

## Ljubljana City Library, Gold Pears and Assuming Responsibility

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### ABSTRACT

All of us dealing with studies on young adult literature (professionally, semi-professionally or unprofessionally) are also advocates of children in literature. We have a duty to treat the image of a child (from birth up to the age of 18) with dignity and respect, especially when it comes to problematic issues that the authors of young adult literature deal with by taking the side of children. These issues are therefore studied from a problem-oriented aspect (in a decent and respectful way) and not in a problematic manner (e.g., attributing the desire for sexual abuse to the child and the shifting of responsibility for the sexual abuse of a child onto the child). Authors and literary historians dealing with young adult literature – as stated in the principles of the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award – base their work on the fundamental principle of trusting the child, and we are obliged to protect the integrity of the child, both in literature and real-world scenarios. Those of us who are truly committed to the well-being of children need to immediately inform the competent state authorities of possible abuses of children by staff, institutions and other people.

The book entitled *Evangelij za pitbule* [The Gospel for Pitbulls] describes the primary sexual abuse of a child, while the secondary abuse is taking place "in front of us," as the cameraman/narrator places the blame for sexual abuse (or for alleged consent) on the child, followed by the tertiary abuse by the youth literary system, or more precisely, the Ljubljana City Library which promotes the novel intended for adults, with adult fantasies, as an excellent literary work for children and young adults, although it does not have an unambiguous message and does not advocate for children's rights and integrity.

**Keywords:** Ljubljana City Library, Slavoj Žižek, *The Plague of Fantasies*, *The Gospel for Pitbulls*, ALMA (Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award)

### INTRODUCTION

According to the polysystem theory, the Slovenian youth literary system is one of the four social systems (language, society, culture, literature). It consists of six constituent elements:

- Writer. (Young adult) writers play a social role and have social responsibility, as authors write for young addressees. The very subject matter, especially problem topic (e.g. illness, death, sexuality, etc.), is in itself not problematic for young people; only the way of dealing with it and the perspective of the author can be problematic; with the latter, the question is above all whether the author is "on the side of the children: does he/she defend and empathize with the child's way of experiencing the world" (Kobe 1999: 11).
- Cultural institutions. The Slovenian Book Agency, the Mladinska knjiga Publishing House, the Cultural Bazaar, the Book Fair, the Ljubljana City Library (hereinafter MKLJ) – Pionirska – the Centre for Youth Literature

and Librarianship (hereinafter Pionirska – CMKK) are cultural institutions or events that maintain literature as a social and cultural activity.

- Repertoire. MKLJ – Pionirska – CMKK canonized/proclaimed the *Gospel for Pitbulls* (2016, 2017) as the best in its *Manual for Reading Quality Youth Literature* (2017); thereby, they placed it on the level of an "excellent" model of "original Slovenian literature" for youth; the book features in the repertoire and various lists for children and young people.
- The Mladinska knjiga Publishing House promotes the interests of the market and cultural, educational institutions (bookshops, libraries, schools, etc.); the novel was released three times by Mladinska knjiga, twice in printed form (2016 and reprint a year later) and as an e-book in 2016 and on iTunes 2017, which is disproportionate when compared to the reviews that represent promotional paratexts.

- Book (product, message). The novel *Gospel for Pitbulls* is recommended as a quality reading for young readers (with the attributes of *original, high-quality, belletristic, excellent, recommended, problem-oriented, Slovenian*) and received various awards, marks, recognition, promotion – as original Slovenian fiction of "excellence".
- Readers – young readers (receivers). Are the young really intentional addressees or are they actual addressees? Is there an empirical study that would reject or confirm the hypothesis – with two groups, experimental and controlling – how the reading of a concrete book is experienced and understood by young people and adult readers on the basis of cognitive-acceptance levels<sup>1</sup> (experiencing, understanding, evaluating and expressing) of the text or message and what kind of message it sends to pupils of the third triennium, age 12+ (grades 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> of primary school).<sup>2</sup>

The social responsibility lies with MKLJ – Pionirska – CMKK which creates the public opinion with the *Manual for Reading Quality Youth Literature* and establishes the youth literary canon for the educational system with its meta texts (reviews, recensions, rationales). The modern canon, created by the *Manual for Reading Quality Youth Literature*, encourages reading selected contemporary works and directs young readers and their mentors to refer to them, quote them, creatively transform and comment on them, and incorporate them into the dynamics of new literary repertoires. The possibility that a concrete work of a male or a female writer is included in the *Manual for Reading Quality Youth Literature* is nearly 20%: "Of 1,800 editions for children and youth from 2016 (COBISS catalogue), 723 books were selected for the evaluation. The sign of quality was received by 136 books published by 25 publishers (72 new and 64 reprinted or renewed), of which 59 were originally Slovene (19 new and 40 reprinted or renewed)."<sup>3</sup>

