. What is interesting from the aspect of a foreign onlooker is that great power poetry has in a society and the 'big bang' of new artists and poets. The poems and authors mentioned in this article are but a small piece of the mosaic of the entirety of contemporary Macedonian poetry. Of course, other works and authors could also be taken into consideration, perhaps even more representative and interesting, but I shall leave space for other readers to express their opinions too. The Macedonian youth poetic scene is going strong and leaves its new, fresh imprint on to Macedonian literature. This poetry is like spring, bringing change, new life; a small, yet important force overcoming the dark moments of the day and promises a better tomorrow. As Ana Golejshka said – *"let it run wild, wherever"* – to shake up the hard and wearying apathy, to challenge the problems and bring hope for a better, blossoming poetic dawn.

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