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Narrative prose from the life of youth at the turning point : summary

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SUMMARY

Narrative Prose from the Life of Youth at the Turning Point

The publication *Narrative Prose from the Life of Youth at the Turning Point* focuses on the definition of the term narrative prose about the life of children and the youth itself. This term is introduced in genealogical and terminological perspective. The book also focuses on basic trends, which appeared in prose published for the first time between 1989 and 2010. Its goal is to evaluate the functionality of this term and the fundamental trends which influenced the genre in the times of important social changes. The individual chapters focus on the books intentionally intended for older school age (literature for boys and girls) and for adolescents (young adult fiction). The thesis also focuses on new adult literature, which is a follow-up to the novels for girls and it is not a suitable transition between the readership of children and adults. This thesis tries to find the differences between the prose for children and adolescents and possibly for new adults. At the same time, it follows the changes of readers' preferences, declines and shifts of individual genre variations, which mainly affected the literature for adolescent girls and boys.

The definition of genre is subjected to both theoretical and historical scrutiny. In doing so, it traces the more than 100-year tradition of genre formation and the search for its appropriate name. In addition to the factual use of the term, the book also draws on the critical responses it has received. The very notion of narrative prose from the lives of children is out of place in the context of the predominantly one-word designations of genres of literature for children and young people; to this day, the genre is still called inconsistently on the book market. Therefore, we define it using the features of narrativity, functionality, a specific type of child character and the mimetic principle. We then verify the functionality

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of the term and the de facto and persistent existence of the genre by analysing and interpreting texts first published between 1990 and 2010.

The term Young Adult Fiction was only subtly penetrating the Czech space in the period under study, while it was already established in the West at that time. Nevertheless, even in Czech literature it is possible to find titles that fit its definition. The monograph suggests that the development of this segment of the book market in the Czech context was parallel to the global one, but it focuses predominantly on two Czech authors who came into wider awareness after 1989. In addition to the artistically demanding books by Iva Procházková (*Soví zpěv, Nazí, Tanec trosečníků*), it analyses the instructionalism in the books by Ivona Březinová (*Držkou na rohožce*).

Prose for girls underwent a significant transformation after 1989, which was primarily based on thematic detaboo. Since 2000, however, this innovative potential has been exhausted, and the subgenre has been looking for other ways to stay in the limelight. One of the tendencies it exhibits is genre syncretism. This is analysed in more detail using the example of Ivona Březina's so-called B series. The book also deals with the so-called New Adult Fiction, a new label for books predominantly for "post young adult" women, which are often linked to prose for adolescent girls. It explains the functioning of this sub-genre using the example of works by Stanislav Rudolf, Blanka Chlupová, Lenka Lanczová, Ivona Březinová and Markéta Harasimová.

In the section devoted to the forms of boys' prose, which are more universal for readers despite their gendered designation, the publication searches for the innovative potential of the type of prose that has been associated in the past with prominent authors, especially Jaroslav Foglar. In fact, his last book is also analysed as an example of one line of development. He also notes his successors, Svatopluk Hrnčíř and Jiří Stránský. Complex themes (World War II, mental handicap) appear rather rarely, but their connection is represented by Ivan Remunda's book *Bryčka pro biskupa*. In the context of the rather declining prose for teenage boys, Iva Procházková's *Únos domů* is also exceptional. It is contrasted with Josef Valášek's (*Rakety, míče, smeče*), which is also psychologically tuned, but which suggests that, compared to the scout novel, a greater emphasis on psychologising characters may not be an ideal way of innovating the subgenre.

The publication is not an overview study; its main intention was to reflect the development of a controversial genre in many respects during a period of a double turning point – a social one, given in 1989, and a temporal one, which is linked to the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries. It notes that the genre benefited from a new social impulse in this period, testing its functionality and its place in

adolescent reading, but also encountering some of its limits. For at least some genre variants, the question then arose – Which way forward? And that’s a question that will have to be answered.