The literary texts for youth are supposed to be "vessels of cultural memory," "represent texts with their materiality, design and content;" but the text analysed here is also "a monument and a

document" of the personal memory of the adult narrator speaking from his linguistic, literary and cultural perspective, and not of the supposedly main literary person, the juvenile girl with attributed thoughts which are atypical for a contemporary adolescent.

### PROBLEM-ORIENTED OR PROBLEMATIC PERSPECTIVE

On the basis of the alleged unanimous opinion according to the selection activities by the 13-member expert committee, composed of important institutions of the youth literary system (SBA, MKLJ, MKZ), selection and rewarding procedures were conducted in line with the criteria<sup>4</sup> for allocating and hierarchizing authors and works. The MKLJ and the *Manual for Reading Quality Youth Literature* with all the participating institutions create a repertoire and promote "the best original Slovene Young Adult Belletristic Literature" – if we leave other open questions aside for the time being. Recommended authors and texts and related classifications, interpretations and values (meta language) are primarily established in the youth literary system by educational system, from required/ leisure/ obligatory/recommended reading in primary school to university lectures. The power of canonization of the best original Slovene young adult literature is scattered according to curricula, textbooks, manuals, obligatory readings, exams, seminar and diploma theses ... In the educational system, "quality works of young adult literature" become canonized documents and their authors are the "central characters," above all "cultural saints," as they act as the main bearers of the literary language tradition and as memorial witnesses of (special) personal experience of events, persons, places and mentalities, by which one nation is separated from another. Slovenian pupils and students are taught how to be Slovene according to the so-called hidden curriculum. In addition, canonical texts represent a model of good and beautiful style, the chosen basis of different development tendencies, typical examples of a period, style or genre, and ultimately the embodiment of identities, values and actions: "to belong to European culture," "to be grateful to the good mother," "to know how to resist" ... (Juvan 2005: 391).

In the Slovene young adult literature, the eternal return of the same is observed – *infantile text and adult contexts* (L. Seifert 1996: 45). In the Slovenian educational system, the *Manual for*

<sup>1</sup>Krakar-Vogel, Boža: Književnost v drugem letniku srednje šole, *Priročnik za branje kakovostnih mladinskih knjig* za učitelje, ZRSŠŠ, Ljubljana, 1994.

<sup>2</sup><http://www.emka.si/evangelij-za-pitbule/PR/2125545>

<sup>3</sup>[http://www.bukla.si/?action=clanki&cat\\_id=6&limit=30&article\\_id=3459](http://www.bukla.si/?action=clanki&cat_id=6&limit=30&article_id=3459) Zadavec, Vojko (2017). Priznanja zlata hruška 2017. Bukla 138–139, 22. 11. 2017.

<sup>4</sup><https://www.mklj.si/zlata-hruska#.WldKIktG250>

*Reading Quality Youth Literature* is also a means of literary incoherence; in the youth literary system, it should perform the function of the institutional medium for storing the memory traces of young adult literature, and thus represents the qualitative and canonizing mechanism that sensitizes the problem topic (Juvan 2005: 391). The *Gospel for Pitbulls* was declared as the best original Slovene Book of Young Adult Literature for 2017 in the *Odklenjeni kriki* [*Unlocked Shouts*] publication. The purpose of this publication is expressed by the following passage: "The mission of Pionirska is to promote reading and to draw attention to the quality of the production of Slovenian books for children and youth. Therefore, every year we prepare a *Manual for Reading Quality Youth Literature* which is indispensable for professional work, library education, and it helps with the commissioning of books for libraries. It is also intended for individuals who care<sup>5</sup> what their children read."<sup>6</sup> The expert committee of the *Manual* allegedly unanimously awarded the Gold Pear for 2017 for the best Slovene original literary work for youth,<sup>7</sup> and an additional expert view of educational books was carried out.<sup>8</sup> However, the question arises as to whether the expert review was really carried out in an ethical and professional way.

