

# Jana Sopková

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"Rómovia v literatúre pre deti a mládež na Slovensku", Bibiana Hlebová et al., Presov 2011 : [recenzja]

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**Jana Sopková** (reviewer)

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**Review of the publication:  
Bibiana Hlebová et al.  
“Rómovia v literatúre pre deti  
a mládež na Slovensku” [Romanies  
in Literature for Children and Youth in  
Slovakia]**

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The cultural and social changes and professional-artistic activities of the Romanies in Slovakia after 1989 inspired Bibiana Hlebová and the other co-authors Susan Stanislavová, Radoslav Rusňák and Eva Dolinská to compile the monograph called ***Romanies in Literature for Children and Youth in Slovakia (2011)***, where they present results of their literary-historical research of Romany literature for children and young people in Slovakia, and the literary-theoretical interpretation of specific self-identification and the identification of the Romanies in various literary genres, which are addressed mainly to children and young readers.

The author B. Hlebová considers that Romanies literature to be an equivalent part of Slovak literature for children and young people, and that it could also positively influence the current system of school literary education, which she has already documented in previous books: in the monograph titled ***Romany Literature in the Multicultural and Emotional Education of Elementary School Pupils (2009)***, where she focused on the actual issues of developing intercultural communication, communication competencies and the emotional intelligence of students at the first stage of primary school through the genres of Romany literature; in the university educational text ***Romany identity (romipen) in Romany fairy-tales (paramisa) (2010)***, in which, on the one hand, she identified a typical and specific symbol of Romany identity in a selected Romany fairy tale from

the Romany authors (D. Banga), J. Berky-Ľuborecký, E. Lacková), and, on the other hand, she pointed out the possibility of their being used in the multicultural and emotional education of students through eighteen strategies of creative and humanistic teaching of Frank E. Williams; in the compiled ***Lexicon of the Authors of Romany Literature for Children and Youth (2011)***, in which she presented the portraits of Romany and non-Romany writers for children and young people in Slovakia, who in their work processed Romany topics in the Slovak or Slovak-Romany languages (part of the lexicon are also the authors of world literature).

The culmination of the author's efforts is a new collective monograph under the name ***Romanies in Literature for Children and Youth in Slovakia (2011)***, in which the aim of the team of authors was to refer concisely to the position and artistic image of Romanies in the literature for children and young people in Slovakia, and in the context of the original and the translation of literary creations of Romany authors, as well as in the occurrence of Romany figures in the genres of Slovak literature for children and young people from non-Romany authors.

In the first chapter, titled *Romanies in Slovak literature for children and youth in literary historical overview*, the author B. Hlebová, after explaining the source of the literary-scientific terms and the historical-developmental context, presents an overview of intentional and non-intentional creation of identified Romany and non-Romany authors in the Slovak literature for children and young people (published in the Slovak or Slovak-Romany languages), as well as the translations of the creations of Romany and non-Romany authors from the foreign literature that have been published in Slovakia. The author presents the results of the literary-historical research of Romany literature in Slovakia as the historical milestone in the development of Slovak literature for children and young people by O. Sliacky (1997), in three developmental periods, within which he says that in the first period (from the 1930s to 1950s) Romany literature in Slovakia did not exist, in the second period (from the 1960s until 1989) Romany literature began to take shape, in the third period (from 1989 to the present) there was a boom in Roma literature for children and young people.

In the second chapter, titled *Romany in genres of Slovak literature for children and youth*, the authors R. Rusňák, Z. Stanislavová, E. Dolinská present the position and artistic image in the selected genres of Slovak literature for children and young people from Romany and non-romany authors. In the subsection, *Before you say Romany literature...* R. Rusňák presents the perception of the problems of Romany and Romany literature based on an extra-literary context, while he points to the difference and also the universality of Romany literature formation on the cultural platforms of the Romany ethnic group from the perspective of the rest of Slovakian society. In the subsection, *Mental image of Romanies in the Slovak creation for children and youth*, Z. Stanislavová tries to reconstruct the mental image of the Romanies and the model of their co-existence with Non-romanies in the two genres, and in a legend and social prose. The author further analyzes the literary "picture" of Romanies in the prose of three Romany authors (E. Lacková, L. Tavali, Ľ. Divi), in the creation in which she situated different variations of literary introspection of this ethnic group. In the subsection *Musical motives in Daniela Hivešova-Šilanova's fairy tales* E. Dolinská focuses on the observation of music motives in the fairy tales for children, *the Boy with a seagull*, and *Susan's butterflies and bird Koráločka*, the interpretation of which is situated parallel to the author's collection of poetry *Bell little man*. The author perceives music and singing not only as an integral part of the philosophy of life and the existence of the Romanies, but also as a logical part of creating fairy tales from the life of the Romany community in the creations of the Slovak writer D. Hivešova-Šilanova.

In the contributions of the reviewed monograph, ***Romanies in Literature for Children and Youth in Slovakia (2011)***, we emphasize the new and actual mediation of literary-historical and literary-theoretical perspectives to the participation of Romanies in the Slovak literature for children and young people. We believe, however, that the authors of the monograph at the same time create a space also for teachers for the creative use of the educational genres of Romany literature in the multicultural and emotional education of students in elementary school, which is a necessity for the development of cognition and cognitive intelligence, as

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well as the development of feelings, emotions and the emotional intelligence of students. Romany literary texts can provide a means to better self-knowledge and self-feeling, through which students can improve their cognition and feeling the otherness of the other.

**Reviewed publication:**

Bibiana Hlebová et al.

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