VYTAUTAS MAGNUS UNIVERSITY

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LITHUANIAN AND TRANSLATED YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE IN THE CONTEMPORARY LITHUANIAN LITERARY SYSTEM AS CONDITIONED BY HISTORICAL FACTORS: AN ANALYSIS USING POLYSYSTEM THEORY

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VYTAUTO DIDŽIOJO UNIVERSITETAS

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ISTORINIŲ VEIKSNIŲ NULEMTA LIETUVIŠKA IR VERSTINĖ JAUNIMO LITERATŪRA ŠIUOLAIKINĖJE LIETUVOS LITERATŪROS SISTEMOJE: ANALIZĖ PAGAL ITAMAR EVEN-ZOHAR SISTEMŲ TEORIJĄ

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1. INTRODUCTION

Although there have always been young people in the transitional stage between childhood and adulthood, in English-speaking countries the term adolescence was not used by psychologists until the twentieth century and the perception of adolescents as distinct grew only after the Second World War. The notion of novels specifically for young adult readers came earlier: it goes back in English-speaking countries to the nineteenth century. Still, it has only been since the later decades of the twentieth century that publishers have started producing such fiction in large quantities and literary critics begun to take an interest in this field.

The distinct nature of young adult fiction will become clearer in subsequent pages, but a general notion of the features of such novels can be provided, based on the work of several critics (Latrobe and Drury 2004, Cole 2009, Waller 2009, Donelson 2009, Cart 2010). First of all, the protagonist or protagonists in novels for young adults are adolescents, as are most of the secondary characters. In some cases adults may play significant roles in the stories, but they may also be practically absent. Usually, the teen characters have to solve their problems largely without adult help. Second, although the plot may concern almost anything, it is most likely to include actions and events that affect the development and identity of the adolescent protagonists. Third, a number of the thematic issues that interest teenagers, from concern with one's appearance and body, independence from parents, fitting in with friends, and early sexual experiences and love are the subject of these novels. Finally, though this is not essential, many of the writers of these novels imitate the current language of teenagers to a greater or lesser extent. Other aspects of this fiction are varied; teen fiction today includes a wide range of sub-genres from romance, crime stories, horror stories, dystopian narratives and fantasy.

The principal focus of this dissertation is to consider the present situation of young adult fiction in Lithuania in the framework of historical changes in the country that have restricted or permitted the growth of novels specifically aimed at adolescent readers. In general, recent young adult fiction available for Lithuanian teenagers is largely translated from Western languages, especially from American and British English. The number of novels created by Lithuanian authors is limited and with some exceptions, not as popular as the translated texts. In Sections 5 and 6, examples of the most widely read novels originally written in Lithuanian and of those translated from English are analyzed with consideration of the features usual to contemporary young adult fiction as well as to thematic and genre concerns.

However, the intention of the author of the dissertation goes beyond analysis of specific novels to an attempt to explain their occurrence within a historical, social and commercial context. The theories developed by specialists in the Tel Aviv school of literary and translation

studies, in particular those of Itamar Even-Zohar, have been chosen because they emphasize considering literary texts in what is called a literary system, with its various players that in different cultures and periods have differing degrees of power. In the case of the Lithuanian system after the re-establishment of independence, this requires going back analytically to the literary system that existed in Lithuania under communist occupation from 1944 to 1990. However, since the Soviet Lithuania literary system replicated the Revolution in Russia, some attention has to be paid to the features of the Soviet Russia system.

Therefore, **the object** of this dissertation is to present the current situation of young adult fiction in Lithuania, including an analysis of selected novels, both original and translated, within a historical context that is interpreted by using Even-Zohar's theory.

Relevance of the topic

This topic is particularly relevant since in Lithuania critical attention to Lithuanian and translated young adult novels is still modest. On the contrary, in the past two decades, young adult fiction has been widely discussed by Anglo-American literary and cultural critics such as Michael Cart (2010), Carl M. Tomlinson and Carol Lynch-Brown (2007), Robyn E. Howell (2011), Janet Alsup (2008), Cecelia Goodnow (2007), Betty Marcoux (2004), Brandon Peat (2010) and others. In Lithuania, literature for younger children has often attracted more interest as it seems more varied to Lithuanian literary scholars and critics. The single Lithuanian critic who does periodically pay attention to Lithuanian young adult novels is Kęstutis Urba. Nevertheless, looking at bookshops and libraries with their large separate sections for young adult literature, one can see that Lithuanian adolescents are taking a strong interest in fiction produced specifically for them. Even a relatively conservative institution like the Lithuanian Book of the Year award committee has felt compelled to add a separate category for young adult novels since 2006.

Given the steady growth of this sector of fiction in Lithuania, in terms of both works by Lithuanian authors and those translated into Lithuanian, it is important to examine it more closely, especially as these literary novels make up a good deal of what is being read by the current generation of adolescents in the country.

Research aim and objectives

The primary **aim** of this dissertation is to look at aspects of young adult fiction, in the Lithuanian market, both Lithuanian and translated, within a historical context that includes Soviet and post-Soviet conditions. A three-stage analysis is carried out. First, the theoretical model created by Itamar Even-Zohar to study literary systems is used to look at the Soviet literary system and its historical development from the Bolshevik Revolution onwards. The

same theory helps explain how the Soviet Lithuanian literary system was formed during the occupation of the country from World War II to 1990. Finally, Even-Zohar's ideas are applied to the changes in the Lithuanian literary system after the re-establishment of independence. To achieve this aim, the following **objectives** have been set:

1. To consider the concepts developed by the Tel Aviv scholar Itamar Even-Zohar that allow a theoretic analysis of a literary system and its norms.

2. To use the schematic model developed by Even-Zohar to present relevant historical details about the Soviet Russian and Soviet Lithuanian literary systems, indicating factors that inhibited the development of young adult fiction.

3. To analyse the development of a free-market literary system in Lithuania after the re-establishment of independence and its effect on encouraging fiction for teen readers.

4. To consider recent examples of teen fiction written in Lithuanian, keeping in mind both similarities to and differences from Anglo-American novels directed at young adults.

5. Looking at specific novels to carry out a close analysis of selected sub-genres in English-language teen fiction that are currently especially popular both in the West and in translation in the Lithuanian market.

6. To indicate, focusing on the issue of translating taboo language from English, how Lithuanian translators can modify the norms present in current Anglo-American teen fiction.

Statements to be defended

The current Lithuanian market of young adult fiction contains a very large number of translations from Western languages, especially English. These translations bring new themes, genres and literary styles into Lithuanian culture, yet the gradual increase in the number of novels for teenagers written by Lithuanians suggests that there is also a need for literature closely linked to the home culture.

1. Itamar Even-Zohar's theory about literary systems helps explain both why fiction for young adults was slow to develop so long as Lithuania was under the Soviet regime, as well as why it has increased so quickly since about 2000 in an independent Lithuania.

2. The most successful novels produced recently for young adults by Lithuanian writers overlap thematically with ones that come into Lithuania through translation. Nevertheless, Lithuanian fiction is still distinctly different from Anglo-American models in many respects.

3. Lithuanian translators of young adult fiction succeed in using strategies that transmit the meaning and style of the source texts but still respect certain Lithuanian cultural norms.

Data and methods of research

The data used in this dissertation can be divided into primary and secondary, both of these necessary to consider the present young adult literary system in Lithuania within the historical and ideological framework demanded by Even-Zohar's system theory. The primary data comprises the young adult novels currently popular in the Lithuanian market, both those originally written in Lithuanian, and those translated from English. A large number of texts was reviewed before a selection was made of two Lithuanian novels, Vytautas Račickas' *Nebaigtas Dienoraštis* (2008) and Kristina Gudonytė's *Blogos Mergaitės Dienoraštis* (2009), and six translated novels, Laurie Halse Anderson's *Speak* (1999), Melvin Burgess' *Doing It* (2003), Cecily von Ziegesar's *Gossip Girl* (2003), Jay Asher's *Thirteen Reasons Why* (2007), Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games* (2008) and Carmen Rodrigues' *34 Pieces of You* (2012), that would receive closer *thematic* and *generic* explanation. These contemporary novels have been chosen for the analysis because they have been especially popular among teenagers in Lithuania and Anglo-American countries and are included in many lists of recommended fiction for adolescents[1]. To provide a meaningful context for the current Lithuanian literary system, a historical and sociological approaches were drawn on secondary data, that is, published sources which explain the historical stages preceding and in certain ways conditioning the situation in Lithuania since 1990.

The fundamental theoretical approach throughout the dissertation comes from the concepts of literary systems as developed by Even-Zohar. However, the data and methods for this dissertation can be divided into two different kinds of material. Research on the history of literary systems in Soviet Russia, Soviet Lithuania and post-Soviet Lithuanian brings together information from a very wide variety of historical studies and articles. Material on Soviet Russia is the most easily available and represents very thorough historical research, such as that by Herman Ermolaev (1997), Pavao Novosel (1995), Ben Hellman (1991) and Epp Lauk (1999), while that on Soviet and post-Soviet Lithuania is still more fragmentary. To a certain degree, critical material that is specifically on literature for young adults in Soviet Lithuania is still lacking. However, recent publications on aspects of the production and regulation of Soviet Lithuanian culture do something to fill in this vacuum. Among useful scholarship based on archival sources are works by Romualdas Bagušauskas (1999 and 2005), Vilius Ivanauskas (2015), Anna Mikonis-Railienė and Lina Kaminskaitė-Jančorienė (2015) and others.

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[1] Information has been retrieved from the following websites: http://www.bernardinai.lt/straipsnis/2015-04-01-daiva-simanaviciute-apie-vaiku-ir-paaugliu-literatura/98394, http://www.goodreads.com/shelf/show/young-adult, http://www.ala.org/yalsa/best (Accessed on January 18, 2016)

The situation is better with the thematic work on Anglo-American young adult culture and fiction, since in the past two decades Anglo-American literary historians and critics such as Michael Cart, Robyn E. Howell and Betty Marcoux have produced a good number of studies on the development and characteristics of this kind of fiction. The analysis looked at a very large number of both Lithuanian novels for young adults, English-language novels and English-language novels translated into Lithuanian, although many were not discussed in great detail.

The choice of specific young adult fiction for deeper analysis has been determined by the quality and popularity of such novels. Since the dissertation focuses on those thematic genres of young adult fiction that are currently popular, there is still very little critical work published on the novels under consideration. In this part of the dissertation generic and thematic of literary analysis are combined to examine the novels translated into Lithuanian, as well as the two novels written in Lithuanian.

Novelty of the thesis

The scholarly novelty of this thesis is apparent in a number of areas. This dissertation can be seen as part of a recent surge in scholarly interest and publication of research on cultural life in Soviet Lithuania like book-length studies by Vilius Ivanauskas of the Lithuanian Writers' Union and Anna Mikonis-Railienė and Lina Kaminskaitė-Jančorienė of Lithuanian feature film; both monographs appeared very recently in 2015.

In general, young adult fiction and its translation, in particular, have been ignored in Lithuania. The analysis of two Lithuanian young adult novels and some of the novels translated from English is original work. In addition, Even-Zohar's model of his system has not been applied in any detail to the Lithuanian situation both in its present state and in the earlier period of the Soviet regime. The detailed analysis of the two Lithuanian novels and six English ones attempts to redress this situation.

Dissertation structure

The thesis is composed of the introduction, three chapters of theoretical discussion, the analytical parts that include four studies of selected Lithuanian novels and those translated from English into Lithuanian, and the concluding chapter, which is followed by a list of primary sources, a list of references and appendices.

The introductory section presents the object of the research, its primary aim, and objectives. Chapter 2 gives an overview of the Tel Aviv approach to literary and translation studies, focusing on Itamar Even-Zohar's Polysystem theory. Chapter 3 discusses the historical context of the literary systems in Soviet Russia, Soviet and independent Lithuania according to Polysystem theory. Chapter 4, which has three subsections, explains young adult literature in

Anglo-American markets. Sub-section 4.1 discusses issues connected with identity development during adolescence. Sub-section 4.2 describes the historical development of young adult literature in Anglo-American culture. Sub-section 4.3 deals with the controversies over topics in Anglo-American young adult literature. Chapter 5 analyses recent Lithuanian young adult novels by two Lithuanian writers, Vytautas Račickas' *Nebaigtas Dienoraštis* (2008) and Kristina Gudonytė's *Blogos Mergaitės Dienoraštis* (2009). Chapter 6 is divided into three subsections that analyse the translated teen novels from English into Lithuanian. Sub-section 6.1 looks at two very popular genres in young adult fiction: first, the *Gossip Girl* series as an example of the elaborate marketing techniques now used for teen literature and a version of typical version of teen love lives. Second, the dystopian sub-genre as best illustrated by Suzanne Collins' series *The Hunger Games* is discussed. Sub-section 6.2 presents taboo social issues in the choice of English-language young adult novels for translation into Lithuanian. Sub-section 6.2.1 deals with the depiction of sex in the humorous British writer Melvin Burgess' novel *Doing It* and the much darker American novel *Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson. Sub-section 6.2.2 discusses new ways of presenting teen suicide in Jay Asher's *Thirteen Reasons Why* and Carmen Rodriguez' *34 Pieces of You*. Sub-section 6.3 analyses the effect of norms in translation from English into Lithuanian of taboo language in young adult fiction, focusing on Burgess' novel *Doing It* and Ziegesar's series *Gossip Girl*. The conclusion generalizes the research and provides suggestions for further study. The thesis ends with the list of primary sources, the list of references and appendices.

Publications on the topic of the dissertation

Dimavičienė, Brigita. 2013. 'Sex in Contemporary Young Adult Literature.' In *Freedom and Control In/Of Children's Literature*. Ed. K. Urba. Vilnius: Vilnius University. ISBN 9786094592478. 116-130.

Dimavičienė, Brigita. 2013. 'The Effect of Translated Literature on Lithuanian Literature for Young People.' In *Žmogus Kalbos Erdvėje: Mokslinių Straipsnių Rinkinys*. Nr. 7. Kaunas: Naujasis Lankas. ISBN 9786094592096. 498-504.

Other publications

Ragaišienė, Irena; **Dimavičienė, Brigita**; Gruslytė, Monika; Kalėdaitė, Violeta; Leonavičienė, Aurelija; Masaitienė, Dalia; Raškauskienė, Audronė; Ringailienė, Teresė; Vaičenonienė, Jurgita. 2013. 'Tarpkultūrinės Komunikacijos ir Vertimo Problematikos Taikomieji Tyrimai.' In *Vytauto Didžiojo Universiteto Mokslo Klasteriai*. Kaunas: Vytautas Magnus University. ISSN 2351-5074. [T.] 2. 61-73.

Ragaišienė, Irena; Aleknavičiūtė, Teresė; Bernatavičiūtė, Vitalija; **Dimavičienė, Brigita**; Eidukevičienė, Rūta; Gruslytė, Monika; Kalėdaitė, Violeta; Leonavičienė, Aurelija; Lėgaudaitė, Jolanta; Masaitienė, Dalia; Raškauskienė, Audronė; Vaičenonienė, Jurgita. 2012. '*Tarpkultūrinės Komunikacijos ir Vertimo Problematikos Taikomieji Tyrimai.*' In *Vytauto Didžiojo Universiteto Mokslo Klasteriai*. Kaunas: Vytautas Magnus University. ISBN 9789955128229. 61-74.

Pantelejeva, Brigita [Dimavičienė, Brigita]. 2011. '*Treatment of sensitive language: in Rūta Razmaitė's and Andrius Patiomkinas' Lithuanian translations of Melvin Burgess' novels Doing it and Junk.*' In *Laikas ir Žodis: Studentų Mokslo Darbai*. Kaunas: Vytautas Magnus University. ISSN 1822-9972. 115-129.

The dissertation has been presented at 10 national and international scientific conferences

Dimavičienė, B. 2015: *Violent Topics in Young Adult Literature*. International Scientific Conference *the Childhood Project: 5th Global Meeting*, Oxford, Great Britain, 24-26 07 2015.

Dimavičienė, B. 2015: *New Subjects in Literature for Adolescents as a Combination of Translation and Lithuanian Writing*. International *PhD Student Conference in Language & Communication 2015*, University of Southern Denmark, Odense, 10-12 06, 2015.

Dimavičienė, B. 2015: *The Effect of Translated Literature on Lithuanian Literature for Young People*. International Scientific Conference *Tarp Eilučių: Lingvistikos, Literatūrologijos, Medijų Erdvė*, Vilnius University Kaunas Faculty of Humanities, Kaunas, 20-22 04, 2015.

Dimavičienė, B. 2014: *LGBT Issues in Contemporary Lithuanian and Canadian Literature for Young Adults*. International Conference *Canada – a Multiplicity of Issues*, Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas, 18 10, 2014.

Dimavičienė, B. 2014: *Transformation of Lithuanian Young Adult Literature since 1990: Effect of Translated Literature*. International conference on *Baltic and Scandinavian Studies*, Yale University, USA, 14-16 03, 2014.

Dimavičienė, B. 2013: *Is Young Adult Literature Maturing too Fast?* International Conference *Cultures, Crises, Consolidations in the Baltic World*, Tallinn University, Tallinn, 16-19 06, 2013.

Dimavičienė, B. 2012: *Sex in Contemporary Young Adult Literature*. International Conference *Vaikų Literatūra – Laisvė ir Kontrolė*, Vilnius University, Vilnius, 13-14 12, 2012.

Dimavičienė, B. 2012: *Normų Laužymas Naujojoje Lietuvių Jaunimo Literatūroje: Verstinės Literatūros Poveikis*. International Conference *Žmogus Kalbos Erdvėje*, Vilnius University Kaunas Faculty of Humanities, Kaunas, 13-14 05 2012.

Dimavičienė, B. 2012: *Taboo Subjects in Lithuanian Literature for Young People*. International Conference of *Young Scientists in Humanities & Social Sciences*, Šiauliai University, Šiauliai, 9-10 05, 2012.

Dimavičienė, B. *Normų Laužymas Naujojoje Lietuvių Jaunimo Literatūroje: Verstinės Literatūros Poveikis*. International Conference *Šiuolaikinės Visuotinės Literatūros ir Kritikos Problemos*, Šiauliai University, Šauliai, 23 11, 2012.

2. THE TEL AVIV APPROACH TO LITERARY AND TRANSLATION STUDIES: ITAMAR EVEN-ZOHAR'S POLYSYSTEM THEORY

The theoretical approach taken by a major scholars from Tel Aviv University in Israel, Itamar Even-Zohar (b. 1939) is considered to provide a significant turning point in translation studies because it moved away from what Jeremy Munday (2001) calls "static prescriptive models" to analysing "translated literature as a system operating in the larger social, literary and historical systems of the target culture" (Munday 2001, 108). Rather than being prescriptive – giving rules for specific translation problems – Even-Zohar, along with his colleagues like Gideon Toury, is part of descriptive translation studies, which seeks to note and explain what real strategies translators adopt. Furthermore, he asserts that these decisions by individual translators are linked to historical, ideological, economic and cultural factors that operate in a specific society at a specific period of time. Even-Zohar is mainly interested in the interplay of different elements that form a system within which both original and translated literary texts are produced. He also refers to his ideas as "polysystem theory", since any literary system is inevitably linked to other systems (for example, cultural or political ones) in the same society. However, as Mark Shuttleworth asserts, "in Even-Zohar's writings, the terms system and polysystem are to a large extent synonymous"; they will be used in this way in the present dissertation. Although, like all cultural theories, Even-Zohar's has been criticized, Shuttleworth argues that only "minor problems' have been raised and that in general "the influence of Even-Zohar's thinking has been considerable", with related studies "being particularly associated with groups of scholars in Israel, Belgium and the Netherlands" (Shtuttleworth 2001, 179). Toury's work builds on that of his colleague, presenting the concept of "norms" to explain translation strategies within a particular system.

These concepts provide a framework for the research in this dissertation, as they allow the specific situation in the publication of young adult fiction in Lithuania since the beginning of the 21st century to be analysed in an objective fashion. In addition, since the present system is connected to the one that existed in Soviet Lithuania, and this system is a direct heir of the one created earlier in Soviet Russia, using theory permits direct comparison of the three systems. In turn, such analysis helps explain many of the characteristics of the fiction being produced or translated for young adults today in Lithuania.

Itamar Even-Zohar first presented his theory of literary polysystem in his doctoral dissertation, defended at Tel Aviv University in 1971, under the title *An Introduction to a Theory of Literary Translation*. In the English summary of his dissertation he wrote: "the polysytem of literature must be considered part of an extra-linguistic system, indispensable for an adequate decoding of literary text" (Even-Zohar 2015). In the following years he described

major elements of his theory in a number of articles published in Hebrew, including the first version of his seminal article, "The Position of Translated Literature within the Literary Polysystem", in 1975. In April 1976 he created a considerable stir when he presented the same paper in English at an international conference at Leuven, Belgium, "Literature and Translation", in which sociological and cultural approaches to literary texts and translation replaced the traditional aesthetic ones (Van Gorp 1997, 1-5). Jose Lambert looks back in 1997 at changes in literary studies, stating that "for many scholars the beginning of functional approach to literature coincides with Itamar Even-Zohar's Polysystem theory" (Lambert 1997, 7). Very quickly regular seminars and conferences took place in Leuven, with scholars then taking Even-Zohar's ideas to develop them in the Netherlands, France, Germany, Canada and the United States (Van Gorp 1997, 2). Lambert emphasizes that the Israeli scholar brought into late 20th century cultural and literary studies an East European transition that used ideas from much earlier scholars like Jurij Tynjanov, Roman Jakobsen and M. M. Bakhtin (Lambert 1997, 7).

Even-Zohar made a point of emphasizing his debt to several Russian-language scholars in linguistics and literature who were connected to the Russian Formalist movement of the 1920s. However, although Even-Zohar acknowledged his debt to Russian Formalists like Roman Jakobsen, his theory is not a formalist one. According to Kristi Siegel (2006), Formalists "approached a literary text as dissociated from its context" (Siegel 2006) so that Even-Zohar preferred to follow Jurij Tynjanov, whom Theo Hermans describes as being the first literary critic to describe literature as a system (Hermans 1990, 104).

Siegel explains that Tynjanov asserted that "works will have to be studied as part of contexts in which they are produced" (Siegel 2006). The contextual understanding of literature made particular sense for an Israeli literary specialist like Even-Zohar who grew up in the first decade of the state of Israel and observed its literary culture closely. One of the main features of the new state of Israel was the determination of its government and many of its citizens to make Hebrew, long a language practically limited to religious expression a true means of communication. The actual mother tongues of the Jews who settled in the newly-established state were, as Even-Zohar states, Yiddish, Russian and German (Even-Zohar 1990, 168). The development of Hebrew as a language used in all aspects of life, and the obligatory use of Hebrew in schools that turned the second generation of Israeli citizens into monolingual Hebrew speakers, is one of the most successful examples of language revitalisation in modern history. Still, as Even-Zohar indicates, it was not a simple process as the new Hebrew system had to "provide both 'high' and 'low' culture from its own resources", a task it carried out in large part through the heavy use of translated texts" (Even-Zohar 1990, 168). In following this

development, Even-Zohar came to understand how translation, which is most often a peripheral, marginal part of a literary system, could function as a central one.

Over the course of years, Even-Zohar wrote a number of articles on literature and translation according to his idea of a system, a context for individual literary works. In 1990 scholars who admired his work organized their collective re-publication, with revisions made by Even-Zohar, in a special edition of the journal *Poetics Today*. The accessibility of this collection, which is available on the web, has encouraged the continued influence of Even-Zohar's theory.

One of fundamental features of this theory is the scheme that Even-Zohar explained the most fully in the article "The Literary System". In order to schematize the literary polysystem, he employed and modified Roman Jakobson's scheme of communication that distinguishes context, code, addresser, addressee, channel and message. Even-Zohar suggested the following six elements for a literary system: institution, repertoire, producer, consumer, market and product (Illustration 1). According to Even-Zohar, "the scheme may thus be produced for the constitutive factors involved with any socio-economic (cultural) event" (Even-Zohar 1990, 19).

Institution

Repertoire

Producer   **Consumer**

Market

Product

Figure 1. Itamar Even-Zohar's scheme of Polysystem theory (Even-Zohar 1990, 19)

Even-Zohar chooses to give functional terms for his six elements in the literary system because most often these include multiple specific players or features. For example, a 'producer' may be a writer, translator or publisher, while, as shall be shown, there are many more possibilities for a 'product' than simply a literary work. 'Consumers' include those who quote a text as well as those who read the whole work, while the market can include schools and friends as well as bookstores and libraries. 'Institutions' refer to all powerful organizations from language commissions and departments of education to ideological organizations like political parties and churches; these both establish the status and value of a product and also control the 'repertoire', which is everything from literary genres and what is suitable according to social norms or not.

According to Even-Zohar, the placement of these elements in the scheme do not imply a hierarchy between the different aspects of the literary system: "it suffices to recognize that it is

the interdependencies between these factors which allow them to function in the first place. <…> None of the factors can be described to function in isolation, and the kind of relations that may be detected run across all possible axes of the scheme" (Even-Zohar 1990, 20). Simple examples make the general meaning of these terms clear: a "producer" may be a writer or publisher, and the "product" a book. "Consumers" include readers who find the book in the "market", for example, a bookstore or library. "Institutions" include universities and prize committees that establish the value of a product. Institutions also control "repertoire": everything from literary genres and what is suitable according to social norms or not. Itamar Even-Zohar gives a precise clarification of the relationship between these six elements:

> A CONSUMER may "consume" a PRODUCT produced by a PRODUCER, but in order for the "product" (such as "text") to be generated, a common REPERTOIRE must exist, whose usability is determined by some INSTITUTION. A MARKET must exist where such a good can be transmitted. (Even-Zohar 1990, 34; emphasis in original)

Yet although all these elements can be found in any literary system, they do not all have the same status within specific systems belonging to particular cultures at particular times. Indeed, they compete for power among themselves, especially in times of transition.

Repertoire is considered the central notion of Even-Zohar's polysystem theory. The usual meaning of a repertoire is, for example, "a stock of plays, dances, or pieces that a company or a performer knows or is prepared to perform" (*Oxford Dictionary of English*). However, here it is used differently. The concept of a repertoire assumes the existence of shared knowledge and values; Even-Zohar defines it as following: "a repertoire is a set of rules and materials that govern the making and use of any given product" (Even-Zohar 1990, 39). According to Even-Zohar, if literature is treated as a system and not just a collection of texts, then "the literary repertoire is the shared knowledge necessary or producing (and understanding) a text, as well as producing (and understanding) various other products of the literary system" (Even-Zohar 1990, 40).

Moreover, in the repertoire some elements are primary, while others are secondary, including the principles of conservatism and innovativeness. In a conservative repertoire, each product will be highly predictable, while an innovative repertoire encourages the production of less predictable products with the introduction of new elements, which may in time become primary, as, for example, the rise of the novel as a literary genre. According to Even-Zohar, "once it [the primary type] achieves the canonized status for some time, it tends to remain conservative, and becomes the secondary form because there are newer models that are pushing it to the peripheral position" (Even-Zohar 1990, 40). In this way repertoires are dynamic, with the status of certain rules, styles or genres shifting with time. Another important issue pointed

out by Even-Zohar is that repertoire "suggests the idea of sharedness," which means that "without a commonly shared repertoire, whether partly or fully, no group of people could communicate and organize their lives in acceptable and meaningful ways to the members of the group" (Even-Zohar 1990, 21). In practice, the repertoire for a literary system includes both literary conventions and ideological concepts like religious ones or ideas that are accepted by a particular society at a specific period of time.

According to Even-Zohar, "the institution consists of the aggregate of factors involved with the maintenance of literature as a socio-cultural activity. It is the institution which governs the norms prevailing in this activity, sanctioning some and rejecting others" (Even-Zohar 1990, 37). By referring to the institution as an aggregate, he means that it is not a unified body; there are multiple forces sub-institutions, such as the church, political parties, universities, etc. As Even-Zohar puts it, "the institution includes at least part of the producers, critics, publishing houses, periodicals, clubs, groups of writers, government bodies (like ministerial offices and academies), educational institutions (schools of whatever level, including universities), the mass media in all its facets, and more" (Even-Zohar 1990, 37). The main role of an institution is to regulate the production of texts; however, keeping in mind that an institution is not a homogeneous body, "inside the institution there are struggles over domination, with one or another group succeeding at one time or another at occupying the centre of the institution, thus becoming the establishment" (Even-Zohar 1990, 37).

In his diagram, at the opposite pole of the institution is the market, which is "the aggregate of factors involved with the selling and buying of the repertoire of culture, i.e., with the promotion of types of consumption" (Even-Zohar 1990, 33). In brief, a market includes the movement of literary products in places like bookshops, book clubs, libraries, fairs and others. Even-Zohar stresses that "the larger the space, the larger the proliferation possibilities. Clearly, a restricted market naturally limits the possibilities of a culture to evolve" (Even-Zohar 1990, 33). The next term to be explained is the producer. Even-Zohar states that he employs "the term producer instead of a writer because the very notion of a writer already brings in very specific images, which may be quite inappropriate" (Even-Zohar 1990, 34). A producer in polysystem theory is the one who produces literary products by operating or manipulating existing repertoires: "the position of the producer vis- à-vis the literature system and the broader cultural system is not fixed – in some periods he is merely an entertainer, at others he holds a position of power equal to any political position" (Even-Zohar 1990, 34). Producers often include writers, editors, translators, agents and in the same way, a product is an outcome of any literary activity. Here Even-Zohar raises the question, "what is the product of literature" and continues by stating

that "the answer depends on the level of analysis" (Even-Zohar 1990, 43). In his article, Even-Zohar provides some helpful examples:

> The product of schools may be defined as "students". Again, this is not an unacceptable answer, in the sense that officially, and visibly, it is students who engage the energy of schools. <...> But even the most conventional views of schools normally conceive of students as vehicles, and/or targets of some other products for which schools are supposed to be responsible, i.e., a certain body of desirable knowledge, and a certain body of desirable norms and views. In this sense, "students" are analyzed only in relation of these products. (Even-Zohar 1990, 43)

Products can refer to a written text or, for example, its reading during a fair. Even-Zohar stresses that no product can exist without a repertoire, which means that "no one is able to make completely new rules and stocks for every individual product while in the process of producing it" (Even-Zohar 1990, 28).

Just as a producer is not simply a writer, a consumer includes readers in a very broad sense because, as Even-Zohar states, "the "consumer", like the "producer", may move on a variety of levels as a participant in the literary activities" (Even-Zohar 1990, 36). Even-Zohar distinguishes two principal types of consumers: direct and indirect. He considers "all members of any community" as indirect consumers of literary texts because "[they] simply consume a certain quantity of literary fragments, digested and transmitted by various agents of culture and make an integral part of daily discourse" (Even-Zohar 1990, 36). For example, many people may refer to Hamlet's question "To be or not to be" without having read Shakespeare's play. These are indirect consumers. Consequently, he defines direct consumers as "people who are willingly and deliberately interested in the literary activities" (Even-Zohar 1990, 36). Moreover, Even-Zohar stresses that "there are not only signal consumers in the literary system, but also consumers as a group, for which our cultural tradition has a common designation – the public" (Even-Zohar 1990, 37).

In each literary system, some of the six elements play a more important role than other; therefore, in later parts of this thesis, these factors will be analysed with specific examples when referring to the system in Lithuania during distinct historical periods.

In his analysis, Itamar Even-Zohar also focuses on power relations between different countries, as well as the role and influence of translations in a literary polysystem. Milda Danytė points out that "working in Israel when the official state language, the Hebrew, was being transformed from a language of limited usage to one serving all the needs of a modern society, Even-Zohar had an excellent opportunity to study how translated texts filled the gaps in the literature needed by readers, and how these translated texts entered and dominated the Hebrew literary system" (Danytė 2012, 3). Siegel explains that "Hebrew lacked original texts and its

literature owed much to works translated from Russian and Yiddish literature. In other words, translations had a central position in Hebrew literature" (Siegel 2006). In addition, Even-Zohar directed attention to the notion of strong and weak literatures as well as majority and minority languages. According to his observations, "peripheral literatures in the Western Hemisphere tend more often than not to be identical with the literatures of smaller nations <…> we have no choice but to admit that within a group of relatable national literatures, such as the literatures of Europe, hierarchical relations have been established since the very beginnings of these literatures" (Even-Zohar 1990, 48). In other words, a strong literary system is able to accept translations from a weaker literature without being particularly affected; however, often the only option for weak systems is to import a greater number of translations. In addition, Danytė goes further, asserting that "in a linguistic and cultural sense, even majority-language societies like Germany, France, Spain and Italy also have a colonial status in relation to English-speaking countries if one looks at their literary systems and the direction of translation" (Danytė 2012, 4). She adds that "English, which first gained prestige through the British Empire, has maintained it through the power of the United States" (Danytė 2012, 4).

As part of the notion that literary work cannot be studied in isolation, Ebrahimi suggests that "a literary system can influence other ones. The translated literature which is being imported to a country can influence the native writings" (Ebrahimi 2011). Even-Zohar notes that "through the foreign works, features (both principles and elements) are introduced into the home literature which did not exist there before. <...> Translated literature may possess a repertoire of its own" (Even-Zohar 1979, 288). Therefore, Even-Zohar stresses that it is impossible to analyse any literary polysystem without treating translated literature as an integral part.

Polysystem theory asserts that in any given society at a specific period of time, there are a number of systems, which in turn consist of a number of sub-systems; according to Even-Zohar, "translated literature is recognized as a system in its own right" (Even-Zohar 1990, 46). Moreover, it should be noted that the relationship between the systems and sub-systems is hierarchical in that some occupy a primary position while others are secondary:

> Primary systems take the initiative in introducing new forms and models in literature; they are responsible for innovation. Secondary systems are conservative and derivative in their activity; they conform to established models and codes and do not introduce anything new. (Even-Zohar 1979, 289)

When it comes to translated literature and its status, this depends on what else is happening in the polysystem as a whole. According to Selay Bedir, "provided that translated literature is primary, it plays an active role in shaping the centre of the polysystem" (Bedir 2009). In general, as has been stated, Even-Zohar believes that a literary polysystem is dynamic:

The dynamics within the polysystem creates turning points, that is to say, historical moments where established models are no longer tenable for a young generation. At such moment, even in central literatures, translated literature may assume a central position. This is all the more true when at a turning point no item in the indigenous stock is taken to be acceptable, as a result of which a literary "vacuum" occurs. In such a vacuum, it is easy for foreign models to infiltrate, and translated literature may consequently assume a central position. (Even-Zohar 1990, 48)

He also distinguishes the three major cases when translated literature occupies the central position:

(a)when a polysystem has not yet been crystallized, that is to say, when a literature is "young", in the process of being established; (b) when a literature is either "peripheral" (within a large group of correlated literatures) or "weak", 1 or both; and (c) when there are turning points, crises, or literary   vacuums in a literature. (Even-Zohar 1990, 47)

In the first case, translated literature introduces new elements that did not previously exist into a culture because the native system is young or in the process of being formed. Peter Hodges provides an example for the second scenario, when a literature is peripheral: "Breton culture in Brittany may rely heavily on literary styles from France in order to fill the gaps that exist in its own literary system" (Hodges 2010). Even-Zohar illustrates the third scenario, that of a literary vacuum, with the situation in Israel: "translated literature has occupied an important position in Hebrew literature because of the elements lacking in the Hebrew polysystem in its Israeli period, which have only gradually been filled in, if at all" (Even-Zohar 1979, 29).

