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## A NEW MACEDONIAN NOVEL ABOUT A YOUNG AND GROWING

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### **Abstract**

In this paper we refer to a new, in fact the latest novel by Macedonian author of children Velko Nedelkovski dedicated to young readers. What makes this book special is that it applies to young people who are at the exit from childhood and the threshold of adolescence, and the author attempted to help them on that rocky road through friendships, initial loves, nourishing love to animals, respect for elders, and all this in order to grow into healthy, strong young men, ready to face all difficulties in life.

**Key words:** novel, Macedonian literature for children and youth.

### **Introduction**

The famous Macedonian novelist, playwright, poet and writer, Veljko Nedelkovski in this his book proves to be a great expert on child soul vibrations of it in those dramatic years of a child's development when the child begins to see the world with different eyes. After the excellent children's books, especially for young "Second shift" (Vtorata smena), "Confused years" (Zbuneti godini), "Flying man Peperut" (Letackiot covek Peperut), "Charmers from eighth grade" (Šarmerite od osmo), now a young adolescent audience it presents novel "Zlatko Zlatec" with interesting subtitle "Series mini-novels for children and young". With the commitment "youth" already indicates the nature of the case. Namely, it becomes clear that the novel will be dedicated to young people, adolescents.

**The novel "Zlatko Zlatec" ( "Series mini-novels for children and young")**

The novel<sup>1</sup> has four parts: 1. Zlatko Zlatec and Tomchule Mac 2. Zlatko Zlatec and Misko from Docnilend 3. Zlatko Zlatec and thirst for applause and 4. Zlatko Zlatec and four simcezi.

The richness of the characters who will walk on the stage in front of readers, gives the novel a broad and attractive dimension. They are not only classmates of Zlatko Zlatec, not only friends of his street, but in almost all the events are included and loved ones of the family, designated as Taton (Tony's father), mother Lily, and the inevitable and always prepared for fun - grandfather Dedor. But there are "omniscient surcharge boy" Zhilche Verne (Živko Vernovski) then Miško (from Docnilend) and Welle from Veles, but also four of his best friends, "princesses-simcezi" (Letka, Jana, Snežinka, Marionka). Inevitable are with domestic pets, with cats and dogs.<sup>2</sup>

In the first part, the main character, Zlatko Zlatec and Tomchule Mac, Zlatko, affectionately called by his parents Zlatko Zlatec, proclaims at home his desire to have a pet, and no more, no less than - lion, and it truly, "I want you to buy me a lion?! ... But live, not teddy bear!" (11).

Once they point that it is impossible, and have a little joke with him, and that the real lions belong either in the jungle or zoo, Zlatko, with capricious behavior typical of children, agrees for a puppy or a kitten, but adults delayed discussion of a "distant and indefinite future." The requested puppy should have odd, fairy characteristics: "Then find me a puppy!?! Now or soon!?! ... With raised or lowered little ears. With green muzzle and blue tail!" (12).

Therefore, in protest Zlatko refuses to eat, and he will even write a letter to their home members, but the answer does not reach. Quite by chance, after a cinch around skyscraper, Zlatko finds a little lost kitten and he appropriates him. Responsibility for its cultivation, especially "rude behavior", on which are beginning to complain domestic - should take Zlatko.

On one occasion, during the arrival of the postman, cat exploits half-open door and goes outside. Among children arises a real search for him around skyscrapers, but only his friend Živko Vernovski (Zhilche Vern) is to remember that the cat must have sinned skyscraper in returning.

Unfortunately, the apartment in which is the cat, belong to Letka and therefore for its new owner she declares herself, Zlatko classmate, which are at odds. The compromise will offer comrade Zhilche - the cat will have two owners and they will change during the week: "the little kitty will have two names and two owners!"

One week he will live with you, Letka. And then a week with you, Zlatec ... Joint care for him will reconcile the two of you "(32). Thus, the pet will really bring feuding sides, so when Letka wants more days, Zlatko could not resist her tears. Also, the cat will be one reason for the assembly of new friendships that from the beginning to be threatening hostilities (with Bobby and Bibo): "A child who has this tame kitten can become a third undivided friend Let's spread our detachment for a snack!" (42).

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<sup>1</sup> Velko Nedelkovski, Zlatko Zlatec, Antolog, Skopje, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Aleksandar Kujundziski, Predgovor kon kn. Zlatko-Zlatec, Antolog, Skopje, 2015.