### LITERARY ANALYSIS OF TEXT, CONTEXT AND SUBTEXT

On the basis of an in-depth analysis of the text, context and subtext, we find that the central literary character is the cameraman, the person who records (with consent/without consent) the supposed narrative of the pupil, who asks her questions that interest him ("erotica/innermost feelings"), and thus verbalises and relives his own fantasies which he attributes to the juvenile literary figure – the girl. By doing so, the author/narrator also introduces an imbalance between the representations of female (negative) and male (positive) literary characters.

<sup>5</sup>Underlined by M. M. Blažič.

<sup>6</sup><https://www.mklj.si/prirocnik#.WldSAktG250>.

<sup>7</sup>Bilban, dr. Tina (self-employed in culture, *Expert commission for book and magazine production in the field of literature and humanities* SBA), Jamnik, mag. Tilka, Kemperle, Katja, Kos, dr. Gaja, Lavrenčič Vrabec, mag. Darja (editor), Mlakar Črnič, Ida (editor), Obadič, Tone, Perko, Manca, Picco, Kristina, Potočnik, Petra, Snoj Verbovšek, Zarika (SBA), Stergar, Katja (SBA) and Zadravec, Vojko.

<sup>8</sup>Dolenc, dr. Sašo, Košir, mag. Tomato (design), Kreft, dr. Samo, Lunaček, dr. Izar and Omladič, dr. Luka.

An analysis of linguistic, literary and cultural references shows that student slang is not in the foreground, but rather the vocabulary and the experiential world of the generation aged sixty or seventy:

- Language (broad, prick, to stare, zeppelin, cur, coochie, boy, girl's tunnel, to wank, flock, to prank, brat, louse, to boast, to puke, to tell obscenities, my goodness, beast, to bonk, disgusting, lust, popular song, to slap, contemptuously, privacy, luck on a string, sex, hit tune, style, yarn, to decompose, little eyes, however, to irk, life, preciousness);
- Literature (cycle of poems, Cankar, Kovič, Matsuo Bashō, *My Black Horse Does Not Need Reins*, Strniša, *Suicides* ...); and
- Culture (Admiral Nelson, blues, Bosch's drawings, Buddhism, Zhuang Zhou,<sup>9</sup> overalls, Dustin Hoffman, *Figurae Veneris*,<sup>10</sup> Grünwald's *Temptation of Saint Anthony*, horse's scock, butterfly (dream of being a butterfly), *My Black Horse (Does Not Need Reins)*;<sup>11</sup> Samaritan, Montenegrin falcon, Speedy Gonzales)<sup>12</sup> of the hippie generation, the central generation that writes children and/or young adult literature.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>9</sup>Iztok Geister: *Uporabnost haiku poezije*, in: *Haiku*, Ljubljana, 1973, pp. 125–126. "Once I, Chuang Chu, dreamed that I was a butterfly; I was happy as a butterfly. I knew that I was completely satisfied with myself, but I did not realize that I was Chu. But suddenly I woke up and behold, it was me. Now I do not know if Chu was the one who dreamed of being a butterfly or did the butterfly dreamed that it was Chu. There is certainly a difference between the butterfly and Chu. The fact that one can be the other is called the transformation of the world."

"This one goes like this: Chugan Tse fell asleep in the meadow by the river and dreamed of being a butterfly. He was light and beautiful and colourful like a butterfly, he was flying like a butterfly, and the flowers liked as a butterfly. When he woke up, he no longer knew who he was. Is he Chuang Tse, who previously dreamed of being a butterfly, or is he a butterfly who now dreams of being Chuang Tse?" (Bezlaj 2016: 27).

<sup>10</sup>Mogens Toft: *Figurae Veneris: ljubzenski položaji v 50 podobah*, 1970.

<sup>11</sup>This adapted cowboy song performed by the pop singer Rafko Irgolič was the hit of 1960–1969.

<sup>12</sup>Speedy Gonzales is an animated cartoon, created in 1955. In pop music, the song was recorded by the group Čudežna polja in 1988.

<sup>13</sup>R. Lindbergh, A. Carter: *My Hippie Grandmother*, 2003; B. Richardson: *I would have gone to Woodstock*, 2007; A. Yasgur, J. Lipner: *Max Said Yes!: The Woodstock Story* etc.

