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IDEOLOGIJA V MLADINSKI KNJIŽEVNOSTI*

1. Literatura in etika

V iskanju odgovora na vprašanje o bistvu literarne umetnine se moramo nasloniti na spoznanja literarne teorije. Ta ugotavlja¹, da obsega sleherno literarno delo poleg estetske in spoznavne funkcije še etično razsežnost, ki ni nič manj pomembna od drugih momentov njene literarnoumetniške strukture.

Etično funkcijo je v poeziji opazila že starogrška filozofija. Tako je Platon menil, da učinkujejo pesniška dela zelo močno na človekovo dušo, sproščajo njene dobre ali slabe sile in jo s tem spreminjajo v to ali ono smer.²

Tudi Aristotel je v *Poetiki* priznaval literarni umetnini poleg spoznavne in estetske funkcije tudi etično komponento, vendar ji je bil, za razliko od Platona, ki je pesništvo v imenu morale obsodil, veliko bolj naklonjen. Etični učinek je imenoval 'katarza' (gr. očiščenje) in menil, da literarna umetnina poslušalca vznemiri in pretrese ter s tem povzroči, da se njegova duša sama v sebi uravnesi. Aristotelov nauk o katarzi je vse do 20. stoletja ostal sredstvo, s katerim so razlagali etično funkcijo besedne umetnosti.³

In kaj razumemo pod etično funkcijo literature?

Janko Kos definira v svojem *Očrtu literarne teorije* kot **etično** vse tisto, kar lahko vpliva na bralčevo vrednostno razmerje do sebe, okolja, sveta; kar oblikuje njegove želje, težnje in namere, mu določene pojave kaže kot pozitivne, druge kot negativne in v tem smislu celotno življenjsko obzorje postavlja pod izrazito vrednostno perspektivo. Takšno funkcijo, ugotavlja, lahko označimo tudi za ideološko, ker ponuja bralcu vrednote velikokrat v obliki idej, povezanih včasih v prave ideološke sisteme. Takšne ideje so lahko verske, filozofske, politične, družbeno-socialne, moralne v ožjem smislu ali pa preprosto življenjske.⁴

Nekateri teoretiki pripisujejo etični komponenti literarnega dela preveliko ali celo edino pomembno vlogo. S tem hočejo reči, da mora biti moralni učinek bistvo literature. Toda velika večina sodobnih teoretikov vendarle ugotavlja, kako je etična razsežnost v literarnem delu sicer nujna, vendarle ne edina, pa tudi ne glavna.

* Besedilo je bilo napisano za 24. kongres IBBY, ki bo letos oktobra v Seville, zato ga objavljamo tudi v angleščini.

¹ Kos J.: *Očrt literarne teorije*. Ljubljana 1983. Str. 33.

² Prav tam, str. 34.

³ Prav tam, str. 35.

⁴ Prav tam, str. 34.

Tudi o vplivu etične komponente literarnega dela na bralčeva politična, socialna, moralna oz. etična načela razmišlja sodobna literarna teorija veliko bolj skeptično, kot je to počela nekoč, saj meni, da je tak vpliv vprašljiv – zlasti v bralčevih zrelih letih, ko je njegova osebnost socialno in moralno že izoblikovana⁵. Vendar dodaja: „...da je tak“ (torej etični) „vpliv pomembnejši v otroških in mladostniških letih.“⁶

2. Mladinska literatura in etika

Velikim možnostim vplivanja na etična načela mladega bralca gre najbrž pripisovati dejstvo, da so strokovnjaki „...tovrstno besedno proizvodnjo obravnavali v okvirih *pedagogike*, kar...pomeni, da so pisanje za mladino od njegovega vznika naprej...pomenljivo usmerjali *normativi* pedagoških teorij v posameznih obdobjih.⁷ Šele v prvi polovici dvajsetega stoletja je mladinska književnost postopoma stopala v zavest strokovnih in kritičnih obravnav kot *področje literature*.⁸

Sodobni (torej literarnoteoretični) vidik obravnavanja mladinskega literarnega dela nas potemtakem pripelje do spoznanja, da je tudi literatura za otroke estetski produkt, za katerega je v prvi vrsti (kot za nemladinsko književnost) značilna strukturiranost na estetsko, spoznavno in etično komponento.

Ne glede na to spoznanje pa ne moremo mimo dejstva, da institucionalizirani pedagoški sistemi tudi v drugi polovici dvajsetega stoletja še zmeraj niso sprejeli izvršenega dejstva ‚depedagogizacije‘ pisanja za mladino in kjub temu, da kvalitetna literarna produkcija za mladino po drugi svetovni vojni tako rekoč praviloma pristopa ‚k otroku kot enakovrednemu sogovorniku‘⁹ in zato ne pridiga in ne poučuje¹⁰, ministrstva za šolstvo ter po njihovem nalogu učitelji še vedno prav posebej intenzivno poudarjajo (in izpostavljajo) etično komponento literarnega dela tako, da ob koncu šolske obravnave besedila pomenljivo vprašajo: kaj nam je hotel pisatelj povedati? Česa smo se danes naučili?

Prav zato se nam zdi, da bi veljalo etično komponento mladinskega literarnega dela analizirati nekoliko natančneje. Zdi se, da je mogoče ta strukturalni element (mladinske) literature didaktično ‚uporabiti‘ vsaj na tri različne načine:

1. Mladinsko literaturo je s tega vidika mogoče uporabljati kot sredstvo, ki naj prispeva k podrejanju otroka svetu odraslih in pravilom, ki jih prav tako določajo odrasli.

V tem primeru gra lahko za posredovanje (indoktrinacijo) ideoloških načel, na katerih temelji trenutna družbena ureditev. V tej luči je treba videti tako delo Matevža Ravnikarja z zgovornim naslovom *Zgodbe svetega pisma za mlade ljudi* (iz leta 1815), ki naj bi otroke motivirale k življenju po načelih, kakršna predpisuje krščanski nauk, kot tudi vrsto mladinskih literarnih del, ki so otrokom in mladini preko identifikacijske figure v bivših socialističnih državah ponujala ‚najboljši družbeni red izmed vseh ostalih‘, jih utrjevala v veri v ‚svetle perspektive delavskega

⁵ Prav tam, str. 36.

⁶ Prav tam, str.36.

⁷ Kobe M.: *Pogledi na mladinsko književnost*. Ljubljana 1987. Str. 8.

⁸ Prav tam, str. 8.

⁹ Novak B. A.: *Igre otrok – igre za otroke. Otrok in knjiga* 32. Maribor 1991. Str. 61.

¹⁰ Prav tam, str. 61.

razreda s komunistično partijo na čelu' in jih učila 'spoštovati svetle tradicije socialistične revolucije'.

Podtip tovnega uporabljanja mladinske književnosti so tiste stvaritve (in interpretacije stvaritev), ki naj spodbujajo otroke k introjekciji norm, ki so jih kot oblike medsebojnega soeksistiranja postavili odrasli. Gre za tip poezije, v kateri se je mogoče poučiti, da se risati po stenah pač ne sme (Grafenauer: *Slikar*), da je zvečer treba pravočasno v posteljo (Župančič: *Pismo*) in in da je treba jesti vse od kraja (H. Hoffmann: *Der Suppenkaspar*).