A literary vacuum appears when the mother-tongue literary works are no longer considered sufficient so that it becomes easier for translated foreign literature to assume a primary position. Nevertheless, there are other situations when translated literature takes a secondary position; Even-Zohar asserts that "this secondary position is the "normal" one for the translated literature" (Even-Zohar 1990, 50). In his analysis, he presents the example of French culture that has strong literary traditions; therefore, here translations occupy a secondary position. Even-Zohar also stresses that "in the long run no system can remain in a constant state of weakness, "turning point", or crisis, although the possibility should not be excluded that some polysystems may maintain such states for quite a long time" (Even-Zohar 1990, 50). Eventually a healthy polysystem produces its own literature with translations functioning as secondary.

Even-Zohar develops one more key concept about literary polysystems – literary interference – a process which helps explain, as Danytė states, "why certain foreign texts and languages are chosen for translation" (Danytė 2012, 67). Even-Zohar defines interference as a relationship between literatures; according to him, "a certain literature A (a source literature) may become a source of direct or indirect loans for another literature B (a target literature) (Even-Zohar 1990, 54). Marijan Dovic stresses that almost all young literatures were established

on the basis on some interference "and its subordination to foreign influences" (Dovic 2004, 69). Even-Zohar maintains that literatures are constantly in "interferential relations" and that this interference is usually one-way: "source literature can have a strong impact on the target, and ignore the latter completely at the same time" (Even-Zohar 1990, 54). For example, American literature influences and is translated into many languages, while the American literary system does not include many translations. It follows that the way translation is practised in a given society is dictated by the position of translated literature in that polysystem, as well as by the existing norms in a particular culture. According to Even-Zohar, "while the contemporary original literature might go on developing new norms and models, translated literature adheres to norms which have been rejected either recently or long before by the (newly) established centre" (Even-Zohar 1990, 48-49).

This aspect of Even-Zohar's theory has been developed through the concept of norms by his Tel Aviv colleague, Gideon Toury (b. 1942), who focuses on the specific decisions that have to be made during the translation process. Norms are unwritten rules within a community which govern all kinds of social behaviour, including forms of expression and communication like literary works. Toury asserts that translators, along with publishers and editors, are engaged in a decision-making process: "the translator fulfils a function specified by the community and has to do so in a way that is considered appropriate win the community" (Toury 1995, 54).

In order to meet the norms of the particular society in an appropriate way, translators not only have to be well acquainted with the appropriate language norms, but also to be able to apply them in the translation. According to Toury, translation strategies help the translator to meet these norms: "at any rate, translators performing under different conditions often adopt different strategies and ultimately come up with markedly different products" (Toury 2000, 39). In general, different translation strategies help translators to transfer the text into the target language without violating the norms of their own cultures while, at the same time, retaining the meaning of a source text as much as possible.

Toury argues that norms govern every level of the translating process; he then distinguishes three sets of norms that a translator has to deal with: preliminary, initial and operational norms (Toury 1995, 56-58). "Initial norms" refer "to the translator's basic choice between an orientation towards the norms of the source text, impacting the translation's adequacy, or the norms of the target culture, determining the translation's acceptability" (Toury 1995, 56). In other words, the translator has to make a decision whether to remain close to the source text or keep closer to the target language. Toury further explains that the nature of the translation depends on the translator's decision: "if he follows the norms of the source text, then what he produces will be of adequate nature, whereas if he subscribes to the other stance, his

translation will be defined as acceptable" (Toury 1995, 56). Apart from the initial norm, Toury defines two other kinds of norms: "preliminary norms" are related to translation policy or directness of translation, while "operational norms" govern the actual practice of translation:

> Preliminary norms are concerned with translation policy, and with directness of translation, where translation policy refers to the choice of works (of authors, genres, schools, etc.) to be translated, and directness of translation refers to the tolerance for translating from a translation in another language rather than from the ultimate source text. [...][...] Operational norms are direct decisions made during the translating process with respect to specific levels. (Toury 1995, 56-58)

Moreover, Toury divides operational norms into two narrower ones: matricial and textual-linguistic norms. He asserts that the first one "governs the very existence of target-language material intended and a substitute for the corresponding source-language material" and the second "relates to the selection of material to formulate the target text in, or replace the original textual and linguistic material with" (Toury 1995, 58-59). In other words, matricial norms help translators to determine whether to translate all the text or only its parts, whereas textual-linguistic norms focus on word choice or sentence construction.

In general, decisions made according to norms might not be directly observable. Therefore, Toury distinguishes two sources of evidence for norms: textual and extratextual sources. In this case, textual sources refer to existing translated texts which demonstrate what the commonly accepted way of rendering for example, proper names, are. Extratextual sources are "the statements about texts made by translators, editors, publishers and prescriptive statements that are supposed to regulate behaviour" (Toury 1995, 65). The study of these sources helps identifying whether particular norms are, in terms of their force, basic norms, secondary norms, or tolerated behaviour (Toury 1995, 67). Basic or rule-like norms are mandatory for all instances of a translation activity, while secondary norms or tendencies may be mandatory within part of a text and not apply for the entire translation.

Like the theories developed by his Tel-Aviv colleague Even-Zohar, Toury's concept of norms helps analyse texts that are very different or that appear in different periods of time, acted on by different cultural and ideological values. This is important in the present study since it looks at literary works, specifically, those for young adults, that come out of systems as diverse as those of Soviet Russia, Soviet-Lithuania, Lithuania with renewed independence, and contemporary Anglo-American societies.

Toury's focus on the specific role of norms in the translation process will be useful mainly in the third section of the sixth chapter of this study, when Lithuanian choices of translation strategies are considered as a way of making translated texts more acceptable for their particular audience.

Itamar Even-Zohar's theory is fundamental for the analysis in this dissertation which looks closely at the different versions of the system in Lithuania during a number of historical periods. To explain why so many novels for teen readers are being translated into Lithuanian now, it is necessary to understand how in previous decades, both such translations and the writing of a native young adult fiction was inhibited by the power of specific institutions and repertoires dominating the Lithuanian system earlier. The Lithuanian literary system was affected not only by Lithuanian being a language of lesser usage, but also by a literary system developed in Soviet Russia.

3. HISTORICAL AND THEORETICAL CONTEXT: THE LITERARY SYSTEMS IN SOVIET RUSSIA, SOVIET LITHUANIA AND INDEPENDENT LITHUANIA ACCORDING TO POLYSYSTEM THEORY

Section 3 discusses the historical context of the literary systems in Soviet Russia, Soviet and independent Lithuania according to Polysystem theory. Sub-section 3.1 looks at the Soviet Polysystem and its historical development, in order to understand the context in which young adult literature has appeared. Next sub-section provides an overview of the literary system of Soviet Lithuania. The political and economic changes that have taken place in Lithuania after regaining independence that influenced all aspects of society, including the book and publishing industry, are discussed in Sub-section 3.3.

3.1 The Historical Development of the Soviet Literary Polysystem: Rules and Restrictions on Literary Production, Including for Young Adults

The major subject of this dissertation is the growing category of fiction for young adults in Lithuania, both Lithuanian and translated, a topic that requires an understanding of the context in which this literature has appeared – what Itamar Even-Zohar terms the literary system. However, particular historical circumstances from World War II onwards have conditioned this system, as they have all aspects of Lithuanian society. In order to describe the Lithuanian literary system during and after the Soviet period it is important to understand the Soviet polysystem since, once occupied by the USSR in 1944, the Lithuanian literary world was forcibly assimilated into the Soviet one. The key fact about the literary system in the Soviet Union is that it was under the strict control of the Communist Party.

Mette Newth interprets the importance of political censorship as a form of historic continuity, as "the Russian empire had a long tradition of strict censorship and was slow to adopt the changes that central European countries had implemented a century before" (Newth 2010, 3). Lauk points out that, "in the former Soviet Union, the mass media constituted a vital element of the Communist Party power mechanism, used as the most efficient means for developing and spreading the Communist ideology" (Lauk 1999, 27). According to Leving and White, the literary market in the Soviet Union strongly differed from the Western one, mainly because

> Within the Soviet Union money played a secondary role in relation to the symbolic capital (in this case, good will) needed to secure the support of those in positions of power. As such, a consideration of cultural and symbolic, instead of financial, capital may be much more relevant in a government-controlled literary market where profit is of less importance than the correct ideological message. (Leving and White 2013, 40)

Olga Sinitsyna affirms that the censorship system was well developed in the Soviet Union; according to her, there were two types of censorship:

> A preliminary personal censorship or self-controlling of an author and an official censorship, provided by special governmental bodies, like the State Committee for Protection of the State Secrets in Publications, all kinds of state and local Art Councils, Committees on Arts and Culture, editorial boards, etc. (Sinitsyna 1999, 36)

In the entire Soviet Union, the mass media, as well as all kinds of printed texts, was treated as a major way for the Communist Party to spread and promote Communist ideology (Lauk 1999, 19). To explain this more specifically, Shubhra Singh Sardar goes back to Marxist principles; he states: "according to Marxists, even literature itself is a social institution and has a specific ideological function, based on the background and ideology of the author" (Sardar 2014, 26). As Sidney Hook asserts, the ideology of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was based on Marxism–Leninism, a political and economic doctrine that aims to replace private property and a profit-based economy with public ownership and communal control of at least the major means of production and the natural resources of a society (Hook 1989). Hook adds that "Leninism as an ideology may be described briefly as the belief that global socialism can be achieved only through the dictatorship of the proletariat, exercised by means of the dictatorship of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which led the first successful effort to seize power" (Hook 1989). In terms of political ideology, Pavao Novosel notes that the Soviet Communist Party was not content to simply have power and rule: it needed "to win over people to the hegemonic ideology, mobilizing them in work and politics, and convincing them that the regime has great success in its endeavours to better the lot of its citizens" (Novosel 1995, 14). Hook also emphasizes that "in the Soviet Union, the ideology is prescribed in such a way that anyone denying it, is deemed unfit for public office, or for any kind of public activity, or private activity involving public manifestations" (Hook 1989, 1). Therefore, everything in the Soviet Union was under the strict supervision, regulation and control of the Party, and "official censorship on various levels became a necessary agent for the maintenance of the Soviet State and the Communist Party" (Lauk 1999, 19). In effect, all literary texts were evaluated for their didactic usefulness in the ideological struggle, while the concept of literature as entertainment or aesthetic pleasure became unacceptable.

Mette Newth, who presents a short history of censorship in Russia, states that "censorship reforms began in Russia in a single decade of tolerance (1855-1865) during the reign of Tsar Alexander II, when the transition was made from legislation on pre-censorship to the punitive system based on legal responsibility" (Newth 2010, 3). Censorship laws were re-imposed in 1866; Newth asserts:

> It was abolished by the Temporary Government on April 1917: this freedom was however short lived, as the decrees only were in force until October 1917. Following the formal separation of church and state in 1918, a new, long and extensive era of strict censorship began, now executed by the revolutionary rulers of the USSR, lasting until the end of the 1980s. (Newth 2010, 3)

The Bolsheviks regarded freedom of expression as too dangerous at this stage of their ideological rule; therefore, "the persecution of the press commenced on the first day of the October Revolution. On 25 October the Petrograd Military Revolutionary Committee shut down the "bourgeois" newspaper *Russkaia volia* (*Russian Freedom*) and confiscated its printing equipment and paper supply" (Ermolaev 1997, 1). In a short time following October 1917 the Bolsheviks shut down about 20 newspapers.

In January 1918 a decree of the Revolutionary Tribunal for the Press was signed by Lenin: "the tribunal had to deal with violations of Soviet press laws and with false or distorted reports constituting "encroachments upon the rights and interest of the revolutionary people" (Ermolaev 1997, 1). Once this document was signed, it was published in *Pravda*, a Russian political newspaper associated with the Communist Party; it emerged after the October Revolution as the leading paper of the Soviet Union. In their article "The Bolsheviks' Policy towards the Press in Russia: 1917-1920" (2007) Dmitry Strovsky and Greg Simons state that "organs of the press 'appealing for the open rejection or insubordination to the new authority, sowing discord by means of libellous distortion of facts as well as appealing for acts of criminal activity' was ordered to be closed" (Strovsky and Simons 2007, 6). Many Russian writers opposed the new documents; for example, "Vladimir Nabokov openly rejected the contemptible and disgusting terror and any other crazy reprisal established by Lenin" (Strovsky and Simons 2007, 7). Over a few months in 1918, "the Bolsheviks are reported to have suppressed 234 newspapers, 142 of which were the organs of the socialist parties" (Ermolaev 1997, 2).

By this time, as Marina Balina and Evgeny Dobrenko state, the Revolution had strongly affected the previously existing Russian literary system:

> The Revolution sharply disrupted the organic development of literature by creating entirely new conditions under which it had to function. The new government imposed agitational and propagandistic functions that were not characteristic of the earlier literature, and the concept of the 'social mandate' took shape. (Balina and Dobrenko 2007, 97)

The greatest changes that took place during this period included the taking over, monopolizing and / or shutting down of private publishing houses; in Balina and Dobrenko's words, "the Party began to actively interfere in literary matters, a process that culminates in the state assuming complete control over literature" (Balina and Dobrenko 2007, 97). The main reason that the

Party imposed such measures was to spread the right ideology; C. Vaughon James explains: "it was an attempt to codify those [artistic] developments and project them into the future, transforming the artist's 'tendency' into a conscious programme" (James 1977, 84).

Wishing to exert its control even more, the Party continued to pass even more laws: "on 20 May 1919 the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets unified the state's control over publishing by expanding the duties of the State Publishing House, which had been formed in January 1918 within the People's Commissariat of Education" (Ermolaev 1997, 2). The latter was known as Gosizdat and was responsible for issuing its own publications, for drawing up a unified publishing plan, directing other publishing houses, supervising book distribution, and planning paper production. According to Ermolaev, "in November 1920 the scope of Gosizdat's activities was augmented by the addition of a specifically censorial function" (Ermolaev 1997, 2). A few years later, in 1922, "a censorship agency was established under the name *Main Administration for Literary and Publishing Affairs at the RSFSR Narkompros*, abbreviated as Glavlit" (Rodden 1999, 86). The hierarchy of Glavlit extended from the central administration in the Kremlin to representatives working in the field. Ermolaev notes that "the Central Office encompassed three departments: the Department of Russian Literature, the Department of Foreign Literature, and the Administration and Control Department. Each department had a *zaveduiushchii* and a secretary" (Ermolaev 1997, 4).

Initially, the main function of Glavlit was to prevent the publication of any information that could compromise the new Soviet state, especially information in books, newspapers and other printed material, as well as in radio and cinema, that was considered as too secret for publication. Very quickly this kind of censorship spread beyond certain types of institution to literary texts. Glavlit performed its functions through regional offices in the Soviet Union, in institutions and enterprises in which the immediate censorship was performed by the so-called First Departments, which were controlled by the KGB. Censors did not have to explain their decisions, and legally there was no system of appeal. According to Ermolaev, Glavlit censors were responsible not only for Russia's publishing; they also "kept a watchful eye on Russian publishers abroad, primarily in Europe. […] Of particular interest are Glavlit's evaluations of émigré publications accompanied by a remark of whether a given book was allowed for distribution in Soviet Russia. Forty –six out of seventy-six titles were tabooed, all for political reasons" (Ermolaev 1997, 5). Glavlit was charged with suppressing any printed materials deemed hostile to the Soviet state or the Communist Party; Sinitsyna notes that this was done allegedly "to protect the minds of the Soviet people from the harmful influence and infection of the West" (Sinitsyna 36). For this reason, foreign books had to pass through the official censorship first and only those that did were sent to state libraries. According to Sinitsyna,

"twice a year our Library received the gifts of Glavpochta. Normally each of those gifts contained about 200 books" (Sinitsyna 1999, 37). Small local libraries were not so lucky, because foreign materials were prohibited.

Overall, Ermolaev explains that "the story of Soviet censorship in the 1917-1931 period shows that the chief reason for its emergence was political. From the very first day of their rule, the Bolsheviks treated the free word as a mortal threat to their power" (Ermolaev 1997, 10). Ermolaev asserts: "the huge censorship machine was built between 1917 and 1931. Since then, censorship went through a series of changes, but its principles remained essentially the same for almost six decades" (Ermolaev 1997, 10). Sinitsyna provides a more detailed explanation of the reasons that particular texts or materials were censored:

> Political reasons (criticism of the Soviet Union, CPSU, Soviet regime, particular political bodies and figures);
> Political unreliability (temporary or permanent) of an artist, whose work was the subject of the publication;
> Political unreliability (temporary or permanent) of an author of a publication; mentioning an unreliable person, unworthy fact or event in the text unless it was criticized (possible cuttings of the text or plates);
> Generally prohibited subject (for instance: unofficial Soviet art); propaganda of fascism, violence or terror (horror films belonged to that category);
> Pornography (a magic word - none of the censors could ever give a distinct definition of this term in their special vocabulary; the most frequent reason for art publications to become banned as most of the artists, since the ancient times, had made the studies of the nude models);
> Themes, subjects, facts, events which caused or might have caused undesirable thoughts, associations or illusions not in favour of the Soviet state. (Sinitsyna 1999, 37-38)

As for children's literature in the Soviet Union, after 1917 it had to develop according to the ideological necessities of the state. Ermolaev, for example, explains: "for belles-lettres and children's literature, the libraries had to be cleansed of books arousing "animal and antisocial feelings" (anger, cruelty, sexual perversion), superstition, nationalism, and militarism" (Ermolaev 1997, 6). Soviet children's literature was mainly regulated by the ideals of socialist realism, as well as the need to turn of the "new Soviet man" into a hero. As William B. Husband explains, children were regarded as future Soviet activists: "the exaltation of the machine over the irresponsible furniture of fairyland, and especially a revised version of the pre-18th-century miniature adult view of the child: he now had become a potential Soviet citizen and architect of the Communist future" (Husband 2007, 795). According to Husband, "literature now served an additional purpose – in conjunction with entertainment and character education, literature for children would also convey messages of social changes, hope and productivity" (Husband 2007, 796). Husband also claims that "Gozidat, the Soviet Publishing House, and the Young Guard Press of the Communist Youth League, both of which were rapidly producing material in the

form of books, magazines, and other youth-centered publications for implementation in schools for young soviet children as well as older adolescents" (Husband 2006, 2). Maria Lomaka also sees one of the main aims of the Soviet authorities as to raise children as the new generation of a future collective society:

> The cultural engineers of the Soviet Union had two things to address in their construction of the new Soviet citizen: the values he would possess and the vehicles through which he would acquire them. The values themselves were at times ambiguous, but their preferred methods of transmission involved mass production and distribution. (Lomaka 2013, 1)

In the 1930s, special interest began to be paid to books aimed at a young audience. According to Ermolaev, "in early 1930s, works considered most suitable for young readers were printed with the notice that the State Learned Council approved their use in school libraries for the upperclassmen of secondary schools" (Ermolaev 1997, 95). Meanwhile, the importance attached to young readers was demonstrated in 1932, when the Union of Soviet Writers was formed, writers of children's literature were given a section of their own within the Union. In the same year a professional journal *Detskaya literatura* (Children's Literature) was established, followed in 1933 by a publishing house with the same name. Ben Hellman asserts that "at the first congress of the Union of Soviet Writers, where Samuil Marshak spoke about children's literature, socialist realism was made the obligatory method for all creative work. From the many conferences on children's literature that were arranged henceforth, it was easy to see that literature had now become a party matter" (Hellman 1991, 8). The First Writers' Congress that took place in 1934 in the Soviet Union agreed to promote the idea of Socialist Realism in all the Soviet literary production (Clark 58, 1981). Furthermore, according to Lomaka, the Soviet writer, translator and children's poet, Samuil Marshak as one of the keynote speakers at the Congress said that there was a need for children's literature as "there were only few books for children. For that reason the issue of children's literature is placed at the forefront of important issues at the First Writers' Union Congress" (Lomaka 2013, 3).

Any literary work, including books for children, had to meet with the idea of "Socialist Realism"; according to Felicity Ann O'Dell, this "is an artistic method, the basic characteristic of which is the just, historically concrete depiction of reality in its revolutionary development, and the most important task of which is Communist character-education of the masses" (O'Dell 2010, 4). Ermolaev points out that the Soviet authorities called for "the political tendentiousness of Soviet literature and linked the definition of Socialist Realism to Stalin's designation of writers as 'engineers of human souls'" (Ermolaev 1997, 53). O'Dell distinguishes the three main rules of Socialist Realism:

1. All works must be optimistic, even if the protagonist may come to an unhappy ending – good conquers evil no matter what circumstance. 2. Man must be portrayed as being a social animal – the main character will ultimately become an active member of society on a true and glorious path. 3. Every work of art should have 'ideological content' – Soviets deny that the value of literature that is pure narrative seeks solely to entertain. (O'Dell 2010, 4-5)

In general, the main aim of Soviet literature for young readers was to teach children to see life according to the Soviet ideology so that they would grow up as disciplined and patriotic Soviet citizens. One of the ways to do this was "by pinpointing out flaws in capitalism and religious belief on a very simplified scale, whether it be that of prerevolutionary Tsarist Russia, or the democratic United States" (O'Dell 2010, 8).

Furthermore, this ruling affected translations in the Soviet Union, as the Soviet Party prohibited any foreign books that proposed different idea from its own. Translations of foreign publications were often produced in a shortened form, with extensive corrective footnotes. In addition, they also had to go through the censorship process, which resulted in "the general public having no access to source language originals, they were ignorant of the extent to which works had been rewritten or 'amputated'" (Inggs 2011, 80). When it came to the censorship of translations, Ermolaev explains that "thoughts, actions, language, names, and personal qualities judged to shed negative light on the Communist Party or on the Soviet regime were deleted, changed, or replaced" (Ermolaev 1997, 15). For example, Ermolaev states that during the period of 1935 and 1941 many literary works were censored though "deletions of puritanical nature" (Ermolaev 1997, 96), which included the removal of allusions to lose behaviour, sex scenes and swearwords. Overall, in the 1930s Soviet censorship was still not reaching its peak: according to Ermolaev, "the years 1946-53 belong to the worst period in the history of Soviet literature and censorship <...> the period lasted until after Stalin's death in March 1953" (Ermolaev 1997, 99). Unfortunately, Lithuania became a part of the Soviet Union during the harshest period for cultural control and censorship in Soviet history. During World War II Lithuania was first occupied by the Soviet army in June of 1940, in conformity with the terms of the 1939 Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact in which Nazi Germany gave Lithuania to the Soviets. During this period "the official task of Soviet literature was to attack boldly bourgeois culture, which found itself in a state of decay and corruption Soviet literature reflected a social system and culture vastly superior to any of their bourgeois-democratic counterparts" (Ermolaev 1997, 99).

In 1932 another major institution of the Soviet literary system, the Union of Soviet Writers was established as an instrument of control over both writers and literary texts. During this period the concept was developed that literature had to be "party minded and typical that is avoiding unpleasant aspects of Soviet reality, while showing the triumph of fully positive

heroes" (Hellman 1991, 10). As for literature for young people, the educating function of physical labour was now stressed in books aimed at children and adolescents. According to Ben Hellman, among this literature "a popular genre was the school novel, in which the conflict was often between the class collective and an individualistically minded pupil" (Hellman 1991, 10). With the institutionalization of the literary process, writers were under strict supervision, since "editors and official censors heightened their vigilance to ensure that literary production met the latest Party prescriptions" (Ermolaev 1997, 100). The late years of Stalin's rule took place in an atmosphere in which writers and the rest of the intelligentsia lived in a constant state of fear. In support of this, Friedberg asserts that "the most oppressive were the years 1946 to 1953, the period of Zhdanov's witchhunts which included the expulsion from the Writers' Union of the poet Anna Akhmatova and the humorist Mikhail Zoshchenko, as well as the orgy of 'anti-cosmopolitan' purges of Jews and other admirers of Western culture" (Friedberg 2012, 6). It was precisely at this point in Soviet history that Lithuanian culture was subjected to a harsh process of assimilation, and its literary system had to follow the Soviet one.

The situation started to gradually change after Stalin's death; this period from the mid-1950s to the 1960, is also known as Nikita Khrushchev's "Thaw". Censorship became less strict and supervision of literary process was more relaxed than during the Stalinist era: "de-Stalinization encouraged writers to tackle previously forbidden themes and to treat familiar subjects with greater frankness. However, when the Party felt that the writers overstepped the limits of the permissible, it would initiate a critical campaign against faulty works" (Ermolaev 1997, 141). In the book *Marketing Literature and Posthumous Legacies* (2013) Yuri Leving and Frederick H. White quote Mikhail Berg, according to whom "the thaw period allowed for and legitimized new players within Soviet social space while the authorities attempted to restructure ideology, economics, politics, and culture. This cultural boom in the 1960s enhanced the role of literature in society" (Leving and White 2013, 42). Overall, literature during the Thaw period was allowed to become more realistic and "less utopian <...> Soviet writers felt strongly that the truth must be told and people must be trusted" (Ermolaev 1997, 142).

This change can also be noticed in children and young adult literature, where a new generation of writers emerged during the period. Hellman asserts that in literature for younger readers a variety of sub-genres appeared: "psychological prose, adventure stories (Anatoly Rybakov), novels for girls (Lyubov Voronkova), humorous prose (Viktor Dragunsky), fantasy and fairy tales (Yuri Druzhkov) and science fiction (Arkady and Boris Strugatsky)" (Hellman 1991, 12). Moreover, the previously unfamiliar genre of the so-called 'youth novel' appeared in 1956:

> The youth novel might be described as a kind of mutation, for though most of standard events of the plot are different from those of the typical Stalin novel, the underlying structural impulse is the same: a rite of passage by which the hero passes from the state of 'spontaneity' to one of 'consciousness' and thus achieves social integration.(Clark 2000, 226)

The main protagonist in youth novels was usually a teenager confused by the discovery that the society around him was full of corruption, betrayal and uncertainty. Clark provides some examples of typical youth novels during this period; according to her, V. Akenov's novel *Ticket to the Stars* (1961) is a good example, which also shows that literature had become more open and liberal during the Khrushchev period:

> [In the novel] a group of swinging young Leningraders set off for a good time in the Baltic resort town in Tallinn, which, by the end of the novella, virtually changes its identity from being a haven for jazz and other forms of Western decadence it becomes simply the nearest town to a fishing sovkhoz in which the hero decides to follow his destiny. (Clark 2000, 228)

Although some writers of this period attempted to touch upon more realistic topics and pay more attention on psychological issues in their fiction for young people, their stories, as Marina Balina and Larissa Rudova state, "ended up posing more questions than providing answers" (Balina and Rudova 2013, 16). They also suggest that this was caused by the changing situation in Soviet society: "the obligatory Soviet model of the happy child growing up under the protection of the state turns out to be a myth, and children's literature still retained the ability to reflect on real-life experience rather than on ideologically imposed constructs" (Balina and Rudova 2013, 16).

Towards the end of the 1960s, a change once again occurred in the political, cultural and social life of the Soviet Union. This is known as the period of "Stagnation" that began during the rule of Leonid Brezhnev (1964–1982). Hellman asserts that there was very little change in literature for young people during the period up until so-called "Perestroika" in 1986:

> Within the body of writers hardly any renewal occurred, and the lack of new, talented writers and outstanding books was felt more and more keenly. Interest in poetry declined, and many poets devoted their efforts to summing up their writing. Names of interest in prose were Yury Korinets, Albert Likhanov, Vladimir Amlinsky and Vladislav Krapivin. Within the sub-genres of fantasy and humour, relatively few works of value appeared. Eduard Uspensky and Sergey Kozlov wrote fantasy and fairy tales, while the popular Kir Bulychev created science fiction for children. (Hellman 1991, 14)

Mikhail Gorbachev took over as the Party chairman in 1988 up to the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991; this period, known as Perestroika, had a significant impact on the country's political and economic life. Moreover, rapidly weakening ideological control and censorship resulted in major changes in the literary system of the Soviet Union. Hellman argues that now,

"in a situation in which the ideological monopoly of the party has been broken and the socialist ideals obscured, the role and content of literature are once again being re-examined" (Hellman 1991, 14). For Lithuania, 1990-1991 marked renewed independence, a rapid movement away from the power of the USSR and a literary system that in the 1990s took on many Western features.

From the perspective of Even-Zohar's theory, Soviet Russia developed a rather unbalanced literary system since so much power was concentrated in the hands of the institution, and this institution, which the Tel Aviv scholar emphasizes usually includes forces and groups struggling for power, was monolithic. The Communist Party enjoyed a degree of power that is unusual, enabling it to dictate the repertoire and making all the other elements of the system subordinate to its mandates. To be sure, no power is absolute; the repertoire that the Communist Party allowed included, especially as time passed, traditional literary genres, forms and styles to a certain extent. However, literature for young adults was additionally restricted by two aspects. First, most of this literature took the form of novels, and so was subjected to the principles of Soviet Realism in its repertoire. Second, the Communist regime was particularly concerned to control young people and their reading, as demonstrated by frequent campaigns to purify school and local libraries of any texts that did not directly propagate Communist ideas. While some poets or writers for adults might succeed in publishing texts that were not quite ideologically appropriate, the situation was much more difficult for writers of young adult fiction.

3.2 The Imposition of a Soviet Polysystem on the Literary System of Soviet Lithuania: Limitations for Young Adult Fiction

Changes in literary systems usually take place gradually, with new elements entering the repertoire and pushing older ones to the margins. In this way, in several European countries, the Renaissance gave way to the Age of Enlightenment and this, in turn, to Romanticism. However, sudden and very radical political events can hasten this process, though not usually as quickly as in Lithuania and other states in regard to the Soviet Union. The Soviet military occupation of the three Baltic states in accordance with its agreement with Nazi Germany in the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact on 14 June 1940 was followed by their incorporation into the USSR as constituent states. A year later, Hitler broke the pact, and his army invaded Lithuania, which came under Nazi control. In the summer of 1944, with the Nazis in retreat, the Soviet Red Army reached eastern Lithuania and gradually occupied Lithuania for the second time, in this case, for nearly half a century.

Overall, the Soviet occupation can be divided into three major periods: the Stalinist era (1940-1953), the period of the so-called political "thaw" (1954-1968) and the later period of

stagnation up to Mikhail Gorbachev's becoming Secretary of the Communist party (Misiūnas and Taagepera 1992). According to Romualdas Bagušauskas, "the Soviet occupation applied destructive policies to Lithuania's social life. The activities of political parties and organisations were interrupted, and an independent press was suppressed" (Bagušauskas 1999, 385). The main aim of this sub-section is to examine the situation of book publishing in Lithuania during the Soviet period, with particular interest in literature for young adults, as well as to consider the ideological pressure exerted on all those involved in producing literature and the impact of this pressure on the system as a whole. In addition, the status of translated literature in Soviet literature is considered. The historical review is based on publications by Klemensas Sinkevičius, Jonas Lankutis, Tomas Venclova, the books of Romualdas Bagušauskas *Lietuvos Jaunimo Pasipriešinimas Sovietiniam Režimui ir jo Slopinimas* (*Youth Resistance Movement in Lithuania Against the Soviet Regime and its Suppresion*) (1999) and *Lietuvos Kultūra Sovietinės Ideologijos Nelaisvėje* (*Lithuanian Culture within the Confines of Soviet Ideology*) (2005), as well as the more recent works by Vilius Ivanauskas *Įrėminta Tapatybė: Lietuvos Rašytojai Tautų Draugystės Imperijoje* (*Framed Identity: Lithuanian Writers in the Empire of the Friendship of Nations*) and Anna Mikonis-Railienė and Lina Kaminskaitė-Jančorienė's *Kinas Sovietų Lietuvoje* (*Cinema in Soviet Lithuania*), both of which were published in 2015.

The Lithuanian language was under threat during Soviet rule: although it was not prohibited, it no longer had the status of the national language. According to Rimvydas Šilbajoris, "when Lithuania, through no fault of her own, became a part of the Soviet Union, Lithuanian culture underwent a forcible transformation designed to bring it into conformity with the Soviet pattern of life. The Communist Party referred to this transformation as 'revolution from above', but the Lithuanian people quickly recognized this semantic curiosity for what it was: Soviet cultural imperialism, reinforcing political imperialism" (Šilbajoris 1955). From the beginning of the occupation, Soviet actions showed that the future would be grim for Lithuanian culture, language and book publishing; as Klemensas Sinkevicius notes, "strict Soviet censorship of the Lithuanian print was imposed during the very first days of the occupation, and all national or foreign publications considered to be harmful to the Communist party were censored or destroyed" (Sinkevicius 2012). Applying Itamar Even-Zohar's terms about literary systems, this meant a radical change from a largely free-market system in independent interwar Lithuania to one in which a single dominant institution, the Communist Party, and its repertoire, Communist ideology, had almost supreme power over producers, products, markets, consumers and products. In a cautious Soviet history of the period, *Panorama of Soviet Lithuanian Literature* (1975), Jonas Lankutis observes these changes and divides the development of Soviet Lithuanian literature into the three periods: "the first years of revolutionary changes in the

Republic (1940 – 1941), the Great Patriotic War period (1941 – 1945), [and] the first ten years after the war" (Lankutis 1975, 10-11). The very terminology he uses indicates how Soviet-centered history now had to be in Lithuania.

Natalia Rudnytskaya, who analyses the impact of censorship on translation in Ukraine, traces the roots of censorship back to the October Revolution in 1917, when "the decree [of Soviet censorship] on publishing became the starting point for the Soviet ideological terror" (Rudnytsjaya 2013). Lankutis uses a fairly mild Soviet rhetoric in considering the Lithuanian situation:

> The years 1940 – 1941 were the formative period for the new literature. Writers had to choose between different ideologies. Some nationalistic intellectuals following bourgeois circles left their native land, emigrating to the West, mostly to the USA. However, the majority of intellectuals have linked their fate with that of their people, and have embraced socialism. (Lankutis 1975, 11)

The state of Lithuanian culture was irretrievably connected to earlier development in the Soviet Union. As has already been explained in Chapter 3.1, by 1930 the complex system of control was firmly established in the Soviet Union, with the censorship agency Glavlit established in 1922. According to Tomas Venclova, during the Stalinist period "Lithuania was practically separated from the world. The Sovietization and Russification process was carried out in brutal, obvious forms. An attempt was made in a brief time to change totally the cultural orientation of the nation" (Venclova 1979, 10-11). Leonas Gudaitis recalls that "*Glavlit* was an alien force, detested but dreaded by the Lithuanian intelligentsia" (Gudaitis 2010).

Control of Lithuanian literature that was more specific and stricter began with the establishment of the Lithuanian Soviet Writers' Union as part of the Soviet Writers' Union. According to Šilbajoris, "this organization had the power to determine the choice of themes, political loyalties and literary interests of each individual member through a complicated mechanism of controls emanating from the policy-making body of the Union – its Communist Party organization" (Šilbajoris 1955). The aim of the Union was to achieve party and state control in the field of literature. For anyone who wished to be a professional writer, membership of the Union was obligatory, and while those who were not members had much more limited opportunities for publication. Writing in 1955, Šilbajoris continues:

> No member of the Union can get his work published unless it has been thoroughly discussed and approved by the representatives of the Party and his fellow-writers. It is not officially forbidden to be a writer without joining the Union, but such a writer will find it next to impossible to appear in print, since the publishing houses obey the orders of the Party and would not dare to publish anything that is likely to be subsequently criticized and denounced by its spokesmen. (Šilbajoris 1955)

Thus Lithuanian writers discovered that in order to remain active in the field of literature, they had to renounce the very thing that makes writing worthwhile — the freedom to follow their own creative vision. The Lithuanian Soviet Writers' Union was under the direct control of the Communist Party and leading members of the Union had to belong to the Party.