The names are linear, and the literary characters are reduced to a reified object (Koka,<sup>14</sup> Lukec-fukec, Maca, Sliva, "That's the one with the horse"). Given that the author pointed out in the media that these were supposed to be "erotic and intimate" narratives of pupils, professional readers should ask themselves whether they are really narratives of pupils or fantasies of the cameraman who is interested only in certain topics (eroticism and intimacy) and not the narrator who is the victim?

### PROBLEM TOPIC AND PROBLEMATIC PERSPECTIVE

The book analysed deals with a problem topic, but it is problematic because it gives an impression that it advocates the abuse of children, especially those of sexual nature. The content (the problem topic) is not problematic in itself because problem<sup>15</sup> topics should be addressed in young adult literature – including suicide, sexuality, sexual abuse. However, in the Bezlaj's novel the mood prevails that is dominated by the perspective of the "lech"; the story itself is also not problematic as it contains conflicts – the most problematic is the perspective of the adult under the mimicry of the 9-, 11-, 13- and 17-year old girl.

The author or narrator uses fiction to verbalise the fantasies of the cameraman and problem topics that are not in themselves problematic, but are verbalised from an adult's point of view and from the viewpoint of the narrator who does not express empathy to the seemingly main character, but expresses an explicitly favourable perspective on sexual abuse of children, which is already confirmed by various quotes in this paper. The topic of rape is also often mentioned without empathy for the victims of rape ("Yes, a good rape is definitely worthwhile" "At least you really enjoy being raped" (Bezlaj 2016: 49)). Frequent and bizarre references to masturbation are also attributed to the girl narrating,<sup>16</sup> with

<sup>14</sup>Allusion to cocaine, a chicken and the nickname of supposed people from real life.

<sup>15</sup>Saksida, Igor, *Tabuji v mladinski književnosti, kritično branje in Cankarjevo tekmovanje*. Otroci in knjiga, Volume 41, No. 91, 2014., pp. 27–28.

<sup>16</sup>Impossible gaze, according to Žižek, is also expressed by fantasies attributed to the pupil and her schoolmates on the subject of masturbation (a tube of shampoo in the bath (Bezlaj 2016: 65), "twenty centimeters long fish" (Bezlaj 2016: 12), battery (Bezlaj 2016: 13), "jumping up and down a broomstick" (Bezlaj 2016: 13) ...).

graphic details which are neither an objective nor a characteristic of young adult literature.

Describing suicide,<sup>17</sup> erotic suicide (Bezlaj 2016: 6, 7, 7, 8, 47, 48), suicide as "luck on a string"<sup>18</sup> (Bezlaj 2016: 21), "suicide [...] with a black pantyhose" (Bezlaj 2016: 7, 21), "suicide [...] I was wearing transparent lace underwear" (Bezlaj 2016: 7), "to serve myself (to my parents) as hanged" (Bezlaj 2016: 47), as well as attributing erotic dimensions to the suicide of the pupil are elements which fall beyond a young adult problem novel and constitute a problematic novel about young people.

### PROBLEMATIC PROMOTION OF THE NOVEL

In several places, the author attributed to the implicit literary figure, in the background of which is the author/narrator/cameraman, the advocating for sexual abuse of children as the realization of the child's/children's desire for this obscene act, which represents an *impossible gaze*. Do children really get acquainted with sexual abuse from "women's"<sup>19</sup> magazines?" It is illogical that a literary student, who is supposed to be proficient in literature (Balzac, Barbery, Cankar, Goethe, Dostoevsky, Gradnik, Kovič, Matsuo Bashō, Munro, Murakami, Paasilinna, Rushdie, Strniša, Tolstoy) and art (Grünwald, Leonardo), acquaints herself with sexual abuse for the first time from "women's magazines;" she is supposed to have "enjoyed" being raped

<sup>17</sup>The author often refers to suicide in connection with erotica and lingerie, e.g. erotic pantyhose (for suicide), erotic hanging, erotic tag, erotic aspect, etc.

<sup>18</sup>Especially problematic is the author's intertextual allusion to the book title of *Sreča na vrvi* (1973), written by Vitan Mal who has been convicted several times over the sexual abuse of children. From the point of view of youth literary science, it is problematic to name suicide as "luck on a string" and to implicitly mention the work of a convicted person under Article 176 of the Penal Code. Young readers should also not have the impression that suicide equals "happiness" (Bezlaj 2016: 21), even if it is meant in an ironic way; the question is how the affirmative and euphemistic, even if cynical, reference to suicide is understood by young readers who may be in distress.