2. Drugi tip mladinske literature 'uporablja' etično komponento v povsem drugačne namene.

Slovenska filozofinja Marija Švajncer razmišlja v študiji *Etika in mladinska književnost* nekako takole: književnost za odrasle sme natančno prikazovati zlo in rušiti njegove vrednote v njegovem imenu, zakaj njena estetika je svobodna do skrajnih meja – vse do iracionalizma, „v mladinski književnosti pa obstajajo mehанизmi, ki morajo vsaj delno obvarovati otroka pred zlom odraslih... Zlo (v mladinski književnosti op. M. K.) je lahko (le) začasno in minljivo sredstvo za dobre namene...¹¹

Etična komponenta drugega tipa mladinske književnosti potemtakem prevzema vlogo velikega sterilnega zvona za sir, da bi otroci čim kasneje opazili strahote, ki se dogajajo v svetu okrog njih. „Odrasli so tisti“, zagotavlja Marija Švajncer, „ki odmerjajo, kakšno količino zla je otrok zmožen prenesti...“¹²

3. Tretji tip je najsodobnejši in trenutno kar se da v modi. Gre za mladinsko literaturo (in uporabo te literature), ki vidi svoje poslanstvo v tem, da mladini odstira socialne, etične, ekološke...probleme, jo nanje opozarja in jo istočasno mobilizira. Primarna funkcija tako zastavljenega mladinskega literarnega dela je potemtakem vzbuditi v otrocih (mladini) občutek, da mora vsak od nas (tudi bralec), kaj storiti, da se bodo svet in razmere v njem popravile, izboljšale. S tem zadeva seveda ni končana – občutek krivde zaradi dotedanje nedejavnosti naj bi namreč pomenil motivacijski impulz za akcijo – bralec naj bi aktivno začel reševati svet.

* * *

Zgornji trije tipi etičnega v mladinski literaturi so na prvi pogled zelo pregledni. Njihova dobra lastnost je, da lahko obstoječo mladinsko literaturo relativno zlahka razvrstimo na posamezne 'ideološke tipe'. Toda žal je treba priznati, da se ob podrobnejši analizi etične komponente izkažejo kot zelo grobo in nenatančno merilo, saj ne dajejo možnosti opazovanja večplastnosti etičnega sporočila. Da je etično sporočilo mladinskega literarnega dela večplastno, pokaže vsaka nekoliko pozornostna analiza. Za katere plasti gre v slovenski mladinski književnosti, bomo ugotavljali na znanstvenofantastičnem romanu za otroke *Drejček in trije Marsovčki* slovenskega pisatelja Vida Pečjaka.

Naj na kratko povzamemo zgodbo:

Drejčka, osemletnega dečka, neke noči obiščejo trije marsovski otroci. Povedo mu, da so prišli na Zemljo kljub izrecni očetovi prepovedi, saj marsovski zakoni take obiske strogo prepovedujejo, ker se Zemljani še zmeraj vojskujejo in so sploh zelo zaostala civilizacija.

¹¹ Švajncer M.: *Etika in mladinska književnost. Otrok in knjiga* 32. Maribor 1991. Str. 55.

¹² Prav tam. Str. 55.

Na Marsu je vse urejeno veliko bolje: vojne so prepovedane, zakon odreja, da morajo biti otroci srečni (kar pomeni, da jih nihče ne sili niti računati in ne zvečer v posteljo) rešili so tudi ekološki problem (saj so industrijo preselili na eno svojih lun, medtem ko so na drugi zgradili veliko otroško igrišče, nekakšen Disneyland) in problem prehrane, saj izdelujejo hrano iz kamenja in jo uživajo v obliki tablet. Ob marsovski družbi Drejček spozna, kako nesmotrno in pomanjkljivo so uredili življenje na Zemlji tukajšnji starši. Sooči se s problemom vojne in miru, nasilja staršev nad otroki... skratka, začanja opazovati svet okrog sebe z drugačnimi očmi, se kritično distancirati in ob tem – odraščati.

Že tako bežno poznavanje zgodbe nakazuje, da gre za povest, ki jo je nedvomno treba uvrstiti v tretji tip zgoraj omenjene sheme, da gre za delo, ki naj (med drugim) otrokom odstre enega najaktualnejših problemov sodobnega sveta in ki naj bralca v zvezi z njim mobilizira.

„Ali na Sferi ni bilo miroljubnih ljudi?“ je vprašal Drejček¹³ marsovskega očeta, potem ko mu je ta povedal eksemplarično zgodbo o nesrečnem planetu, ki je postal žrtev svoje agresivnosti.

„Vseposvod v vesolju živijo miroljubni ljudje,“ je odvrnil marsovski oče. „Toda, če hočeš doseči mir, ni dovolj, da ga samo ljubiš. Za mir se je treba boriti.“¹⁴

Toda nekoliko natančnejša analiza etične komponente povesti *Drejček in trije Marsovčki* pokaže, da problema ideologije / etike v mladinski literaturi ni mogoče poenostavljati, saj se praviloma pojavlja večplastno in razslojeno.

TEZA: Moralna in etična načela v mladinski literaturi (torej tudi v *Drejčku in treh Marsovčkih*) je mogoče razdeliti na tri sloje:

1. Moralna in etična načela, ji jih avtor hote, namenoma posreduje mlademu bralcu in ki kot ideologija štrlijo iz literarnega dela – ideali odraslih, ki naj jih sprejmejo tudi otroci.

2. Moralna in etična načela, ki jih avtor hote napravi vidne s pomočjo posebne pripovedne perspektive – svet odraslih in njegove napake.

3. Moralna in etična načela, ji jih avtor v besedilo ne vgrajuje hote, a postanejo vidna prav zaradi posebne pripovedne perspektive v mladinski literaturi. – Etična načela, postavljena v gornjih dveh plasteh, doživijo na tej ravni erozijo!

ad 1

V *Drejčku in treh Marsovčkih* je temeljno ideološko sporočilo jasno:

Nasilje ne sme biti metoda za reševanje konfliktov.

To načelo je v povesti razdelano tako na makro kot tudi na mikro nivoju:

– Na makro nivoju gre za problem vojne in miru in za temeljno sporočilo v zvezi s tem:

*Potem sta govorila o vojni in miru. Drejček mu je (zdravniku) dokazoval, da so vojne škodljive, da lahko uničijo svet in da ni dovolj mir le ljubiti, temveč da je treba zanj kaj storiti...*¹⁵

– Na mikro nivoju gre za agresivnost pri reševanju medsebojnih konfliktov, kjer močnejši (odrasli) praviloma s silo vsiljuje svojo voljo šibkejšemu (torej otroku):

¹³ Pečjak V.: *Drejček in trije Marsovčki*. Ljubljana 1961. Str. 114.

¹⁴ Prav tam, str. 114.

¹⁵ Prav tam, str. 126.

„Ali na Zemlji vsi starši tepejo otroke?“ je vprašal Miš.

„Drugi starši tepejo otroke samo tu pa tam,“ je odvrnil Drejček.

„Zakaj?“ je vprašal Miš.