Sarah Friedman in her article *Is Sharing a Bear Necessity*, explains why animal characters and anthropomorphism have a greater impact on children than human characters, which emphasized that: 1. the animals are an inseparable part of life for children 2. Children love animals and 3. the use of animal characters is ambiguous and due to the lack of sex, race, age, etc., which can allow children to identify with them.<sup>3</sup>

And Karen Swallow Prior indicates on positive effects of animalistic stories for children. According to her, the ethical dimension is important that children learn compassion towards animals and their humane treatment later in life. While identification with animals helps in the development of a moral framework for children that includes kindness to animals, identification with them is still not the highest rank of the ethical scale.

Higher than this is sympathy, which is not quite the same thing as identification. The word "compassion" (a derivative of the root of word meaning "to suffer" and combined with the prefix "together" or "a") is the anguish felt for each other, but not by identifying with the other, but rather to despise being by the other.

One thing is to feel the pain of another through identification, but higher ethical is to suffer fully, to feel for what is not himself, but is entirely another. Hence the most powerful and most shocking places in animalistic literature are those when their only role reflects that they have in the real world: simply to be an animal with which we live in this country.<sup>4</sup>

The second part of the novel is entitled "Zlatko Zlatec and Miško from Docnilend" and it starts with the first school day of the new school year, when Zlatko is in fourth grade. Here is shown the friendship between the children at the school especially friendship with classmate Miško also called "Misko from Docnilend", because he was always late for classes. In this chapter, the area turns a negative behavior in mice, its constant delays of hours, request excuses to avoid school obligations.

Reading the dialogues between Miško and Zlatko in which Miško attractively is trying to capture the fun of absence from school, inevitably pushed the notion of "Pinocchio" and section when bows and accepts to leave in the country where there is no school.

In their fun games, Miško will try to suck and Zlatko, but Zlatko recognizes the danger in time, so not only he will not accept it, but he will try and help his partner. In fact, the cause of the rebellious behavior of Miško looming, and it is the absence of the father who is abroad. Solidarity of children is boundless, so first, not knowing the reason for his absences, his comrades from their modest pocket money, generously raise funds to buy him a watch to not be late for class.

But then, after finding out that this Miško's behavior is only a way and wish to draw the attention of his parents, particularly the father and forced him to return home from abroad, his friends choose to take concrete action – they will write a letter to Miško's father to return home.

This, according to Carl E. Pickhardt, is a kind of rebellion against social norms imposed by adults, precisely because adults. Revolt could cause young people to rebel against their own interests - to reject interests had since childhood, various activities and relationships that often support their self-esteem. It can cause them to engage in self-destructive behavior - refusing to work at the school, even physically hurt. Although the young man considers that the rebellion

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<sup>3</sup> Sarah Friedman, *Is Sharing a Bear Necessity?: Anthropomorphization and Learning Social Lessons from Children's Books*. MA thesis, University of Virginia, 2011, <<http://www.virginia.edu/psychology/downloads/DMP%20Papers/DMP%202011/Sara%20Friedman.pdf>>. Web, accessed on 22.01.2016

<sup>4</sup> Karen Swallow Prior, . Ask the Animals, and They Will Teach You, *Flourish* magazine, 2011, accessed on 22.01.2016, <http://www.flourishonline.org/2011/07/lessons-from-literature-about-animals/>



is an act of independence, he never really is. It is actually a case of addiction. The rebellion in the young person causes it themselves cannot define, and this affects personal behavior when doing the opposite of what other people want.

Dave Currie says that adolescent rebellion as a result of the desire of adolescents for independence. It is one of the normal reasons, but he believes there are "unhealthy" reasons for such rebellion, such as parental discord, parental discipline methods, confusion in the family, parental alcoholic, abusive situations, financial pressures, the influence of peers fear of failure, feelings of low self-worth, and so on.<sup>5</sup> In the case of this novel, the care of friends walked in time to protect Miško of bad roads. Not only that, thanks to their appeal to the father, he returns home and opens a business in their homeland. Charity action of family harmony is immediately visible and Miško corrected his behavior. Meanwhile, relations between Letka and Zlatko thanks to kitty improve.

The third part is entitled "Zlatko Zlatec and thirst for applause," and in it first we see the desire by Zlatko to be famous, and therefore belong in all possible sections (young actors, dancers, players, reciters, traffic section, ecologists chess players, etc.), but he soon realizes that it is impossible to achieve good results everywhere, and all things do not attract him the same. While parents and grandfather are proud of it and recognize themselves and their desires in him, he gives up many of these extracurricular activities, one by one. The environmental section will initiate one-day trip to Katlanovo, where Zlatko will introduce girl Marionka from Veles, with who he will continue to communicate through letters, to which Letka becomes jealous.