In his study of the Lithuanian Writers' Union during the Soviet period, Vilius Ivanauskas refers to the work of writers as providing insight into what was happening in Lithuania at this time, as well as illustrating the relations between the centre and the margins of the Soviet world (Ivanauskas 2015, 9). In general, he concludes that, in Lithuania, which was at the margins of this world, literary activity was conducted in the context of extreme restrictions of the autonomy of writers (Ivanauskas 2015, 10). His study shows how the Writers' Union had both formal and informal ways to discipline writers in its attempts to unite individuals into a general cultural group that carried out official policies (Ivanauskas 2015, 14). Ivanauskas analyses the institutional structure of literary activity in the Soviet period, noting what functions each organization in the general structure carried out. It is significant not only that a specific organ of censorship known as *Glavlit* existed, but also that a number of organizations, the Writers' Union itself, printing houses and their management and the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party, were responsible for the propagation and development of subject fields that had priority (Ivanauskas 2015, 87). Ideological considerations, according to Ivanauskas' research, were closely related to the notion that literature had to be didactic, and these principles of didacticism and ideological correctness remained in force during the entire Soviet period in Lithuania (Ivanauskas 2015, 92). In a sense, this comes up against earlier writers cited who divide the period into stricter and more liberal times. However, Ivanauskas' archival-based conclusions are a reminder that the basic repertoire of Communist party did not change, though it could be administered in a more or less severe way.

In this whole Soviet period, what Even-Zohar calls the market (bookstores, libraries and publishing houses) and the product (books, magazines and newspapers) were all owned and regulated by the Party. Maurice Friedberg asserts: "books printed in the Soviet Union by government-owned presses, sold in Soviet stores and circulated by Soviet libraries fall, roughly, into two distinct categories: there are those publications that the authorities are eager to disseminate as widely as possible, and those to which they merely have no objections" (Friedberg 2012, 4). The first group of books included mainly political literature ranging from classics of Marxism-Leninism to pronouncements by current Soviet leaders. The other group consisted of "subject matter ranging from fiction (pre-revolutionary, Soviet and translations of foreign writing), to juvenile books to reference works, i.e., books that entertain or those of

immediate practical value" (Friedberg 2012, 4). Sirje Olesk distinguishes an additional significant feature in the literary system in the Soviet Union: "there were two unbreakable rules in the Soviet society: the state monopoly of publishing and the publishing and the censorship of the printed word" (Olesk 2008, 123). Tal further explains the process of censorship: "printed works published in this country [Soviet Union] are reviewed twice by the organs of censorship. There is the so-called preliminary censorship carried out by authorized representatives of *Glavlit* who work in actual publishing houses, and the final censorship carried out by the Central Staff of *Glavlit*" (Tal 1936; Baliulytė 2003).

Historically, according to Silvija Vėlavičienė, who writes about the initial period of the Soviet occupation, "the grounds of censorship were political, and censorship was carried out along four main lines; closure of all periodicals currently published in the Republic of Lithuania, suspension of printing of books due to be published, prohibition of all import of books from foreign countries except the USSR, and by scrutiny of all previously published material. If a publication was deemed harmful to the Soviet regime, the publication was placed in special collections of strictly limited access" (Vėlavičienė 2011, 8). In 1979 Tomas Venclova, who analyzed translations and political censorship in Soviet Lithuania, viewed Lithuanian publishing system "as liberal (sometimes even slightly more liberal) as that of Russia (that is, the Russian Republic); it is, however, more restricted than in Estonia, but much more liberal than in all the other republics" (Venclova 1979, 7-8). Nevertheless, he also pointed out the strict censorship system in the country and mentioned "the mechanism of 'blacklisting'" (Venclova 1979, 22). Venclova distinguishes eight particular groups of people that might be put on this list; it includes dissidents, Western authors of anti-Communist books, Western authors who rejected ties with Communism, writers who condemned Soviet policies, Catholics, supermodernists, writers of extreme right and pornographic writers (Venclova 1979, 23-24).

Publishing was directed by the State Publishing Centre of the U.S.S.R., which was established in Lithuania in the autumn of 1940. The State Publishing House took over more than 40 private and public publishing and printing houses that had existed in interwar Lithuania. Soviet state publishing houses were established in almost every occupied country. For example, Aile Moeldre, who analyzed the book publishing situation in Soviet Estonia, asserted that such an "institution was organized according to the pattern of the All-Union Association of the State Publishing Houses. The association consisted of publishing houses, which were specialized by types of literature and directed from one centre" (Moeldre 2005, 52). It should be noted that all the publishing houses were given a name and a field of specialization and were also supposed to prepare production plans. Nadia Zilper adds that "a government printing plant was then assigned, paper allocated, and a print run determined based on estimates made by the three

distribution agencies – two internal (for books and for subscriptions) and one external" (Zilper 2013, 44).

The State Publishing House in Lithuania stopped its activities at the beginning of 1945, when four separate publishing houses were established in Lithuania, each specialising in a certain type of literature or printed matter – pedagogical, scholarly, political and literary (Prunskis 1957). In 1946, the publishing house *Mintis* (*Thought*) was founded in Vilnius, which mostly dealt with scholarly books; later, in 1975, Soviet Lithuanian authorities decided to split this into two: *Mintis* and *Mokslo* (*Scholarship*) (Prunskis 1957). The latter specialized in books for higher and special schools, as well as dictionaries and encyclopaedias. The *Šviesa* (*Light*) publishing house that was created in 1945 (first known as the Publishing House of Pedagogical Literature) also mainly focused on publishing pedagogical books; at first, according to Juozas Prunskis, "the majority of these books were translated from Russian" (Prunskis 1957). In brief, *Mintis* specialized in political literature, *Šviesa* in educational literature while *Vaga* (*Furrow*), (known until 1965 as *Valstybinė grožinės literatūros leidykla (the State Literary Publishing House*), mostly published fiction. *Vyturys* (*Skylark*) produced literature for children; according to the statistics, 163 books for children and young adults were published in 1989 (the largest number of titles throughout the entire Soviet occupation in Lithuania). All these publishers had a monopoly in their category and there was no competition between them which, according to Moeldre, "made it easy to monitor and control" (Moeldre 2005, 3); a writer whose manuscript was refused by the publisher appropriate for its subject and genre could not submit it to another publisher.

Lithuanian publishing houses were directly subordinate to the Agitation and Propaganda Section of the Central Committee Secretariat of the Communist Party. This department of the Central Committee was established in the early 1920s and was responsible for determining the content of all official information, overseeing political education in schools, watching over all forms of mass communication, and mobilizing public support for party programs (*Agitprop*).

Nevertheless, according to Vanda Stonienė, although the Communist party had great power in controlling publishing in the Soviet Union, during the Soviet occupation Lithuanian publishing houses still managed to support the use of the Lithuanian language, as 74.7 percent of all published books were in Lithuanian (Stonienė 2000, 79). Matters were more restricted when it came to the contents of all media. Lauk explains that some topics and facts such as "big disasters with human losses, criminality and jails as well as censorship itself could never be mentioned or written publically" (Lauk 1999, 23).

There is still a lack of sources when it comes to the culture of young adults or literature for adolescents during the Soviet period in Lithuania. In his book *Lietuvos Jaunimo Pasipriešinimas*

Sovietiniam Režimui ir jo Slopinimas (*Youth Resistance Movement in Lithuania against the Soviet Regime and its Suppression*) (1999), Bagušauskas argues that the Soviet regime in Lithuania severely affected the life of young people: "school programmes were revised to advocate teachings of communist doctrine. Young people against their will were involved in the destruction of statehood and the subjugation of the country" (Bagušauskas 1999, 385). Nevertheless, Lithuanian youth resisted against Soviet power in different ways. In the Stalinist period many of them joined the partisans instead of serving in the Red Army, while later, becoming part of different underground activities was another way of resistance. Bagušauskas argues that many "young people explored new trends of music, art and literature" as a way of resistance against the Soviet dominance (Bagušauskas 1999, 396). Especially during the later years of the Soviet occupation, "young intellectuals fought for the preservation of cultural heritage and protested against ideological pressures upon culture" (Bagušauskas 1999, 388). In other words, many members of Lithuanian youth found ways of self-expression free from Soviet ideology. In *Notes from Underground: Rock Music Counterculture in Russia*, Thomas Cushman explains that the Russian counterculture refers "to social actors who share values, perceptions, beliefs, and cultural symbols and codes which stand in opposition to the dominant, 'normal' culture of Soviet industrial society. [Where the] rock musical counterculture refers to a group of individuals who share, first and foremost, a common commitment to the autonomous production and dissemination of rock music without overt or covert interference by 'political' or economic forces" (Cushman 1995, 8). Since the source and models of rock music came from the West, it was automatically considered suspect by the Soviet authority.

In his study, Ivanauskas does not look specifically at fiction for young adults, but in one illuminating case he analyses a major speech made at the 1965 Fourth Conference of the Writers' Union by its current head, Eduardas Mieželaitis. The speaker generally expresses pleasure at the development and growth of Lithuanian literature and in particular, in fiction, its depiction of the Soviet hero: "the characteristics of a young person, fighting in a revolutionary manner against conservatism, routine, passivity and bourgeois indifference" (Ivanauskas 2015, 149; translated by the author of the thesis), heading his list of positive heroes with Vytautas Čeponis in Alfonsas Bieliauskas' novel for young readers, *Rožės Žydi Raudonai* (*The Roses Bloom Red*) (Ivanauskas 2015, 149). Vytautas Čeponis, a promising member of Communist Youth, returns from the war front to his native town, where he works very successfully organizing Communist youth groups. Although the Soviet regime has taken over, the town is still full of supporters of independent Lithuiania. The love relations between Asta, from one of these families, and Vytautas is doomed to failure. The novel ends with the hero leaving for an unspecified five-year assignment far away, but he no longer feels bitter about Asta. This novel

so clearly fits the requirements of Soviet Realism that it was awarded the Lithuanian Soviet Republic state prize when it appeared in 1959 and became a standard text given to teenagers to read in school.

As for children's and young adult literature, Visockas claims that the main aim was didactic (Visockas 1979, 11). Nevertheless, Urba notes in his article about children's literature "Children's Literature as a Political Minority's Means of Resistance" (2010): "the history of Soviet Lithuanian literature could be written as the history of fighting against censorship, efforts to circumvent and outwit it, as the history of overcoming the inner censor by each writer" (Urba 2010). Urba admits that children's literature was also censored, but asserts that "the ideas expressed in it could be hidden under the traditional and seemingly 'innocent' form of a fairy tale" (Urba 2010).

It has to be remembered that the Soviet Lithuanian literary system did not inherit a strong tradition from the preceding interwar system. Overall, until 1934, the number of original books written by Lithuanians for children and young adults was very low: "there were merely five original books per year, the rest were translations" (Brazdžionis 1995, 61). This started to improve after 1934, when, according to Brazdžionis, the numbers of books for children and young adults rose up to twenty per year, while the numbers of translations started to decrease (Brazdžionis 1995, 61). The increase in numbers was not only determined by the encouragement of the First Writers' Congress, but Lithuanian writers and teachers started writing for children (Brazdžionis 1995, 61). Significantly, most of them shared a similarly negative attitude to the translated books that had been produced, stating that those books "not only ruined the literary taste of young people but also their attitude to life. These books showed alien customs […] that destroyed local traditions, nature and love for the motherland" (Brazdžionis 1995, 62; translated by the author of this thesis). Therefore, the new original Lithuanian fiction for children and young adults depicted the real lives and enviroment of young Lithuanians in a way that they could relate to more easily.

When it comes to literature for young adults in Soviet Lithuania, the number of books written by Lithuanian writers remained low. Vincas Auryla explains that until 1970 children's and young adult books were mostly strongly didactic, with writers paying little attention to child desires (Auryla 1986, 230). The difficulties of writing something closer to Western young adult fiction in Soviet Lithuania are illustrated by individual attempts that did indeed seem significant to teen readers of that period.

Kęstutis Urba argues that there were no books for teens during the Interwar period in Lithuania; but that the situation started to change after such writers as Vytautas Bubnys, Algimantas Zurba, Vytautas Račickas and Kostas Kaukas begin producing for teens (Urba

2013). Their short stories and novels were among the first ones aimed specifically at high school students, since the topics that these writers included suicide, murder, drug and/or sexual abuse and other sensitive issues that concern young adults (Keleras 1993). Most of these are influenced by the excellent translation made by Povilas Gasiulis in 1966 of J.D. Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye* (first published in 1951). This novel describes the emotional and existential reflections made by a teenager and his attempts to rebel against what he sees as a hypocritical and materialistic American society. The narrative gains effect because it is all told by the main character Holden who uses typical adolescent language, including slang and swearing. Vytautas Bubnys' short novel *Arberonas: Mažas Ispažintis* (*Arberonas, a Brief Confession*), published in 1969, depicts seven days in the troubled lives of Lithuanian high school students. Most importantly, as Vaškūnas states, "the short story opened a window onto typical Lithuanian schools of the period, therefore, the narrative gained a lot of attention from young readers" (Vaškūnas 1972). The narrative is told through the perspective of a teenager, Arūnas, whose parents have a painful divorce: "They shared us, Saulius and me, as some things: this one is for you, this one is for me. I never thought that grownups who consider themselves wise could suddenly become such spineless creatures" (Bubnys 1969, 5; translated by the author of the thesis). Bubnys' story stood out from others by detailing controversial social topics like the divorce parents and by portraying a more rebellious side of Lithuanian teens. Since the narrator and the focalizer of the story is a sixteen-year-old boy, the writer uses language that is more colloquial and some slang typical for teens during the period. A narrative in the first person helps readers gain access to the speaker's feelings, some of which remain unspoken to other characters in the story. Like Salinger's novel, *Arberonas* focuses on the existential crisis of Arūnas, who is depressed by parental conflicts and hypocrisy at school. His own rebellion comes both through the publication of a secret school newsletter by him and his friends, along with his refusal to betray his friends when he is caught by the school authorities. Bubnys won a state award for his book and it has remained in print to the present.

However, as the authors of *Kinas Sovietų Lietuvoje* (*Cinema in Soviet Lithuania*) (2015) demonstrate, Algirdas Arminas' attempt to turn the popular story into a film encountered a good deal of opposition and negative commentary by Soviet authorities as well as critics. Arminas succeeded in bringing out his film as *Maža Išpažintis* (A *Brief Confession*) in 1972, but as Anna Mikonis-Railienė and Lina Kaminskaitė-Jančorienė state, the film is weakened by having almost no plot; action is replaced by good camera work and the successful use of the songs of the young singer-actor Vytautas Kernagis.

Keleras, Urba and Auryla distinguish Algimantas Zurba (b. 1942) as one more prominent writers for young adults during the Soviet period. According to Auryla, Zurba worked as a

teacher and an editor of a magazine for young people for a long time experiences, which helped him to get acquainted with the life of high-school pupils (Auryla 1986, 232). Zurba's 1975 novel *Šimtadienis* (The *Hundredth Days* refers to the custom of celebrating the end of secondary school about three months before the end of the final semester) similarly to Bubnys' *Arberonas* mostly focuses on teenagers' life at school and their most common struggles. Algimantas Zurba also received an award for this work, the Lithuanian Communist Youth Prize in 1978; in speaking to those who grew up in the last decades of the Soviet Lithuanian period, the author of this thesis found that this was the Lithuanian novel that was mentioned the most often as good teen fiction from the Soviet period.

Like Salinger's, Zurba's text concerns teenagers and their problems and unhappiness. In this case, the story is set in a special residential school for those from broken or socially problematic families: for example, one girl's father is in prison for theft so that she is crossed out from a list of pupils who can go on an excursion to East Germany. The major male teenager wants to create a symbolic and idealistic pageant for the hundredth day celebration, but this is not supported by all the teachers. There are more conflicts and interesting plot turns in Zurba's novel than in that written by Bubnys: a girl has a bad love affair that ends in her becoming pregnant and trying to kill herself; while a secret music and dance club organized by pupils is discovered and, presumably, closed down. If one considers this novel with the characteristics of young adult fiction today in mind, it becomes clear that Zurba is writing a slightly different kind of book. Teen interests should dominate such texts, but here, for instance, rock music is not referred to specifically and jazz is treated as a kind of barbarian form of contemporary music and dance. Moreover, the last third of the novel makes the teachers and not the teenagers, the central characters, and it is these adults that regulate and solve the adolescents' problems.

It has to be said that the political system in place in Soviet Lithuania was far too rigid and watchful to permit adolescents to manage their lives for themselves whenever such behaviour transgressed fundamental Communist principles. Therefore it is not surprising that the teen heroes of Bubnys' and Zurba's fiction express most of their rebelliousness in their thoughts, and that the plots that these writers conceive lack exciting action of the kind that is usual in Western young adult narratives. However, the emphasis that the Lithuanian novels place on long episodes of reflection rather than action is not untypical of Lithuanian narrative fiction in general, and continues as a feature after the Soviet regime has collapsed.

Since Lithuanian writers were restricted by internal and external censors from writing young adult fiction, this left the door open to translations. Here Even-Zohar's ideas about the status of translation in a literary system can be usefully applied. Moeldre asserts that the banning and destroying of many books led to the promotion of translations: "the Soviet period brought

along the transfer to compulsory translations – the choice of authors and works was determined by ideological considerations" (Moeldre 2005, 310). Despite the fact that the Russian language was given the dominant position, Moeldre's observations show that until 1970, the Soviet Union welcomed "translations of foreign literature consisting of books from socialist countries and from capitalist countries" (Moeldre 310). She continues that "the strengthening of ideological pressure since the beginning of the 1970s resulted in a decrease of these translations [from capitalist countries]" (Moeldre 2005, 310). Similarly, Susanna Witt supports the idea of the importance of translations in the general literary system of the Soviet Union; according to her, "translations now gained importance as an element of nationalities policy, regarded as a tool for holding together the many different republics and nationalities of the Soviet empire and as a means of communication between cultures" (Witt 2011, 157). To be sure, as Natalia Kaloh Vid states, "the whole translation and literary process in the Soviet Union differed greatly from that in democratic societies, as it was inevitably influenced by an institution of censorship and strict centralisation" (Kaloh Vid 2007, 157). The readers themselves could not choose which translations they preferred to get, while the publishers could not easily have Western books that won awards or were bestsellers translated. In 1979, reviewing Soviet Lithuanian literary production, Visockas states that translations helped promote the correct ideology: Lithuanian writers tend to pay more attention to Russian and other Soviet countries' literatures rather than Western ones, as used to be before Lithuania had become the part of the Soviet Union (Visockas 1979, 8-9). He does not explain that this shift came about because access to literature produced in capitalist countries was greatly restricted. It might also be noted that translated literature for younger children, like Astrid Lindgren's novels, could feature rebellions against adult systems of order. However, what could be permitted as a kind of fantasy for children of 9 to 12 could not be risked with teen readers.

Even though this kind of translation was part of a system of ideological indoctrination, it did give translated literature a positive image during the Soviet period. Looking back, one might say that the relatively high status of translated literature laid the ground for a natural transition in the literary system once Lithuania broke away from the Soviet system, only with Western literature being translated rather than works from Communist countries.

In general, then, the possibilities for the development of Lithuanian literature and in particular for young adult fiction during the period in which the Lithuanian system was regulated by the Soviet Communist party were extremely limited. The texts themselves that could be printed were censored at multiple levels, beginning with writers themselves and then moving within the hierarchy of a process of controls. The same could be said for the introduction of new ideas for the repertoire through translation. Most of the texts approved for

translation came from within the Soviet Union or from approved Communist regimes outside the country. Furthermore, as in earlier decades in the Soviet Union, the idea of seeing teen interests and values as constituting a culture worthy of recognition and support was countered in Soviet Lithuania by the fear that young people would form a generation that did not accept communist ideals and goals. The very fact that Lithuanian teenagers were strongly attracted to Western jazz, rock music and current fashions in clothing and appearance was considered alarming enough: there could not be any question of encouraging further subversive ideas through literary texts.

3.3 Changes in Literary System of Lithuania after 1990: the Impact on Young Adult Fiction in Particular

The sudden end of Soviet rule created vacuums and gaps both in institutions and producers in the Lithuanian literary system after 1990. It took a certain number of years to re-distribute power and to create desirable literary products for Lithuanian consumers. The first step was for private individuals or groups to take over the power held by key Soviet members of the institution, the Communist party and its censors. This position of power was assumed by publishers: instead of the very limited number of officially sanctioned publishing houses that existed in Soviet Lithuania, a number of new ones appeared since now there were no obstacles to their establishment. Some were privatized versions of Soviet publishers like *Vaga*. Others sprang up with the help of foreign funds, like *George Soros' Atviros Lietuvos fondas* (The Open Lithuanian Fund). The greatest risks were taken by purely commercial ventures. Many of these were short-lived, but one, *Alma Littera*, founded in 1990, moved quickly to learn from foreign partners in the Western free market system and eventually rose to a dominant position in the Lithuania system (Užtupas 1992; Kišūnaitė 2007).

One key difference was the Lithuanian system was no longer getting (or being forced to accept) literary translations from what Even-Zohar refers to as an "adjacent system" (Even – Zohar 1990, 168), in this instance, from Russian or from the literatures of other parts of the Soviet Union or Communist states. Without these translations a vacuum in publications appeared in the 1990s. With little respect for copyright, small printing houses appeared that took the easiest road by producing cheap reprints of earlier successful translations. However, players moved into the Lithuanian system in the form of visiting literary agents from Western publishers, invitations to Western book fairs and contract offers.

As the operation of the literary system in Lithuania became increasingly dependent on commercial rather than ideological factors, number of translations rose steeply, supporting Even-Zohar's observation of the situation in Israel, in that "the option of using translated texts

for popular consumption is still much easier and cheaper than producing them originally in Hebrew" (Even-Zohar 1990, 168). Previously, the Soviet Lithuania system had been compelled to draw from Soviet-approved sources; now it turned abruptly, and quite successfully from a commercial point of view, to Western suppliers.

The political and economic changes which have taken place in Lithuania after regaining independence have influenced all aspects of society, including the book and publishing industry. After 1990, the structure of the publishing market started to change, for instead of being tightly controlled by a single political party; it became closely tied to the global publishing market. Applying Even-Zohar's Polysystem theory, one may assert that the roles of the main players in the literary market have shifted: the major institution, the Communist Party, lost its power, while publishing houses, many newly-established, and modelled on Western ones, have gained most of the control in the decision-making process of what should be published. This section of the thesis looks briefly at the main changes in Lithuanian literary market after 1990, mostly focusing on literature for children and young adults.

First of all, since the end of the Communist system, the Lithuanian literary market has been characterised by an increasing number of titles published every year: over four thousand titles were released in 1997 compared to two thousand in 1991 (Misiūnas 2014, 273-289). However, Roma Kišūnaitė notes that the number of books for children and young adults started to grow only after 2000; she states that there was "a significant increase of titles of books - up to 700 titles per year (in 2006), i.e. five times more than in 1991" (Kišūnaitė 2008, 280).

As for translations, during the Soviet period most of the books published in Lithuania were fiction, and most fiction comprised translations from other languages, often using Russian as an intermediary language for translations. During the first years of independence, publishing concentrated on Western foreign literature with English-language literature predominating. As Ingo-Eric M. Schmidt-Braul and Maria Mölstad note, "in 1991, the number of translations of English, French, Russian and German literature titles was approximately equal, but since 1996, American literature remains prevailing in publishing" (Schmidt-Braul and Mölstad 1999, 26).

In addition, the publishing sector became completely privatised; there were almost no state owned publishing houses. During the Soviet period, *Vyturys* was a specialised publishing house, the main publisher for children but with independence and a free market economy it was gradually replaced by a variety of new private publishing houses. In "Vaikų Knygų Leidyba Lietuvoje 1991-2000 m." ("Children's Book Publishing in Lithuania, 1991-2000") (2001), Roma Kišūnaitė notes that approximately forty publishers produced books for children during the first decade of Lithuanian independence (Kišūnaitė 2008, 279-286). According to her, during this period, the following publishing houses were among the main players in children and young

adults: "*Alma Littera,* which produced almost one-third of all books for children and young adults, *Gimtasis Žodis*, *Nieko Rimto*, *Vaga*, *Aušra*, *Konta* and *Garnelis*" (Kišūnaitė 2008, 281). As an educational process, in order to adapt to changing market conditions, publishers started to participate in expositions of books at major international book fairs such as the Frankfurt International Book Fair. Taking part in these fairs allowed Lithuanian publishers to make business contacts with the international publishing community, as well as Western publishing norms. In addition to international fairs and expositions, Lithuanian publishers and writers became members of different international organisations. In an article "Literatūra Vaikams ir Paaugliams" ("Literature for Children and Young Adults") (2003), Kęstutis Urba notes the most significant changes in the market began with the appearance of the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY), a non-profit organization established in 1953, which cooperates with various international organizations and children's book institutions. In 1992, the Lithuanian section of IBBY was created, opening new opportunities for Lithuanian children's and young adult literature (Urba 2003, 260). Urba explains that, at the end of 1994, the Literature Association of World Lithuanian Children was established (Urba 2003, 260).

New literary prizes became another means to support and promote literary works. Since 1993 International Children's Book Day has been celebrated, during which the best books by Lithuanian writers are given awards. In addition, every year the Lithuanian Section of IBBY names the best writers and books for children and young adults. According to Urba, "2004 the Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science created the Children's Literature Prize (Urba 2013). In 2005, another, broader award was established, the Book of the Year, of which, in 2006, books for children and young adults formed two separate categories.

In his analysis of the children's and young adult literary market, Urba states that "Lithuanian children's literature written after 1990 is extremely diverse. The tradition of the genre of the literary fairy tale and fantasy has been replaced by a more nonsensical style; whereas in young adult fiction the problem novel has developed and matured" (Urba 2013). As for novels specifically for young adult, the number of titles begins to rise only after 2006; moreover, although Lithuanian writers have made a significant attempt to aim at young adults, original narratives constitute only a third of the output (Kišūnaitė 2008, 281). Urba, who presents a detailed review of children and young adult literature, distinguishes only a few examples of narratives aimed at teenagers at that time. He mentions Kostas Kaukas trilogy *Musei Geriau* (*Musė is Better*) (1988), *Musei vis dar Geriau* (*Musė is Even Better*) (1993) and *Paskutinis Kaifas* (*The Last High*) (1997); the three stories deal with drug abuse among adolescents. In addition, Urba also refers to the historic *Skomantas* series for young readers that has been republished and remains popular. The stories presented in the series focus on historic

events in Medieval Lithuanian, but at the same time depict fascinating tales of adventure and romance. The tales also discusses the beliefs and customs of Lithuanian pagan tradition and ethnographic material.

Since 2000, the situation in young adult market has perceptibly changed, since more books by Lithuanian writers are produced. As in other parts of the world, this particular genre gained more attention with the appearance of the first *Harry Potter* novel. In Lithuania, this took place in 2000 when the initial *Harry Potter* novel was translated into Lithuanian. The global success of the series showed that young adults all over the world are a profitable niche that is worth exploring; therefore, Lithuanian publishers, operating in a free literary market and strongly influenced by Western market partners, also saw the value of investing more into books for this particular readership.

Overall, two groups of writers aiming at young adults can be distinguished; Urba writes of acknowledged writers such as Kazys Saja, Algimantas Zurba, and Bitė Vilimaitė and a new wave of writers (Urba 2003, 259-290). According to him, the acknowledged writers wrote for children and young adults during the Soviet period and continue to produce books after the restoration of independence, while the new-generation writers attempt to reflect trends in contemporary society (Urba 2003, 273-288). These new writers are more open and tolerant about possible topics and the kind of language used in novels for teenagers.

One writer, Vytautas Račickas (b. 1952), fits into both groups since he wrote children's books during the Soviet period and recently has become one of the most popular writers among young adults. Račickas is among the rare Lithuanian writers known for addressing young adults in a way they can identify with and relate to. Initially, Račickas used to write books for children and is well known for his trilogy *Zuika Padūkėlis* (*Zuika Behaves Badly*) (1985). The Lithuanian Section of IBBY selected the narrative *Šlepetė* (*The Slipper)* as the best children's book of 1996. In this story, Račickas is among the first children and young adult writers in Lithuania who addresses the issue of parental emigration and its effect on a child. Today Račickas has become one of the most popular Lithuanian writers among teenagers, since he is not afraid to raise such sensitive subjects as drugs, homeless or runaway children, dysfunctional families, and even homosexuality. Račickas was nominated for the Book of the Year award in ythe oung adult category twice and won both times, in 2010, *Baltos Durys* (*White Door)* (2010) and in 2014, *Aš, Dviratis, Pirmoji Meilė ir Sumuštiniai su Sliekais (Me, the Bicycle, First Love and Sandwiches with Earthworms).*

Other popular Lithuanian writers for adolescents belong to the another generation, like Kristina Gudonytė, Gintarė Adomaitytė, Herta Matulionytė, and Unė Kaunaitė. Kristina Gudonytė (b. 1949) aims specifically at teen girls. Her novel *Blogos Mergaitės Dienoraštis*

(*Diary of a Bad Girl*) (2009) depicts a rebellious 15-year-old teenager who makes up stories and lies in order to get attention from her mother and friends. Gudonytė's novel was well received by teen readers mostly for its relatable characters, realistic setting and contemporary slang. The book was selected as the Book of the Year in 2009. Similarly to Gudonytė, Gintarė Adomaitytė also aims at teenage girls. She is a three-time recipient of the Lithuanian Section IBBY prize for the best book for young readers, one of which is a narrative for young adults: in 2001, for *Laumžirgių Namai* (*The House of Dragonflies)* (2001). Here Adomaitytė tells the story of a teenage girl whose mother is mentally ill; she does not know who her biological father is. In addition to some typical teen girl's problems such as conflict with her mother, attending a new school, falling in love, the novel also includes mystery elements. According to Urba, Adomaitytė's novel "is a stylistically new phenomenon in young adult literary market, since it is a mixture of emotional prose and detective elements" (Urba 2003, 287).

In "Literatūra Vaikams ir Paaugliams" ("Literature for Children and Teenagers") (2003), Urba also mentions Herta Matulionytė, who explores a new topic in her young adult novel *Žaidimo Valdovas* (*Lord of the Game*) (2001). This is a fantasy narrative in which children play a dangerous and addictive computer game; one of the players becomes stuck in virtual reality so that his brother has to try to save him and return him to reality. Urba states that Matulionytė's narrative is a good example of the virtual fantasy genre that is new in Lithuanian young adult literature (Urba 2003, 287).

In addition, the phenomena of young adults themselves writing and publishing books in Lithuania has grown, something that would never have been possible in Soviet times. There are different associations, student circles as well as universities and schools that encourage young writers by announcing various competitions. To name a few, the Lithuanian Writers' Union established a series called First Book in 1994, which encourages young writers under the age of 35 to participate in the First Book competition and have their books published. Unė Kaunaitė can be mentioned among the outstanding young Lithuanian writers. Her novel *Sudie, Rytojau* (*Goodbye Tomorrow*) (2012) was nominated for a Book of the Year award. Interestingly, however, in 2012, there were only two books nominated in the young adult category, showing that the number of books published by Lithuanian writers is very low. Still, Kaunaitė's nomination also shows that young adults can sometimes reveal the struggles of teenagers better than adult writers, since the story is told through the perspective of a teenage girl. Moreover, the young writer was praised for her book by the well-known critics in Lithuania; for example, Džiuljeta Maskoliūnienė stated that Kaunaitė dwells on topics that have not yet been discussed in young adult fiction, such as "the future of a talented young girl whose life is burdened by an infinite and great faith, and pressure by adults" (Maskoliūnienė 2012). *Sudie Rytojau* was not

the only novel written by Kaunaitė, as in 2015, she published *Žmonės iš Alkapės* (*People from Alkapė*).

Despite these and other changes in the Lithuanian literary market, young adult literature does not receive as much attention as other literary genres, mainly because there are not many strong writers who attempt to write for these readers. For instance, in the Book of the Year award, there are usually five books nominated in each category, but in 2011, the committee could find only three in young adult category.

Moreover, even when written, Lithuanian books do not often interest teenagers, as writers are still reluctant to deal with the more sensitive topics relevant to contemporary teens. The repertoire has broadened, but not to the extent needed. Because of social media and television, teenagers are able to learn about the latest trends in the foreign young adult market and are eager to read popular bestsellers, further encouraging translations in this particular genre. In "Šis tas apie Vertimų Vaikams ir Jaunimui Situaciją" ("A Few Comments on the Translation Situation of Children and Young Adult Literature") (2005), Urba explains that every year approximately 350 books are published for children and young adults, of which over 60% are translations, mostly from English (Urba 2005). Urba adds that, since 1990, "when publishers felt great a lack of books for teenagers, the number of translations has especially grown in young adult fiction" (Urba 2005). Special book categories for young adults were established by the largest publishers; for instance, *Alma Littera* has released a series called *Mergaičių lyga* (*Girls' League*), while *Vaga* has established a series *N-14* that specifically addresses teenage readers, mostly relying on translations.

In general, teen books written by Lithuanians, remain restricted by the fact that although these do discuss teenage life, Lithuanian literary culture is still not as open to the depiction of sex, swearing and vulgarisms, as Western literary cultures. The imbalance between the number of translations, especially from English, is rapidly growing, with teenagers attracted more to translated texts than to the native ones. Urba complains about the often superficial repertoire of ideas in these texts: "the amount of popular literature for teenagers is increasing in Lithuania - books which tell teenagers how to be 'cool', how to date a girl or a boy, how to have sex, etc.; these books do help teenagers to understand themselves better, but they do not teach any values or morals"(Urba 2005). One may speculate, too, that Urba's concept of "values or morals" does not agree with those currently present in the teen world. He continues that "Lithuanian publishers feel the great lack of teenage literature in Lithuania so that they are translating and publishing vast numbers of different books for teens, which reflect the modern teen world; meanwhile, teenagers greatly enjoy such books (Urba 2005).

In yet another attempt to encourage Lithuanian fiction, in 2014 Lithuanian Young Adult Book contest was initiated which invited writers to produce books for Lithuanian teenagers. The country's leading publisher, Alma Littera, and a group of literary critics and specialists received more than 26 manuscripts. The first winner of the contest was a historical love story by Akvilina Cicėnaitė, *Niujorko Respublika* (*Republic of New York)*. The jury of the contest found it notable that the participants attempted to explore new literary genres: with some writers selecting currently popular dystopian topics, while others dwelled on contemporary teen problems.

This analysis has shown that in some ways the position and status of young adult fiction changed radically during the period of renewed independence: young adult culture in general became an accepted part of contemporary Lithuanian culture, with no attempt, for example, to limit the access of teenagers to popular Western music and the commercial success of native rock groups. The literary market also accepted young adult consumers as a fact of life, giving novels intended for them space in both libraries and bookstores; publishers sought out contracts to translate the latest Western teen bestsellers and also encouraged Lithuanian writers, both established and very young, to produce fiction for teenagers. However, Even-Zohar's observation, already referred to earlier, that Israeli Hebrew society would probably have to rely on translations of foreign popular literature for an undefined time in the future (Even-Zohar 1990, 169), can be applied to the Lithuanian system as well. Even if local writers appeared with successful teen novels, there would not be enough of these to satisfy the market demand, just as there are not enough Lithuanian romance or crime novels being produced and translation in these fields flourishes.

4. HISTORICAL AND THEMATIC OVERVIEW OF YOUNG ADULT FICTION IN ANGLO-AMERICAN MARKETS

Since Anglo-American fiction for young adults dominates the Lithuanian literary market just as it does the Western one, it is necessary to look more closely the relevant aspects of this sector of Anglo-American culture. This section of the dissertation considers Anglo-American teen fiction in the context of its historical development. Sub-section 4.1 summarises the psychological issues that psychologists and other specialists find characteristic of Western adolescents, especially in more recent decades. The next sub-section presents the pre-history of fiction for adolescents in the Anglo-American world from the 19th century to the present. Sub-section 4.3 defines young adult literature and presents its main characteristics. Sub-section 4.4 raises the issue of controversy in Anglo-American countries about the range of contemporary topics addressed in current teen fiction.