„Zato, da bodo pridni,“ je pojasnil Drejček. „Otroci so tepeni, kadar nagajajo, kadar nočejo v šolo, kadar se branijo umivati in v podobnih primerih.“

Miš, Maš in Šaš so se začudeno spogledali.¹⁶

Poleg teme nasilja lahko na prvem nivoju opazimo še dve etični sporočili. Prvo bi pravzaprav morali videti kot vrsto indoktrinacije ideoloških načel, na katerih temelji trenutno vladajoča politična struktura v državi, saj imajo na Marsu (ki ima v naši povesti funkcijo neke vrste eksempla, oziroma funkcijo neke vrste utopije, dežele, kjer je vse urejeno kar najbolje in kar najbolj smotrno) družbeno ureditev, ki bi jo z zemeljskim besednjakom še najlaže lahko imenovali komunistično, saj so tam vsi ljudje bogati:

„Na Marsu ni siromakov,“ je dejal (marsovski oče).

„Vsi ljudje so bogati. Vsakdo dobi, kar želi.“

„Ali v vaših trgovinah dajejo stvari zastonj?“ je začudeno vprašal Drejček.

„Zastonj,“ je pritrdil marsovski oče.

„Potem lahko dobite, kolikor hočete. Tudi sto robotov.“

„Le zakaj naj bi imeli sto robotov?“ je začudeno dejal marsovski oče. Toliko jih nihče ne potrebuje. Mi jih imamo pet, kar je več kot dovolj.¹⁷

Gre torej za družbo, kjer vsakdo vzame, kar potrebuje, a le toliko, kot zares potrebuje – idealna ureditev medčloveških odnosov, kakršno sta kot vizijo socializma – komunizem – zastavila Marx in Engels.

Tako razmišljanje bi nas lahko zavedlo k napačni interpretaciji, češ da gre v *Drejčku in treh Marsovčkah* za prvi tip mladinske književnosti (tistega, ki služi indoktrinaciji političnih načel). Da temu ni tako dokazuje že samo dejstvo, da povest s političnim preobratom v Sloveniji ni izgubila svojega čara in mika, ostala je v šolskih berilih in otroci jo berejo enako navdušeno, kot so jo brali takrat, ko se je eden izmed njihovih šolskih predmetov še imenoval temelji družbene morale.

Vse to pa zato, ker je *Drejček in trije Marsovčki* povest, v kateri etična komponenta ne preplavlja spoznavne in estetske, ki potemtakem ostaja literarna stvaritev in ki je nikakor ni mogoče uvrstiti med tiste vrste „literarno produkcijo“, ki je štirideset let po drugi svetovni vojni ideologijo oblačila v „estetsko embalažo“ zato, da bi bila (ideologija namreč) za otroke mikavnejša in laže prebavljiva.

Četrto sporočilo, ki ga moramo šteti k prvemu sloju etičnega v *Drejčku in treh Marsovčkah*, je brez dvoma vzgojna pridiga o pisanju domačih nalog:

„Roboti so bistri stroji,“ je odvrnil Miš. „Znajo kuhati, pomivati posodo, sesati prah s pohištva...“

„Tudi računati,“ je pripomnil Maš.

„Ali ti kdaj napravi računsko nalogo?“ je vprašal Drejček.

„Ne,“ je odvrnil Maš. „Naloge delam sam, če pa jih ne znam, jih ne napišem.“

„Ali ni učitelj nič hud?“

„Zakaj?“ se je začudil Maš. „Če jih ne znam, je bolje, da jih ne naredim, kot da bi jih naredil robot, saj to ne bi bila moja naloga.“¹⁸

¹⁶ Prav tam, str. 51.

¹⁷ Prav tam, str. 107.

¹⁸ Prav tam, str. 106.

Skratka, naloge naj pišejo otroci sami. Prepisovanje nalog je nesmiselno, saj sicer človek ne bo nikoli postal pameten in učen, kot so pametni in učeni odrasli.

Na prvem sloju etične komponente *Drejčka in treh Marsovčkov* posreduje Pečjak torej tri teme:

- temo agresivnosti, nasilja v reševanju medsebojnih konfliktov,
- temo idealne ureditve medčloveških odnosov in
- temo iskrenosti in poštenosti (ob pisanju matematičnih domačih nalog).

Vse tri teme so postavljene v literarno delo s posebne pripovedne pozicije odraslega, ki ve, kaj je nabolje (za otroke in za svet) in ki misli, da je to vedenje (znanje) tako dragoceno, da bi ga morali posedovati (in se v skladu z njim ravnati) tudi otroci. Gre za klasično relacijo odrasli (pisatelj) : otrok, ki je, kljub temu, da je Drejček sodobna literatura, sicer značilna za starejšo (slovensko) mladinsko literaturo.

ad 2

Na drugem etičnem nivoju *Drejčka in treh Marsovčkov* najdemo tista etična načela, ki postajajo vidna s pomočjo posebne pripovedne perspektive: Dvoličnost, neiskrenost in kompromisarstvo so že tako vsakdanje, da jih odrasli sami niti ne opazamo več. Pri otrocih je drugače. Zanje je svet črno – bel. Ali so reči dobre, če niso dobre, so seveda slabe. Ničesar vmes ne poznajo. Zato je otroška (brezkompromisna) perspektiva pravo sredstvo za odkrivanje tega, kdaj odrasli lažejo (a je taka laž dopustna), kdaj so odrasli agresivni (a je ta agresivnost upravičena), skratka, kdaj odrasli govorijo tako, ravnajo pa popolnoma drugače – in imajo za to ravnanje zmerom kakšno (odraslo) opravičilo. Ni naključje, da so Marsovčki, predstavniki idealnega (popolnoma belega) sveta, za komunikacijo izbrali prav otroka – Drejčka:

„Učitelj je rekel, da ne smemo Zemljanom nič zaupati,“ ga je posvaril Maš.

„Toda Drejčku lahko zaupamo,“ je dejal Miš. „On ni čisto nič podoben Zemljanom. Če mu ne bi rasle roke iz telesa, bi bil prav takšen, kot so marsovski otroci.“¹⁹

Sporočilo je jasno: Zemljanom (beri odraslim) ne gre zaupati. Tisti, ki so nosilci dobrega, čistega, lahko komunicirajo samo s takim, ki ima enako zaupanje v dobro, s takim, ki je sposoben dobro natančno ločevati od zla. Iz take (otroške) perspektive pa se svet odraslih kaže povsem drugačen, kot ga v svojih pridigah skušajo otrokom predstaviti sami.

Nosilec etičnega na drugem nivoju je Drejčkov oče. Načelno bi ga morali uvrstiti med pozitivne osebe, saj se zdi na prvi pogled kar strpen oče, ki razume, da je Drejček pojedel marmelado in tudi to, da je (nalašč) uničil svoje igrače. Poleg tega trdi, da ljubi mir, da je proti vojni – in tudi otrok ne pretepa, kot to počne oče sosedovega Mihca.

Toda – takoj, ko ga začnemo opazovati z nekoliko strožje – otroške perspektive (in s te perspektive ga skupaj z bralci opazuje pisatelj Vid Pečjak) se začne ta fasada neoporečnosti rušiti.

Ko ga Drejček povpraša, zakaj na Zemlji preprosto ne prepovejo vojne, mu oče razloži, da se to pač ne da in da bo tudi sam (Drejček) to že razumel, ko bo velik in pameten (kot je oče).

Ob istem pogovoru se izkaže dvomljiva tudi njegova demokratičnost:

¹⁹ Prav tam, str. 24.