Pickhardt in his article, speaking exactly about early adolescence (from 9-13 years), indicates that at that time the child leaves childhood and begins to move into adolescence. What characterizes this period is the desire of the child-adolescent should not be treated as a child but as an adult. Therefore, it is understandable, in that period, the child tries to get away from family and moving to other social groups, the circle of friends, with those who have common interests, the same understanding with which to hang out and are associate with him.

Therefore, any such group-band has its own place in the school where they are collected. The adolescents in this period is especially important to be accepted by their appearance, behavior, attitudes, in a word, not to be alone. But on the other hand, excessive popularity can bring big problems.<sup>6</sup> That is a problem faced Zlatko. In fact, this part of the novel suggests uptake of Zlatko puberty, as evidenced by the fact that he wants to emphasize among his friends, and especially to appeal to girls: "With such responsibilities, you will neglect the poor kitty! He will mew hungry and thirsty, my little eye! Actor, dancer, chess player, karate ... Overnight you want to become world popular number one..." (100)

Zlatko wishes not to be alone, to have a brother or sister, especially after being a mediator in forgiveness between twins Goran and Zoran Bliznakovski (!), and their mutual

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<sup>5</sup> Dave Currie, Helping Parents Survive Adolescent Rebellion, <http://powertochange.com/family/rebellion/>, accessed on 13.02.2016

<sup>6</sup> Carl E. Pickhardt, Adolescence and the pursuit of popularity, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/surviving-your-childs-adolescence/201005/adolescence-and-the-pursuit-popularity>, accessed on 13.02.2016

jealousy. Zlatko is one that will find a compromise solution to their jealousy, and also the way to get what they want from their parents.

The last, fourth part of this novel for children and youth, "Zlatko Zlatec and four simcezi" reveal "sweet pain" of Zlatko, stage in the life of every adolescent when their awareness parade more sympathies, and they are hesitating. Depending on the daily events in correspondence with them, the mood of Zlatko is also changing. Thus, except Letka, which completely appropriates kitty, Zlatko nurture some tender feelings towards the girl who is sitting with in the same bench, Jana - Janka, to Marionka from Veles which introduces on the ecological outing in Katlanovo and with which some time he exchanges letters, and to a beautiful snowflake (of the performance) - Sneze.

Another normal space for young people to explore is their new development of their sexuality. Children who are in transition from middle childhood to adolescence will express their sexuality in a natural, healthy way. Often, young people express romantic interest in one of their peers. When these "sympathy" will occur, they can call on their friends these special "boy" or "girl". Young can express an urgent desire to associate with these friends in the school bus, during lunch, or during other group activities, such as a basketball game. Or they can connect with these friends in the community, such as festivals, church activities, or youth clubs.<sup>7</sup>

So, suddenly, poor Zlatko will find himself amidst the "whirlwind" of girls, feelings, interwoven events ... The dilemma will be resolved in part with the help of his grandfather who gives useful tips that are timely for show because his companions begin exhibit jealousy towards him as a favorite of many girls: "Letka why are you like pungent pepper? Let's do this ... One day I will sit with Janka and one day with you. If Jana agrees ... (154).

His dilemma is beautiful present by his grandfather, who will also be the best adviser: "I know your little problem has three unknowns... Up-number with four unknown! That familiar and dear girls, right? Which little eyes will be given priority? Which name rings to you the most?" (155).

This will crystallize Zlatko feelings, girls feelings, and among his comrades. Letka and Jana Janka willfully away from him and get closer to other classmates, Snowwhite family will move to another city, and while Zlatko is grieving because of that, suddenly in Skopje migrates Marionka from Veles. The novel ends with the image of two young on a walk through Skopje.

## CONCLUSION

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<sup>7</sup> Angela Oswald, Developing Interest In Sex And Sexuality, <https://www.mentalhelp.net/articles/developing-interest-in-sex-and-sexuality/>, accessed on 13.02.2016

This is novel in that motive more interlocking strands that are attached to each other. First, here is the child's loneliness amidst skyscrapers, lonely without sibling or replacement requires pet. Love and care for the little kitten, you walked with the girl which otherwise was "at odds" - Letka. Also, the cat will be an occasion to acquire new friends, new friends, who will show him that life can pull and side roads if permits (from hours to escape from Misko Docnilend). Friendship and the desire to prove participation in many sections, and will bring friends with girls top children's sympathy and tender feelings, which reflects the typical growth of children in comprehensive youth.

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