<sup>19</sup>Discrimination against women is a constant with the author, with negatively stylistically marked words, whereby the author/narrator is defined primarily as the "hero victim" and not the "hero searcher" (V. Propp: *Morfologija pravljice*, 2005) or, as Žižek would say on the basis of the Great Other (Žižek 2013: 95): The Problem of the Gospel for Pit Bulls is not the drive of death (Eros – Tanatos, suicide, etc.), but the fact that monstrosity is concealed by aesthetization – "erotic suicide" (Žižek 2013: 97).

already as a 9-year-old girl (Bezljaj 2016: 61). Bezljaj describes the perpetrator of the sexual abuse, "Uncle Slavec", as a "real man [...] who is so fond of the (9-year-old) girl" (Bezljaj 2016: 61; underlined by M.M.B.); he also attributes to her incestual desires directed toward her father (Bezljaj 2016: 61). Dealing with another example in adult literature,<sup>20</sup> Žižek poses the question whether paternal incest is just a fantasy or is this fantasizing triggered by 'real' sexual abuse (Žižek 1997: 39).

"How come he is interested in my cherry just because he is a man. It was still completely smooth, only after about a year or two the first golden down started appearing. What's wrong with my dad's manhood that he never shows interest in it? Is he a real man at all? I tested him ..." <sup>21</sup> (Bezljaj 2016: 61).

"A while ago I read one article about sexually abused children in a women's magazine. For as I have found out in my memory flash, I am also one of them" (Bezljaj 2016: 63).

"You know, all my childhood I wanted, and I'm still dreaming about it, that someone would sexually abuse me, but nobody showed even the slightest interest in that regard." She paused for a while again. "Nothing ever happens to me" (Bezljaj 2016: 65).

"But to be the child of a drunk, that's revolting! It's much worse than being a sexually abused child! I know from my experience" (Bezljaj 2016: 81).

"She is able to forgive everything, unless you claim that dogs do not have a soul – such a statement once cost a parish priest to lose a devoted and faithful pious soul, although she longed more for sexual abuse than salvation" (Bezljaj 2016: 100).

"Uncle Slavec, who sexually abused me, fucked me up a thousand times less than you, my loving daddy, who are so anxious for my future" (Bezljaj 2016: 104).

What impression should a young reader get when reading this literary text and being recommended such a text in the youth literary system? The MKLJ itself promotes pornographic material that includes minors and their realistic images, which is contrary to Article 176 of the Penal Code.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>20</sup>Edith Wharton (Žižek 1997: 38–39).

<sup>21</sup>What follows are details allegedly narrated by a 9-year-old girl who tests the "manhood of her daddy", (un)consciously versed in the language and attributed to the child.

<sup>22</sup><https://www.uradni-list.si/glasilo-uradni-list-rs/vsebina?urlurid=20082296>.

In contemporary young adult literature, children/young adult literary texts with a child/young adult as the main literary character, as a rule, do not moralize, they do not know an explicit moral lesson that relies on the model of traditional young adult literature.

The author attributed to a 13-year-old girl the following statement: "I started to feel like a mature woman who knows how to satisfy a man" (Bezljaj 2016: 62). Fantasies about the "sperm that squirts more than a meter far" (Bezljaj 2016, 62), attributed to a 13-year-old girl, is another example of "an impossible gaze" (Bezljaj 2016: 62).

"The evident attitude of the writers is that they are 'on the side' of children: they defend and, with great empathy illuminate the child's way of experiencing the world, they consider the category of "childhood" as "the original text of life" (Cankar) (Kobe 1999: 11).

The characters of adult people play a secondary role and their function is collateral, as they are not given the role of main literary persons, however the role of the cameraman, mentioned initially as a voyeur who records (audio or video) the supposed narrative of the minor, is the main literary figure who, through an external literary figure, a 17-year-old pupil, and through an alleged narrative strategy of the first-person narrative, legitimizes his own opinions or fantasies. In doing so, he uses the strategy of dissimulation or concealing the main (absent) adult character (the cameraman who does not protect personal data of the minor). The student is only a presentation of the author's own thoughts, which in a fragmented manner and focusing only on the pornographization of the girl at the micro and macro levels attempts to naturalize sexual abuse of the child, as the girl allegedly several times explicitly advocates for abuse. Thus, at the level of naming, the author also reifies the superficial literary character – described is the literary figure of a 17-year-old girl with a focus on reliving fantasies from the age of nine, eleven and thirteen; thus, the pupil is not a literary figure, she is just a puppet of the cameraman from the background who justifies sexual and other abuse of the child with ideological strategies.