„Oče, zakaj pa ne nosimo nogavic namesto čevljev?“

„Zdaj imam pa dovolj teh tvojih večnih zakaj!“ se je razhudil oče. „Ali si naredil računsko nalogo?“²⁰

Značilnost strpnega, demokratičnega dialoga je, da poslušamo sogovorčeve argumente ali njegova vprašanja, se nanje odzivamo in argumentirano debatiramo. Če teža sogovorčevih dokazov pretehta naše, priznamo, da ima prav, če nam zmanjka odgovorov, povemo, da ne vemo.

Reakcija Drejkovega očeta je popolno nasprotje demokratičnemu dialogu. Je sistem, ko v trenutku, ki dovoljuje, da v nepregledni govorni situaciji (ko ti zmanjka argumentov oziroma ko ne poznaš več odgovorov) pač poiščeš nasprotnikovo najšibkejšo točko in ga udariš prav tja, kjer veš, da mu bo vzelo sapa in da se bo potem umaknil.

Drejkova šibka točka je matematika – smo izvedeli iz zgodbe – in vprašanje o matematični nalogi ga bo gotovo izločilo iz pogovora. Oče bo dosegel, kar je hotel: imel bo mir in bo lahko bral časopis. Tudi očetova tolerantnost do Drejkovih nerodnosti se ob nekoliko natančnejšem opazovanju izkaže za zelo problematično. Ko ugotovi, da je otroški vlak razbit (pokvarili so ga Marsovčki, a starši mislijo, da je to storil Drejček sam), oče še razumevajoče izjavi:

„Otroke je treba razumeti. Nekoč sem bil nalašč polomil boben, ker mi niso hoteli kupiti večjega.“²¹

Toda izkaže se, da traja toleranca le tako dolgo, dokler je Drejkovo vedenje podobno temu, kar je oče sam počel kot otrok. Kakor hitro se namreč fant ne obnaša več v skladu z njegovimi pričakovanji, tudi razumevanja – in s tem demokracije – ni več:

„Kaj pa Mars?“ je vprašal oče. „Zakaj se mu je zapičil v glavo? Ko sem bil jaz v njegovih letih, sploh nisem vedel zanj.“²²

In na drugem mestu:

„Potuho mu daješ!“ je vzkliknil oče. „Ko sem bil jaz majhen, sem si smel s prihranjenim denarjem kupiti samo šolske potrebščine.“²³

Še bolj obsojanja vredno postane očetovo vedenje potem, ko ga Drejček (prvič v življenju) resnično spravi na rob razuma. To se zgodi takrat, ko skupaj z Mišem, Mašem in Šašem ponoči odpotuje na Mars in ostane tam še ves naslednji dan.

Lahko sicer razumemo, da je bilo očeta do blaznosti strah (izvemo celo, da je Drejkova iskala policija), toda zdi se, da je ravno blokada razuma omogočila, da se je oče pokazal v pravi luči.

„Vrnil se je!“ je zavpila mati, ko se je Drejček prikazal na pragu...

Oče je odrinil mater in stopil predenj. Jezno ga je prebodel z očmi. Pokazal je v kot, kjer le ležala palica in rekel:

„Ali jo vidiš? Zdaj pa brž povej, kje si bil!“²⁴

Skratka, kadarkoli so načela odraslih na preizkušnji, se zmeraj zamajejo – in odrasli ravnajo v nasprotju s svojim deklariranim prepričanjem.

Iz otroškega zornega kota, zornega kota, ki ne pozna nobenih nians med prav in ne-prav, so te reči zlahka opazne in seveda obsojanja vredne.

²⁰ Prav tam, str. 27.

²¹ Prav tam, str. 12.

²² Prav tam, str. 129.

²³ Prav tam, str. 123.

²⁴ Prav tam, str. 121.

Na drugi etični ravnini vse to opazuje tudi avtor. Tudi on kompromisarstvo, dvoličnost in nekonsekventnost obsoja, kot ga obsojajo otroci, zato je komunikacijska situacija na drugi ravnini etičnega drugačna od tiste na prvi, kjer je bil avtor bolje obveščeni odrasli, ki ve, kaj je prav, in ki želi o tem poučiti tudi otroke.

Tukaj nimamo več opravka z odraslim, ki se sklanja k otroku. Na drugi ravnini etičnega govorita avtor in otrok isti jezik, mislita iste misli, čutita iste občutke in se čudita z istim začudenjem. Na tej ravnini je povest doživljajsko utemeljena v pisateljevem lastnem infantilizmu, infantilni pesniški naravnosti, kakršna se izraža v čudenju, začudenju nad stvarmi in pojavi.²⁵

Odkrivanje lastnega infantilizma pomeni v sodobni poeziji odkrivati sposobnost čudenja nad stvarmi, sposobnost igrive transformacije stvarnosti – in istočasno motriti svet iz perspektive črno-belega zornega kota, neobremenjenega z okoliščinami, s cilji, z nenapisanimi zakoni..., skratka, z vsem tistim, kar odrasle determinira kot odrasle.

Na drugem nivoju etičnega avtor potemtakem skupaj z bralcem opaza tiste etične elemente našega sveta, ki so vidni, dostopni, opazni le, če jih postavimo v drugačno luč – pod žaromet infantilne brezkompromisnosti.

ad3

Na tretjem nivoju etičnega v Pečjakovi povesti *Drejšček in trije Marsovčki* so tista etična načela, za katera se zdi, da jih avtor v besedilo ne vgrajuje hote – načela, ki predstavljajo erozijo tistih ideoloških vrednot, ki jih je pisatelj zgradil na prvem in drugem nivoju.

Za kaj pravzaprav gre?

V znanstvenofantastični povesti imata Mars in marsovska družba funkcijo eksempla – zgodbe, ki naj na konkretnem primeru ponazori bralcu teže dostopna abstraktna (etična) načela. Po tej logiki bi smeli pričakovati, da bodo medčloveški odnosi na Marsu vzorno urejeni – in zdi se, da nam jih je pisatelj resnično želel prikazati kot take. Na Marsu imajo zakon, ki prepoveduje vojne, na Marsu ni nihče grabežljiv, na Marsu gredo otroci spat, ker so spoznali, da so zvečer zaspani, in pišejo matematične naloge, ker vedo, da se bodo le tako naučili računati. Na Marsu imajo celo zakon, ki zapoveduje, da morajo biti otroci srečni.

Vesoljci imajo že po definiciji v znanstvenofantastični literaturi (in to povest *Drejšček in trije Marsovčki* brez dvoma je) funkcijo nekakšnega ogledala. Zaradi njihove beline in neoporečnosti postanejo naše napake bolj vidne, bolj opazne.

Da jim je tudi Pečjak namenil tako vloge, dokazuje naslednji odlomek:

*Drejšček je pričakoval, da bodo ponoči spet prišli skrivnostni neznanci in mu bodo naložili nov greh. Zato je skril pod blazino baterijo in pištolo na kapseljne, pripravljen, da jih ob najmanjšem šumu preseneti.*²⁶

Drejšček je sicer otrok in zato v povesti nosilec pozitivnih etičnih načel, toda v stiku z neznanim, tujim, nerazložljivim tudi on reagira instinktivno, torej tako, da vidi najprej rešitev v uporabi sile.

Ob pogovoru z vesoljskimi otroki postane to zelo evidentno:

„Čudni?“ je ponovil Drejšček. „Menda se vam ne zdimo čudni?“

„Čudni ste,“ je dejal Marsovček, „ker vam rastejo roke iz telesa, in še bolj ste

²⁵ Grafenauer N.: *Sodobna slovenska poezija za otroke. Otok in knjiga* 31. Maribor 1991. Str.68.