4.1 Psychological Views of Identity Development during Adolescence

Adolescence is a transitional stage of physical and mental human development that occurs between childhood and adulthood; this transition involves biological, social, and psychological changes. The issue of adolescence and the problems related with it have been discussed by psychologists and sociologists; moreover, in recent decades adolescent life is often presented in films, television shows and prose fiction. Gerald A. Adams argues that "accounts of adolescent behaviour presented in movies, newspapers, and magazines tend to be sensational in that they focus on what is unusual and newsworthy rather than what is normative" (Adams 2006, 9). Nevertheless, it is agreed that adolescents do face many problems and pressure from those who surround them. For example, Adams indicates problems such as peer pressures, conflicts with parents, the need for approval and difficulties in distinguishing what is good and bad (Adams 2006, 10).

Over the last few decades researchers have focused on the notion of teenagers being able to self-realize and self-define. As Jane Kroger suggest, "of the many pressures and responsibilities confronting the contemporary adolescent, 'the task of self-definition', seems to cast a powerful shadow over all that he or she does" (Kroger 1996, 1). For adolescents today, films, books, talk shows, and other popular media frequently allude to the importance of finding oneself and the benefits of inner search, although there is no clear conception of precisely what these mean or they can be achieved; nor is there any clear evidence of the beneficial consequences of such endeavours. As Krause notes, "adolescence is a period in which young people develop the ability to think hypothetically and to place themselves in the position of

others – to acknowledge multiple viewpoints simultaneously and to understand how these pertain to their own ideas" (Krause 1995, 269). For young adults of the late twentieth century, popular culture not only encourages but expects one to understand oneself. It is also believed that teenagers can find their identity by experimenting with different roles. According to David Huffaker, "identity exploration remains a chief concern for the emerging adolescent; and as it has already been mentioned it is a time where adolescents can 'try out' different identities until they construct a cohesive one to carry into early adulthood" (Huffaker 2006, 3). This kind of experimentation is normal and positive, though it can lead to risky situations.

It is often asserted that family and friends play the major roles in adolescent life, for many decisions which are made by teenagers are influenced by these two groups. Laurence D. Steinberg states that "the home is an important aspect of adolescent psychology: home environment and family have a substantial impact on the developing minds of teenagers, and these developments may reach a climax during adolescence" (Steinberg 2009). However, the psychologist Judith Rich Harris notes that specialists do not agree on this subject: "some researchers argue that peers have greater influence and a youth culture dominates the behaviour of young people and is independent of, if not antagonistic toward, the views of adult society" (Harris 1999). Nevertheless, as Harris continues, "others have suggested that adolescents are still largely influenced by parents and that peer influences are transitory or tend to support those of parents" (Harris 1999). Harris supports the first approach, claiming that "because adolescents are experiencing various strong cognitive and physical changes, for the first time in their lives they may start to view their friends, their peer group, as more important and influential than their parents" (Harris 1999). It is common that teenagers become less open about their problems with their parents than with their peers, usually because they are afraid to be scolded or have their freedom limited. Furthermore, adolescence tends to be a period of parent and teen conflict. Roberta G. Simmons claims that "often conflicts between parents and teenagers are minor issues related to things not linked to major values" (Simmons 2008, 4). Still, such conflicts and quarrels play an important role in the way teenagers see their parents: they think that adults in general do not understand them or their experiences. Consequently, teenagers tend to turn to each other more often, as they share the same kinds of problems. Further, when a conflict does develop between parents and teenagers, teenagers share this experience with their peers, which often leads to an even stronger gap between adolescents and their parents.

In general, having close friends of the same age is a very significant part of youth culture. Bradford Brown states that "young people are expected to spend more time with friends, to build social life around peer relationships, and to look to peers for emotional and instrumental support" (Brown 2006, 330). Frequently teenagers form so-called cliques within their social

environment which, as Tricia Ellis-Christensen explains, are "exclusive groups of people who share the same interests, views and problems (Ellis-Christensen 2003, 1). In the meantime, students at a school who do not belong to any particular clique may become subject to insults and bullying, which can be extremely psychologically damaging. Even within a clique, the individual does not necessarily feel secure. As Christensen explains,

> Often the clique has a defined leader, though leadership may change from time to time. A nasty part of the clique power structure may involve bullying, harassment, or playing jokes on non-clique members. Fear of no longer being part of the clique may force children to behave in ways that are immensely hurtful to others. (Christensen 2003, 1)

Moreover, as Brown points out, there is another major type of peer association, friendship; in his opinion, "friendship is considered to be one of the most important relationships for teenagers" (Brown 2006, 333). Almost all teenagers have at least one close friend with whom they spend most of their leisure time, sharing similar problems, likes and dislikes, as well as being involved in similar activities. Nevertheless, Brown adds that such friendships may become ambivalent: "sometimes friendship quality can be a blessing, as well as a real problem the other times, depending upon the behaviour patterns of the person who is befriended" (Brown 2006, 338).

A third meaningful kind of relationship is that of sexual attraction and love. Adolescence is the period in which young people typically become involved in their first romantic relationships, which, according to Lisa J. Crockett, "increase the likelihood of sexual activity" (Crockett 2006, 378). Crockett explains that "adolescents' attitudes about sex are shaped by family values and cultural; proscriptions as well as personal experience" (Crockett 2006, 379). Culturally, teenagers are exposed to sex and sexual behaviour all the time in television, films and magazines. In an important sense, social and cultural pressure encourage both emotional and sexual relations.

In the same way, because of peer pressure, teenagers may sometimes take up activities which break norms and may be dangerous; for example, they start smoking, drinking alcohol and using drugs. As the psychologist Michael Windle asserts, "these new circumstances can be confusing and difficult for the youth to understand and deal with. Often their ability to make correct or safe decisions is also at a stage of immaturity, while substance use is pervasive among youth in many cultures and countries around the world" (Windle 2002, 450). For example, drinking and taking drugs have become a common part of teenage parties and other gatherings, so that young people get involved in risky behaviour in part because of social needs.

It is agreed that adolescence is a complex stage in life marked by many changes. Teenagers have to make choices that significantly affect their lives, from behaviour at school to how far to go with sex and whether or not to experiment with drugs. The family, which was the

place of accepted norms, now no longer satisfies many adolescent needs. It is not surprising that a period marked by internal and external conflicts and pressures should produce subjects for fiction. In terms of system theory, once can say that adolescence has a specific repertoire of topics and issues which can call for literary expression.

4.2 Historical Development of Young Adult Literature in Anglo-American Culture since the 19th Century

This brief survey of the history of how young adult fiction developed in Anglo-American culture from the middle of the nineteenth century to the end of the twentieth century is intended to place in context the later analysis of the contemporary novels that, in translation, have won a place at the centre of the literary system for teenagers in Lithuanian. This overview also demonstrates how, in a different culture, what may be called a natural development of appealing to a specific audience, the growing number of educated teenagers, occurred. With free-market conditions in Britain and the USA, economically wealthy countries due to early industrialization and unrestricted by the ideological forces that opposed similar developments in Communist Russian and later in Soviet Lithuania, it was logical for publishers to seek new consumers. They found them increasingly in what was first the expanding middle class, with its educated teenagers who had money and time to spend on leisure reading. Later, with universal programs of education and the growing prosperity of much of the working class, the market of teen readers expanded rapidly.

The school story genre developed in England in parallel with the establishment of secondary education from the mid nineteenth century onwards. Although selected stories appeared earlier, many critics agree that the first real school story novel was published in 1857, with *Tom Brown's Schooldays* by Thomas Hughes (Carpenter and Pritchard 1999; Ray, 2004; Pinsent 2002). The typical British school story is set in public schools, which in the UK are expensive and elite private boarding schools. This creates a space in which many adolescent issues can arise. Ray notes that "a school story offers a setting in which young people are thrown together and in which relationships between older and young children, between members of the peer group and between children and adults can be explored" (Ray 2004, 348).

Due to prevailing gender norms during the later 19th and early 20th centuries, there were different schools and so different school stories for boys and girls. According to Ray, the typical boy school story would include the "arrival of the new boy and his adjustment to school ways, school matches, the school magazine, conflict between juniors and seniors, concerts, friendships and rivalries, and villainies and blackmail" (Ray 2004, 349). In the same period, boys' magazines began to be published, featuring such school stories as well; the best-known was

Boy's Own Paper, which began in 1879. The situation was different for girls, as the majority of upper-class girls were educated at home, with only some of them attending expensive boarding schools. Therefore, Ray asserts that girls' school stories

> were modelled on boys' public schools, and the high schools, which provided a good, academic education for girls on a daily basis. <...>Late nineteenth-century writers for girls wrote from their own experience which was of girls being taught at home or in small schools which were an extension of home. (Ray 2004, 349)

Girls' school stories mostly presented characters who were models of traditional femininity so that the school was just a small part of the protagonist's upbringing. Ray explains that this sub-genre:

> came in various forms <...> all of which were published in great quantities for the growing and apparently insatiable market. Like most popular fiction, school stories emphasized what were seen as middle-class virtues such as good manners, the need for self-discipline, a sense of responsibility and respect for authority. (Ray 2004, 351)

This tendency did not change until Elizabeth Thomasina Meade (1844–1914) started writing school stories for girls. Meade differed from other writers who focused on family stories mostly because she portrayed her heroines not only future housewives but, as characters (Ray 2004, 350).

However, after World War II stories set in private boarding schools lost popularity since state-run secondary schools were attended together by boys and girls. The older school story has seen a revival only with the success of the *Harry Potter* series, which uses many plot features found in the traditional school story and combines them with fantastic elements.

In the late nineteenth century, apart from school stories, adventure stories were also popular; most of them focused on boys' adventures. According to Ray, "the hero is usually a teenage boy, generally from a respectable but not particularly wealthy home. <...> As a hero continues his journey, all kinds of complications and difficulties threaten him. <...> The hero survives, and the end of the story sees him rewarded with wealth and honour" (Ray 2004, 337-331). Among the most popular writers of such adventure stories were W.H.G. Kingston, G. A. Henty and Robert Louis Stevenson (Ray 2004; Butts 1997). Although the British school story genre did not get much attention in the United States, the situation was different with adventure stories, since, as Ray asserts, "many Americans were deeply influenced by the contents and form of British adventure stories" (Ray 2004, 334). Then American writers began to develop adventure stories themselves, these were popular throughout the English-speaking world.

Furthermore, more public interest in technological and scientific development meant that boys' adventure stories also started to incorporate such topics. Once forms of airplanes were

invented, the setting for adventures moved away from exotic settings like the Far East; "flying stories, with their formulaic elements of young hero, his introduction to the skills of aviation, and subsequent encounter with an enemy, became an important sub-genre of the adventure story" (Ray 2004, 334). All of these formulaic boys' books focused on the features of stereotypical masculinity: the boy hero was physically active and brave, and end up in often dangerous situations.

At about the same time, new forms of popular adult fiction provided narrative models for novels aimed at younger readers. Around 1905, the Stratemeyer Syndicate, an America organization established by Edward Stratemeyer, was among the first publishing houses that started producing books aimed specifically at children and young adults. According to Brandon Peat, these books "were not intended for moral instruction – they were intended to appeal to kids themselves. <...> This is the group that eventually gave us Nancy Drew and the Hardy Boys" (Peat 2010). Early on, Stratemeyer realized that to make the market of children's literature profitable he had to produce quantities of fiction according to formula that had been proven to be popular. He began by purchasing existing stories and then created new series to be written by ghost writers (O'Rourke 2004).

Some of these series were for younger readers, but others were aimed at the growing teen market. In these books the young heroes enjoy freedom from oppressive adult supervision. The most popular Stratemeyer novels were detective stories and not about ordinary teen problems, which is what one expects of teen fiction today. For his girls' detective series, there was a radical change from most nineteenth-century stories where domestic issues and scenes dominated. The very successful *Nancy Drew* series, first published in the 1930s, portrayed a clever teen girl who differed from typical girls during the period, as she always plays the part of a detective who solves different kinds of mysteries. *The Hardy Boys* series (first published in 1927) was aimed at boys; these novels focused on brothers who solve mysteries.

The Stratemeyer novels were part of a new attitude to teen consumers. Michael Cart states that, in the Western countries, "the merchandising of and to 'the juvenile' had begun in the late 1930s, coincident with the emergence of the new youth culture" (Cart 2010, 11). According to Cart, in the United States publishers started to pay even more attention to teenagers once this group grew larger and had money: "World War II prosperity put money into the kids' own pockets, money that had previously gone to support the entire family" (Cart 2010, 11). According to Ray, English-language societies changed just as World War Two began "and adult fiction started to deal with sex and violence more explicitly" (Ray 2004, 336). Furthermore, Betty Marcoux notes that "in the 1950s two novels drew the attention of adolescent readers: *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951), and *Lord of the Flies* (1954). Unlike more recent fiction classified as

young-adult fiction, however, these two were written with an adult audience in mind" (Marcoux 1999).

Looking for pioneering examples of young adult fiction, literary historians like Michael Cart and others claim that the American novel *Seventeenth Summer* (1942) could be considered the first true young adult novel. This book about first love was largely aimed at girls; although it includes episodes concerned with underage drinking and smoking, as well as hinting at teenage sexuality, it is still a rather innocent book that romanticizes adolescence. Nonetheless, Daly wrote the novel specifically with the young adult audience in mind, mainly because she herself was a teenager at this time. Dwight Burton states that "Daly is a teen writing for teens and her work influenced other writers to write specifically with the young adult audience in mind.[...] She captured the spirit of adolescents better than any other novel" (Burton 1970, 364).

On the other hand, not everyone agrees that Daly's novel is strong enough to deserve being called the instigator of a genre. Betty Marcoux argues that a much later American novel, *The Outsiders* (1967), by S.E. Hinton is better regarded as the pioneer of modern young adult fiction. Marcoux stresses that "*The Outsiders* in particular differs from the usual books written for teens, as it shows the more realistic and dark side of teenage life, in part because it is written by a young adult" (Marcoux 1999). The novel offers a more mature realism directed at adolescents; according to Cart, "the focus on culture and serious themes in young adult paved the way for authors to write with more candour about teen issues in the 1970s" (Cart 2010, 4). *The Outsiders* was also the first widely-read novel that included more challenging issues and explicit language in young adult literature. In general, according to Hamilton,

> During the 1960s, the movement towards new realism in young adult literature gave rise to the birth of the classic, contemporary young adult novels still being used in classrooms today and welcomed the addition of a plethora of young adult authors, including Judy Blume, Paula Danziger, Robert Cormier and Chris Crutcher. (Hamilton 2002, 4)

Writers started to explore more disturbing topics that were now playing a significant part in the lives of many teens of all social levels, such as physical abuse, eating disorders, the divorce of parents, bullying by peers, addiction to alcohol or drugs and even the long taboo subject of homosexuality. Owen asserts that "the 1970s through to the mid-1980s has been described as the golden age of young-adult fiction, when a highly intelligent and demanding literature was written for young people that spoke to them with particular directness" (Owen 2003). Similarly, Ashley Strickland asserts:

> The first golden age is associated with the authors who the parents of today's teens recognize: Judy Blume, Lois Duncan and Robert Cormier. The young adult books of the 1970s remain true time capsules of the high school experience and the drama of being

misunderstood. Books like Cormier's *The Chocolate War* brought a literary sense to books targeted at teens. (Strickland 2013)

Most importantly, Cart states that this was the period when young adult literature not only became popular among young readers, but also started to be treated by specialists as a serious kind of literature: "the Young Adult Library Services Association, in 1973, finally began considering young adult titles for inclusion on its annual Best Books for Young Adults list (the list had been called by that name since 1966, but had previously included only adult titles) (Cart 2010, 31-32). The 1980s saw the appearance of "a large amount of young adult publications which pushed the threshold of topics that adolescents faced such as rape, suicide, parental death, and murder" (Cart 2010, 99). Gradually writers found they could attract more readers creating teen versions in a wider variety of genres such as horror, science fiction, and romance.

Nevertheless, according to Cart, in the 1990s, young adult literature in many Western countries suffered a decline in the numbers being bought by young adults. He asserts that there were many reasons for this situation, but the most significant was the appearance of other modes, especially electronic ones: "publishers have long had to compete with a variety of things that command young adults' attention; the Internet was yet one more enticement for teens to do something other than read a book" (Cart 2010, 105). Nevertheless, as Tomlinson and Lynch-Brown in *Essentials of Young Adult Literature* state, "due in part to an increase in the number of teenagers in the 1990s the field matured, blossomed, and came into its own with the better written, more serious, and more varied young adult books published during the last two decades" (Tomlinson and Lynch-Brown 2007, 5). Similarly, Owen states that "from the mid-1990s there has been a resurgence and reinvention of young-adult literature; this is mainly due to authors and publishers challenging the traditional content, age limit and format of the teenage problem novel" (Owen 2003).

Even though total sales figures may go down periodically, the quality of the best teen fiction has improved. Presently many sub-genres of young adult fiction exist from fantasy to detective and romance novels, as well as problem and coming-of-age novels. According to Robyn E. Howell, "current trends include realistic fiction, romance/sexuality, dystopian fiction, and mixed genre fiction. The boundaries that are pushed within these genres include profane language and explicit sexual content" (Howell 2012, 3). Young adult novels appeal to young people as they tend to deal with the actual psychological realities, some of them very complex and difficult, that teens have to face in their everyday lives, although, typically the contextual situation may be far from ordinary or realistic, young adult novel focuses on one or a group of teenagers; the setting of the story is usually at school or some other gathering place which is well-known to young adults. In addition, the teen characters speak to their readers in a language

familiar to the adolescent audience. Within these basic parameters, however, a wide number of plots and emotional conflicts are presented.

One of the clearest signs that the market of young adult literature had changed significantly came when J. K. Rowling published her *Harry Potter* series, beginning in 1997: as Cart declares, "it exploded the category and inspired a whole generation of fantasy series novelists" (Cart 2010, 35). At once publishers began to look for writers capable of creating similarly profitable series: the best known include Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* vampire saga (2005) and Suzanne Collins' dystopian series *The Hunger Games* (2008). One of the reasons why such books have become popular is that they are crossover fiction, meaning that they appeal not only to young adult but also to adult readers, which has led to the expansion of the young adult literary market even more.

As defined in the introduction to this dissertation, the novel for young adults has come to mean a narrative centred on teenagers, reflecting their behaviour, both good and reprehensible, their interests, which often do not conform to adult preferences, and their tendency to form a separate group with close friendships and often its own mode of expression in appearance and language. Such novels are most often presented through the voice of a first-person narrator, a teenager, who is the protagonist. In terms of plot, such novels can vary widely, but they are typically full of action and may even contain dangers and adventures. Over time, but especially in recent decades, Anglo-American young adult fiction has broken taboos and spoken out more freely about the concerns like sexuality, substance abuse, and problems to do with power in the family, the school and society in general.

4.3 Characteristics of the Contemporary Young Adult Novel

In recent years young adult literature has become a major publishing phenomenon in the world, especially in English-speaking countries, with more and more books aimed at the highly profitable teen audience. One of the reasons for the popularity of current novel is that these have become more interesting for teens, as they now tend to deal with the specific realities of adolescents in the West, including some very complex and painful issues, that teens have to face growing up. Young adult fiction is also an evolving genre that, along with structural changes, often pushes the boundaries of what is considered controversial by many adults.

Young adult fiction is written, published, and marketed for adolescents and young adults. Whether in the form of novels or short stories, it has distinct features that distinguish it from other age categories of fiction. A clear definition of young adult literature was introduced by Steven VanderStaay, who stated that it is

literature wherein the protagonist is either a teenager or one who approaches problems from a teenage perspective. Such novels are generally of moderate length and told from the first person. Typically, they describe initiation into the adult world, or the surmounting of a contemporary problem forced upon the protagonist(s) by the adult world. (VanderStaay 1992, 48)

This definition usefully identifies major characters and typical plots as well the use of a first-person narrator.

However, many other specialists in young adult literature, such as Aleen Nilsen and Ken Donelson, define young adult literature purely with regard to the age of its readers. Donelson states that young adult literature means anything that readers between the approximate ages of twelve and eighteen choose to read either for leisure reading or to fill a school assignment (Nilsen and Donelson 2009, 1). Somewhat similarly, Kathy H. Latrobe and Judy Drury describe young adult fiction as "a changing and overlapping set of works from picture books to graphic novels to adult fiction and nonfiction <…> for students in secondary schools within grade levels 6-12" (Latrobe and Drury 2004, 3-4). Cart, on the other hand, argues that for a long time it has been difficult to define the age of readers of young adult literature; however, lately they are "somewhere between twelve and nineteen years of age" (Cart 2010, 4). In addition, he states that "the term is inherently amorphous, for its constituent terms 'young adult' and 'literature' are dynamic, changing as culture and society — which provide their context — change" (Cart 2007, 5).

Maija Lehtonen refers to specific matters of content defining the young adult novel as a literary work that is "conceived in order to satisfy what are considered to be their own special needs: a short novel in which teenage readers could perceive and identify themselves and could learn to cope with their problems" (Lehtonen 2014, 97). The librarian Naomi Bates emphasises the need to let adolescents decide; she notes that young adult literature refers to the books teenagers choose to read during their free time. Still, as a librarian she considers that this category can also include literature that has been advertised by publishers as young adult fiction or non-fiction (Bates 2008).

All critics of young adult literature do agree that there are some common features to this genre. As Cart suggests, young adult literature needs to contain specific elements that will not only interest the readers, but that also relate directly to real situations and contain believable characters (Cart 2010, 4). Pam B. Cole states that these characteristics encompass "multi-themed story, tension versus shock effect, memorable characters, accurate facts and details, some unlikely coincidences, original ideas, memorable voice, authentic dialogue, effective/clear writing style, sense of humour, widespread appeal, intriguing openings and memorable closings" (Cole 2009, 48). The stories tend to focus on the major developments and experiences

of an individual, almost always a teenage protagonist Alison Waller indicates that "a young adult novel should be about adolescence in some way; that is, it should have a teenage protagonist and a plot that incorporates elements of adolescent experience or interest" (Waller 2009, 15).

This sub-section describes some of the most common features of young adult fiction. First, the protagonist or protagonists in novels for young adults are adolescents, as are most of the secondary characters. Moreover, young adult novels are typically told from a first-person perspective and are narrated through the eyes of a young adult. There may be multiple perspectives in one narrative but all of them will likely to be those of teenagers, not adults (Cole 2009, Cart 2010). In addition, Latrobe and Drury, and Nilsen agree that "with the use of first-person narration goes a distinctive style of voice, which means that the conversational style is dominant in teen stories, making them sound as if one teenager is speaking to another" (Latrobe and Drury 2004, Nilsen 2005). Furthermore, adults usually play minor roles in young adult novels; sometimes they may be practically absent. The teen characters have to solve their problems largely without adult help. According to Cole, "parents are noticeably absent or at odds with young adults" (Cole 2009, 49). In some cases, however, adults may act as mentors or guides for teenagers in their struggles.

Second, although the plot may concern almost anything, it is most likely to include actions and events that affect the development and identity of the adolescent protagonists. As Cole notes, such narratives typically do not have "a storybook or happily-ever-after ending", which according to her is the feature of a book for younger children (Cole 2009, 48). In terms of plot, novels can vary widely, but they are typically full of action and may even contain dangers and adventures. The novel for young adults has come to mean a narrative centred on teenagers, reflecting their behaviour, both good and reprehensible, their interests, which often do not conform to adult preferences, and their tendency to form a separate group with close friendships and often its own mode of expression in appearance and language. As Latrobe and Drury state, the plot usually centres on "typical adolescent behaviour, their insecurities relating to their body image and popularity, as well as immature behaviour and tendency towards overdramatizing events" (Latrobe and Drury 2004, 12). Nilsen and Donelson add that young adult fiction plots generally "include secrecy, surprise, and tension brought about through narrative hooks and a fast pace" (Nilsen and Donelson 2009, 38). Most often these plots are set in a familiar setting for young adults, such as school or someone's home.

Third, a number of the thematic issues that interest teenagers, from concern with one's appearance and body, independence from parents, fitting in with friends and early sexual experiences and love are the subjects of these novels. Contemporary young adult novels now

deal with issues that are extremely painful for teens, such as violence, psychological and physical abuse and problems, all of which are experienced by some young adults. Party Campbell suggests that "from the start, the mainstream of young adult literature has been perceived as realistic" (Campbell 2008, 4), since teenagers have always been eager to read about problems that they struggle with in their daily lives. This is true even when the action may include futuristic or fantastic events. According to Robyn E. Howell, "current trends include realistic fiction, romance/sexuality, dystopian fiction, and mixed genre fiction. The boundaries that are pushed within these genres include profane language and explicit sexual content" (Howell 2011, 3). The introduction of sensitive or taboo topics has been gradual, mostly due to critical attitudes by adults to such topics in young adult novels. Over time, but especially in recent decades, Anglo-American young adult fiction has broken taboos and spoken out more freely about concerns like sexuality, substance abuse, and problems to do with power in the family, the school and society in general. According to Kimberley Reynolds, teenagers can often relate to such sensitive and painful issues "through teen characters <...> they can read such books in private, can get answers to many of their own concerns" (Reynolds 2007, 117).

Finally, since teenagers tend to use a great deal of slang, swear words and colloquial language in their daily lives, many of the writers of these novels imitate the current language of teenagers to a greater or lesser extent. Some contemporary young adult writers make their characters speak in a way that is authentically adolescent. Most often it is a language filled with terms that teens coin with their friends, secret code names, slang, acronyms and swearwords. Adolescent slang is often used to discuss such subjects as emotions, drunkenness, sexual organs and activities, and drugs, as the sociologist Teresa Labov states:

> Adolescents today, as ever, have terms by which they express approval (cool) or disapproval (bummer, it stinks); classify others (jocks, punks, or druggies); characterize events as enjoyable or boring, success or failures; describe their coming or goings; and distinguishing whether someone is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or both. (Labov 1992)

Teenagers have developed their own terms to express their feelings, thus distinguishing themselves from the adults around them; they feel more comfortable expressing their emotions in their own language. Therefore, slang becomes fashionable among teenagers; in addition, they get accustomed to using it.

In addition to slang, teenage language is often full of swearwords which in other circumstances are considered to be offensive, rude, insulting and inappropriate; normally people use swearwords and offensive language to express their emotions and attitudes such as aggression, anger, surprise or frustration. In the teen world, these words may also be related to

bonding between peers, or self-assertion. As Nilsen and Donelson point out, language in young adult fiction needs to be "lively, varied, and imaginative <...> that is grammatically correct while being neither patronizing and simplistic nor unnecessarily confusing through lexical density or complexity" (Nilsen and Donelson 2009, 38). In other words, teenagers are eager to read novels that speak to them in a familiar language because then they can empathize with the characters in such novels.

4.4 Current Controversies over Topics in Anglo-American Young Adult Literature

This subsection looks at some of the less favourable responses to the rise of a contemporary young adult fiction that may radically break the social norms that adults believe should govern adolescent thinking and behaviour.

Since more and more books are aimed at a teen audience, this literature has become the subject of many discussion in the media, often ones that are critical as well as sympathetic. The fact that the number of such novels published every year has been soaring lately is not the only reason why they have received attention. The main issue among adults is whether or not young adult fiction is dark, psychologically and physically violent and sexually explicit. Since this is a period when young adults might easily be influenced by their reading, very popular books attract a lot of attention from adults, especially those like parents, teachers, psychologists and librarians who deal with teens.

The presence of sensitive topics in young adult literature has naturally become controversial. Betty Marcoux asserts that "some critics of books of sensitive content argue that these novels encourage destructive or immoral behaviour, while the other part of them argues that fictional portrayal of teens successfully addressing difficult situations and confronting social issues helps readers deal with real-life challenges" (Marcoux 2004). Nonetheless, Cecelia Goodnow notes that "kids are buying books in quantities we have never seen before and publishers are courting young adults in ways we have not seen since the 1940s" (Goodnow 2007). Goodnow provides statistics which shows that teen book sales went up by a quarter between 1999 and 2005 in Great Britain; apparently teenagers have discovered literature once again, because in many ways they can identify with the main characters and the problems they deal with in these new novels. Shelley Stoehr suggests that teenagers have always been more interested in things which are related to them, "issues for contemporary young adults are not so different now than they have always been for young people - the main concerns still being sex, drugs, and rock and roll. What's changed more than the issues themselves is how they are dealt with by the media, and the arts, including literature" (Stoehr 1997, 3). Young adults are drawn to books that reflect their daily lives and portray characters with whom they can easily identify;

however, the appropriateness of these books is often determined by adults, who still control publishing, libraries and schools.

As soon as young adult novels began to include topics like peer pressure, parents' divorce, drugs, violence, sexuality and swearing, these books attracted the attention of parents, teachers and psychologists, who still tend to see adolescents as needing supervision and control. Tara Chittenden asserts that "young people are often located as 'vulnerable' consumers in the realm of sexuality, where their perceived inability to make sound or 'moral' judgements when it comes to sex [or any other controversial issue] deems them in need of adult intervention" (Chittenden 2010, 79). Mary Owen explains that "in today's young-adult fiction there is virtually no topic that is off-limits; readers can explore such topics as gay love, AIDS, teen parenting, depression, violent acts, passionate vampires and fairies, suicide, murder, political choice and belief and concerns about money" (Owen 2003, 1). For their parts teenagers are generally eager to leave the restrictions of childhood behind and want to read about more mature concerns; they definitely do not wish to be treated as children anymore so that reading about taboo subjects is a form of self-assertion. Marcoux notes that "from its very beginning, young adult fiction has portrayed teens confronting situations and social issues that have pushed the edge of then-acceptable content" (Marcoux 2004). Still, as Lydia Kokkola points out, "changes in literature are never fully 'radical', they always build on established traditions" (Kokkola 2011, 3), which is true for young adult literature as well. Older norms and traditions are clearly reflected in novels written for young adults. In addition, the perception of what is appropriate and what is not can evolve over time. Michael Cart states that though there are many controversial topics in books for young adults, the one area of life that "has most stubbornly resisted such taboo breaking is human sexuality" (Cart 2010, 141). Lately the issue of sex in young adult literature has aroused researchers' interest by once again dividing them into opposing camps: a more liberal and a more conservative one. For example, *The Telegraph* has recently questioned whether sex in young adult literature is a positive trend, even though, as Alice Vincent asserts, that in adult fiction , which is available to teen readers, "the older audience are less likely to be satisfied by the omission of details regarding sex" (Vincent 2013, 2). Young adults are exposed to sex in everyday life, as Fraser notes "there are millions of young people in the Western world who have more expose to sexually graphic material of every kind than ever before <...> the sex they are seeing is not complex, not authentic and certainly not magical or mysterious" (Fraser 2013, 1).

Certainly literature for young adults has changed in the English-speaking world since the 19th century. From the initial realization that novels like school stories would be popular, publishers identified the teen audience as a profitable sector of the market. This view has grown

remarkably since the early 1990s, though it means that young adult fiction becomes the subject of controversy.

Today, with teen novels quickly becoming televisions serials and films, the financial value of the adolescent cultural market has increased very substantially, probably beyond the point in which critical commentary about its moral values can do much to restrict its further development. This is of great importance to the Lithuanian young adult literary system, since specific Western texts and genres are imported through translation. These directly influence what kinds of young adult fiction is being produced in Lithuania, as the following section of the dissertation shows, and simultaneously makes it difficult for native products to compete.

5. CHANGES IN LITHUANIAN YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE SINCE THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF INDEPENDENCE: NEW LITHUANIAN NOVELS FOR YOUNG ADULTS

If one considers teen fiction in the contemporary Lithuanian literary system, one finds that the numbers of novels written in Lithuanian is not nearly as high as translations of this kind of fiction from other languages, especially from English. In addition, Lithuanian-authored novels for young adults are often not especially successful, either in critical or market terms. However, there are some exceptions, which it is interesting and useful to examine in greater depth.

This chapter analyses two of the more popular recent novels for young adults written by Lithuanians Vytautas Račickas (b. 1952) and Kristina Gudonytė (b. 1949). Both novels represent a new kind of approach to novels for teen girls, one that is clearly influenced by Western tendencies but is still distinctly Lithuanian in many aspects of plot choice and style. Since both *Nebaigtas Dienoraštas* and *Blogos Mergaitės Dienoraštis* are presented as diaries written by teenage girls, reasons for the current popularity of this form are considered here. Further, because the two novels show young teenagers attempting to get control of their lives and practice what sociologists refer to as "agency", the meaning of this useful term is briefly explained. Then the large part of the case study takes a comparative approach to the structure, style and issues raised in Račickas and Gudonytė's novels.

If one looks at the narrative features and contents of Račickas' and Gudonytė's novels from the point of view of repertoire, one can situate these along a line of which one pole would be "Western" and the other "Lithuanian". For example, under "Western" the genre of young adult fiction could be included, as well as the popular diary format. The imitation of teen language in literary text also has a longer tradition in the West than in Lithuania, as does the decision to include specific references to taboo behaviour like sexual intercourse or, even more so, homosexuality. On the other hand, changes in the repertoire, though they can be forced by political regimes as happened in Lithuania, once it was occupied by the Soviet Union, have a measure of resistance. Therefore, Račickas and Gudonytė do not go as far in imitating teen speech as many Western writers because they include a great deal of slang, vulgarisms and swearing is still not common in Lithuanian young adult fiction. Nor does Lithuanian literature have a tradition of detailed descriptions of sexual activity, though some contemporary writers for adults are now freer in this respect. Finally, one may add that the realism with which Račickas and Gudonytė depict the contemporary Lithuanian social and urban settings keeps their characters and plots within the bounds of Lithuanian culture.

Novels written in a diary form have long been popular among middle childhood and teen readers. It was the immense success of Stephen Chbosky's epistolary novel *The Perks of Being*

a Wallflower (1999), however, that stimulated the recent upsurge among Anglo-American authors to produce novels for teens in diary or letter formats, some following the latest trends of youth communication by using instant messaging, social network or blog formats in their texts. In 2001 the British author Louise Rennison published the first of the series *Angus, Thongs, and Full-Frontal Snogging: Confessions of Georgia Nicolson,* a light-hearted and humorous diary of a teen girl whose entries are mainly on boys, sexuality, and the typical daily activities of an adolescent. Chbosky's and Rennison's novels received good reviews and gained global popularity in translation. Rennison's series has become very successful among Lithuanian girls. A poll by Violeta Juodelienė in 2008 on the most popular books among Lithuanian teenagers showed that 64% of those questioned enjoyed reading diary-type novels for young adults and named Rennison's books among their favourites (Juodelienė 2008, 16-17). Interestingly, among these the teenagers polled indicated only one diary-format novel written by a Lithuanian, Vytautas Račickas's *Nebaigtas Dienoraštis* (*Unfinished Diary*) (2008). According to Juodelienė, the main reason that such diary novels are popular among adolescents is because "they feel that the protagonist's thoughts are like theirs since they think in similar ways" (Juodelienė 2008, 18).

Some Lithuanian writers have also followed the Western trend by producing diary-format novels for teenagers; two of these, Vytautas Račickas' *Nebaigtas Dienoraštis* (*Unfinished Diary*) (2008) and Kristina Gudonytė's *Blogos Mergaitės Dienoraštis* (*Bad Girl's Diary*) (2009) are analyzed in greater depth in this section of the paper. Both of these novels won Book of the Year Awards in the young adult category and were well received by teen readers. It is interesting that Gudonytė's novel was published by Alma Littera in its special category created for older adolescent girls, *Mergaičių Lyga*.