The Mladinska knjiga Publishing House published the novel in the Nova slovenska knjiga collection (2016), which includes it in the field of literature for adults. And if it remained at that also literary historians studying young adult literature would agree that the *licentia poetica* (artistic licence) or the author's freedom of expression is guaranteed. But in 2017, the

novel was proclaimed a work of young adult literature for unknown reasons and without taking into account the characteristics of the genre (child's perspective, child-centred approach, the benefit of the child) and the fact that the text should not give rise to the impression that the work advocates for sexual abuse of children. The responsibility that was prior to the proclamation of the novel as a work of young adult literature attributed to the author thus becomes institutional, as the central institution – MKLJ promoted this work as an excellent work for youth, and therefore it has to take responsibility for its irresponsible act.

### THE PLAGUE OF FANTASIES

In the *Plague of Fantasies* (1997), Slavoj Žižek speaks of seven veil of fantasies which are applicable on the analysis of the literary text analysed, since the author's fantasies are attributed to the literary character.

- "Fantasy's transcendental schematism": fantasy constitutes desire, provides its coordinates and literally teaches "how to want" (Žižek 1997: 13). Thus, the literary text presented realizes its intent, since all seven reviews/recensions justify the novel on the basis of the intentional meaning of "how to want" and "how to read"; they do not see beyond the strategies of deceiving by the hidden adult cameraman – literally and metaphorically (P. Nodelman: *Hidden Adults*, 2008).
- Fantasy between the beneficent and the envious: the cameraman in the novel is the main person who poses the puppet-like character questions relating to alcohol, drugs, lesbian experiences, violence, suicide, sexuality, abuse, etc. ("Yes, I have a lesbian experience. This was also one of your questions at the beginning of our conversation, besides those about alcohol, drugs, the first experience with sexuality and violence against young people. (...) Why are you really interested in these things? (...)") (Bezljaj 2016: 110)).
- Dispersed subject positions: Who, where, how (a fantasizing) subject influences the phantasmic narrative? The subject is by no means necessarily "identifiable with him-/herself," as Žižek speaks of a classic pornographic scene. The literary character of a 17-year-old girl is described as an exhibitionist subject who is portrayed as enjoying being watched, listened to ... in a clear contrast to the man listening, recording, carrying a social mask – Žižek argues that he hides the

fact that there is nothing to hide, i.e. he emphasizes the desubjectivised, mechanical status of the man. Žižek speaks of "multiple, dispersed subject positions" and "voyeuristic sadomasochistic activity" (Žižek 1997: 16).

- Intersubjectivity of fantasy: neither subjective nor objective, but intersubjective experience is the relationship of the cameraman to the 17-year-old girl; the cameraman's fantasies are central to the girl's intersubjectivity. *Infantile text, adult contexts* (Seifert 2006: 45) is a phantasmatic creation expressing the implicit position of the right subject. The superficial main literary figure, a 17-year-old girl, is embedded in a complex network of relationships, she is a "catalyst and battlefield" for the desires of the deep subject – the cameraman. The literary figure of the 17-year-old girl has the status of the object because the literary fantasy is intersubjective. The subject becomes the object of the narrator's/author's desire or drive. The subject is reduced to a "token" (Žižek 1997: 18). A transgression of the fantasy occurs, because the text is intended for a young reader – a child or an adolescent. The child/ girl becomes the real Other, a *thing*.
- Narrative obfuscation of antagonism: the form of narration, story serves to obfuscate the original problem – socio-political fantasies and obscures violence (Žižek 1997: 18). There is no child-centred perspective (one of the rules of the genre of young adult literature), but rather decentres the 9-, 17-year-old subject into object and leads her to a pure void – self-referring negativity (Žižek 1997: 19). Narrativization – in the form of a story it is not a cultivated form but rather a primitively sexualized ontology and regression or Fall (Žižek 1997: 20). Narrativization does not follow the logic of the genre and the implicit logic of narration, so the characteristics of the narrative are the regression of something else, beyond young adult literature. Based on the criteria and distinction between love, erotic and pornographic literature, we can conclude that the book of this kind is pornographic, because all the events are:

"[R]educed to pornographic operations in all their possibilities [...] the subjectivity of the literary figure is so narrow and exists only in a limited form, only as a sexual hero, the pornographic text actually abolishes the subject. [...] The abolition of the subject is a logical consequence of [...] pornographic characterization.