²⁶ Pečjak V.: *Drejšček in trije Marsovčki*. Ljubljana 1961. Str.12.

čudni, ker se voskujete.“ Drejček je pogledal pištolo na kapseljne, ki jo je še vedno držal v rokah, in postalo ga je sram...²⁷

Kjub temu da je pisatelj vesoljcem namenil vlogo neke vrste lakmusovega papirja, s pomočjo katerega naj bi zemeljske lastnosti postale bolj vidne – in v ta namen naslikal njihov svet idealnejši od najbolj idealnega, vendarle ne moremo spregledati, kako tudi v tem naj-svetu, kjer si vsi prizadevajo, da bi bili kar se da enaki, kar se da pošteni, kar se da fair in kar se da demokratični – tudi v tem svetu vendarle še veljata zakon močnejšega in tisti, ki pravi, da mora šibkejši ubogati.

Na mestu, kjer se Drejček pogovarja z marsovčki o možnosti, da bi si ogledal njihov planet, začnejo njegovi vesoljski prijatelji hudo dvomiti o tistem zakonu, ki zagotavlja, da morajo biti otroci na Marsu srečni.

„...Tepli nas ne bodo!“²⁸ o tem so sicer prepričani, toda druga možnost – namreč ta, da jih bo oče zaprl v sobo – se jim zdi že veliko bolj verjetna.

Ko se potem po prestani kazni vendarle vrnejo na Zemljo po Drejčka, pa izvemo, kako je bilo:

„Le malo je manjkalo in nas ne bi več videl!“ je vzkliknil Miš ter mu začel pripovedovati, kako je bilo. Ko se povedali očetu, da so hodili na Zemljo, se je strašno razsrdil. Materi pa je postalo slabo. Dopovedoval jim je, da so prekršili marsovski predpis št. 2 in izpostavili ves Mars grozoviti nevarnosti. Šele ko so noč in dan pre-jokali, se mu je omehčalo srce...A ko je Šaš padel na kolena in sklenil roke, je privolil, da prebije Drejček en dan v njihovi hiši.²⁹

Etično sporočilo je nedvoumno: močnejši, veliki, vendarle imajo možnost, da prisilijo šibkejše, manjše od sebe, k poslušnosti. Od stopnje njihove tolerance je odvisno, ali bodo to počeli ali ne. **Toda odločitev je izključno v njihovih rokah!!!**

To načelo pa je v popolnem nasprotju s tistimi, ki jih najdemo na nivojih ena in dva. In zdi se, da je zašlo v besedilo kar proti avtorjevi volji.

Povzetek

Natančna analiza etične komponente literarnega dela je torej pokazala, kako je v mladinski literaturi nemogoče govoriti o tipih literature glede na avtorjev namen sporočanja (glede na njegovo voljo poučevati / vzgajati ali glede na odsotnost te volje). Etična načela / ideologija so v mladinskem literarnem delu ponavadi razslojena na tri ravnine. V pričujočem spisu smo jih opazovali v povesti Vida Pečjaka *Drejček in trije Marsovčki*.

Na prvi ravnini etičnega smo srečali tista moralna in etična načela, ki jih avtor posreduje mlademu bralcu v obliki eksplicitnih vrednot, ki jih on kot odrasli dobro pozna in za katere želi, da bi jih spoznali in usvojili tudi otroci. (*V Drejčku in treh Marsovčkih* gre za etično načelo, da sila ni argument, da bi morali konflikte reševati, ne da bi uporabljali za to orožje, in da ni dovolj, da mir ljubimo, ampak je zanj treba tudi kaj storiti.)

Na drugi ravnini etičnega srečamo tista etična načela, ki jih avtor napravi vidna s pomočjo posebne pripovedne perspektive tako, da jih skupaj z bralcem opazuje iz

²⁷ Prav tam, str.12.

²⁸ Prav tam, str. 81.

²⁹ Prav tam, str. 87.

zornega kota, ki pozna samo dobro in zlo – in ki ne pozna ničesar vmes, skratka iz zornega kota, ki ne pozna ne kompromisarstva in ne izgovora, češ da namen posevčuje sredstvo. Svet odraslih postane na tej ravnini etičnega v *Drejčku in treh Marsovčkah* veliko manj lep in urejen, kot se je zdel na prvi ravnini. Jasno postane namreč, kako odrasli govorijo tako in ravnajo drugače.

Moralnih in etičnih načel, ki jih srečamo na tretji ravnini etičnega, avtor v besedilo ne vgrajuje hote. Zaradi posebne pripovedne perspektive v mladinski književnosti pa postanejo vidni tudi taki segmenti etičnega, ki pomenijo popolno erozijo etičnih načel, ki jih je avtor ‚hote‘ gradil na prvem in drugem nivoju. V Pečjakovi povesti gre za spoznanje, da sta demokracija in enakost tudi v najidealnejšem vseh svetov le začasni ureditvi, saj ostaja močnejšemu še zmeraj prepuščeno, da presodi, kdaj nista več v skladu z njegovimi interesi, in ju takrat ukine ter spet uvede pravice in argumente močnejših.

IDEOLOGY IN YOUTH LITERATURE

1. Literature and Ethics

The answers about the essence of a literary work have to be sought in the findings of the literary theory. The latter suggests¹ that any literary work contains, in addition to aesthetic and cognitive functions, an ethical dimension that is no less important than other elements of the literary-artistic structure.

The ethical function of poetry was recognized already in the ancient Greek philosophy. Plato, for instance, thinks that poetic works have a strong impact on the human soul and that they provide an outlet for good or evil forces in it, thus inclining it toward one or the other direction.²

Aristotle, in his *Poetica*, also agrees that each literary work of art contains an ethical component in addition to aesthetic and cognitive ones. He differs from Plato, who morally condemns poetry, however, and is much more in favor of it. He terms the ethical effect „catharsis“ (Greek for „purgation“). According to him a literary work of art causes tumult and shock in the audience, which consequently leads to the reinstatement of harmony in their souls. Aristotle's perception of catharsis has continued to be used as a means of explaining the ethical function of literary art well into the 20th century.³

What constitutes the ethical function of literature?

Janko Kos in his *Očrt literarne teorije (An Outline of Literary Theory)* defines as ethical everything that influences the reader's value system with regard to himself,

¹ Kos, J. *Očrt literarne teorije*. Ljubljana, 1983. p. 33.

² *Ibid.* p. 34

³ *Ibid.* p. 35

his environment, and the world; everything that shapes his desires, tendencies and intentions; and everything that shows him certain phenomena as positive and others as negative, thus placing his entire life horizons in a distinctly value-oriented perspective. He finds that such ethical function can be seen as ideological, because it offers the reader values which are frequently presented as ideas that sometimes form real ideological systems. Such ideas can be religious, philosophical, political, social, moral in the narrow sense of the word, or simply ideas stemming from life itself.⁴

Some theoreticians attribute too much importance to the ethical component or even see it as uniquely important. They claim that the essence of literature is in morale. The majority of contemporary theoreticians, however, admit that while the ethical dimension of a literary work cannot be neglected, it is nevertheless neither the only one nor the most important.