Diary-format novels can be considered part of the broader category of adult epistolary fiction, which was very popular in the 18th century. Teenagers prefer reading those type of these novels because they are written in conversational and easy to read language that often includes short sentences and typical teen slang. Since such novels consist of brief entries and do not look like conventional novels, they immediately attract the attention of young readers. Still, the most significant feature that makes these novels popular among teen readers is that they are completely immersed into the life and feelings of another adolescent. In "The Epistolary in Young Adult Literature" (2003), Emily Wasserman asserts that "the rocky nature of adolescence makes the epistolary well suited to adolescent literature, for young adult literature described how the interior monologue can lead to constructive change" (Wasserman 2003, 48). According to Antero Garcia, "for teenagers trying to understand their place in the world that may be changing around them, a diary acts as both an anchor into someone else's experiences and – perhaps – a place to seek empathy" (Garcia 2013, 100). Diary-format novels are written from a

first-person perspective, the viewpoint of characters writing or speaking directly about themselves: sometimes the entries are personal daily reports. In any case, they often describe intimate secrets or struggles that the characters are not able to tell anyone else. Using the internal focalization of another teenager allows readers to identify more easily with protagonists. Holly Koelling adds that "the characters that voice these sorts of works are often unreliable, and this can be stimulating for readers, who are put in a position to know more than, or perhaps even know better than, the characters they are reading about" (Koelling 2009, 42).

In this way, teen readers are encouraged to evaluate teen lives while still feeling empathy. The diary format especially promotes the exploration of a major issue in adolescent life – the struggle to take control of one's own life. Sociologists refer to this capacity as 'agency', and usually pair it with the concept of 'structure', social institutions and systems that dictate the individual's decisions in life and restrict free will. Anthony Giddens has been a leading sociologist in giving agency a more positive sense. He states that "agency is the capacity of individuals to act independently and to make their own free choices" (Giddens 1991, 45). According to Giddens, agency "is a feature of action that, at any point of time, the agent could have acted otherwise, despite working power structures" (Giddens 1991, 56). There is always a specific social structure; however, it can be changed to some extent: people may start to ignore it or begin to act in opposition to its norms and rules. As Mustafa Emirbayer and Ann Mische point out, human agency is constantly changing: "human agency is temporally constructed engagement by actors of different structural environments – the temporal – relational concepts of action-which, through, the interplay of habit, imagination, and judgement, both, reproduces and transforms those structures in interactive response to the problems posed by changing historical situations" (Emirbayer and Mische 1998, 970).

John Coleman points out that "the young person is an agent in his or her own development, managing the adolescent transition"; he adds that "when young people cope with major change they are active agents, managing the pace of change, and selecting which issues to deal with on a day-to-day basis" (Coleman 2011, 20, 216). Most important, Coleman explains that agency plays a significant part of an adolescent's choices in life, distinguishing "between 'playing appropriate roles' and selfhood'" (Coleman 2011, 79). In other words, an adolescent needs to choose whether: "to play the right roles in a range of social settings, and to follow the prescribed rules for these situations. [Or] to maintain elements of individuality or selfhood" (Coleman 2011, 79).

In both novels, the main character sometimes feels controlled by specific social structures yet sometimes is able to practice agency. *Nebaigtas Dienoraštis* and *Blogos Mergaitės Dienoraštis* are very similar in narrative format: the protagonists write a diary from a first-

person perspective; their entries are always dated. Additionally, both writers include a good deal of slang and informal language, trying to imitate the daily speech of contemporary teens, along with references to popular culture that are well-known for Lithuanian readers. Above all, both explore certain controversial issues that contemporary teenagers have to deal with.

Despite similarities, there are stylistic differences between novels. Račickas creates a more realistic version of diary format in *Nebaigtas Dienoraštis* than Gudonytė. His entries are often short, sometimes only a paragraph long:

> Thursday, November 13
> Baby Beast is on the attack again.
> Texting.
> I just barely manage to answer. His questions are as dumb as him. Do I wear thongs? Do I take a shower every night? Do I have a lot of sexy dreams?
> I was stupid to give him my phone number.
> (*Lapkričio 13, ketvirtadienis*
> *Vėl Baubukas atakuoja.*
> *Žinutėmis.*
> *Vos spėju atsakinėti. O jo klausimai kvaili kaip ir jis pats: ar nešioji stringus? Ar kiekvieną vakarą eini į dušą? Ar dažnai sapnuoji erotinius sapnus?*
> *Kvaila buvau, kad daviau jam savo telefono numerį.*)
> (Račickas 2008, 48; translated by the author of the paper)

While Gudonytė's entries also begin with a date and depict the events of that particular day, they are longer and much more descriptive than Račickas' entries. For example, the entry for June 17th is almost eleven pages long:

> Well, there it is – something in my life's changed – things got so that I had to come to live with Mommy. I got mad at my father and with Granny Valerija (when I get mad I always call her Valerija because that drives her crazy). I phoned Laura but she didn't answer. I guess she turned off her cell phone. Poor kid, she probably had a hard time today to get herself going to her old woman. I wonder does she really read her the Bible?
> (*Tai va, mano gyvenime kai kas pasikeitė – aplinkybės susiklostė taip, kad man teko atvažiuoti gyventi pas mamą .Susipykau ir su tėvu, ir su močiute Valerija (kai susipykstu, visada vadinu Valerija, nes tai ją labai siutina). Skambinau Laurai, bet ji neatsiliepė. Matyt, išjungė mobilųjį. Vargšė, turbūt jai šiandien buvo nelengva išsiruošti pas tą savo bobutę. Kažin, ji iš tiesų skaito jai Bibliją?)* (Gudonytė 2009, 21; translated by the author of the paper)

Gudonytė's diary entries are very detailed; her main character, Kotryna, tends to provide many descriptions and details, a style which does not always seem natural for a blog entry.

In Račickas' novel, the sentences are generally short mainly because the entries are heavy with dialogue. On the other hand, Gudonytė's entries are pages long, in where the protagonist mostly shares her thoughts, expresses emotions, and provides detailed flashbacks through lengthy sentences. Therefore, Račickas' novel is much more quick-paced, mainly action driven with only some descriptions or the character's feelings. Considering the fact that Račickas

includes quite a number of delicate subjects in his novel, such as teen pregnancy, homosexuality, terminal illness and suicide, his text does not provide the protagonist Deivė's feelings on these particular issues; the writer jumps rapidly from one subject to another, leaving many questions unanswered. For instance, at the end of the novel when the narrator hints that Deivė is pregnant, he offers little insight on how the teenage girl feels, just her general sense of panic: "I was losing my ground. Lord, what if Živilė was right?" (*Dabar iš po kojų žemė slydo man. Viešpatie, o jeigu Živilė teisi?*) (Račickas 2008, 167; translated by the author of the paper). It is never revealed whether she is actually pregnant, as the text moves quickly to another issue and at the end of the novel Deivė commits suicide. Nevertheless, as an experienced writer, Račickas manages to create a realistic situation: a teen protagonist who suddenly becomes pregnant feels so devastated she cannot write anything very meaningful in her diary. Since the readers are able to see the inner world of the diarist, they can understand how confused the girl feels. Meanwhile, in her novel Gudonytė tends to focus her on Kotryna's thoughts and also gives significantly more space on setting and descriptions of characters.

Among the features typical of the repertoire of young adult fiction, and especially in diary novels, is that teen characters use a language similar in some ways to that used by readers. Young people use many slang words as well as taboo ones to express themselves within their peer groups, words and expressions which are understood by particular groups, and form a group language. Teenagers feel that such words express their feelings, more specifically, as well as distinguishing them from the adults around them. In both novels, the language used by characters is fairly colloquial, and includes slang that is well-known to contemporary Lithuanian teens:

> Fantastic! We're going to a party. I have to take a bath and put some polish on what's left of my chewed off nails… I looked through my wardrobe but couldn't find a thing. Oh well, no problem, I'll put on my light-coloured jeans and a black top – they'll go well with my faded hair. …And I've got a great black hat a la Michael Jackson and wide tie with skulls…I'll look awesome.
> (*Geras! Eisim į tūsą! Reikia išsimaudyti ir nusilakuoti nukramtytų nagų likučius.<...> Peržiūrėjau savo garderobą, bet nieko gero neradau. Ai, velniai nematė! Užsimaukšlinsiu šviesius džinsus ir juodus marškinėlius – jie tinka prie mano išblukusių karčių. <...> Be to turiu liuksusinę juodą skrybėlę a la Maiklas Džeksonas ir platų kaklaraištį su kaukolėmis. <...> Atrodysiu klasiškai.)* (Gudonytė 2009, 20; translated by the author of the paper)

Words like "tūsas" (party), "velniai nematė" (no problem), "karčiai" (hair), "liuksusinis" (awesome) and "klasiškai" (classic), along with the cultural reference to the non-conformist rock star Michael Jackson, are only a few examples of the type of teen language that Gudonytė uses in her novel.

Račickas inserts some typical slang in his text, but this is less frequent than in Gudonytė's

work. In compensation, Račickas tends to use more vulgarisms and sometimes even swearwords:

> The taxi driver hit Dodger. And drove off. Like Dodger was some kind of plastic bottle from Teisybė beer. That fucking driver will wind up in trouble. / So maybe you're a ballet dancer? No. Maybe an artist or writer? No. A member of Parliament? No, are you nuts? I'm a plumber. Well, if you're a plumber, you're not gay. Or what? A pederast.
> (*Taksi vairuotojas partrenkė Dodžerį. Ir nuvažiavo. Tarsi Dodžeris būtų koks plastinis butelis nuo 'Teisybės' alaus. Tam pydarui taksistui gerai nesibaigs. /*
> *Tai gal tu – baleto šokėjas? Ne. tai gal dailininkas aš rašytojas? Ne. Seimo narys? Ne, ką jūs! Aš santechnikas! Na, jeigu santechnikas, tai tu – ne gėjus. O kas? Pederastas!*)
> (Račickas 2008, 50, 147, 148; translated by the author of the paper)

Gudonytė avoids vulgar swearwords in her novel: her characters mainly curse in common and weaker swearwords such as "velnias" (devil), "velniai rautų" (God dammit), "prakeiktas" (cursed), "šūdas" (shit) (Gudonytė 2009, 13,14, 16, 26). Although the language of both of the protagonists is realistic, it is mild and does not go beyond the limits of what Lithuanians are accustomed to considering an appropriate literary version of colloquial style.

Račickas also adds some foreign words and phrases in his novel, which is also typical for contemporary Lithuanian teenagers who are strongly influenced by Anglo-American culture and consider it fashionable to replace some Lithuanian words by English ones. For example, when in *Nebaigtas Dienoraštis* Deivė goes to a swingers' club with her friend, she is astonished by its erotic atmosphere:

> The room had pink lights and instead of a chandelier there was this huge metal phallus that a smiling nude girl was riding on, as if it was a horse. Not a real girl, of course. There were TVs in all the corners showing dirty scenes. The same kind of stuff was drawn on the walls of the club. Couples at the tables were kissing and caressing each other. Encouraged not only by the crazy decorations but also by erotic music.
> (*Salė buvo apšviesta rausvai, o vietoje sietyno kyburiavo didžiulis metalinis falas, ant kurio lyg ant žirgo jojo linksma nuogalė. Netikra, žinoma. Ant kiekvieno kampo įtaisyti televizoriai rodė pikantiškas scenas. Panašiais vaizdais buvo išpieštos ir klubo sienos. Bučiavosi ir glamonėjosi prie staliukų įsitaisiusios poros. Tai daryti skatino ne tik crazy interjeras, bet ir erotinė muzika.*) (Gudonytė 2009, 143; translated by the author of the paper)

To describe the appearance and atmosphere, she finds the English word 'crazy' more appropriate than any Lithuanian word. Another example of an English borrowing us used at the end of the novel, when a journalist takes Deivė to the Seimas to meet her biological father, who denies any relation to the girl. The journalist is pleased stating that his behaviour will create an excellent story for the media: "Come on, you understand – if he'd give you some chocolate and said, 'Forgive me, my sweet daughter,' there'd have been nothing in it. Readers aren't going to get excited about a happy ending like that." (*Na, suprask, jeigu jis būtų šokoladiniais saldainiais pavaišinęs ir pasakęs 'atleisk dukrelę', būtų visiškas šnipštas – straipsnis su tokiu 'hepiendu'*

skaitytojų nesujaudintų.) (Račickas 2008, 174; translated by the author of the paper). Račickas assumes that contemporary Lithuanian teenagers are familiar with such foreign words and will enjoy their use.

In addition, the writers include references to both Lithuanian and international popular culture. For instance, there are numerous cases of well-known places in Lithuania such as "Akropolis", "Užupio respublika", "Vilnius university", "Arka", a swingers' club and others. The inclusion of "Akropolis", a chain of large shopping malls where teens often spend their leisure time creates a sense of familiarity when characters spend time in these settings. In addition, differently from Račickas, Gudonytė tends to include many references to foreign popular culture, especially the names of famous actors and characters, such as "Michelle Pfeiffer", "Michael Jackson", "Slave Isaura", "Adams family" or "Anthony Hopkins" well-known to the writer's target readers, teenage girls (Gudonytė 2009, 8, 20, 100,135, 145).

Interestingly, Račickas and Gudonytė also refer to classical literature; both of the protagonists become friends with girls who are obsessed with reading books such as Russian classics, Ernest Hemingway, and Alexander Dumas and, thanks to these girls, Deivė and Kotryna find pleasure in reading as well. For example, in Gudonytė's novel, Kotryna reads Fyodor Dostoyevsky's novel *The Idiot* while she stays at her friend's house: "All day I read The Idiot. What an awesome book! It's been ages since I enjoyed something like that! I felt so close to Prince Mishkin. He had such an effect on me that even when I finished the book I couldn't shake him off." (*Visą dieną skaičiau 'Idiotą'. Klasiška knyga! Seniai jaučiau tokį malonumą! Susipažinau su kunigaikščiu Miškinu. Jis taip mane paveikė, kad paskui, net kai baigiau skaityti, negalėjau jo atsikratyti.*) (Gudonytė 2009, 120; translated by the author of the paper). In Račickas' case, Deivė borrows Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* from her friend Živilė, providing a clear allusion to the tragic end of his novel *Nebaigtas Dienoraštis*. Both the protagonist in Tolstoy's novel and Račickas's main character kill themselves by throwing themselves under a passing train. Still, one may question whether the inclusion of such books does not reflect more the writers' pasts more than those of contemporary teenagers, since Tolstoy or Dostoyevsky are writers who were popular in the Soviet period when there was a shortage of other fiction to read.

Račickas and Gudonytė's novels depict teen female protagonists, Deivė and Kotryna who attend typical Lithuanian schools and live with single mothers. The action is set in contemporary Vilnius; the girls live in apartment buildings, as do most Vilnius families. They are comfortably off but not rich; the two mothers are educated women of the professional middle class. Deivė and Kotryna do not attend expensive private schools or travel to exotic places for vacations; they do not have large allowances. Economically, in Western terms, they are poor, but in their own East European society they belong to a better off class. Throughout the narratives, these young

girls deal with the problems in high school and their peers, as well as conflict with their parents and other adults. In their attempts to cope, both of the girls write daily in their diaries where they feel able to express their emotions, intimate thoughts and secrets. To begin with, both are presented as typical teenage girls who are not the most popular girls in school and do not consider themselves as pretty or attractive. In Račickas' novel, Deivė Tauraitė is a professional swimmer so that her body is more similar to that of a teen boy. When Deivė meets an older girl, Živilė, with whom she later establishes a close friendship, Živilė is surprised that Deivė is only fifteen years old, since she looks much older due to her athletic body:

> I would have said you were twenty...or older.
> Do I really look that developed?
> Sort of...
> It's because I exercise. I'm pretty muscled. And then, I've got big bones.
> (*Sakyčiau, tau dvidešimt... Arba daugiau.*
> *Nejau esu tokia įmitusi?*
> *Šiek tiek.*
> *Tai todėl, kad sportuoju. Turiu daug raumenų. Be to, mano dideli kaulai.*) (Račickas 2008, 25; translated by the author of the paper)

Deivė is depicted as a naïve, quiet and generally obedient teenager, whereas Gudonytė portrays a much more rebellious and egocentric teenager in Kotryna. Still, like Deivė, Kotryna is dissatisfied with her appearance: "I'm very skinny and not at all sexy-looking. I really need to make my breasts bigger – they damn well aren't growing. Boys don't find me attractive...There's my legs, too – they're as thin as rakes." (*Esu labai liesa ir visai neseksuali. Man aiškiai reikėtų pasididinti krūtis, nes jos nė velnio neauga. <...> Nepatinku bernams. <...> Be to, mano kojos – kaip šakaliai.*) (Gudonytė 2009, 15; translated by the author of the paper). Both girls see themselves as quite ordinary which makes them easier to identify with, especially for most adolescent girls who are dissatisfied and self-conscious about their bodies.

Often in English teen fiction, adult or parental figures do not appear prominently or do not appear at all. However, in Račickas and Gudonytė's cases, family relationships play a significant part in both protagonists' lives. Both characters come from what are known as single families, as the girls live only with their mothers and grandmothers. In addition to other possible reasons, one of the factors why both writers choose such family situations is that the number of divorced or single-parent families has been increasing in reality. According to Sandra Dičienė's research carried out in 2009, the divorce rate in Lithuania has reached 50-70% (Dičienė 2009). In an article about single-mothers Vida Kanopienė asserts that single mothers make up almost one-tenth of all families in Lithuania (Kanopienė 2002, 6). In addition, the writers' choice of such family situations help them to create an interesting plot that was either not typical or not supposed to be mentioned in the Soviet period. Again, in Even-Zohar's terms, these novels are

successful because their repertoire in terms of subjects and style are in line with post-Soviet realities.

Both girls live with their single mothers and are often visited by grandmothers, but otherwise the family situations are different. In *Nebaigtas Dienoraštis* Deivė has always lived just with her mother and never known who her father was: "WHO IS YOUR FATHER? I spent a long time thinking how to answer. I wrote that my father is Antantas Tauras. A lawyer. He had his own office and earns a lot of money. It's stupid to lie, but there wasn't anything else I could do. After all, I don't have any idea who my father is." (*KAS TAVO TĖVAS? Po to ilgai galvojau, ką atsakyti. Parašiau, kad mano tėvas yra Antanas Tauras. Advokatas. Turi savo kontorą ir uždirba daug pinigų. Kvaila meluoti, bet kitos išeities nebuvo. Juk ir aš pati nežinau, kas mano tėvas.*) (Račickas 2008, 32; emphasis in the original; translated by the author of the paper). Several times throughout the novel Deivė attempts to ask her mother about her biological father, but she does not have enough courage. Deivė and her mother do not seem to have a very close relationship; both of them live their ordinary lives and occasionally meet over breakfast, or in a hallway. They sometimes have conversations about their daily activities, though the mother does not interfere with her daughter's life and is often absent. Deivė's mother is a typical hardworking single parent trying to provide for her daughter but not having time or even desire to spend much time with her daughter. As Deivė notes, "She teaches music at a school for the blind. And runs a girls' choir as well. And sings herself in a choir called Airija. On top of that she's preparing for a recital. So sometimes she comes home completely drained." (*Ji aklųjų mokykloje muzikos mokytoja dirba. Ir dar mergaičių chorui vadovauja. Ir pati tokiame 'Aidijos' chore dainuoja. Be to, ruošiasi rečitaliui. Taigi kartais namo grįžta visai nusivariusi.) (Račickas 2008, 46; translated by the author of the paper*). Only late in the novel does Deivė casually mention that her mother is blind; the novel does not focus on this much.

In contrast, Kotryna's parents in *Blogos Mergaitės Dienoraštis* have been divorced for six years and share her custody: "For a long time they couldn't agree who I should live with because neither of them wanted to pay support money. Finally they decided they'd share me: I'd live a week with one, a week with the other." (*Ilgai negalėjo susitarti, su kuriuo iš jų man reikėtų gyventi, nes nė vienas nenorėjo mokėti alimentų. Galop buvo nuspręsta, kad jie manimi dalysis: savaitę gyvensiu pas vieną, kitą savaitę pas kitą ir t.t.)* (Gudonytė 2009, 17; translated by the author of the paper). Later Kotryna ironises that her parents' system worked fine only until her father's secretary gave birth to her younger half- brother. Since then her father's attitude towards Kotryna has worsened: not only does he stop caring about his daughter but scolded and beat her even more frequently. Unlike Deivė's, Kotryna's mother is depicted as a more contemporary woman, something of an eccentric: "My mother's a painter so she's weird

and totally committed to being alone. She doesn't need people, doesn't need me – paintings and books are enough for her...my father says she's like all artists – crazy" (*mano mama – dailininkė, todėl keistuolė ir nepataisoma vienišė. Jai nereikia žmonių, nereikia nė manęs, užtenka paveikslų ir knygų. <...> Tėvas sako, kad ji, kaip ir visi menininkai, trenkta*) (Gudonytė 2009, 34; translated by the author of the paper). Despite her eccentric behaviour she tries to involve herself to some degree in Kotryna's life, most often by acting like a girlfriend, which irritates Kotryna.

Throughout the novels, both girls observe that their mothers gradually start spending more time with their boyfriends. In Deivė's case, she does not object to her mother's new relationship at first: "Pranukas is not that bad. Most importantly he makes breakfast every morning. He doesn't forget to give me my vitamin" (*O šiaip tas Pranukas visai nieko. Svarbiausia, kad kiekvieną rytą pusryčius paruošia. Ir nepamiršta man vitaminą paduoti*) (Račickas 2008, 123; translated by the author of the paper). Later, however, when Pranukas becomes allergic to her dog, and Deivė needs to give it away, she begins to suspect him of being a fraud who is taking advantage of her mother. In *Blogos Mergaitės Dienoraštis* Kotryna has to deal with a more traumatic problem since her mother starts to date her daughter's boyfriend: "Oh God! My violinist was holding Mommy's hand. With both his paws on it! ... No, I didn't like it" (*O dievai! Mano smuikininkas laikė mamos ranką. Abiem letenomis! <...> Ne, man tai nepatiko*) (Gudonytė 2009, 44; translated by the author of the paper). The discovery that her mother is seeing the young man with whom Kotryna is in love devastates her. Gradually, both Deivė and Kotryna feel alienated from their mothers and search for affection and support elsewhere. Although it seems that they lead lives independent from their parents and other adults, their actions and behavioural norms are still those dictated by adults and the structures of their societies. Deivė and Kotryna react by attempting to exert agency in order to make changes in their lives. This is especially evident in Kotryna's case, because she is a much more rebellious girl than Deivė.

From the very beginning of Gudonytė's *Blogos Mergaitės Dienoraštis,* it is clear that Kotryna wishes to gain a measure of control over her life or, as sociologists would term it, to have agency. Her mother arranges an appointment with a psychologist; during the entire visit Kotryna tries as hard as she can to manipulate the woman: "I was already getting bored, a bit more and I would have started yawning. But then she gave in, lowered her head and smiled. HA! I knew I'd won. One – nothing in my favour" (*Man jau darėsi nuobodu, dar kiek ir būčiau praėjusi žiovauti. Bet tada galop ji pasidavė, nuleido galvą ir nusišypsojo. CHA. Suprato pralaimėjusi. Vienas nulis – mano naudai*) (Gudonytė 2009, 9; translated by the author of the paper). In her mind, Kotryna mostly makes fun of the psychologist, while simultaneously she

despises her mother who has forced her to make this visit: "Darling Mommy, of course, had already talked to her on the phone and told her all kinds of stuff about me. When she gets like this all of a sudden she starts to worry about me. She can make a big deal out of the smallest thing" (*Mieloji mamytė, žinoma, jau buvo šnekėjusi su ja telefonu ir, aišku, pripaisė apie mane visokių niekų. Kai jau užeina šišas ir staiga pradeda manimi rūpintis, gali iš mažiausio nieko išpūsti didžiausią burbulą*) (Gudonytė 2009, 8; translated by the author of the paper). Although Kotryna's parents seem to care, she considers their concern as superficial and hypocritical. Nevertheless as parents they establish the rules and the only way Kotryna is able to overcome these is by lying to everyone, including the psychologist and her parents: "So she wrote me a prescription for sleeping pills (which of course I won't take), ordered me to keep an eye on myself (I'll have to take a mirror to classes and keep looking in it so that I don't miss anything), I have to analyse my actions (I do analyse them, isn't that obvious?)...write down my prayers (really!) dreams and that kind of stuff" (*Žodžiu, man prirašė lašų miegui (kurių aš, žinoma negersiu), liepė stebėti save (teks nešiotis veidrodį į pamokas ir nuolat į jį žiūrėti, kad no nors savyje nepražioplinčiau), analizuoti savo veiksmus (aš ir taip analizuoju, argi nematyti?), <...> užsirašyti potyrius (na jau!), sapnus ir panašiai*) (Gudonytė 2009, 12; translated by the author of the paper). For Kotryna, lying often serves as an escape from punishment for misbehaviour or to get to do something forbidden. For example, when Kotryna, without telling her parents, spends a night at a friend's party, in the morning she has to deal with her furious father: "I was at Mommy's! I yelled as loud as I could. 'So, I'm not allowed to do that!' / Right then I couldn't come up with with anything better. I knew it was just a temporary excuse, that pretty soon it would be clear I was lying again, but to tell the truth it was all the same to me" (-*Buvau pas mamą! – išrėkiau visa gerkle. – Ką, gal negaliu?! / Tuo metu nieko geresnio nesugalvojau. žinojau, kad tai tik laikina priedanga, kad tuoj paaiškės, jog ir vėl meluoju, bet man, tiesą sakant, buvo vis tiek*) (Račickas 2008, 26; translated by the author of the paper). To many teenagers, lying is the easiest way to practise a kind of agency.

Not only does Kotryna never listen to the rules established by her parents, she smokes and drinks, which are also prohibited for a person of her age. When she does this, she feels liberated from societal restrictions and sees herself as an adult, especially when she steals alcohol from her mother: "I saw some cans of beer in the fridge... (O took one, just in case, thinking that no one would notice). When my mind cleared a bit, I leaned over the table, poured myself a full glass from the pretty bottle and in one gulp drank it down...All right then! That's just what they need! I'll turn into an alcoholic and stumble about the garbage bins collecting bottles. On purpose! Anyway, nobody needs me" (*Šaldytuve pamačiau skardinių su alumi. <...> (Vieną skardinę dėl visa ko pasiėmiau, pamaniau, vis tiek niekas nepastebės). Kai šiek tiek atitokau,*

pasilenkiau prie staliuko, prisipyliau pilnutėlę taurę gėrimo iš gražiojo butelio ir vienu mauku ištuštinau iki dugno. <...> Na, ir gerai! Taip jiems ir reikia! Tapsiu alkoholike ir slampinėsiu prie konteinerių rankiodama butelius. Tyčia! Vis tiek aš niekam nereikalinga...) (Gudonytė 2009, 35, 76; translated by the author of the paper). This passage shows Kotryna's immaturity; what she believes is agency is just an attempt to gain attention. Once her father welcomes another child and her mother has a new boyfriend, Kotryna feels lonely and unwanted. Temporarily, her rebellious behaviour and lying do help her receive the attention. Her wrong-headed attempt to control her life reaches its peak when she deceives her parents and instead of going on a retreat to Nida that her mother's boyfriend suggests, she makes a deal with her friend and they trade places: Kotryna stays in her friend's apartment, while her friend travels to Nida. In this way, for a time Kotryna gains freedom from her parents: "First I went into Ele's room and looked over what she had on her bookshelves. I took down Dostojevsky's The Idiot. I liked the title and besides, Momy said it was a great, serious book. I made some coffee with milk and stretched out with the book on Ele's bed. Bliss!" (*Pirmiausia nuėjau į Elės kambarį ir peržiūrėjau, ką ji turi knygų spintoje. Išsirinkau Dostojevskio 'Idiotą'. Patiko pavadinimas, be to, mama kadaise sake, kad tai kieta knyga. Pasidariau baltos kavos ir su knyga įsitaisiau ant Elės lovos. Kaifas!*) (Gudonytė 2009, 118; translated by the author of the paper).

In addition, Kotryna carefully plans to steal money from an old woman whom her best friend Laura has been taking care of. Once at the old woman's apartment, Laura shows Kotryna where the woman hides a large amount of money. Then Kotryna comes up with a plan that she calls "operation Granny's money" (*operacija Bobulytės pinigai*) (Gudonytė 2009, 118; translated by the author of the paper); in Kotryna's naïve mind, this money will help her reach a complete level of autonomy: "Then we'll both be rich and we can beat if from here and can run off anywhere in the world. Once I have money I can go anywhere I please and start a new life: I'll change my name, dye my hair, have plastic surgery on my face, get my breasts made bigger and buy a small house by the sea. It'll be awesome..." (*tada abu su tavimi būsime turtingi ir galėsime dingti iš čia į visas keturias pasaulio puses! Turėdama pinigų galėsiu nuvažiuoti bet kur i pradėti naują gyvenimą: pasikeisiu vardą ir pavardę, nusidažysiu plaukus, pasidarysiu plastinę veido operaciją, pasididinsiu krūtis ir nusipirksiu mažą namelį prie jūros. Bus gerai...*) (Gudonytė 2009, 99-100; translated by the author of the paper). The passage shows that Kotryna is still very immature, as she would need a great deal of money to carry out her radical plan, which is simply a set of clichés from films and novels. This is not real agency, but only an illusion of control over her life.

In contrast, although Deivė in *Nebaigtas Dienoraštis* also tries to resolve problems in her family situation through her own actions, these are less extreme than Kotryna's. Deivė is not

portrayed as a rebellious teenager: she is the complete opposite to Kotryna, who smokes, drinks and lies, while Deivė stays away from any substance abuse: "Come on, come one! I've got champagne for you. You know I don't drink" (*Ateik, ateik! Šampanu pavaišinsiu. - Tu gi žinai – aš negeriu*) (Račickas 2008, 84; translated by the author of the paper), she emphasizes several times in the novel. At first sight, Deivė is an independent but also a responsible teenager who usually does not disobey her mother and follows the established rules: she goes to school and receives good marks; she is chosen to represent her class in a contest for the outstanding Pupil; she is an excellent athlete; there are friends and boys like her. At the same time, it should be noted that the diary format of the novel reveals that Deivė, as a responsible adolescent, feels considerable pressure that from her participation in school and sports and, partially from her mother:

> Deive, you've got to be the best!
> Deive, you've got to swim the fastest!
> Deive, you've got to write the best!
> Deive, You've got to-
> You'd think that Deive was made of iron.
> (*Deive, tu privalai tapti šauniausia!*
> *Deive, privalai greičiausiai nuplaukti!*
> *Deive, privalai gražiausiai parašyti!*
> *Deive, privalai...*
> *Galima pagalvoti, kad Deivė geležinė*.)
> (Račickas 2008, 49-50; translated by the author of the paper)

Unlike Kotryna, who tries to act as an agent in order to gain attention, Deivė's desire for agency appears more in her struggle to break free from the expectations of others. At the beginning of the novel, Deivė explains in one of the entries that she wishes to become a writer; all of her entries include her short poems. Nevertheless, when Deivė shares her aspirations, her teacher is quite pessimistic:

> 'Oh,' the Lithuanian teacher sighed, but she still gave me a smile. 'And what do you plan to write?'
> 'Novels,' I said.
> 'Oh!'
> Of course she didn't believe me.
> 'To do that, Deive, you need a God-given talent.'
> (*Oho! – atsiduso lituanistė, bet vis tiek nusišypsojo. – Ir ką tu žadi rašyti?*
> *Romanus, - atsakiau.*
> *Oho!*
> *Žinoma, ji nepatikėjo.*
> *Tam reikia turėti Dievo dovaną, Deivute.*)
> (Račickas 2009, 22; translated by the author of the paper)

Despite her teacher's reaction, Deivė keeps telling her that she will still write a novel.

In another episode, when Deivė's mother discusses her future, she does not agree with

Deivė's decision to study business management, which she feels is not a profession, adding that the girl should become an odontologist since this would ensure financial stability for her future. However, Deivė immediately goes on the offensive, changing the subject by asking an uncomfortable question about when her mother's boyfriend, Pranukas, is going to move in with them. In both cases, Deivė attempts to exercise a slight degree of agency in her life by confronting her teacher and mother with her own plan; at these moments she feels in control of her life.

Another form of pressure comes from the fact Deivė is a promising swimmer whose coach pushes her hard: "My trainer is probably right. I will someday be an Olympic champion" (*treneris, ko gero, teisus. Aš, ko gero, iš tikrųjų kada nors būsiu olimpinė čempionė*) (Račickas 2008, 13). This pressure also starts to irritate her:

I came second. My trainer said that I was as strong as an elephant but needed to improve my technique.
'Deive, when you reach the end you should be like a wrung-out towel, got it? The water in the pool should be salty. From your sweat. Got it?'
'I got it, I got it…'
'Look, don't feel down. We still have some time until the contest…'
We do, I tell myself and think that I'll never be a champion.
(*Likau antra. Treneris sako, kad jėgos turiu kaip dramblys, bet reikia šlifuoti techniką.*
Deivute, po finišo tu turi būti išsunkta kaip miško samana, supratai? O baseino vanduo turi likti sūrus. Nuo tavo prakaito. Supratai?
Supratau, supratai....
Na, nenusimink! Iki olimpiados dar turim šiek tiek laiko...
Turim, pasakiau mintyse ir pagalvojau, kad jokia čempionė niekada nebūsiu.) (Račickas 2008, 33-34; translated by the author of the paper)

Eventually, Deivė decides to stop her swimming lessons: "That's it! I'm not going to swim anymore. Or if I do, it'll be just for my own pleasure" (*Viskas! Daugiau baseino nebelankysiu. O jeigu ir lankysiu, tai tik savo malonumui*) (Račickas 2008, 126; translated by the author of the paper). This act of agency makes Deivė feels liberated from one more pressure that has made her unhappy. According to Kristen S. Montgomery, "By establishing a level of control over their [adolescents'] hectic and stressful lives, they are able to add meaning to their lives" (Montgomery 2000). In this case, not only does Deivė break free of an activity regulated by an adult but becomes aware that she can exercise agency, making her own decisions.

In the two novels both of the girls have friends at school that they can talk to; nevertheless, they now bond with other teenagers who, in both cases, are outsiders in the group. Kotryna accidentally becomes friends with a teenage girl who is pregnant: "Are you…that Elvyra? She laughed again. If I were in her place I won't giggle so often. The same girl…Yes, I'm that Elvyra who's pregnant" (*Ar tu, tipo...ta Elvyra? Vėl nusijuokė. Būdama jos situacijoje aš taip dažnai nekikenčiau. Ta pati...Aš ta, nėščia Elvyra*) (Gudonytė 2009, 105; translated by

the author of the paper). Once Elvyra becomes pregnant, gossip about her spreads quickly at school: "She's only fifteen! Poor, poor Elvyra! I feel horribly sorry for her. And what if her parents hold the principle, 'What will the neighbours think?'" (*Juk jai tik penkiolika! Vargšė, vargšė Elvyra! Man jos klaikiai gaila. O ką, jeigu jos tėvai gyvena pagal principą, ką kaimynai pamanys?*) (Gudonytė 2009, 35; translated by the author of the paper). At first, Kotryna feels reluctant to accept Elvyra's offer to be friends; however, later they become close since her lying and deceiving causes Kotryna to lose contact with her best friends and be treated as an outsider like Elvyra.