[P]ornographic extension, the spread of the sexual sign to all parts and substances of the human body as they acquire a sexual function [...]

Pornography as a border area of eroticism should also be highlighted from the point of view of pretending or hiding pornography behind the name of erotic literature (Zupan Sosič 2008: 138-139)."

- Impossible gaze– the temporal loop of fantasy: the subject is already present at the act of his/her own conception or death ("suicide"). The narrative becomes a chaotic space, not because of the supposed narration of a wounded and vulnerable 17-year-old girl, but because of representation at the expense of the victimized girl who also makes the victim of herself– and this is filmed, wherein the presumed pupil and probably a "liberal" professor are on the first name basis. It is evident from the quotes that a "similar description" is a structured interview and the acquisition of data based on preplanned questions or topics (alcohol, drugs, lesbian experiences, violence, sexuality, abuse, etc.).

Impossible gaze is represented by a fantasy snare attributed to the view of a 9-year-old girl and the fantasies of incest:

My first sexual experience is connected with him – Uncle Slavc, the great, respected Slavc, licked my pussy. (...) At that time I was only nine years old and didn't have much experience with parties. (...) I was crazy with curiosity [...] His hands shook when he lifted my little thin skirt and pulled my panties under my knees, and then he started to kiss and lick my cherry. [...] I was nine years old and I have never heard of oral sex. It was not a nasty feeling, it was quite pleasant, as if I needed to take a pee (Bezljaj 2016: 59-61).

But I was thinking a lot about this event. I was particularly wondering how come he can't restrain himself just because he's a man. How come he is interested in my cherry just because he is a man. It was still completely smooth, only after about a year or two the first golden down started appearing. What's wrong with my dad's manhood that he never shows interest in it? Is he a real man at all? [...] I tested him [...] He had to take off my pyjamas and put on my panties. Even if I was pressing my feet apart, it was a futile hope that he would notice my cherry. I was almost offended. Is he not a real man like uncle Slavc [...] or does he not like me as much as uncle Slavc does? (Bezljaj 2016: 61).

- After the Fall– fantasy as the realization of desires prohibited by law: the phantasmic narrative does not represent a suspense, but the act itself– Žižek argues that the prohibition factor regulates the desire, in the case of the *Gospel for Pitbulls*, the object of desire is the law itself, and therefore also the violation. In the *Gospel for Pitbulls*, the Fall occurred in the past (Žižek 1997: 26). The paradox of the Fall is that it is at the same time the act and the choice of "disobedience."

In the following, Žižek considers the connection between *phantasms, desire and drive*. The "original text of young adult literature" can be understood as a phantasm or a screen that separates the desire from the drive: the supposedly 17-year-old girl only tells the story to the cameraman interviewing her and posing questions from his point of view, which allows him to describe the alleged void of the 17-year-old girl. The phantasm or recorded allegedly first-person narrative is reduced to the instrument of the Other that exploits and manipulates her (Žižek 1997: 28). She is presented as "vulgar" or "hysterical" and someone who can fully enjoy only if she is forced to perform a sexual act" (Žižek 1997: 29). This is how a 17-year-old girl is portrayed in the *Gospel for Pitbulls*. The cameraman recording the alleged girl's narrative illegitimately takes advantage of her and enjoys instead of her. The narrator's strategy is to get back at least part of the pleasure by transgressing the Other's norms (masturbation, "oral sex") (Žižek 1997: 29). Behind the facade of Authority/cameraman/teacher hides an obscene pleasure. Žižek claims: "Sometimes sexual acts with a third person can act as evidence of love" (Žižek 1997: 29). The basic paradox of the phantasmic narrative is to remain implicit, not to keep the distance to the explicit symbolic tissue it maintains. This phantasmic gap is a feature of works of art. There is no symbolic tissue in this "best book of young adult literature," there is no distance towards the explicit, it is not about the horizon of expectation of a 17-year-old girl, but about that of an adult cameraman who asks questions that interest him from his point of view. The literary text is also contradictory to itself, which becomes clear based on the deconstruction and analysis of the context that reveals the inconsistencies in structure and content, reveals the phantasmic gap between intentional and actual meaning, the implicit and the empirical main character, and therefore it must be read not only at the level of the text itself, but also at the level of the subtext

(ambivalence) and context – it's a reflection of Slovenian society which recommends to children a text that denies the child.

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