Similarly, the contemporary literary theory views the impact of the literary work's ethical component on the reader's political, social, moral and ethical principles with considerably more skepticism than it did in earlier periods. It believes that such impact is questionable, especially if the reader is a mature person with already shaped social and moral personality.⁵ It does admit, however, that „such (i.e. ethical) influence is stronger during childhood and adolescent period.“⁶

2. Youth Literature and Ethics

It is perhaps owing to this considerable power of influencing the ethical principles of a young reader that experts used to treat „such literary production within the framework of pedagogy, which.... means that writings for the young were from the very beginning... importantly guided by norms valid in pedagogical theories during individual time periods.“⁷ It was not until the first half of the 20th century that youth literature gradually began to be regarded as part of literature.⁸

Contemporary (i.e. literary-theoretical) approach to literary works for youth shows that children's literature, too, is an aesthetic product whose structure is, just as literature for adult readers, composed of aesthetic, cognitive and ethical components.

Despite this fact it has to be noted that even in the second half of the 20th century institutionalized pedagogical systems have failed to acknowledge the „depedagogization“ of youth literature. Even though good youth literature after World War II as a rule treats „children as a partners with equal rights“⁹ and consequently does not preach and teach¹⁰, the ministries of education and teachers continue to stress (and highlight) the ethical component of literary works by asking

⁴ Ibid. p. 34

⁵ Ibid. p. 36

⁶ Ibid. p. 36

⁷ Kobe, M. *Pogledi na mladinsko književnost*. Ljubljana, 1987. p. 8.

⁸ Ibid. p. 8.

⁹ Novak, B. A. *Igre otrok - igre za otroke. Otroci in knjige* 32. Maribor, 1991. p. 61.

¹⁰ Ibid. p. 61

their students at the end of the lesson the still important question: „What was the author's purpose? What have we learned today?“

It is for this reason that I feel that ethical component of youth literature should be analyzed more thoroughly.

It seems that this structural element of (youth) literature can be used in at least three didactic ways:

1. Youth literature can be used as a means of subordinating children to adults and the rules they create.

This may involve conveyance of ideological principles (indoctrination) of the current social order. Such is the work by Matevž Ravnikar *Zgodbe svetega pisma za mlade ljudi* (*Biblical Stories for the Young*). The purpose of this work from the year 1815 is to inspire children to live according to Christian principles. A series of other youth literary works which, in the former socialist countries, offered children and teenagers, through their identification characters, „the best possible social order“, lead them to believe in „the bright prospects of the working class with the Communist Party as its leader“ and taught them to „respect the bright traditions of socialist revolution“, also belong to this category.

A subtype of such use of youth literature represent those works (and their interpretations) whose objective is to encourage children to introject those norms that the adults set up to regulate forms of coexistence. This is the type of poetry where children can learn that it is not advisable to paint on the walls (Grafenauer: *Slikar/Painter*), that they should go to bed on time (Župančič: *Pismo/Letter*) and that they should not be choosy while eating (H. Hoffmann: *Der Suppenkaspar*).

2. The second subtype of youth literature „uses“ the ethical component for a different reason.

Slovene philosopher Marija Švajncer writes in her study *Etika in mladinska književnost* (*Ethics and Youth Literature*) that literature for adults is allowed to portray the evil in its entirety. It is allowed to destroy human values in the name of the evil because the aesthetics of this literature knows no boundaries and extends in its freedom all the way to – irrationalism. „In youth literature, on the other hand, there are mechanisms which at least partly protect the child against the evil that comes from the adults... The evil (in youth literature; comment by M.K.) can be only a temporary, ephemeral means that in the end leads to the good...“¹¹

The ethical component of this second type of youth literature therefore assumes the role of a big germ-free cheese container which prevents children from noticing the horrors that happen in the world that surrounds them for as long as possible. „It is the children“, writes Marija Švajncer, „that determine the dosage of evil that they are capable of taking...“¹²

3. The third type is the most recent and considered to be very much an in-thing. This is the youth literature (and its use) that sees its role in drawing the attention of the young to the social, ethical, ecological... problems and at the same time mobilizing them for action. The primary function of such literary works is therefore to invoke a feeling in the young reader that each of us (including the reader) should do something to change the world and rectify the conditions in

¹¹ Švajncer, M. *Etika in mladinska književnost. Otroci in knjiga* 32. Maribor 1991. p. 55.

¹² *Ibid.* p. 55.

which we live. This is not all, however, – the feeling of guilt which stems from the reader's passivism in the past is supposed to act as a motivational impulse for action – the reader should take up an active role in saving the world.

At first sight, the mentioned three types of the ethical in youth literature appear to be very clear-cut. The good thing about them is that they allow us to classify the existing youth literature into individual „ideological types“ without much difficulty. Unfortunately, a more thorough analysis shows the ethical component to be a very crude and imprecise criterion, as it does not allow for examining the ethical message on all of its several levels.

Any more detailed analysis of literary works for youth shows that their ethical messages functions on several levels. The nature of these levels will be revealed through the example of the science-fiction novel for children *Drejček in trije Marsovčki* (*Drejček and the Three Martians*) written by Slovene author Vid Pečjak.

Following is a short summary of the story:

Drejček, an eight-year old boy, is visited by three children from the planet Mars one night. They tell him that they came to Earth despite their father's forbiddance to do so. Martian laws strictly forbid such visits, as people on Earth still fight wars and are very backward.

Everything on Mars is arranged in a far better way than on Earth: wars are forbidden, there is a law according to which children are to be happy (meaning that nobody forces them to learn mathematics or to go to bed at night). Martians also solved all ecological problems (by moving their industries on one of their moons, and building a huge playground similar to Disneyland on another one) as well as the food problem – food is produced from rocks and eaten in the shape of pills.

The Martian company opens Drejček's eyes, who now sees the shortcomings of the way parents on Earth had arranged life and the lack of purpose in such order. He becomes aware of the war and peace issue, of the violence of parents toward their children... in short, he begins to observe the world around him from a different perspective, from a critical distance and, in the process, to grow up.

Even such sketchy summary of the story shows that it belongs to the third type of the already mentioned classification. The objective of the work is (among other things) to draw children's attention to one of the most burning problems in the contemporary world and to mobilize them to do something about it.

„Were there no peace-loving people on Sfera?“ asked Drejček¹³ the Martian father after the latter had told him the story of the unfortunate planet that had become the victim of its own aggressiveness.

„Everywhere in the space there live peace-loving people,“ answered the Martian father, „but it is not enough to love peace if you want to live in peace. You have to fight for peace.“¹⁴

A more detailed analysis of the ethical component in the story *Drejček in trije Marsovčki* shows that the problem of ideology/ethics in youth literature cannot be simplified, as it regularly occurs on several levels and dimensions.

¹³ Pečjak, V. *Drejček in trije Marsovčki*. Ljubljana, 1961. p. 114.

¹⁴ Ibid. p. 114.

THESIS: Moral and ethical principles in youth literature (including in *Drejček in trije Marsovčki*) occur on three levels:

1. Moral and ethical principles that the author intentionally, purposely conveys to the young reader. These principles are salient ideological markers in the literary work and represent the ideals of the adults. Children are supposed to adopt these ideals.

2. Moral and ethical principles that the author chooses to make salient through a special narrative perspective – the world of adults and their errors.

3. Moral and ethical principles which are included in the text but not on purpose. Rather they become visible because of the specific narrative perspective in youth literature – ethical principles presented on the first two levels are being eroded on the third level!