When Kotryna is strongly pressured by her mother to go on a retreat in Nida, she suggests to Elvyra that they exchange places: Elvyra goes to the retreat instead of Kotryna. Kotryna's friendship with Elvyra plays a significant role in Kotryna' future. Once on her own in Elvyra's apartment, Kotryna is able to carry out her plan to rob the elderly woman; "Now I'm rich, I can travel anywhere I like. It's all mine! Think of it, Kotryna!" (*Dabar esu turtinga, galiu keliauti kur panorėjusi. Viskas! Įsisąmonink, Kotryna!*) (Gudonytė 2009, 132; translated by the author of the paper). Kotryna's plan succeeds; she even wears a mask and cleans her fingerprints from the furniture that she touches while robbing the woman, but her conscience awakens after the incident. She becomes paranoid that everyone around her knows what she did: "Suddenly a shiver ran down my back. Hell, what if she saw me somewhere and recognized me?!...Maybe at night she couldn't sleep, when to the window and saw how I climbed onto the balcony or when I climbed down…When I was climbing down, the dawn was breaking. I wasn't wearing my mask…that's right, I took it off on the balcony…" (*Staiga man pradėjo mausti paširdžius. Velnias! O jeigu ji mane kai kur matė ir atpažino?! <…> Gal naktį, kankinama nemigos, stovėjo prie lango ir matė, kaip užlipau į balkoną arba kaip nulipau žemyn…Kai nulipau, jau brėško. Buvau be kaukės…Taip, nusiėmiau ją balkone…*) (Gudonytė 2008, 134-135; translated by the author of the paper). Kotryna's paranoia only worsens after her friend, Laura, who used to take care of the elderly woman and showed Kotryna where the money was hidden, phones to tell her that the police have launched an investigation and that Laura is the main suspect:

> 'You know,' Laura went on after a pause, 'they asked me who else knows about that money.'
> 'And?' I listened carefully. I shivered.
> 'Well, I told them about you…you understand? I said that you knew about they money too.'
> 'What…'
> 'You know, I had to.'
> 'And why not!' I laughed loudly. 'God says, if you know something about your friends, then tell other people right away!'
> (*Žinai, - kiek patylėjusi tęsė Laura, - jie klausinėjo, kas dar žino apie tuos pinigus.
> Ir? – suklusau. Mane nupurtė šaltis.*

Aš papasakojau apie tave, na...Supranti?...Pasakiau, kad ir tu apie juos žinojai...
Na, na?
Pati supranti, aš juk privalėjau...O kaipgi! – garsiai nusikvatojau. – Dievas juk yra pasakęs: „Jei žinai ką nors apie savo draugus, tuoj pat papasakok!) (Gudonytė 2009, 141; translated by the author of the paper)

Laura's confession means that Kotryna will be among the suspects as well. Now she understands that her selfish plan to gain control over her own life and become more independent from her parents has made her into a criminal. Notably, she does not seem to care about the position she put her best friend Laura in, who may face criminal charges. Too egoistic and immature, she immediately decides to use the only kind of agency she has left by giving back the money she stole; however, instead of confessing to the crime, which would be a responsible act, she puts back the money secretly into the woman's post box:

'Left-it-in-the-post-box.'
'Post box!' I dramatically clapped my hands and for an instance felt like someone playing a startled blonde in a black and white movie.
'Of course. When I went up the stairs to Kazimiera, I glanced at her post box. God, I was really surprised to see so many letters there!
(Pa-li-ko paš-to dė-žu-tė-je.
Pašto dėžutėje! – išraiškingai pliaukštelėjau rankomis ir akimirką pasijutau vaidinanti nustebusią blondinę iš nespalvoto filmo.
Taigi. Kai nulipau pas Kazimierą, netyčia mestelėjau akis į jos pašto dėžę. Dievaži, ne juokais nustebau pamačiusi ten kiek laiškų!) (Gudonytė 2009, 170; translated by the author of the paper)

In order to get into the woman's building, she pretends to be the new girl who is going to take care of her. However, at the climactic moment in the story, the elderly lady suddenly recognizes the perfume Kotryna is wearing and states that this is the same scent that the intruder who stole her money wore that night: "Nanete,' the dwarf woman said to me, 'When I woke up the other night, when I was robbed, I also smelled this scent.' I nearly turned to stone…Maybe in an earlier life Her Eminence the Old Lady had been some sort of Inspector Rex?" (*Nanete, - užtikrino mane nykštukė. – Atsipeikėjusi aną naktį, na kai mane apvogė, irgi pajutau šį kvapą. <…> Suakmenėjau...Gal pereitame gyvenime ta bobulencija buvo koks nors komisaras Reksas?*) (Gudonytė 2009, 173; translated by the author of the paper). Rather unrealistically, Gudonytė simply ends the story of the robbery. Instead, Kotryna and the woman form an unexpected relationship and become close: they go for walks and to restaurants; the woman even takes the girl to her theatre where she worked and introduces Kotryna to her former actor friends.

At first, Kotryna, being the way she is, attempts to exercise agency with the elderly lady by lying about her family:

'And where are your parents? Not in Vilnius?'
'No-o,' I mumbled. 'They…they died…'

'Good Lord!' said the old woman, her eyes bulging. 'Poor child…was that long ago?'
'My father left us when I was born…Mommy-she died in an accident…'
'How dreadful!' nodding her head, the old woman looked really horrified.'
(*O kur tavo tėveliai? Ne Vilniuje?*
Ne-e…-numykiau. – Jie…jie mirę...
Vajetau! – išsprogino akis senikė. – Vargšas vaikelis... Ar seniai?
Tėvas paliko mus, kai gimiau... O mama... ji žuvo avarijoje...
Koks siaubas! – palingavo galva bobulytė, atrodo, kaip reikia pašiurpusi.) (Gudonytė
2009, 174-175; translated by the author of the paper)

By deceiving the woman, Kotryna wins her sympathy and temporarily gains some control over the situation. Still, throughout her short friendship with the elderly woman, the girl begins to change from a pathological liar - "Oh God, how hard it is to tell the truth!" (*O dievai, kaip sunku sakyti teisybę!*) (Gudonytė 2009, 222; translated by the author of the paper) - into a more understanding and accepting person who finally comes to terms with the relationship between her mother and the latter younger boyfriend.

Račickas uses a similar narrative device to make his teen protagonist mature. In *Nebaigtas Dienoraštis*, while walking her dog in the park, Deivė meets Živilė, a nineteen-year-old whom, as Deivė learns from her elderly neighbour, has cancer: "Blood cancer. She's been sick for a lot of years. They operated her bone marrow there in Germany. Now they keep giving her blood transfusions, but what good do they do? Her father spent something like twenty thousand on drugs already" (*Krauja vežys. Jau kelinti metai serga. Jai ir kaulų špikus Vaketijoj aperava, a dabar vis kraujų perpildinėja, ale kas iš ta...Jas tėvas vaistam jau gal dvidešim tūkstančių išlaide*) (Račickas 2008, 89; language in the original; translated by the author of the paper). As an adolescent suffering from a terminal illness, Živilė feels trapped in her own body, as psychologists many teenagers do; "the diagnosis of cancer and its treatment cause loss of control and increased dependency, when parents and physicians tend to protect the patient from facing risks of morbidity and mortality. This situation may interfere with normal psychological development during adolescence" (Bleyer and Barr 2007, 355). Therefore, Živilė differs from a typical adolescent: she reads classical literature, does not have many friends and likes taking risks. In the novel, Račickas depicts Živilė as a kind of model for Deivė, who looks up to her since she seems to have answers to all the questions. First, Deivė admires Živilė's taste in books:

I said something and asked her what she was so absorbed in reading.
'Anna Karenina,' Živilė said.
'Oh, Tolstoy...'
Tolstoy. Fantastic novel. I don't read all that postmodern junk they write now. I can't get into those novels. But the classical stuff is great. Usually I don't lend books, but if you haven't read *Anna Karenina*, I can give it to you. Do you want to borrow it?'
(*Aš kažką sumekenau ir paklausiau, ką ji taip godžiai skaito.*

- Aną Kareniną", - atsakė Živilė.
- A, Tolstojus....
- Tolstojus. Nerealus romanas. Visokių ten dabartinių postmodernistų vapaliojimų neskaitau. Iš rankų krinta. O klasika yra jėga. Šiaip knygų aš neskolinu, bet jeigu neskaitei 'Anos Kareninos', galėsiu duoti. Ar norėsi?) (Račickas 2008, 28; translated by the author of the paper)

The fact that Živilė admires classical literature distinguishes her from other teenagers of the same age. Nevertheless, from the very beginning, Deivė feels that something is wrong with Živilė: "Živilė is hiding something from me" (*Živilė nuo manęs kažką slepia*) as she never speaks about her illness (Račickas 2008, 67; translated by the author of the paper). Živilė also takes Deivė to night clubs, places that are not suitable for teenagers; like a swingers' club. Deivė is attracted to these outings since these experiences are completely new for her. Still she feels reluctant about Živilė's insisting they pretend to be lesbians when they go to these clubs: "Živilė has invited me again to go out on the town. And again, like the last time, to pretend we're lesbians. All of that disgusts me…At first I thought I would refuse her stupid masquerade but in the end I agreed. I thought it might be Živilė 's last time" (*Živilė vėl kviečia pašėlti. Ir vėl, kaip ir anąsyk, lesbietėmis dedantis. O man visa tai šlykštu. <...> Iš pradžių ketinau atsisakyti Živilės sumanyto maskarado, bet galų gale sutikau. Pamaniau, jog tai gali būti paskutinis Živilės kartas*) (Račickas 2008, 131; translated by the author of the paper). Deivė's behaviour with Živilė represents a transitional phase in agency: she allows their outings to be dictated by Živilė but is aware of her own feelings, one of which is feeling sorry for the girl.

Other major topics in teen fiction for girls are romance and sexual experiences. Here the two Lithuanian novels differ. Gudonytė does not focus much on Kotryna's romantic relationships. Kotryna does write about her neighbour, Gvidas, that she used to spy on when she was younger: "I knew everything about him: when he gets up, when he has breakfast, lunch and supper. I'd see how he poured over the books he was reading and keep pushing back a lock of hair that fell on his forehead. I'd see when he'd go downtown and when he'd come back. He often stood at his open window and stared at the sky" (*apie jį žinojau viską: kada keliasi, kada pusryčiauja, pietauja ir vakarieniauja, matydavau, kaip susikaupęs skaito knygas ir vis nubraukia ant kaktos užkritusius plaukus, matydavau, kada išvažiuoja į miestą ir grįžta. Jis dažnokai stovėdavo prie atviro savo kambario lango ir žiūrėdavo į dangų*) (Gudonytė 2009, 38; translated by the author of the paper). Kotryna is infatuated with the idea of Gvidas; however, nobody learns about her feelings, not even when he starts to date her mother, which makes her feel angry and, especially feels betrayed by her mother.

On the other hand, one of the main themes in Račickas' novel is Deivė's relationship with boys, in particular Valentinas, whom she meets him at her friend's birthday party: "He'd just

shaved and smelled as sweet as a baby. He's not real, I'd think, looking at his fingernails-as clean as a ballerina's. He must manicure them" (*Jis buvo švariai nusiskutęs ir kvepėjo kaip kūdikėlis. Nerealus bernas, pagalvojau ir pažiūrėjau į jo panages – baltos kaip balerinos. Galimas daiktas, jis darosi manikiūrą*) (Račickas 2008, 57; translated by the author of the paper). She herself emphasises this difference in describing cinema dates with him and another boy from school, Baubukas. The latter one acts as a typical hormonal teenage boy, wishing to kiss her: "<…> his most lips touched my earlobes. He bit one gently and then started to suck it as if it was a baby's soother" *(<...> drėgnos jo lūpos palietė mano ausies spenelį, švelniai sukando jį dantimis ir pradėjo čiulpti lyg kūdikis čiulptuką*) (Račickas 2008, 37; translated by the author of the paper), while Valentinas does not try to touch her at all: "Valius wasn't like that. In fact he sat for two hours without moving. As if I was his sister. While I really wanted him to at least take my hand" (*Valius ne toks. Iš tikrųjų 2 val. Jis sėdėjo kaip nulietas. Lyg aš būčiau pati tikriausia jo sesuo. O taip norėjau, kad bent už rankos paimtų*) (Račickas 2008, 97; translated by the author of the paper). Račickas provides many hints that Valentinas is homosexual, until Baubukas screams at her that her new boyfriend is gay: "Listen, that barman of yours is gay…men shouldn't fuck other men,' said Baby Beast" (*Tai va, žinok, kad tas tavo barmenas – žydras. <...> Vyrui nedera su vyru dulkintis, - pasakė Baubukas*) (Račickas 2008, 117; translated by the author of the paper). At Deivė refuses to believe this but she gradually becomes suspicious about Valentinas. One reason that Deivė values Valentinas' lack of sexual initiative is that unlike her friends, virginity is very important for her. She develops deeper feelings for Valentinas.

When she finally sees Valentinas in a swingers' club having sex with two other men, she is devastated and betrayed: "Now I understood what he needed me for. Needed me like a scene on a stage, like décor. So he'd have someone to go to the theatre with. So people who'd see him with me wouldn't suspect anything" (*Dabar suprantu, kam aš jam reikalinga. Aš jam reikalinga kaip butaforija, kaip dekoracija. Kad turėtų su kuo į teatrą nueiti. Kad žmonės, matydami jį su manim, niekuo neįtarinėtų*) (Račickas 2008, 147; translated by the author of the paper). From this point events in the novel move at a quicker pace.

Once Deivė learns the truth about Valentinas, her behaviour changes. The day after the incident in a swingers' club, Živilė's brother Gabrielius arrives to change the lock in Deivė's room, and they have unprotected sex; now Deivė loses her virginity: "I came back to real consciousness only when he'd left…I locked the door, hugged my pillow and started to sob" (*atsipeikėjau tik tada, kai jis išėjo. <...> Užsirakinau, įsikniaubiau į pagalvę ir pradėjau žliumbti*) (Račickas 2008, 151; translated by the author of the paper). Her first sexual experience takes place when she is still in a state of shock so that she winds up humiliated and vulnerable.

Now, instead of feeling empowered Deivė feels completely lost. Readers note that she is probably pregnant when she vomits in the morning. After her friend Živilė suggests taking a pregnancy test, Deivė suddenly begins to comprehend the situation as well: "now I felt as though the ground was shaking under my feet. God, what is Živilė is right?" (*dabar iš po kojų žemė slydo man. Viešpatie, o jeigu Živilė teisi?*) (Račickas 2008, 167; translated by the author of the paper).

Račickas adds to the pressure on his protagonist by a traumatic final episode related to an issue that has been mentioned throughout the story: she is taken to meet her biological father, who turns out to be a member of the Lithuanian Parliament; he denies any relation and rejects her. It is not clear whether he is Deivė's real father, or this is just a media trick that a journalist plays on Deivė. However, it breaks her fragile self-control: "Today is Friday. Tomorrow is Saturday…No, it might not be Saturday. There won't be any Saturday. Really, there won't. Forgive me, I love you all a lot…" (*Šiandien penktadienis...Rytoj šeštadienis...Ne, šeštadienio gali ir nebūti...Šeštadienio nebus. Tikrai nebus. Atleiskit, aš jus visus labai myliu...*) (Račickas 2008, 177; translated by the author of the paper). The last entries in Deivė's diary are very short and incoherent, mostly abrupt sentences or phrases indicating that she is suffering from a severe mental breakdown, and hinting that she commits suicide at the end.

Blogos Mergaitės Dienoraštis and *Nebaigtas Dienoraštis* are structurally and thematically similar in many ways: both are written in a diary format and raise teen issues that have rarely been explored by Lithuanian young adult writers. Still, the way that the authors approach these issues differs. Gudonytė's novel is a relatively light story of a contemporary teenage girl who is extremely egoistic and too self-absorbed in her life to care about anyone else. At the end of the novel, the readers are able to see that the death of her friend Živilė changes Kotryna; she stops lying and becomes a more mature and caring person instead. On the contrary, Račickas offers a bleaker picture of contemporary Lithuanian teenagers, where Deivė is presented as innocent and naïve, and is traumatised by forces around her. Both of the authors draw readers into shifting events and the feelings of their protagonists and so probably help teenage readers to cope more successfully with their own problems. As first steps into creating Lithuanian versions of contemporary teen fiction, the novels succeed in combining interesting plot events turns with the typical concerns of many female adolescents. Nonetheless, their repertoire of topics is still limited in comparison to that of Western fiction, as will be seen in the analysis of selected English-language young adult novels in Section 6.

6. THE ENTRY OF NEW SUBJECTS INTO LITHUANIAN LITERARY SYSTEM: ANALYSIS OF SIX ENGLISH-LANGUAGE YOUNG ADULT NOVELS TRANSLATED INTO LITHUANIAN

Chapter 6 looks very closely at six very successful Anglo-American novels for teenagers that, once translated into Lithuanian moved immediately into the centre of the literary system in terms of popularity. The chapter is divided into three subsections in order to focus on instructive aspects of which genres and types of fictional subjects are treated in the most popular of imported fiction.

Chapter 6 deals with the entry of new subjects into Lithuanian literary system by analysing the translated teen novels from English into Lithuanian. Sub-section 6.1 looks at two very popular genres in young adult fiction: first, the *Gossip Girl* series as an example of the elaborate marketing techniques now used for teen literature and a typical version of teen love lives. Second, the dystopian sub-genre as best illustrated by Suzanne Collins' series *The Hunger Games* is discussed. Sub-section 6.2 presents taboo social issues in the choice of English-language young adult novels for translation into Lithuanian. Sub-section 6.2.1 deals with the depiction of sex in the humorous British writer Melvin Burgess' novel *Doing It* and the much darker American novel *Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson. Sub-section 6.2.2 discusses new ways of presenting teen suicide in Jay Asher's *Thirteen Reasons Why* and Carmen Rodriguez' *34 Pieces of You*. Sub-section 6.3 analyses the effect of norms in translation from English into Lithuanian of taboo language in young adult fiction, focusing on Burgess' novel *Doing It* and Ziegesar's series *Gossip Girl*.

6.1 Trends and Issues in Translated Novels for Young Adults

As teen literature becomes more and more popular, a variety of sub-genres distinguished by specific items in their repertoire begin to appear. Some of these genres are versions for teens of popular adult narrative genres; among the most striking of these sub-genres are two kinds, *Gossip Girl* and *The Hunger Games* series. Critics have linked Cecily von Ziegesar's *Gossip Girl* series to new forms of romance aimed at adult women like television series *Sex and the City* (Binding 2015, 25). The young adult series by Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games,* on the other hand, belongs to the dystopian genre. Sub-section 6.1.1 looks at the phenomenon of the *Gossip Girl* series, while the following sub-section first takes a brief look at current dystopian narratives for adolescents and then focuses in greater detail on *The Hunger Games* series.

6.1.1 New Teen Versions of Novels about Love and Consumer Culture: Cecily von Ziegesar's *Gossip Girl* Series

A detailed examination of what can be called the *Gossip Girl* series phenomenon has been chosen for this dissertation for two reasons: first, the repertoire of these novels is different from any other Lithuanian novels for young adults; second, the way in which these novels were produced shows new trends in the Western young adult literary market, which also affect the Lithuanian literary system.

The *Gossip Girl* series became an international bestseller in so many countries that literary scholars have become interested in how this took place. Not only have the novels gained immense popularity around the world but the TV series based on them has also been translated and aired in such different countries as China, Mexico, Hungary, Poland, the Netherlands, Austria and Germany. Although the earlier *Harry Potter* and *Twilight* series are also known for turning into major film franchises, the *Gossip Girl* novels are among only a small number that have generated a television series for teen audiences and encouraged the appearance of many similar series for young girls. In the United States, *Gossip Girl* novels themselves have sold over six million copies.

In Lithuania, after the success of *Harry Potter* among readers, Lithuanian publishers started to look for another series that would attract as much as attention and profit as Rowling's fiction. *Alma Littera*, the country's largest publishing house, and the publisher of *Harry Potter*, had the first and the second *Gossip Girl* novels translated into Lithuanian by Gabija Ryškuvienė in 2006, with the final novel of the series published in 2010; meanwhile, the TV series appeared on Lithuanian television in 2007. In this way Lithuanian young adults received the print and television versions almost simultaneously, adding to the sense that *Gossip Girl* was a very significant and fashionable cultural product in English-language societies.

The *Gossip Girl* series, which depict the glamorous kind of life of wealthy teenagers in New York, quickly became popular among Lithuanian readers. It was not only a completely new phenomenon in the United States but also in the Lithuanian literary market for young adults; the novels combine teens issues, most treated comically with the attractive fantasy of the lives of very rich teenagers. None of the Lithuanian writers for young adults have yet published anything like this series. Indeed, though there are wealthy families in Lithuania, novels for young adults written by Lithuanians focus on the less extravagant world of the middle class. Therefore, there was a clear gap in the teen literary market that needed to be filled.

In terms of Lithuanian market, as Urba states, "Despite the fact that about 350 books are published for young adults in Lithuania each year, only about 40 percent of these books are written by Lithuanian writers" (Urba 2005). Moreover, the majority of these books written by

Lithuanians are republications or, even if they are published for the first time now, were written during the Soviet period when they could not be presented to the public for ideological reasons: they do not depict the Lithuania that teenagers know today. Urba states that merely 20 percent of the books for young adults are newly written (Urba 2005). In addition, teen books written by Lithuanians differ from the ones written by English-speaking writers; although these novels do discuss adolescent life and its problems, Lithuanian literary culture has not been very open to sex, swearing, or vulgarisms, creating a more censored version of Lithuanian teen life. Nor do these novels include all the common realities that Lithuanian teenagers experience, from spending time at the new shopping malls to the problems raised by rising emigration.

Publishers who compare original Lithuanian fiction with foreign-language fiction for teenagers understand that they need to import texts from foreign markets. Therefore, translations of such novels as *Gossip Girl* introduce a new set of literary subgenres with distinctive repertoires that do not exist in the market. Urba asserts that "Lithuanian publishers feel the great lack of teenage literature in Lithuania so that they are translating and publishing vast numbers of different books for teens, which reflect the modern teen world; meanwhile, teenagers greatly enjoy such books (Urba 2005, 2). According to Lithuanian librarians, *Gossip Girl* novels have been among the most popular books among teen girls since they were translated into Lithuanian and still rank in the top places among the most widely-read books for teens. In addition, such novels as *Gossip Girl* serve as a source of new repertoire items for Lithuanian writers because they show that Lithuanian teens like novels that are both entertaining and also deal with the contemporary lives of adolescents. Here the Tel Aviv approach to explaining why certain texts are chosen for translation is supported, especially Even-Zohar's principle that foreign literature is translated "when a system is in need of items unavailable within itself" (Even-Zohar 1990, 59). Further, it is worth examining the phenomenon of *Gossip Girl* more closely, as it has played a significant role in shaping the contemporary literary market for young adults around the world, including Lithuania.

Gossip Girl (2002 – 2011) is an American young adult novel series written by Cecily von Ziegesar and published by Little, Brown and Company. Michael Cart categorizes *Gossip Girl* and other similar series as belonging to the contemporary romance genre, which often leads among readers (Cart 2010 95). The series revolves around the lives and romances of teenagers at the Constance Billard School for Girls, an elite private school in New York City's Upper East Side. The narrative mainly focuses on best friends Blair Waldorf and Serena van der Woodsen, whose lives are among those chronicled by the unknown gossip blogger. There are 13 novels in the series: the first novel, *Gossip Girl*, was published in April 2002, the last one *I Will Always Love You* in 2009.

At first glance, it seems that the combination of an intriguing and easy-to-follow plot, and dynamic characters that lead wealthy and glamorous lives are enough to make the *Gossip Girl* series a successful product in a young adult literary market. However, critics have probed and discovered that the reasons for popularity are more complicated than first appear. In 2007 the novels' success inspired a television show of the same name. In *Gossip Girl: A Critical Understanding,* Lori Binding asserts: "airing from 2007-2012, *Gossip Girl* [...] filled the void in new teen television programming when *The O.C.* ended. [...] By the first season, *New York Magazine* had even declared that *Gossip Girl* was 'the greatest teen drama of all time' and the show was a top performer in the network lineup for the CW" (Binding 2015, 1). Binding points out the rather extraordinary fact that "New York City mayor Michael Blumberg declared January 26, 2012, as 'Gossip Girl Day' due to the program's cultural importance and impact on the city's economy" (Binding 2015, 2). The action takes place mainly in Manhattan; after the series was released, the bars, hotels, shops, and many other places mentioned in the novels became ones that girl readers wanted to visit or go shopping at. Martha Spalding asserts that "trends introduced through [novels or television] medium affect millions of young viewers on a daily basis" (Spalding 2010, 38).

Another significant feature about *Gossip Girl* is that it has launched a new publishing trend in the literary market for young adults in the USA. Literary critics agree that the success of these novels lies not solely in their content but is rather a well-strategized business plan carried out by very professional experts in marketing. In her article "Commodities in Literature, Literature as Commodity: A Close Look at the *Gossip Girl* Series", Amy Pattee explains that the success of a series does not rely only on the writer of the novels but on an appropriate combination of the publishing company and "the book packaging group responsible for its conception and distribution" (Pattee 2006, 154). As has been mentioned, the novels are published by the well-established Little, Brown and Company publishing house; however, the company Alloy Entertainment has played a crucial role in turning *Gossip Girl* into global bestsellers. Alloy Entertainment is a leading producer of novels for young adult audiences; the company develops storylines, hires writers and sells the completed novels to publishers (Rich and Smith 2006, 8). Interestingly, Alloy Entertainment does not publish any books itself: it is mainly a marketing and advertising company "credited with first identifying consumers under the age 18 as a significant market segment and reaching them through advertisements in schools, restrooms, movie trailers, television shows, Internet chat rooms" (Mehegan 2006). Binding adds that "Alloy is a marketing company known for promotional events, online publicity, and a clothing line aimed at teens. [...] Alloy was able to pitch potential concepts to publishers as well as television film studios" (Binding 2015, 24-25). One of the main goals of the company is to

sell any kind of product to teen consumers and turn it into something highly profitable, so that Binding asserts that "the creation of these texts [*Gossip Girl* novels] were [also] profit driven" (Binding 2015, 25). The apparently original creator of the *Gossip Girl* series, Cecily von Ziegesar, is in fact not the only person who contributed to the stories; it took an entire team of people to develop the series into what it has become. Furthermore, it was not accidental that the *Gossip Girl* novels also evolved into a popular TV series as well, this too was planned. As Rebecca Mead notes, Alloy has created a so-called "teen-entertainment factory" (Mead 2001, 62). Alloy Entertainment can be compared to Edward Stratemayer's company that produced successful series for boys and girls in the middle of the 20th century. The team approach is similar, but Alloy operates as a much larger stage.

The creation of the *Gossip Girl* series demonstrates how the literary and cultural market of young adult literature can be clarified by using Even-Zohar's scheme for a literary system:

INSTITUTION
Little power in this case process (schools, universities, parents' groups)

REPERTOIRE
Teen romance genre; brand name shopping references;
Imitation of teen talk;
Upper-class Manhattan life
Consumer culture in this upper class
Manhattan as a specific kind of place in American consumer culture
Chaotic sexual lives of characters, elements taken from Sex and the City TV series

PRODUCER	**CONSUMER**
Alloy Entertainment	*Teen girls*
Writers: Cecily von Ziegesar and others	*Adult women*
Little, Brown Publishing	

MARKET
Bookstores
Libraries
Television
Online sites
Fashion stores

PRODUCT
Gossip Girl novels
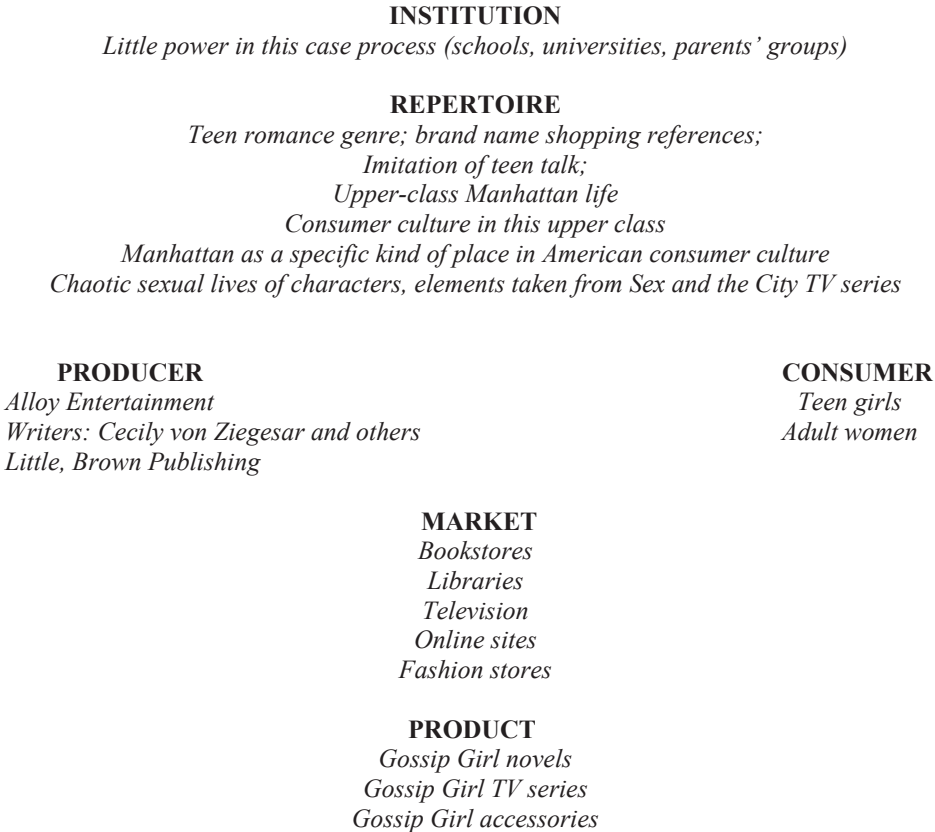*Gossip Girl TV series*
Gossip Girl accessories

Figure 3. The success of the Gossip Girl series according to Itamar Even-Zohar's scheme of Polysystem theory in the United States of America

With system theory's attention to the social, economic and cultural context of a specific literary product, it becomes clear that teen fiction can be treated very much like many brand-name

fashion products. Just as wearing a brand name perfume can give its consumer the sensation of participating in a high-status world, so readers of *Gossip Girl* can simultaneously reflect on teen issues and enjoy the extravagances of upper-class adolescents.

In the Lithuanian literary system, the players in the success of *Gossip Girl*, though dependent on its success in Anglo-American countries, are different.

INSTITUTION
Most Lithuanian institutions do not pay attention to translated teen fiction
REPERTOIRE
Combination of teen romance genre with brand name shopping series
Sex and the City series for teen girls
First teen romance series translated into Lithuanian

PRODUCER   **CONSUMER**
Alma Littera   *Teen girls*
Gabija Ryškuvienė   *Adult women*
Other translators
Editors

MARKET
Bookstores
Libraries
Television
Online sites

PRODUCT
Lithuanian translations of Gossip Girl novels
Gossip Girl TV series in Lithuanian

Figure 4. The Lithuanian success of the Gossip Girl series according to Itamar Even-Zohar's scheme of Polysystem theory in Lithuania

One might argue that not all young Lithuanian girls are familiar with the wide variety of luxurious brands and places mentioned in the series; however, this kind of exoticism is an additional feature that attracts them to the novels, giving them the sense of knowing elite New York culture from the inside. Moreover, the fact that the teenage characters "are slight caricatures, adds to the appealing escapist aspect of formulaic literature" (Naugle 2008, 43). Luxury and the daily lives of these elite teens serve as a kind of compensation for an ordinary or even dull lives of most teenagers in Lithuania, restricted by lack of money. Additionally, in Lithuania, a number of internet websites, blogs and other social networks have been launched by *Gossip Girl* fans where readers discuss the novels, as well as sharing their opinions about fashion and the latest trends.

Figures 3 and 4 show how the young adult literary market operates in the USA and Lithuania, specifically in terms of the success of the *Gossip Girl* series. It is apparent that the globalization of entertainment in this case, teen fiction and TV programs for teenagers, allow a

successful product in the Anglo-American world smoothly more into the Lithuanian one via translations. According to Pattee, the *Gossip Girl* production process has set a new trend in literary market for young adults: "literature for young people conceived initially as a conceptual commodity and not with charitable intent, becomes a serendipitous product of a capital venture, the goal of which is to sell products – any products" (Pattee 206, 154). The novelty of the *Gossip Girl* success is highlighted if one compares it to that of another literary phenomena that moved rapidly from one market to a global one, including the Lithuanian one: the *Harry Potter* series. It was only after Rowling's novels was based not on marketing into a strategized profitable business the aim of which is to not only reach a wide audience and sell large numbers of copies but to also create a kind of brand or a trend that everyone needs to follow. However, Rowling always kept tight control of both films and spin-off products, while Cecily von Ziegesar has very little power over the development of *Gossip Girl*.

Finally, the success of the *Gossip Girl* series set off the rush to write imitations that would be equally profitable. One *Gossip Girl* novels appeared in Lithuanian bookstores and gained popularity with the teen audience, soon the translations of similar series of contemporary romance for teens started to flood the market: Lisi Harrison's *Monster High* series, Meg Cabot's *Princess Diaries* novels, Sara Shepard's *Pretty Little Liars* and others. For example, the initial title in the *Pretty Little Liars* series was published in 2006 in the US and translated into Lithuanian by Sigitas Parulskis in 2011. It should be noted that the *Pretty Little Liars* series is also one of the most successful promotions of Alloy Entertainment. Like *Gossip Girl*, *Pretty Little Liars* depicts the lives of four contemporary privileged teen girls without almost no or very little adult supervision.

Keeping in mind that the audience for young adult fiction is female, the *Gossip Girl* series is primarily aimed at teenage girls who are ready to spend and are constantly following new trends in fashion. Critics have often called the *Gossip Girl* series a version of *Sex and the City* for teenagers, because of its combination of shopping, trend-setting fashion, famous brands and romantic relations. Moreover, both series tend to primarily focus on female characters and are written mainly to entertain: although characters take drugs, drink heavily or become depressed, nothing very bad happens to them. The series mostly revolves around a group of rich teenagers: Serena, Blair, Nate and Chuck, as well as others, Dan, Vanessa and Jenny, that come from middle class families; however, they attend the same elite schools as the others.

One of the two main characters, Blair Waldorf, is depicted as physically attractive, but not as much as she wants to be. She is heavily involved in extracurricular activities since she dreams of studying at Yale University after graduating. However, in the sixth novel of the series, Blair is only put on a waiting list for Yale, whereas her best friend, Serena, who pays much less

attention to school, is accepted to every college she applies to, including Yale: this strengthens their rivalry.

Blair's peers often consider her as a nasty and competitive person: "whenever Blair did anything nice for someone else, she usually regretted it. Which kind of explained why she was such a bitch most of the time" (Ziegesar 2003, 9). Throughout the series, she has an on-and-off relationship with Nate Archibald, whom she always imagines marrying. Significantly, in the initial *Gossip Girl* book, Blair is depicted having deliberately remained a virgin: "I was wrong about boys. I always thought they'd do anything to bag a virgin. I mean, I thought N would like the idea that B has never done it. <…> All it does is make having sex with her this huge thing that he can't deal with without smoking a big fattie and downing half a bottle of JD" (Ziegesar 2003, 144). Since Blair's virginity causes problems for Nate, he has sex with Blair's best friend, Serena. Overall, Nate is an extremely wealthy, good-looking lacrosse player who attends another elite institution, St. Jude's School for boys: "Nate was the only son of a navy captain and a French society hostess. His father was a master sailor and extremely handsome, but a little lacking in the hugs departments. His mother was the complete opposite, always fawning over Nate and prone to emotional fits during which she would lock herself in her bedroom with a bottle of champagne and call her sister on her yacht in Monaco. <…> He [Nate] might look like a stud, but he was actually pretty weak" (Ziegesar 2003, 20). Nate takes drugs and eventually is sent to a clinic for a time. He dates a number of girls in the series, but his only serious relationships have been with his friends, Blair and Serena; most of the time he is unable to choose between the two girls. Eventually, he professes his love for Blair over Serena, which leaves Serena heartbroken.