The first level:

The basic ideological message in *Drejček in trije Marsovčki* is clear:

Conflicts should not be resolved by violence.

Both macro- and micro-dimension of this principle is presented in the story.

– The macro-dimension involves the problem of war and peace. The basic message is contained in the following passage:

„Then they spoke about war and peace. Drejček was trying to persuade (the doctor) that wars are damaging, that they may destroy the world and that it is not enough to love peace. We have to do something for peace...“¹⁵

The micro-dimension involves aggressiveness at solving interpersonal conflicts, where the stronger (the adults) usually impose their will on the weaker (children):

„Do all parents on Earth beat their children?“ asked Miš.

„Other parents only beat them every now and then,“ replied Drejček.

„Why?“ asked Miš.

„So that they would be good,“ explained Drejček. „Children are punished when they are naughty, when they don't want to go to school, when they refuse to wash themselves and in similar cases.“

Miš, Maš and Šaš looked at each other, bewildered.¹⁶

In addition to the theme of violence there are two other ethical messages on the first level.

The first should be interpreted as a kind of indoctrination of ideological principles on which the country's dominant political elite of the time was based. Mars (which the story presents as a perfect example, a kind of utopian country where everything is best and meaningful) has a social order that, when compared to the situation on Earth, comes closest to the communist social order, where everybody is rich.

„There are no poor on Mars,“ said (the Martian father).

„Everybody is rich. Everybody gets what he or she wants.“

„Are goods in your shops free?“ asked the surprised Drejček.

„Free,“ confirmed the Martian father.

„Then you can get everything that you want. Even a hundred robots.“

¹⁵ Ibid. p. 126.

¹⁶ Ibid. p. 51.

„Why should we want a hundred robots?“ was surprised the Martian father. „Nobody needs as many. We have five, which is more than enough.“¹⁷

The author portrays a society where each takes only as much as he or she needs – such ideal interpersonal relationships were foreseen in the socialist-communist vision of Marx and Engels.

Such ideas could easily lead us into a faulty interpretation, i.e. that *Drejček in trije Marsovčki* belongs to the first type of youth literature (the one that is written with the purpose of indoctrinating the reader with political principles). The fact that the story did not lose its appeal with the political changes that took place in Slovenia best proves that the indoctrination claim would be wrong. The story remains in school textbooks and children read it with equal enthusiasm as they did in the time when one the school subjects used to be the fundamentals of social morale.

The reason for such interpretation lies in the fact that *Drejček in trije Marsovčki* is a novel where the cognitive and aesthetic components are not dominated by the ethical one. It remains a literary work of art and should be distinguished from the kind of „literary production“ that was offered to children as ideology in aesthetic „packaging“ (to be more appealing) for forty years after World War II.

The fourth message that is found on the first level of the ethical in *Drejček in trije Marsovčki* is the educational preaching about homework writing.

„Robots are smart machines,“ replied Miš. „They can cook, wash the dishes, dust the furniture...“

„They can calculate, too,“ added Maš.

„Does he ever write the maths homework instead of you?“ asked Drejček.

„No,“ answered Maš. „I do my homework myself and if I don't know something, then I don't write it.“

„Isn't the teacher angry then?“

„Why?“ was surprised Maš. „If I don't know something it is better that I don't write it. If the robot were to do my homework, it would no longer be mine.“¹⁸

In a word, homework should be done by children. Copying from others doesn't make any sense, as one would never grow wise and learned as the adults in this way.

The first level of the ethical component of *Drejček in trije Marsovčki* thus serves Vid Pečjak to present three topics:

- the topic of aggressiveness and violence in interpersonal conflicts
- the topic of ideal interpersonal relations and
- the topic of sincerity and honesty (writing maths homework).

All three topics are presented from a narrative position of the adult that knows what is best (for the child and the world) and who thinks that this knowledge is so important that children, too, should possess it (and act accordingly). We are faced with a classic adult (the author)-child relation, typical of the older Slovene youth literature. Here, however, it is used in the modern story of *Drejček in trije Marsovčki*.

¹⁷ Ibid. p. 107.

¹⁸ Ibid. p. 106.

The second level:

The second ethical level of *Drejček in trije Marsovčki* includes those ethical principles that are made visible through a special narrative perspective. Double-facedness, insincerity and compromising have become so commonplace that adults don't even notice them any more. It is different with children. For them the world is black and white. Things are either good or, if they are not good, bad. There is nothing in between. It is this uncompromising childlike perspective that is used to detect when adults lie (but think that their lies are acceptable), when they are aggressive (but find justification for their aggression) – in a word, when adults say one thing, but do the opposite and yet always manage to find an (adult) excuse for their actions.

It is not a coincidence that Martians, the representatives of the ideal (perfectly white) world choose to communicate with a child – Drejček.

„The teacher told us that we should not trust people from Earth,“ warned him Maš.

„But Drejček can be trusted,“ said Miš. „He is not like people from Earth. If his arms did not grow out of his body he would be no different from Martian children.“¹⁹

The message is clear: People from Earth (adults) are not to be trusted. Those who represent the good and the pure can communicate only with those who have equal confidence in the good and who are capable of distinguishing very accurately the good from the bad. The world of adults as seen from such (childlike) perspective is of course very different from the world the adults would like to present to the children through their preaching.

The figure who represents the ethical on the second level is Drejček's father. In principle he should be counted among positive characters. Our first impression is that he is a tolerant father who understands how Drejček could eat the marmalade and even destroy his toys (on purpose). In addition, he claims that he loves peace and that he is against war. Also, he doesn't beat his children as does Mihec's father next door.

But as soon as we begin to examine his behavior more closely, from a stricter, childlike perspective (as does the author together with his readers), his facade of blamelessness starts to crumble.

When Drejček asks him why people don't simply forbid wars on Earth, the father explains that this cannot be done and that he (Drejček) will understand why not only when he is grown up and wise (as his father).

The continuation of the same conversation reveals also his rather questionable democratic attitudes.

„Father, why don't we wear socks instead of shoes?“

„Now, I've had enough of your never-ending why's!“ was angry the father. „Have you done your homework yet?“²⁰

It is typical of a tolerant, democratic dialogue that we listen to the interlocutor's arguments or his questions, respond to them and present arguments during the discussion. If the interlocutor's arguments carry greater weight than ours we admit that he is right; if we run out of arguments, we admit that we do not know the answer.

¹⁹ Ibid. p. 24.

²⁰ Ibid. p. 27.

The reaction of Drejšek's father is in complete contradiction with the rules of a democratic dialogue. As soon as the speech situation becomes uncontrollable, i.e. when he runs short of arguments and when he no longer can produce answers, he looks for the other person's weakest point and hits him where he is certain to force him in retreat.

Drejšek's weak point is mathematics – as we know from the story – and the question about his maths assignment is sure to end the discussion. The father will get his way – he will be able to read the newspaper in peace and quiet.

Even the father's tolerance toward Drejšek's mishaps turns out to be a little problematic on closer inspection.

When he finds out that the toy train is broken (it was broken by the Martians, but parents think that Drejšek is responsible), he says sympathetically:

„We have to understand the child. I once broke a drum on purpose when they wouldn't buy me a bigger one.“²¹

But it turns out that his tolerance lasts only as long as Drejšek's behavior is similar to his own behavior from the time when he was a child. As soon as the boy's behavior does not comply with his expectations, his sympathy – and democracy – is gone.