Serena is not only wealthy like Blair and Nate, but also extraordinary beautiful: "they were all tall, blond, thin, and super-poised, and they never did anything – play tennis, hail a cab, eat spaghetti, go to the toilet – without maintaining their cool. Serena especially. <…> She was the girl every boy wants and every girls wants to be" (Ziegesar 2003, 17). She is chosen to be the face on a series of advertisements for luxury products. Serena has many admirers but, despite the fact that her best friend Blair is dating Nate, Serena also wants to have a relationship with him. She is often criticized by her classmates, especially females, who find her an excellent object of gossip since her effortless good looks let her get the attention of any male she desires. At the end of the series, Serena decides to stay in New York City, instead of attending one of the many Ivy League schools. Throughout the series, Blair's often comically unsuccessful attempts to outdo her friend.

Chuck Bass is the fourth member of the four main wealthy characters in the series. He is a handsome young man who is often disliked by other characters but respected for his status and

wealth of his family, "Chuck might have been banished as a slimeball of the highest order, but <…> Chuck was a Bass, and so they were stuck with him" (Ziegesar 2003, 7). In addition, he stands out from other male characters by his flamboyant taste and style; another character even calls him "Scarf Boy" (Ziegesar 2003, 196) since Chuck likes wearing expensive scarves.

Meanwhile, the other three characters in the series, Dan, Jenny and Vannesa, are easier, at least initially, for readers to identify with, as they come from middle-class families with limited incomes. Dan and Jenny Humphrey are siblings who, unlike the elite group, live with their father Rufus in the New York borough of Brooklyn, instead of prestigious Manhattan. According to Crissy Calhoun, Manhattan and Brooklyn "from the social point of view, contrast the value of money, and fashion and beauty with that of family and being together" (Calhoun 2009, 17). The Humphrey siblings do not wear expensive brands or have access to luxurious homes. They have to earn money, as they will not inherit it. Their father Rufus is "the infamous retired editor of lesser known beat poets and a party animal himself. Their mother had already moved to Prague a few years before" (Ziegesar 2003, 49), that in order to be able to attend an expensive, private school, Dan and Jenny need to earn scholarships. Dan is a talented writer, and works as an intern for a literary magazine one summer. He attends the same school as Chuck and Nate and is secretly obsessed with Serena; however, later he dates his close friend Vanessa, whom he considers as more suitable for him.

His younger sister, Jenny, is also enthralled with Serena who befriends her at school. While Dan is an outsider at his prestigious school, Jenny manages to fit in with the rich girls at her school. Though Jenny is only a short and small-boned freshman, her large breasts ("at fourteen, she was a 34D. Can you imagine") (Ziegesar 2003, 42) attracts the nasty Chuck Bass, who tries to rape her. Meanwhile, Vanessa is a filmmaker, another scholarship student, who has shaved her head and always wears black. Her hippie parents live in Vermont but allowed her to move to Brooklyn to live with her sister Ruby, who is a guitarist in a rock group. Although her parents wish Vanessa to attend a private school "to be sure she got a good, safe, high school education. <…> Vanessa hated it, but she never said anything to her parents" (Ziegesar 2003, 55). In general, the depiction of these three middle-class characters allows the writer to include more ordinary problems than those that trouble the rich adolescents.

Throughout the series there is a great deal of action and social dynamics between the characters: they constantly fight, betray, fall in love, and bully each other. The "queen bee", Blair and her best friends mostly focus on boyfriends, sex, shopping, and secrets as well as gossiping about the other characters, mainly Serena. In addition, the circle of the rich teens do not accept the middle-class characters in their cliques, although Dan, Jenny and Vanessa, attend their schools. For example, the rich girls tease Vanessa for her odd appearance and non-brand

clothes: "an anomaly at Constance, the only girl in the school who had a nearly shaved head, wore black turtlenecks every day […] She had no friends at all at Constance" (Ziegesar 2003, 54). Like a typical teenager, Vanessa who is forced to attend this school by her parents, rebels against everyone by refusing to fit in with the other girls in terms of clothes and interests. While the girls bully other teens about clothes and dating, boys typically bully other boys in order to establish their power. For instance, Chuck often verbally attacks Dan for his lack of money, and also for his obsession with Serena, who is seen as too upper-class for him.

Although all the characters are often nasty to each other, the unknown blogger called Gossip Girl is the biggest bully in the series. Gossip Girl functions as an anonymous cyber personality who tells people's secrets and initiates conflicts between the characters by spreading information about them. This blogger is presented as the all-knowing spy who secretly follows the lives of all the characters. For example, at the beginning of the initial novel, the blogger is the first one to announce Serena's return to New York: the way how the blogger describes Serena immediately intrigues the readers and creates tension for other characters, especially Blair: "Just to be safe, we should all synchronize our watches. If we aren't careful, S is going to win over our teachers, wear that dress we couldn't fit into, eat the last olive, have sex in our parents' beds, spill Campari on out rugs, steal our brothers' and our boyfriends' hearts, and basically ruin our lives and piss us all off in a major way" (Ziegesar 2003, 4). Throughout the novel the blogger terrorizes the teenagers with different rumours and photos that intimidate characters.

Still, despite their social status, the protagonists of *Gossip Girl* series lead fairly typical adolescent lives and deal with some of the usual problems of their age: first romantic and sexual relationships, pressures of body image, peer pressure, issues at school and many others. The action moves quickly, which is especially evident in their relationships: they date, fall in love, lose their virginities, cheat on each other, and break up. In the first *Gossip Girl* novel, Blair Waldorf leaves a party to have sex for the first time with her boyfriend Nate Archibald, but they are interrupted by the return of Blair's friend Serena van der Woodsen, who was away at boarding school. While Serena is shown as perfect in appearance and manner, Blair often feels pressure to fit in with cultural stereotypes about body types. She suffers from bulimia, a serious eating disorder that is characterized by stress eating that is followed by forced vomiting. Throughout the series, everyone knows about Blair's condition; however, they do not address the issue, especially her friends since they think it is disgusting and not lady-like: "Stress-induced regurgitation?' she answered tightly. She knew Jackie wanted her to say bulimia, but it was such a gross word, she refused to say it, especially in front of Nate" (Ziegesar 2003, 45). Blair releases her anxiety and anger by filling up her stomach with food: "her stomach rumbled

nervously. After all the throwing up she'd done, she really needed another tuna roll" (Ziegesar 2003, 193). As these passages show, even bulimia, which can be a life-threatening disorder, is treated humorously. Similarly, when Chuck tries to rape Jenny, but the scene is mainly presented as comic. Nate is arrested for possession of drugs, but is rapidly rescued by his rich father's lawyer and simply has to attend a clinical program. None of the girls become pregnant or have abortions, none of the drunk boys have car accidents. *Gossip Girl* features an urban pastoral world in which all of the major characters are young, attractive and have no problems that cannot be resolved – especially by wealthy families and their own power as members of the New York elite.

With each new novel of the series these books gained more and more popularity among readers; Marc Aronson explains that "they are like a familiar brand-name purchase: you read a book because you know what you will find, and yet you enjoy getting this particular version" (Aronson 2002). The main characters extremely rich but they can also act like adults, since they drink, dress, and talk like grown-ups. Ziegesar sets her series in upper New York City prep schools, where the characters live in a world that is rather similar to the one of the American or Lithuanian readers; however, at the same time it differs with regard to their lifestyle because they are very rich. The novels depict the everyday life of wealthy teenagers with considerable detailing about designer consumer goods: for example, "Serena van der Woodsen shook her head and handed her vintage Burberry coat to Esther, the maid" (Ziegesar 2003, 20). They dine at fancy restaurants, drink expensive alcohol and live in luxurious apartments: "The Waldorf penthouse had been expensively redecorated that summer in deep reds and chocolate browns, and it was full of antiques and artwork that would have impressed anyone who knew anything about art" (Ziegesar 2002, 9). In addition, they are able to ski in luxurious ski resorts. Nate gives himself time to decide his feelings for Blair and Serena by sailing around the world in an expensive yacht with a friend of his father's. Such a glamorous lifestyle creates a fantasy world that is extremely pleasurable for readers who do not have such luxuries in their lives. Nevertheless, at the same time, the struggles that characters in the series often deal with show that even extremely rich teenagers face similar problems that make them easier to relate to.

In the novels, parents and other adults do not play any major roles; as in most contemporary teen fiction, parents appear when characters argue with them, or see them as an additional problem in their lives. For example, at the beginning of the first *Gossip Girl* novel, Blair feels ashamed that her mother is dating Cyrus Rose who, according to Blair, "looked like someone who might help you pick out shoes at Saks – bald, except for a small, bushy moustache, his fat stomach barely hidden in a shiny blue double-breasted suit" (Ziegesar 2003, 3). Blair's parents divorced when her father moved to live with a French man in a chateau.

Despite her father's homosexuality and the fact that he abandons her, Blair cares deeply about him, whereas she is mortified by Cyrus, whom she sees as vulgar and not worthy of her socialite mother. Meanwhile, Serena's parents are also wealthy people: her mother, Lillian is a socialite, while her father runs a successful Dutch shipping company. They hardly figure in these novels: Serena, like many teens is able to do whatever they please without any adult supervision:

> Blair and her friends could drink whatever they wanted, whenever they wanted, as long as they maintained their grades and their looks and didn't embarrass themselves or the family by puking in public, pissing their pants, or ranting in the streets. (Ziegesar 2003, 8)

The young adults in the series seem to have almost no limitations in their lives, which makes them even more appealing to the readers, as this lets them enter a highly desirable kind of imagined world.

Meanwhile, Rufus, Dan and Jenny's father, is the only adult character who is depicted as a loving and caring father. He values good education and makes many sacrifices so that his children can attend elite schools. Although Rufus is not overly strict, he is a single parent who at least makes some attempt to control his children, especially Jenny, the younger of the two. For example, Rufus is furious with Jenny when images of her nude photo shoot surface on the internet among the students and teachers at school.

A final reason for the popularity of the *Gossip Girl* novels is that the language of the series is simple, yet also successfully imitates a contemporary young adult vernacular. The language of the characters includes a good deal of slang; for example, in one passage Serena leaves her brother a voicemail message: "You could have called me too, you big jerk. I was stuck up in Ridgefield, bored out of my mind [...]I had my first day of school today [...] Actually, it sucked" (Ziegesar 2003, 67) as well as electronic language: "You know you love me, xoxo Gossip Girl" (Ziegesar 2003, 8). Moreover, the creators of the series include the internet as an inseparable part of contemporary teenagers' lives. Therefore, parts of the novels are written in the form of a blog or an email:

> *B*, *K*, and *I* all in 3 guys eating fries and hot chocolates with big fat Intermix bags under the table. Don't those girls have anywhere else to go? And we thought they were always out boozing it up and partying down. So disappointing. I did see B slip a few splashes of brandy into her hot chocolate, though. Good girl. (von Ziegesar 2003, 102)

The typical teen use of swearing and vulgarities in these novels is discussed in more detail in Sub-section 6.3.2.

Additionally, the chapters are short and full of dialogue between the characters:

> "A thousand bucks says she got kicked out," Chuck told them. "And doesn't she look fucked? I think she's been thoroughly fucked. Maybe she had some sort of prostitution

ring going on up there. The Merry Madam of Hanover Academy," he added, laughing at his own stupid joke.

"I think she looks kind of spaced out, too," Kati said. "Maybe she's on heroin."

"Or some prescription drug," Isabel said. "You know, like, Valium or Prozac. Maybeshe's gone totally nuts."

"She could've been making her own E," Kati agreed. "She was always good at science."

"I heard she joined some kind of cult," Chuck offered. (Ziegesar 2003, 21)

In this passage, teenagers gossip about Serena, who mysteriously disappeared from school months earlier. The writer does not provide many descriptions. The novels mainly focus on sudden decisions by the characters that usually lead to awkward consequences. For example, going to an upper-class party, Jenny spends too much on a black evening gown which the salesperson has told her is not suitable for a young girl, and indeed attracts the wrong kind of attention.

Although the series centres on the lives of high school students, *Gossip Girl* is one of the growing number of crossover teen novels that have become popular among adult readers as well. One of the reasons is that the novels are written in a light-hearted and humorous manner intended for entertainment rather than serious presentations of problems; it allows readers of all ages to escape into a pleasurable fantasy world. The success of the *Gossip Girl* series in Lithuania is evidence that, despite its long history under a communist regime, this society, or more particularly its young adult readers, have become westernized to a surprising degree. They are able to understand a consumer society unlike their own and find their imaginative immersion in it pleasurable. This is helped by what the analysis has shown: many of the situations and problems that the wealthy New Yorkers face are fundamentally versions of common teen concerns like appearance, status, friendship, sexuality and love.

6.1.2 The Rise of Teen Dystopian Fiction: Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games* Series

When Lithuania became independent, it gave its citizens, including young adults, the freedom to receive information about foreign cultural products. With the creation of the internet in the late 1990s, news and publicity about new Western literature came very rapidly to young Lithuanians. In the contemporary young adult literary market, one trend quickly follows another: a new kind of once novel becomes successful, a great number of similar books appear. These rapid changes mean that publishers in countries like Lithuania have to keep in touch with the latest foreign trends so that they can provide teen readers with translations of bestselling books as soon as possible. For example, in 2008, Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games* novel, set in a post-apocalyptic North American totalitarian state, established a new global trend. With its phenomenal success, it became clear that the earlier schools of magic and vampire stories had

been rapidly taken over by more realistic but also significantly darker dystopian novels. The translation of the initial novel in *The Hunger Games* series reached Lithuanian readers in 2010, after it received a great deal of attention from English-speaking teens; Alma Littera Group published the second novel of the series the same year, while the third appeared in 2011. In order to produce the trilogy so quickly, the first book was translated into Lithuanian by Ina Jakaitė, and the other two novels by Simona Kaziukonytė.

Erika Gottlieb offers a clear definition of the dystopian genre in literature:

> dystopian fiction looks at totalitarian dictatorship as its prototype, a society that puts its whole population continuously on trial, a society that finds its essence in concentration camps, that is, in disenfranchising and enslaving entire classes of its own citizens, a society that, by glorifying and justifying violence by law preys upon itself. (Gottlieb 2001, 12)

Similarly, April Spisak asserts that every dystopian novel shares similar characteristics: for example, there is always "a society that is a counter-utopia, a repressed, controlled, restricted system with multiple social controls put into place via government, military, or a powerful authority figure" (Spisak 2012, 1). Dystopias are futuristic, imagined societies characterised by oppressive control. Cart indicates that "a dystopia is a future world that extends and distorts modern day issues into an inexhaustible and dehumanized state in which controls have been forced upon society and its inhabitants through social and physical limitations that restrict many aspects of life" (Cart 2010, 103).

The power through which dystopian authorities govern is based on the use of an ideological state apparatus. This is a concept that was developed by the Marxist theorist Louis Althusser (1918-1990). He argues that things such as art, movies, books, advertising, music, television, fashion, games, technology, families, schools, churches, and others. These are forms of power that do not work by force, but rather by persuading us to believe things ourselves" (Althusser 1971). An ideological state apparatus is any form of expression that promotes a given ideology. Earlier, Antonio Gramsci pointed out that consent is necessary to maintain power: "the exercise of hegemony […] is characterized by the combination of force and consent, without force predominating excessively over consent" (Gramsci 1971). Novels about dystopian societies depict both ideological and state apparatuses. Sar emphasizes the apparently total power in a dystopian society which "is controlled by a dictator or ruling regime, secret police employ terror tactics to control citizens, government controls the mass media through censorship and propaganda, armies and weapons are controlled by the ruling regime, and a central ideology controls every aspect of citizens' lives" (Sar 2011, 5).

Although the *Hunger Games* launched a new trend in the Anglo-American young adult literary market, in Lithuania the first popular dystopian English-language novel for teens was published in 2003, Lois Lowry's *The Giver* (1993). This story is set in a society that is at first presented as utopian and gradually is revealed to be completely different. It is significant that Alma Littera published a translation by Bronė Balčienė ten years after its very successful original appearance in the USA. Such a wide gap between the original publication and translation can be explained by the fact that in 1993 Lithuania was only in the process of establishing a free-market publishing system, while young adult literature was not even perceived as a highly profitable separate category. Therefore, the translation of foreign teen best-sellers took much longer than it does today.

Furthermore, although Lowry's novel won awards, including the prestigious American *Newbery Medal* in 1994, it has never enjoyed nearly as much commercial success as the more recent dystopian series for adolescents. The novel does appeal strongly to adult critics, including Lithuanian ones; for example, Kęstutis Urba names *The Giver* among his top five recommended translations for teens. The story depicts a boy named Jonas, who lives in a simple and peaceful society that has apparently eliminated pain and conflict by an ideology called Sameness, in which no one is encouraged to hold different views. Additionally, at age twelve, every boy and girl is assigned a job based on his or her abilities and interests. What distinguishes Lowry's *The Giver* from typical dystopian novels is that the readers are not immediately immersed into a harsh futuristic society. However, Jonas learns that this society maintains a small and healthy population through the selective killing of infants and of all elderly people. Eventually he flees his home village.

Once the global fascination with dystopian fiction among teen readers began, earlier and often forgotten novels as Orson Scott Card's *Ender's Game* (1985) or *The Giver* (1993) have also found their way back to the bookstores. Publishers as well as filmmakers quickly revived these novels, both of which depict dystopias through a young person's perspective. For example, in 2013 Alma Littera republished its translation of *The Giver* with a new cover. Similarly, Bonus Animus republished the Lithuanian translation of *Ender's Game* in 2011 (its initial publication was in 2007). Film versions of *Ender's Game* and *The Giver* reached Lithuanian cinemas in 2013 and 2014, boosting interest in the novels. Moreover, Scott Westerfield's series *Uglies,* published in 2005 in the United States, three years before the first novel of *The Hunger Games*, was translated into Lithuanian in 2011 by Donatas Masilionis, showing that this series publisher, Alma Littera, is looking for more teen dystopias. Interestingly, now these novels have gained much more attention from teen readers compared to their initial releases. This is mostly due to the popularity gained by dystopian fiction.

To be sure, no amount of promotion can produce an international bestseller if the novels themselves do not have strong qualities. While *Gossip Girl* did well through a combination of teen issues, consumer topics, while dystopian novels shows that more profound social issues can also attract adolescents. Teen audiences quickly engage in *The Hunger Games* since the story combines rapid action, complex adolescent character and danger in a post-apocalyptic future. According to Tom Henthorne, who has analyzed *The Hunger Games* phenomenon in *Approaching the Hunger Games Trilogy* (2010), the series appeals to a very broad audience of readers, not only teens but also adults, as is evident by sales figures in the millions (Henthorne 2014, 2). This is one of the similarities between *The Hunger Games* and world bestsellers like *Harry Potter* or *Twilight*, which are other examples of crossover literature that attracted adult readers in high numbers. Nevertheless, as Henthorne notes, "the *Hunger Games* trilogy is markedly different from other series in the nature of its appeal, Suzanne Collins' work being cynical and ironic in ways that *Harry Potter* and *Twilight* are not" (Henthorne 2014, 2). The major difference between these series is that *The Hunger Games* are much more realistic: the stories are not set in a supernatural world with wizards and werewolves like *Harry Potter* or *Twilight*; the teen characters do not have to fight any fantastic or supernatural creatures. Instead, they are forced by the repressive apparatuses of their society to fight each other. Unlike the *Harry Potter* and *Twilight* series, where most of the action takes place in schools and teens deal with problems that are typical for this age group, in *The Hunger Games*, instead of going to school, the teen protagonists are selected to participate in murderous reality games to entertain the masses, much as Roman gladiators risked death in front of huge crowds.

Other recent dystopian series for teens such as *Uglies* (2005) by Scott Westerfield, *The Maze Runner* (2009) by James Dashner, *Divergent* (2011) by Veronica Roth or *Delirium* (2011) by Lauren Oliver are similar to *The Hunger Games* in that the stories are set in a post-apocalyptic society that is divided into a privileged ruling class, and the poor working class, with teens acting as the protagonists. Still, each of these stories differs considerably in the structures and ideologies of the dystopian societies depicted. For example, in *Uglies,* everyone is turned a 'Pretty' by extreme cosmetic surgery reaching the age of 16. *Divergent* depicts a society that categorizes its citizens by their social and personality-related affiliation with five factions; meanwhile, in *Delirium* people live in a society where love is considered a disease. These contemporary dystopian teen novels centre on relatively ordinary young adults who become heroes not through magical gifts but because they have the courage to first doubt and then rebel against an oppressive system.

The fact that these characters choose to rebel against powerful authorities strongly attracts contemporary teens who are constantly feeling under pressure by their parents, teachers, and

society in general. Such general or individual anxieties are common and felt among by young people, which explains why contemporary dystopian novels have had such worldwide success. According to Hintz, Basu and Broad in *Contemporary Dystopian Fiction for Young Adults: Brave New Teenagers*, "young adult dystopias are a vivid snapshot of contemporary cultural anxieties: what individuals and even the human species as a whole might have to fear in the future" (Basu, Broad and Hintz 2013, 12).

It has been argued that the publication of the initial novel in *The Hunger Games* (2008) coincided with the beginning of an unexpected global financial crisis, when banks in the Western world and those connected with them failed because of loans and mortgages. In "The Financial Crisis of 2008: Year in Review 2008", Joel Havemann, asserts that "in 2008 the world economy faced its most dangerous crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s. The contagion, which began in 2007 when sky-high home prices in the United States finally turned decisively downward, spread quickly, first to the entire U.S. financial sector and then to financial markets overseas" (Havemann 2009). In the United Nations' report on the world social situation in 2011 *The Global Social Crisis*, it is stated that the economic crisis resulted in sharply increasing unemployment, moreover, "beyond job losses, the quality of employment also deteriorated in both developed and developing countries. Across the globe, many workers who did not lose their jobs were forced to accept reduced working hours as well as lower wages and benefits" (Ocampo 2011, 27). Therefore, in a period of political, social, economic and ecological disturbances in the world, novels that depict a bleak post-apocalyptic world seem even more persuasive to contemporary teens. Indeed, these dystopian novels seem ideologically realistic, while young adult readers, having lost faith in the way that adults are running the world, applaud the teen heroes who rebel and combat not evil supernatural creatures or monsters as in fantastic literature but governing institutions depicted in their world. It could be argued that the eventual success of protagonists in such novels give the readers a sense of comfort.

In discussing *The Hunger Games*, a useful starting point is the list of Sar's five most common aspects of a dystopian society: "totalitarian government, political repression, dehumanization, restrictions of freedom, and oppression which leads to rebellion" (Sar 2011, 5). Such features are found in Collins's trilogy *The Hunger Games*. The series is set in a nation known as Panem that is separated into twelve states known as districts, each one responsible for producing or obtaining goods in a particular industry as dictated by the Capitol. The residents of the Capitol are the wealthiest most known for their extravagant outfits and odd appearance: "they are so dyed, stencilled, and surgically altered they're grotesque" (Collins 2008, 63). Katniss, the young female protagonist of the series, vividly describes the difference between the residents of the wealthy Capitol and the poor districts she comes from:

> They do surgery in the Capitol, to make people appear younger and thinner. In District 12, looking old is something of an achievement since so many people die early. You see and elderly person, you want to congratulate them on their longevity, ask the secret of survival. A plump person is envied because they aren't scraping by like the majority of us. But here it is different. Wrinkles aren't desirable. A round belly isn't a sign of success. (Collins 2008, 125)

In the Capitol, the residents are obsessed with changing their appearance, and are depicted as wearing odd wigs, as well as extreme make-up and clothes.

The repressive state apparatuses in Panem are governed by President Snow, the absolute ruler of the country; his government is responsible for the country's financial and other policies. To maintain control of all classes, the government employs special police that constantly supervise people. If people rebel or do not do their work, they are severely punished by the ironically named Peacekeepers, the secret police in Panem: "they whip you and make everyone else watch" (Collins 2008, 201). In addition, innovative technology serves as a tool often in the hands of the totalitarian authority. The presence of technology in dystopian novels, or as Gorman Beauchamp defines it, "technotopia" (Beauchamp 1986, 53), is essential, but often depicted in a variety of forms. For example, in *The Hunger Games*, the presence of repressive apparatuses keep the residents of Panem constantly under surveillance of all-seeing cameras and hovercrafts.

Ideological apparatuses are closely tied to repressive ones. The media is censored: each resident is required to watch television when there is an important message aired by the government. Furthermore, the annual Hunger Games have been made into a mandatory festival that must be watched by everyone so that they feel intimidated and stay obedient: "to make it humiliating as well as torturous, the Capitol requires us to treat the Hunger Games as a festivity, a sporting event pitting every district against the others" (Collins 2008, 19).

The main aim of the Capitol's political repression is to avoid another rebellion against the regime. Although no detailed history of the past is given, in the initial novel, the period of the Dark Days is mentioned, which is described as "the uprising of the districts against the Capitol" (Collins 2008, 19). The rebellion resulted in the complete destruction of District 13 and the establishment of the Hunger Games as a "reminder that Dark Days must never be repeated" (Collins 2008, 19). Now the Capitol maintains its power both through careful monitoring and also through a form of ideological terror by forcing children from each district to participate in cruel televised games: "taking the kids from our districts, forcing them to kill one another while we watch – this is the Capitol's way of reminding us how totally we are at their mercy" (Collins 2008, 19). Children between the ages of twelve and eighteen, one boy and one girl from each district, are supposed to fight to the death against other teens in an outdoor arena, while the rest

of the country watches on television. Moreover the games are meant to amuse residents of the wealthy Capitol: "What do they do all day, these people in the Capitol, besides decorating their bodies and waiting around for a new shipment of tributes to roll in and die for their entertainment?" (Collins 2008, 66).

Collins has successfully incorporated the idea of an elaborate reality show in her series. Currently reality shows appear on television around the world, with viewers fascinated by watching real-life participants trying to survive on distant islands, battling obesity, finding true love, eating spiders for large amounts of money. Because this is viewed on television, viewers can distance themselves and forget that the participants are real people. The major difference with Panem's reality show is that it is much more violent, and ends fatally for almost all participants. The contestants have no choice about whether they want to participate or not; in order to stay alive, they need to kill each other.

Katniss Everdeen is the sixteen-year old protagonist of the series, who is depicted as independent, self-controlled but often with a fierce temper. All three books in the series are told from her perspective, as she is the main focalizer of the story. Katniss and her family live in District 12, located in a coal-mining region where people have to work under primitive conditions: "men and women with hunched shoulders, swollen knuckles, many who have long since stopped trying to scrub the coal dust out of their broken nails, the lines of their sunken faces" (Collins 2008, 5). The provision of very little food is another means to exert control over potential rebels, since people are too weak to think beyond survival. According to Katniss, District 12 is one of the poorest districts in the country:

> starvation's not an uncommon fate in District 12. [...] Older people who can't work. Children from a family with too many to feed. Those injured in the mines. Straggling through the streets. And one day, you come upon them sitting motionless against a wall or lying in the Meadow, you hear the wails from a house, and the Peacekeepers are called in to retrieve the body. Starvation is never the cause of death officially. It's always the flu, or exposure, or pneumonia. (Collins 2008, 29)

Again, repressive apparatuses combine to control the people.

A major ideological institution in this government is the school system. The Capitol imposes its control from an early age: as Katniss explains, at school pupils from her district learn mostly about coal and their future hard work: "besides basic reading and match most of our instruction is coal-related. Except for the weekly lecture on the history of Panem. It's mostly a lot of blather about what we owe the Capitol" (Collins 2008, 43). The Capitol exerts its control on young children and teenagers so that they are indoctrinated to obey the authorities at an early age.

The authorities prohibit almost any free enterprise in poorer districts. The residents are not allowed to grow food for themselves or do anything that would even slightly improve their lives. Summarised in this way, *The Hunger Games* sounds too depressing to appeal to a mass readership even with an original story and good writing. However, it is especially the depiction of major characters that have turned this series into a global success. One of the most distinctive elements in *The Hunger Games* series is that it depicts a strong, aggressive female protagonist and so launches a new trend in dystopian young adult fiction where such teenage female heroes dominate. Although traditionally the dystopian genre has been considered as male-oriented and written by male writers such as George Orwell, and Ray Bradbury, the novels that have followed *The Hunger Games* are predominantly written by women. Novels like *Divergent* by Veronica Roth, *Delirium* by Lauren Oliver, *Matched* by Allyson Braithwaite Condi, *Cinder,* the debut novel by Marissa Meyer, like *The Hunger Games,* come out as a series. In all of these novels, the plot is set in a post-apocalyptic future society; all of them have strong female protagonists, physically and emotionally dominant, independent girls who manage to control their emotions and survive in a severely antagonistic environment. These girls break the stereotype of contemporary teen girls, especially since the novels are set in a bleak future society where they do not have any time or opportunity to think about the latest fashions, parties, oppressive parents or difficulties with boyfriends: mostly they are concerned with personal survival, taking care of their families and, eventually, protecting an entire society from tyrannical authorities.

Katniss is not a typical teenager girl. In severe conditions, Katniss hunts for food, although the Capitol prohibits its citizens to provide food for themselves. After her father is killed in the coalmines, Katniss is forced to take care of her mother and young sister, Primrose. Katniss, who learnt her hunting skills from her father, is now able to partially support her family by hunting and selling fresh meat to the police officers, who according to Katniss, "turn a blind eye to the few of us who hunt because they're as hungry for fresh meat as anybody is. In fact, they're among out best customers" (Collins 2008, 7). In this way she acquires skills, especially archery, that become useful for her during the Games. From the beginning of the series, Katniss is depicted as a rebellious character who does not obey the rules imposed by the authorities:

> when I was younger, I scared my mother to death, the things I would blurt out about District 12, about the people who rule our country, Panem, from the far-off city called the Capitol. Eventually I understood this would only lead us to more trouble. So I learned to hold my tongue and to turn my features into an indifferent mask to that no one could even read my thoughts. (Collins 2008, 7)

Throughout the games, Katniss does everything to survive, even if she needs have to go against

her own moral standards and manipulate the audience for the Games.

She is capable of surviving in extreme conditions throughout the Games:

> There are my wounds to contend with – burns, cuts, and bruises from smashing into the trees, and three tracker jacked stings, which are as sore and swollen as ever. I treat my burns with the ointment and try   dabbing a bit on my stings as well, but it has no effect on them. [...] I can't move too quickly, my joints reject any abrupt motions. But I establish the slow hunter's tread I use when tracking game. Within a   few minutes, I spot a rabbit and make my first kill with the bow and arrow. It's not my usual clean shot through the eye, but I'll take it. (Collins 2008, 198)

She also remembers how to treat wounds from her mother, who knows many traditional modes of healing.

More surprisingly, because she is not good at feminine games of flirtation and seduction, Katniss quickly learns how to manipulate her audience's affection. As part of an extreme reality show, the players need to appeal to their audience in the Capitol so that they can gather support from sponsors. The tributes from each district are given their own public relation teams that prepare them for the show: they are housed in luxurious rooms and dressed in designer clothes. They also train for live television interviews to introduce themselves and impress the audience: "Having watched the tribute interviews all my life, I know [...] if you appeal to the crowd, either by being humorous or brutal or eccentric, you gain favour" (Collins 2008, 116). Her first success occurs when she combines her skill at archery with her strong temper. When she realizes the judges at a banquet table are hardly even watching in preliminary exhibition of talents she loses her temper:

> It's excellent shooting. I turn to the Gamemakers. A few are nodding approval. [...] Suddenly I am furious, that with my life on the line, they don't even have decency to pay attention to me. [...] Without thinking, I pull an arrow from my quiver and send it straight at the Gamemakers' table. I hear shouts or alarm as people stumble back. [...] Then I give a slight bow and walk straight toward the exit without being dismissed. (Collins 2008, 102)

Her dangerous tactics pay off: she makes an impression. Later, with the help of her public relations team, she also agrees to pretend that she and the male tribute from District 12 Peeta, are falling in love. Since this is a reality show, this news immediately increases interest in the pair.

In Katniss, Suzanne Collins creates the model of a teen female hero who does not need to be protected or saved by any man, and whose agency is practised in a broad social and political context. As Harris asserts, in contemporary dystopian novels "young women are imagined and constructed as the ideal new citizens for a changing world who lead the way for new modes of civic life" (Harris in Day 2014, 17). Like several other female protagonists in current dystopian

novels such as Beatrice Prior in *Divergent* Katniss strongly differs from the girls in the popular series that preceded them. In the *Twilight* series, for example, Bella is presented as a much more sensitive and often passive girl. The new heroines are a little closer to Hermione in the *Harry Potter* series: she is also brave and very intelligent; however, Hermione is not the central character in the series or physically aggressive. The image of a very tough-minded girl that stands up to authority and competes successfully with male characters both physically and psychologically has become strongly appealing not only to young readers around the world, but also to other young adult writers.

The real measure of how different the current literary system in Lithuania is from its predecessors can be seen in the way in which *The Hunger Games* and its successors have succeeded in the Lithuanian market. Even-Zohar's Polysystem theory, which asserts that translation is a means of importing a new repertoire into a target culture. In the case of Lithuania, translated dystopian series have been very popular among teens yet on the whole Lithuanian writers have not attempted to produce anything similar. Only a few somewhat similar examples can be noted: for instance, in 2001, Herta Matulionytė, a Lithuanian writer for children and young adults, wrote a novel, *Žaidimo Valdovas* (*King of Games*), depicting teenagers playing a dangerous computer game and then getting caught inside this fantasy world. In 2004 Daiva Vaitkevičiūtė published a Lithuanian version of *Harry Potter*, *Marius Pietaris ir Burtų Knyga* (*Marius Pietaris and the Book of Magic*): it centres on a fantastic world and includes elements of Lithuanian mythology. Still, such books did not become very popular among young Lithuanian readers. In the meantime, Lithuanian publishers, observing the surging success of English-language dystopian novels, have rapidly filled this gap with translations which are immediately bought by Lithuanian teens because, by this time, they have already heard about the latest trends in the English literary market through media. Often Lithuanian publishers do not even have to widely promote a translated bestseller as teens learn about it through the internet and other sources.

Additionally, as Corbett points out, the majority of the current dystopian novels for teens are rapidly turned into films, which also serve as another means of promoting bestsellers (Corbett 2013). Malcolm Gladwell, who analyzes the phenomena of bestsellers, states that like films, fashion and other consumer trends, bestsellers spread through a society with the speed of "an epidemic disease" (Gladwell 2002, 13). This tendency has grown with the appearance of different social media channels like Facebook, Twitter and blogs. Publishers have also taken advantage of these new communication channels to reach their target audience more quickly and efficiently.

In Lithuania, the effect of social media on fiction sales only started with the initial *Gossip Girl* novel but reached a peak with *The Hunger Games*. Research carried out in Lithuania in 2012 shows that there were more than one million Facebook users in Lithuania, of which teenagers make up about one-fifth (Pociūtė and Krancaitė 2012, 46). Additionally, with social media, readers can directly address a publisher about when the next volume in a series will be released; they can also share their reviews about the book or the writer by posting their reviews or comments. In this way social media, as a new and very important player, enters the young adult literary market in Lithuania. Although there is a whole variety of different posts and blog reviews about these books on foreign internet portals, naturally, Lithuanian reviews or opinions are much closer and appeal more to Lithuanian teens. Therefore, the majority of Lithuanian publishers such as Alma Littera, Obuolys, Tyto Alba, Nieko Rimto and others have established their profiles on Facebook and Twitter, with large numbers of followers. In "Book Marketing and Social Media: How to Sell Books to Generation Y" Agnė Šerpytytė (2010) asserts that in order for book publishers to attract the attention of younger consumers, social media is one of the best tools because teenagers live in a globalized and technology-oriented society. In Even-Zohar's system, social media can be seen both as part of the market in which potential readers encounter a new book and a tool that publishers can use to increase interest in one of their publications.