„What about this Mars?“ asked father. „How come he got it in his head? When I was his age, I knew nothing about Mars.“²²

And:

„You encourage him!“ shouted the father. „When I was little, I was only allowed to use the money that I had saved to buy things for school.“²³

Even more condemnable becomes the father's behavior when Drejšek drives him (for the first time in his life) completely crazy. This happens when he travels to Mars together with Miš, Maš and Šaš and stays there the entire next day.

We can understand that the father was worried to death for his son (we even learn that he had called the police to find him). Nevertheless, it is precisely during this blockade of logical thinking that his real self seems to be revealed.

„He's back!“ shouted the mother when Drejšek showed up on the doorstep.

The father pushed her away and stepped in front of Drejšek. He looked at him angrily, pointed to the stick in the corner and said:

„Do you see it? You'd better tell me where you were and fast!“²⁴

In a word, whenever the principles of the adults are put to test, they waver – adults always act contrary to their declared positions.

From the child's viewpoint, the viewpoint that knows no nuances between right and wrong, such things are very obvious and deserve to be condemned.

All of this is observed also by the author. Like children, he condemns compromising, hypocrisy and inconsistency, which is why the communicational situation on this ethical level differs from that on the first level (where he was an adult who knows what is right and wants to teach).

On the second level we no longer deal with an adult who is patronizing a child. As far as ethics is concerned, the author and the child speak the same language. They think the same thoughts, feel the same feelings and experience the same

²¹ Ibid. p. 12.

²² Ibid. p. 129.

²³ Ibid. p. 123.

²⁴ Ibid. p. 121.

wonderment. The story and its experience originate in the author's own infantilism, i.e. his infantile poetic orientation manifested in his wondering at things and phenomena.²⁵

Discovering one's own infantilism in contemporary poetry implies the poet's ability to be fascinated by things, his ability to transform the reality through play – and at the same time his ability to observe the world from the black-and-white perspective, unburdened by circumstances, goals, unwritten rules etc. ..., in short, free of everything that determines adults as adults.

On the second level of the ethical, the author, together with the reader, thus reveals those ethical elements in the world around us that are visible and accessible only when placed in a different perspective – under the spotlight of infantilism that allows for no compromise.

The third level

The third level of the ethical in Pečjak's story *Drejček in trije Marsovčki* includes those ethical principles that seem to be interwoven into the text without the author's conscious intention. These are the principles that represent the erosion of those ideological values on which the author had been building on the first two levels.

What exactly is meant by this?

In Pečjak's sci-fi story Mars and Martian society are used as an example, an illustration through which the author attempts to explain hard-to-comprehend abstract principles. Following this logic, we would expect interpersonal relations on Mars to be ideal – and, indeed, it seems that the author tried to show them as such. On Mars there is a law that prohibits wars, nobody there is greedy, children go to bed, because they realize that they are sleepy and they write the maths homework, because they know that this is the only way to learn calculus. They even have a law requiring that children be happy.

The spacemen in sci-fi literature (and *Drejček in trije Marsovčki* undoubtedly is a sci-fi story) by definition assume the role of a mirror. It is because of their whiteness and flawlessness that our mistakes are so much more visible and more obvious.

That Pečjak himself planned such roles for them is evident from the following passage:

„Drejček had expected that the mysterious guests would come again during the night and burden him with a new sin. He thus took a battery and a toy gun and hid them under his pillow so as to be able to surprise them at the slightest noise.“²⁶

As a child Drejček adheres to positive ethical principles. Still, when he comes into contact with the unknown and unexplainable, he, too, reacts instinctively, i.e. the first solution that comes to his mind is the use of force.

This is very clear from his conversation with space children:

„Strange?“ repeated Drejček. „You don't think that we are strange, do you?“

„You are strange,“ replied the Martian, „because your arms grow out of your bodies and even more so because you fight wars.“

Drejček glanced at the toy gun that he still held in his hand and felt ashamed...“²⁷

²⁵ Grafenauer, N. *Sodobna slovenska poezija za otroke*. Otroki in knjiga 31. Maribor 1991. p. 68.

²⁶ Pečjak, V. *Drejček in trije Marsovčki*. Ljubljana, 1961. p. 12.

²⁷ *Ibid.* p. 12.

Even though the author planned for Martians to be a sort of a test that should make the characteristics of people from Earth more salient – which is why he painted the Martian world more ideal than the ideal – we cannot overlook the fact that even in that supreme world where everybody strives to be equal and maximally honest, fair and democratic – that even in that world there still exists the law of the stronger and that the weak have to obey.

When Drejšek discusses with his Martian friends the possibility of visiting their planet, his friends from space begin to have serious doubts about the law that requires that children be happy.

„...*We will not get the beating!*“²⁸ they are sure of that, but the threat that their father may lock them in the room seems much more real to them.

When they return to Earth after the punishment to get Drejšek we learn what happened:

„*It was within a hair's breadth and you would have never seen us again!*“ cried Miš and began to tell the story. When they told their father that they had visited Earth, he was enraged. Their mother fainted. The father was trying to impress on them that they had broken the Martian rule no. 2 and exposed the entire Mars to a horrible danger. Only after they had cried night and day, his father's heart softened... When Šaš fell to his knees and held up his his hands, he gave his permission for Drejšek to spend one day in their house.²⁹

The ethical message is unmistakable: despite everything the strong and the big will always have the power to force the weaker and the smaller to submission. It depends on the degree of their tolerance whether they will resort to this power or not. The decision remains exclusively in their hands!!!

This last principle is in complete contradiction with those that we find on the first and the second levels. It seems almost as if it had found its way into the text against the author's will.

Summary

A detailed analysis of the ethical component of a literary work shows that it is impossible, in youth literature, to define types of literature according to the purpose of the author's message (according to the presence or absence of his intention to teach/educate). Ethical principles/ideology in youth literature are usually divided into three levels. This study is concerned with such division in Vid Pečjak's story *Drejšek in trije Marsovčki*.

The first level of the ethical includes those moral and ethical principles that the author conveys to the young reader in the form of explicit values. These are the values that he, as an adult, knows well and wishes for the children to adopt. (The ethical principles that he mentions in *Drejšek in trije Marsovčki* are the following: force is not an argument; conflicts should be resolved without resorting arms; it is not enough to love peace, we need to actively fight for it).

The second level of the ethical includes those ethical principles that the author makes visible through a special narrative perspective. Together with the reader he

²⁸ Ibid. p. 81.

²⁹ Ibid. p. 87.

looks at them from the perspective that distinguishes only between good and evil and knows nothing in between – no compromising, no excuse that the goal justifies the means. The world of adults on this level of the ethical in *Drejšek in trije Marsovčki* is not nearly as beautiful and ordered as on the first level. It is evident that adults say one thing and do the other.

The moral and ethical principles that we encounter on the third level of the ethical have not been included in the text on purpose. These segments of the ethical that show a complete erosion of the ethical principles that Pečjak had built in 'žintentionally' on the first two levels, however, become salient through a special narrative perspective of youth literature. In Pečjak's story this is the realization that democracy and equality are only temporary values even in the most ideal of all worlds. The strong are the ones who decide when these values no longer correspond to their interests and may therefore suspend them and reintroduce the rights and arguments of force.

Prevod (translation)
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