6.2 Taboo Social Issues in Problem Novels for Young Adults

This section of the dissertation focuses on specific changes in the repertoire for teen novels in Lithuania brought by translated texts. Just as translation brings new genres of young adult fiction into the Lithuanian literary market, it also introduces or alters the treatment of topics that were held to be taboo for adolescent readers. Sub-section 6.2.1 discusses the depiction of sex in two very popular young adult novels: Melvin Burgess' *Doing It* and Laurie Halse Anderson's *Speak*. The next subsection looks at a new presentation of teen suicide in contemporary novels for teens exemplified by Jay Asher's *Thirteen Reasons Why* and Carmen Rodrigues' *34 Pieces of You*.

6.2.1 Presenting Sex as an Issue in Problem Novels: Melvin Burgess' Comic *Doing It* and Laurie Halse Anderson's Psychological *Speak*

The inclusion of sensitive or even taboo topics, especially those connected with sexuality in some kinds of cultural products, often shock adults, as they consider it inappropriate. They may be willing to accept explicit sexual scenes in certain kinds of popular entertainment for adults, but even this acceptance is limited and has appeared only recently. They understand that

adolescence is a transitional stage of physical and mental human development that occurs between childhood and adulthood; this transition involves biological, social, and psychological changes. Beth Younger argues that "the period is often a time of confusion, growth and change for young women and men; an in-between stage of life" (Younger 2009, 2). This is a time when young adults are easily influenced by their surroundings, peers, family, the media, and cultural products like fictional narratives so that novels, like anything else that might have an impact on developing adolescents draws critical attention from adults. Now that more and more fiction is aimed specifically at a teen audience, young adult literature has become the subject of many heated discussions in English-speaking countries, not so much because of the soaring numbers of titles but because this fiction is seen as too explicit for adolescent readers. Younger adds that "young adult literature is an important source of cultural information for young readers in that it portrays adolescents negotiating the social and sexual standards of the dominant culture. Often defined as writing specifically published for teenagers, the genre is uniquely subject to social supervision and frequent challenges in public and school libraries" (Younger 2009, 2). However, it should be added that the topic of sexual activity is not new in young adult fiction; it has been among the most common subjects since the appearance of the first novels written particularly for young adults. Nonetheless, according to the data presented by *American Library Association*, while there are three main reasons that young adult fiction books have been challenged, sexually explicit content is the leading one.

The issue of sex in young adult literature has divided adult commentators into two camps: a more liberal and a more conservative one. For example, *The Telegraph* has recently questioned whether the description of sexual activity in young adult literature has become a rising trend. The inclusion of more explicit scenes about sex in teen literature can be explained by the fact that young adults are habitually exposed to sex in everyday life, as one commentator notes: "there are millions of young people in the Western world who have more exposure to sexually graphic material of every kind than ever before <...> the sex they are seeing is not complex, not authentic and certainly not magical or mysterious" (Fraser 2013). Culturally, today's teens are probably under more pressure to have sex than to avoid it. Sexual activity is openly glamorized in contemporary culture including, young adults' main sources for information like the Internet, television and films, music, video games, and magazines. The way that sexuality is depicted in the media is what teens perceive to be true, especially younger teens. Therefore, the abundance and explicitness of sexual scenes in young adult literature is hardly surprising; it parallels much deeper changes in the media, society and the image of adolescence. The British scholar Vanessa Harbour defends that the presentation of sex in young adult literature as nothing unusual or new: "sex in young adult fiction does have its place if it

fits in with the story. I have said this many times before; it is all about being in context" (Harbour 2013).

It should also be noted that societies differ greatly in the prevailing norms regulating both real sexual behaviour and its fictional presentation. For example, in the USA, despite increased sexual permissiveness since the 1950s and the fact that the majority of adolescents do have some sexual experience, there are still opposing views regarding the issue: one supports increased sexual content in the teen genre while the other challenges any teen fiction with any sexual content.

In an absolute sense the topic of sexuality is not that new in English-language young adult fiction, as certain critics consider Henry Gregor Felsen's *Two and the Town,* published in 1952, as one of pioneers in this respect. However, the most significant issue is not including the topic but how it is presented. The first young adult books to deal with sexuality were primarily concerned not with the sexual act but with its consequences; sexual act was touched upon very delicately. Although *Two and the Town* lacks any explicit presentation of sex, the novel still caused a strong reaction from parents and librarians. According to Cart, the 1960s offered more realistic novels: "Ann Head writes a novel Mr and Mrs Bo Jo, where teenagers get swept away by passion, July becomes pregnant, and they elope. Still all this book, just like the previous ones had something in common; they did not focus on the act of sex, but on the consequences" (Cart 2010, 143). It is widely agreed that the situation changed only after Judy Blume's *Forever* was published in 1975, since it depicts teenage characters enjoying sex. According to Norma Klein, "Forever was the first, and hopefully not the last, book to show teenagers it was all right to have sexual feelings, to be unashamed of this very natural physical and emotional reality" (Klein 1991, 23). Previous novels including the subject were didactic tools "used as a deterrent to scare teens about sex or to curb teens' sexual desires" (Howell 2011, 23), while *Forever* broke this norm and described the pleasure of sex between young people.

In principle sex may be presented in novels through psychological and emotional perspectives, or more specific issues like romantic relationships, pregnancy, first sexual experiences, sexual assaults, the search for sexual identity and sexual health. For example, recent young adult novels aimed at teenage girls tend to focus on negative consequences for the girls who take part in sex. Such issues as unpleasant sex, unwanted pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and emotional problems are often included by writers. For instance, Marilyn Reynold in her novel *If You Loved Me* (1999) tells the story of a girl's first sexual experience which results in her getting a sexually transmitted disease. This novel, as many in this particular genre are published by the American Morning Glory Press, which has been releasing books uniquely on pregnant teenagers. Recently in another novel, *Someone Like You*

(2004), by Sarah Dessen, a teenage girl is left alone to deal with her pregnancy alone after her boyfriend is killed in a motorcycle accident. One can get an idea of the size and scope of fiction with this theme cane be gained by looking at the largest site for readers and book recommendations, Goodreads, which lists over 200 book titles that deal specifically with young adult sex, first sexual experiences, pregnancy, abortion, and teenage parenting: the protagonist in these books is usually a teenage girl. As Howell points out, such novels "provide details of not only the act itself, but also the emotional and psychological elements of sex" (Howell 2011, 23).

However, the outcome of the first sexual experience is not always negative; it can be treated as a natural part of every teenager's life, as for example, in Jenny Downham's novel *Before I Die* (2007), where a terminally ill teenage girl and her shy neighbour fall in love. As Gillis and Simpson emphasise, "literature can provide a safe space for exploration. For example, many adolescents who identify as homosexual have a difficult time reconciling their sexuality and often must do so alone" (Gillis and Simpson 2015, 7). Therefore such novels are often helpful; as Gillis and Simpson state, "literature provides examples of rewards and repercussions" (Gillis and Simpson 2015, 7). Most important, each novel approaches teen sexuality in its own manner and centres on a different aspect of the issue. The novels selected for closer analysis are Melvin Burgess' *Doing It* (2003) and Laurie Halse Anderson's *Speak* (1999), both successful novels liked by teen readers and literary critics. To a large degree, these specific novels have been chosen to illustrate how very differently the topic of sex can be dealt with, for Burgess' novel presents a frank and humorous perspective on teenage boys' attitude to sex, whereas Anderson portrays a female teenager who deals with the aftermath of a date rape.

Melvin Burgess (b. 1954) became globally popular in 1996 with the publication of *Junk*, a novel about heroin-addicted teenagers, which won the Carnegie Medal from the Library Association as the year's best adolescent book by a British writer. For its 10th anniversary in 2007, it was listed among the top ten medal winning novels (Carnegie Kate Greenaway Awards). In an essay in which Burgess discusses his novels, he notes that for a long time English literature lacked books written specifically for a teen audience:

> Books are written for every age group, from toddlers to granddads. In music, film, TV and every other media, youth represents one of the most well-exploited markets and vigorously creative areas in the world. But with books, no one seemed to bother. The received wisdom was that teenagers didn't read, or else they read adult stuff and by and large, this was true. Even today there's a great deal of soul searching about boys in particular not reading. But is it because books are only for old and uncool people, like opera or bingo? Or could it be that the books that might interest people of that age are simply not written? (Burgess 2009)

Doing It, published in 2003, is considered to be one of Burgess' most controversial narratives because it addresses teen sexuality in a particularly explicit manner. In addition to this, the novel tackles issues like the insecurities of teenagers, peer pressure, and family relationships.

Burgess admits that *Doing It* was one of the most difficult of his novels to write, while some reviews of the novel were hostile:

> *Doing It* is my go at trying to bring young male sexual culture into writing. The boys in *Doing It* are nice boys – not sexist, not bullies, certainly not dirty. They may make the crudest type of jokes imaginable, but only amongst themselves. They treat their girlfriends by and large with respect and regard themselves as being better than them in no way whatsoever. They and millions like them aren't dirty, they aren't bullies and they don't need that sort of attitude being brought to bear on them. I may have done this well, or I may have done it badly but at least I had a go at it in the face of such poisonous opposition, and I'm proud of the book for that reason alone. (Burgess 2009)

Doing It may shock more conservative readers for its unusually open treatment of teenage sexuality, as well as the vulgar language the novel uses in its realistic approach to the life of teenagers today, boys in particular. Burgess states that "*Doing It* is an attempt to chronicle a side of that culture, sexually, emotionally, psychologically, and of course, humorously as well. Finally it is exactly because of the sort of self-righteous, crushing reactions of the evil of this world, and the damage they can do to young people trying to enjoy and have fun with something, that is, after all, a major part of all our lives" (Burgess 2009). These comments show Burgess' sympathy with contemporary teenagers, something that can also be felt in his novels.

Nevertheless, Chris Richards points out that "*Doing It* proves to be particularly controversial and was often the occasion for extended commentary and debate" (Richards 2013, 24). He considers that this is due to the novel reflects the real-life situations of teenagers: "he successfully addresses young people, especially boys, and to do so in terms that they accept and enjoy – nothing too 'soft' or too 'polite'" (Richards 2013, 29). Jack Zipes states that "there are many novels apparently addressing teenagers but which arguably make a priority of satisfying those who actively select and mediate books for young readers – teachers, librarians, bookstore managers" (Zipes 2001, 44). In this sense Burgess is not a 'safe' writer since he addresses a variety of sensitive topics. Meanwhile, Cart suggests that many texts which are received critically from adults are those books that are the most popular among young adults.

The translated versions of Burgess' novels have sold very well among teenagers in Lithuania, but some literary critics here sceptical about him. For instance, Kęstutis Urba argues that "Melvin Burgess should not become the new icon for teenagers, while translators and publishers should look for better writers who search for eternal values and solve existential

questions in their novels" (Urba 2005, 2). However, Lithuanian teenagers continue buying and enjoying the novels of Melvin Burgess, who has visited Lithuania more than once attracting large crowds of young readers. Certainly, he is held to be among the key players in the transformation of writing about adolescent sexuality. Indeed *Doing It*, although it might seem at first that it deals basically with explicit sex, is more a humorous depiction of the daily tensions in the lives of few teenage boys, in which sex plays an important part.

The plot in *Doing It* revolves around a group of British teenagers: Dino, who is the most popular boy at school, and his two best friends, Ben and Jonathon. Dino is attracted to a beautiful girl, Jackie, who, according to Dino, enjoys the highest status of girls at school. Since Jackie refuses to have sex with Dino, he looks for other, more promiscuous girls. Meanwhile, Jonathon likes Deborah; however, he struggles with the fact that she is overweight, fearing ridicule from his friends so that he does not show his true feelings. The third of the boys, Ben, has been secretly seeing his teacher, Miss Young, enjoying a typical teenage fantasy. The teacher is the one who initiated the sexual relationship; after some time, Ben tries to end the relationship to pursue a girl of his own age, creating more trouble for himself.

In addition to realistic and explicit language that is easy for contemporary teenagers to relate to, Richards adds that "the strength of the novel [also] lies in its comic structure" (Richards 2013, 33). Humour is present throughout the entire novel both in the dialogues between the boys and the situations they find themselves in the course of the narrative. For example, the opening episode of the novel presents three seventeen-year-old friends, Jonathon, Ben and Dino, who are talking about sex and deliberately being disgusting, as teenage boys often do to test each other and also to avoid showing that the subject matters a great deal to them. This conversation may well shock adult readers; however, as it continues, readers discover that the novel is about boys' sensitivity and lack of confidence, shown especially in their, fear of peer judgement. Jonathon begins by daring Ben and Dino to choose with whom they would decide to have sex between two unattractive candidates:

> I'd take the homeless. She wouldn't be so bad once you'd cleaned her up.
> You have to take her as is.
> Can I shag her from behind?
> No, from the front. With the lights on. Snogging and everything. And you have to do oral sex on her too ... Oral sex until she comes. (Burgess 2003, 1)

Jonathon provides them only with two choices, both bad: a girl who is considered the least attractive at school and an elderly homeless woman who begs for money. Jonathon himself quickly makes his choice selecting the plainest girl at school, Jenny, while the other boys tease him, claiming that nobody else except this girl would agree to have sex with him. Dino admits that he would prefer to have sex with Jackie, who is considered the prettiest girl at school and to

whom he is strongly attracted. Dino's friends, however, joke that Dino will never succeed with Jackie, as she feels superior to everyone else. Dino even agrees with them: "'you'll probably get it before I do,' he said" (Burgess 2013, 6). This admission shows a different side of Dino who frequently masks his sensitivity and vulnerability behind the image of a tough boy. The fact that he is comfortable enough to admit his lack of success for a moment with Ben and Jonathon shows the closeness of their relationship.

One of the most humorous episodes in the novel is about Jonathon's secret problem: he starts to worry after he notices something unusual about the appearance of his penis. Jonathon has convinced himself that he has cancer and imagines how a doctor will explain that the only way to treat the disease is by removing his penis. Readers of the novel do not feel particularly worried about Jonathon's problem, because Burgess presents him in a comic way. It turns out that Jonathon has been concerned about his penis for some time, but has not shared his problem with anyone, even with his closest friends: "Maybe I should tell this friend. But – it really is too embarrassing, I mean, his problem, it's awful but it's cool. Mine's just crap. Who else could I tell? My mother?" (Burgess 2003, 301). The very way he puts the question indicates that telling his parents would be even more shameful than the problem itself.

Although Jonathon's anxiety is natural, the manner in which Burgess shows his thoughts only makes the readers laugh: "OK, OK, the doctor might say it is knob cancer – only he won't, will he? I know he won't. But it's going to work, because – well. Because I believe in doctors, I suppose" (Burgess 2003; 301). In addition, when he finally visits the doctor, she turns out to be a woman, which makes him even more uncomfortable:

'Whereabouts?'
'On. On. In,' I said. I just couldn't utter a word. [...]
'Is it in a private place?'
'Um,' I agreed.
'Testicles?'
'Nun.'
I couldn't work it out for a minute, but then it occurred to me; she thought I might have cancer of the arse as well. (Burgess 2003, 303 - 304)

Burgess portrays a typical adolescent extremely worried about his genitals but too ashamed to explain his problem properly to a woman doctor. Once he is reassured nothing is wrong, he feels he has been silly; now his first thought is that he will be able to have sex: "On the way home I was dying, just dying. And stupid and horrible. But now, my boy, you have a brand new knob. Thing is, to go and try it out" (Burgess 2003, 306). Although the topic of the episode is a bit vulgar, Burgess presents it in a very light-hearted spirit.

By focusing on these teenage boys, Burgess is able to show a variety of typical fears and secrets, and desires, as well as a general obsession with sex: "As he left the room, Dino paused

to look at himself in the mirror. He liked what he saw. Jackie was the most gorgeous creature in school – with one possible exception: himself. Dino was it" (Burgess 2003, 6). Dino knows his value as the most attractive boy at the school but he has a major problem; he is attracted to Jackie, who already has an older boyfriend, something that makes Dino want her even more. Dino's friends are constantly teasing him for his obsession about Jackie: "Half of the girls in the school are wetting themselves for him, and there he is mission impossible, Jackie Atkins or nothing" (Burgess 2003, 6). Although Dino always tries to appear tough and manly, he is more sensitive than he looks; for instance, when Jackie refuses to have sex with him, Dino's reaction is to start yelling at her:

> 'Well, he was eight years older than you for a start.'
> 'Oh, right. I'm too young, am I? Not mature enough for you?' I was really pissed off but I knew I shouldn't be going on like that, I was really blowing my chances. I just can't help it sometimes. 'I get it. I'm stupid. I'm just a kid. You're all so grown up and I'm not!'
> 'You're behaving like a kid,' said Jackie coldly.
> 'I don't behave like a kid – you do!' I yelled.
> And that was it. She was off, pulling her coat around her and storming off down the road. (Burgess 2003, 18)

In this passage, Dino is not able to hide his sense of humiliation and acts aggressively, which is a typical reaction by an adolescent. Most importantly, Burgess presents the boy's perspective in this situation; since the majority of young adult books are aimed at teen girls, in this case it is interesting to see what a male character thinks and does.

Aside from Dino's situation at school and among his friends, he faces a serious problem at home; he accidentally discovers that his mother is having an affair with one of his teachers, which destroys his faith in his parents even more. Eventually, trying to solve his sexual dilemma Dino becomes involved into a double relationship with Jackie and another girl; this later damages his reputation among his friends and with Jackie, who cannot forgive him for the lies he has told her.

While Dino is the one who boasts about his adventures with girls, his friend Ben behaves completely differently. Ben has a secret which he reveals to his closest friends only at the end of the novel: he has been having an affair with one of their teachers: "Ben's affair with Ali Young had been sown over three years ago when he was in Year 9, involved in the school production for that year, West Side Story" (Burgess 2003, 20). Although Ben boosts about this, he still thinks that it makes him superior to his friends: "He knew that. He was more mature than Dino and Jonathon, both of whom were just kids in one way or another" (Burgess 2003, 3). Ben secretly looks down on his friends and tends to show his maturity in different situations. When they play a game of imagining choices of a sex partner, Ben speaks up: "'Old is better than ugly,' said Ben definitively. The other two looked at him curiously. That was Ben; he always

knew exactly what he wanted." (Burgess 2003, 3). However, the truth is that it was Ben who was manipulated into the affair by his teacher. At first Ben is pleased with himself: "'You lucky bastard,' he thought to himself. 'You lucky lucky bastard" (Burgess 2003, 28). Eventually it becomes clear that he has almost no agency in the relationship and wishes to escape, but is not sure how to end the affair.

Jonathon is one of the most comic characters in *Doing It*, as he often falls into ridiculous situations. At the beginning of the novel, the readers learn that Jonathon likes Deborah; however, he is ashamed to admit this publicly, because she is too plump and other pupils make fun of her: "Could it be that I've been kidding myself all the time, and that actually it's just that I'm ashamed to be seen with her? Because let's face it, the humiliation would be endless. People would go on and on and on" (Burgess 2003, 144). This shows Jonathon's immaturity: he is afraid to be teased by his friends if he dates Deborah. For a while Jonathon tries to adapt to his friends' norms, but he still misses Deborah. Comically, he even prays for a miracle: "Please please please make Deborah thin…but with big tits so that I'd still have those wonderful bazookas to play with, but no one would sneer at me for going out with a fat girl" (Burgess 2003, 149). Jonathon is portrayed as a typical teenage boy governed by stereotypes and peer pressure, so that he both hurts Deborah's feelings and is made unhappy by the situation himself. Although all three boys consider themselves grownups who are ready to take responsibility in the adult world, events make it clear that they are not nearly as mature as they think.

In addition to the subject of adolescent sex in Burgess' novel, there is another major theme that the writer emphasizes, the importance of male friendship for adolescent boys. Since the story is told through different perspectives, readers can easily see that, despite various misunderstandings, all of them deeply value each other's companionship. Moreover, Burgess also shows that, due to the different issues that they deal with throughout the novel, their attitudes towards each other change. For instance, Dino, who is considered to be the most popular in school and followed by the other boys, loses his credibility with all the lies that he tells:

> Dino always was a wanker. You have to be a bit of a tosser to be that cool. How important is to be admired? All that effort. And overnight he's turned into just some idiot with more problems than he can cope with, trying to look good and failing. You'd have thought he was the most popular guy in school last week and now all he's got is Jon and me. Bang! Gone, the lot of them. (Burgess 2003, 245)

Through Ben's focalization, readers observe how his opinion of Dino changes once his bragging about having sex and being popular among girls are revealed as lies. Burgess depicts the

characteristic tendency among contemporary teenagers to create a social hierarchy, which, however, can be suddenly altered.

Nevertheless, although Ben and Jonathon find it difficult to trust Dino, they do not abandon him, mainly because all of them have secrets that they have confided in each other. Ben and Jonathon are the only two people that Dino feels comfortable enough with to reveal his problems with his family and relationships. Moreover, overwhelmed by his situation, Dino feels secure enough to cry in front of his two friends: "Boy, he really was going through it. And halfway through it, he began to cry – really properly cry, big sobs. You don't see that very often. We just sat on either side of him with our arms around him. He'd have broken your heart" (Burgess 2003, 248). Giving this description through another teenage boy's perspective shows a non-stereotypical picture of adolescent males. Earlier, the three friends enjoyed being intentionally disgusting and often treating girls in a demeaning way, where all three are shown as sensitive and compassionate: Dino by bursting into tears while Ben with Jonathon, instead of making fun of him, support their friend. The novel clearly distinguishes between the boys' behaviour when they are in a large group of other males where they feel compelled to act tough and manly, and in a group of friends they trust, where they are able to be vulnerable and sensitive. In addition, Dino's behaviour leads the other boys not to be afraid to speak about their problems to each other or at least address people who can help them.

Burgess' novel is one of the new teen novels that centres on the issues and perspectives of contemporary young males in a general abundance of books with female protagonists. It presents a frank and realistic attitude towards issues that teen boys deal with nowadays in a language that is easily relatable for them. *Doing It* shows how these teens attempt to act according to stereotypes but they do not do this very well. Therefore, readers easily identify with the characters.

A radically different approach to the issue of sex in teen lives can be seen in the second novel discussed in this sub-section. Among the number of novels dealing with sexuality aimed at adolescent girls, Laurie Halse Anderson's (b. 1961) novel *Speak* (1999) has been selected because it is world-known and centres on a major problem. *Speak* won different awards, such as the prestigious Printz Honour Book award (2000). The novel has also been included in English literature curricula in American and Canadian high schools. In addition, it has been translated into over sixteen languages, including Lithuanian, although Vilma Rinkevičiūtė's translation was published by Alma Littera only in 2013. Even though this novel deals with teenage sexuality, it is completely different from Burgess' story, since it represents sex as aggression with the painful issue of rape and its psychological aftermath for the victim.

The novel *Speak* presents a variety of typical problems experienced by contemporary teenagers, but its main focus is the issue of sexual violence and the victim's way of dealing with this. In "Coming of Age in Suburbia: Sexual Violence, Consumer Goods and Identity Formation in Recent Young Adult Novels", Lisa Detora calls Anderson's novel a typical coming-of-age story, since it is the protagonist's "quest to claim a voice and an identity which propels the powerful coming-of-age narrative of a young girl overcoming a significant trauma at her initiation into sexual identity" (Detora 2006, 26). Although a number of novels for teenagers deal with sexual violence, Anderson's has attracted more critical acclaim for "narrating Melinda's story that adolescent readers are compelled to pay attention instead of dismissing it as yet another example of a sad story like so many others they have heard in the past" (Alsup 2003, 165). The readers of the story are able to relive the aftermath of a date rape through the perspective of a survivor who tries to come to terms with the abuse within a difficult high school environment. Melinda has to go through a period of hiding and passivity before she can practise agency.

Anderson has stated that that she wished the novel to "be well suited for a wide range of teens, including those at the younger end of the spectrum, given the fact that 'so many young teens are sexually assaulted; they are easy targets because they are young and naïve. As a result, Melinda's memory of the rape, was toned down making it less graphic" (Glenn 2010, 40). Since discussing sensitive issues with young people is difficult not only for adults but for adolescent readers as well, Anderson does not include any explicit details regarding the rape scene, concentrating on the emotional and psychological trauma that Melinda needs to overcome after being sexually abused by an older boy. In addition, the writer employs intertextuality, including references to Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* and Maya Angelou's work in order to emphasize Melinda's feelings.

Speak tells the story of a high school teenager, Melinda Sordino, who is the first-person narrator and the main focaliser of the novel; therefore, all the events, emotions and opinions are filtered through her. Melinda's story is written in a diary format in which she describes everyday events at school and home. At the beginning of the novel, nobody knows why Melinda calls the police during a party. Throughout the story, Anderson does not reveal exactly what happened to the girl; however, through foreshadowing, readers guess that she underwent some kind of traumatic experience. Only at the end of the novel, through flashbacks, does Melinda explain that she was raped during a summer party, an event which is the actual cause of her inability to speak:

> We were on the ground. When did that happen? "No." No I did not like this. I was on the ground and he was on top of me. [...]I can hear myself – I'm mumbling like a deranged

drunk. […] He is so heavy. I open my mouth to breathe, to scream, and his hand covers it. In my head, my voice is as clear as a bell: "NO I DON'T WANT TO!" But I can't spit it out. […] shirt up, shorts down, and the ground smells wet and dark and NO! […] He smells like beer and mean and he hurts me hurts me hurts me and gets up. (Anderson 1999, 135)

During the incident, Melinda finds herself physically and psychologically helpless, unable to do anything to stop her rapist, or even to scream, which results in self-blame since she feels that she somehow allowed the rape to take place. The writers of an article on this psychological phenomenon, "Self-Blame Among Sexual Assault Victims Prospectively Predicts Revictimization: A Perceived Sociolegal Context Model of Risk" state that "a victim's failure to have controlled any behaviour preceding her assault – even behaviours without rational causal bearing on the outcome (e.g., not having left a party earlier) – may engender self-blame attributions that is in retrospect seem to have caused the assault" (Miller, Markman and Handley 2007, 130). What happens that victims keep emphasizing the idea of "if only" (Miller, Markman and Handley 2007, 130), meaning that often they tend to think of how they could have prevented the assault. In Melinda's case, since she does not speak during the incident, she feels confused as to whether what happened to her was actually a rape. In addition, she also broods on the scenario of 'if only' she had said anything or screamed loudly, the attacker would have left her alone. In addition, she feels guilty that she was drunk and therefore incapable of standing up to the boy. Half-consciously blaming herself for remaining mute, she then refuses to speak at all, at the same time wishing to repress the horrible memory of the assault. Additionally, she fears how others will react if she tells them; as Janet Alsup observes, "women and girls are often afraid to tell that they were raped because they believe they will be blamed" (Alsup 2003, 164). Melinda sarcastically questions: "Me: [inside my head] Would you listen? Would you believe me? Fat chance" (Anderson 1999, 114). She does not trust anyone, neither her peers nor adults to believe that she was assaulted since she is incapable of comprehending what really happened during the incident.

The readers also learn from Melinda that the rape occurred in summer at a party during which she called the police, causing her friends and everyone at the party to treat her as a betrayer: "'My brother got arrested at that party. He got fired because of the arrest. I can't believe you did that. Asshole.'" (Anderson 1999, 28). In addition to the fact that Melinda is now rejected by her peers, at school she is also bullied and humiliated:

Thwap! A lump of potatoes and gravy hits me square in the centre of my chest. All the conversations stops as the entire lunchroom gawks, my face burning into their retinas. […]. I'm getting bumped a lot in the halls. A few times my books were accidentally

ripped from my arms and pitched to the floor. I try not to dwell on it. It has to go away eventually. (Anderson 1999, 8, 14)

Robyn L. Schiffman states that the school cafeteria is often a (re)defining place for one's social status: when Melinda is publically humiliated in school's cafeteria and everyone's attention is on her, this enforces her status of a outsider or even an object of ridicule (Schiffman 2012, 53). Being bullied isolates Melinda from her schoolmates even more so that she wishes she could be invisible; however, instead, she endures the pain on her own, not informing anyone.

At this time Melinda is beginning her freshman year at a high school in New York; however, during her first days at school, it is clear that everyone treats her as an outsider: "we fall into clans: Jocks, Country clubbers, Idiot Savants, Cheerleaders, Human Waste, Eurotrash, Future Fascists of America, Big Hair Chix, the Marthas, Suffering Artists, Thespians, Goths, Shredders. I am clanless. […] I don't have anyone to sit with. I am Outcast" (Anderson 1999, 4). Typically, in high school teenagers tries on different roles by joining various clubs or cliques in search for identity. As Schiffman points out: "Everyone gets sorted into predictable high school categories. [...] Clan activity is mostly observed in the cafeteria, where who you sit with and where you sit determine not only the conversation of others but also (re)defines the social structure, status, and network of your place within high school" (Schiffman 2012, 52). Melinda feels she has no place within this structure: "There is no point looking for my ex-friends. Our clan, the Plain Janes, has splintered and the pieces are being absorbed by rival factions" (Anderson 1999, 4). She has not always been an outcast; however, once her friends moved to high school, all of them quickly joined other groups for a new social status, leaving Melinda marginalized.

In addition to physical bullying, Melinda's peers torment her psychologically as well: for example, in a Spanish class, the students tease Melinda for her name: "No, Melinda no es linda" (Anderson 1999, 41). In Spanish *linda* means beautiful; therefore, they rhyme it with her name but call her 'not beautiful'. Melinda does not respond to this or other teasing and bullying; she refuses to speak and turns her aggression and anger towards herself, falling into deeper despair. Her behaviour indicates that there is something more seriously affecting Melinda than bullying at school.

Schiffman offers the interesting idea that Melinda, once rejected by her peers and not fitting into any clan, is compelled to re-examine her sense of self. Schiffman suggests that, though not being able to identify with any specific group in high school, "Melinda identifies with the school. Once she finds her safe space, the closet, she begins to find her voice and shape her own identity at the school" (Schiffman 2012, 49). As she indicates, Melinda finds an abandoned janitor's closet at school that she cleans and decorates:

> Not only is the Homecoming pep rally going to spring me from algebra, it will be a great time to clean up my closet. I brought some sponges from home. [...] The first thing to go is a mirror. It is screwed to the wall, so I cover it with a poster of Maya Angelou that the librarian gave me. She said Ms. Angelou is one of the greatest American writers. The poster was coming down because the school board banned one of her books. She must be a great writer if the school board is afraid of her. (Anderson 1999, 16, 50)

The closet becomes her refuge from bullies and teasing, the only safe place for her. Melinda is trying to retreat from normal reality and the fact that she was raped. Her choice of a poster of Maya Angelou may be more broadly significant than she asserts. Angelou is known for her autobiographies, which focus on her childhood and early adult experiences. The first, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* (1969), tells of her life up to the age of seventeen and speaks of being raped at the age of eight (Lupton 1998, 30). Melinda is able to relate to Angelou's experience; sometimes she talks to the poster and feels comforted by its presence.

At the beginning of the narrative, Melinda suffers from a high degree of trauma; she is a victim who lack agency since she is not able to deal with the event of her rape. Once she finds a safe place in the school, in a sense she embraces victimhood, as this role is the only way for her to feel she can make choices, have agency and gain some sort of control over her life. She underlines her status at school as an outcast by not speaking to most people. At the beginning of the school year, Melinda's only friend is Heather, a new student who is the complete opposite to her: "Heather from Ohio sits with me at lunch and calls to talk about English homework. She can talk for hours. All have to do is prop the phone against my ear and 'uh-huh' occasionally while I surf the cable" (Anderson 1999, 14). In contrast to Melinda, who is portrayed as too depressed to do anything but go from one television program to another, Heather, a new child in school, wishes to join some clique and become a part of the so-called social clan. Therefore, she is very active and participates in various school activities; furthermore, she attempts to involve Melinda into these activities, mostly unsuccessfully.

In addition to becoming silent, Melinda tries to escape from psychological pain by hurting herself: "It is getting harder to talk. My throat is always sore, my lips raw. When I wake up in the morning, my jaws are clenched so tight I have a headache. <...>I can't stop biting my lips. It looks like my mouth belongs to someone else, someone I don't even know" (Anderson 1999, 17, 50). Self-hurting is one more way of gaining some control over herself. She constantly bites her lips, which she sees as ugly and cracked: the idea of hurting her lips on purpose makes her feel ashamed and disgusted with herself: first, for not being able to stand up against the rapist, and second, for feeling so repelled by her own body after being raped. One time Melinda uses a paperclip to cut her hands: "I open up a paper clip and scratch it across the inside of my left wrist. Pitiful. If a suicide attempt is a cry for help, then what is this? A whimper, a peep?"

(Anderson 1999, 87). In her daily life Melinda's raw honesty and sarcasm is both painful and humorous in a dark way, enabling both her and readers to endure the story:

> Nobody bothered to tell me that study hall was being held in the library today. By the time I find it, the period is almost over. I'm dead. I try to explain to the librarian, but I keep stuttering and nothing comes out right. <...>She holds up a small green pad – my get-out-of-jail-free cards. I smile and try to choke out a 'thank you,' but can't say anything. (Anderson 1999, 24-25)

From a psychological point of view, Melinda is suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder as a result of her rape. Like other trauma survivors, she tries to forget the event, but the memories keep resurfacing in her mind. In the book *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence from Domestic Abuse to Political Terror* Judith Herman states: "trauma survivors, including survivors of sexual trauma, often experience a conflict between the will to deny horrible events and the will to proclaim them aloud" (Herman 1997, 1). Herman continues by explaining that, only when trauma victims acknowledge what has happened to them can they begin to recover. Nevertheless, as Herman notes, "far too often secrecy prevails, and the story of the traumatic event surfaces not as a verbal narrative but as a symptom" (Herman 1997, 1). In Melinda's case, she tries to repress her memories of the rape, refuses to speak about it, and moves into deeper withdrawal.

Since nobody, including Heather, knows Melinda's secret, they consider Melinda to be a strange and depressed person, according to Heather she is going "through the Life Sucks phase" (Anderson 1999, 106), a vague diagnosis that prevents her from taking Melinda's condition seriously. Through self-harming greater depression, Melinda isolates herself from her only friend, Heather. Once the latter becomes part of "The Marthas" club, Heather feels that being friends with Melinda can harm her new social status, since Melinda is treated as an outsider and has a poor reputation among the other schoolmates:

> Up until this very instant, I had never seriously thought of Heather as my one true friend in the world. But now I am desperate to be her pal, her buddy, to giggle with her, to gossip with her. I want her to paint my toenail. (Anderson 1999, 105)

The idea that Melinda has lost her only friend frightens her because she knows that now she will have to be completely alone without any distraction from her painful thoughts.

In addition to her life at school, Melinda has problems at home. Her parents are not depicted as supportive or understanding; she sees them as extremely busy and absorbed in their routine and work:

> At first, Mom was pretty good about preparing dinners in the morning and sticking them in the fridge, but I knew it would end. [...] My family has a system. We communicate with

> notes on the kitchen counter. [...] My mother manages Effert's, a clothing store downtown. But a downtown location makes it hard to find people to work for her. (Anderson 1999, 14-15)

Most of the time Melinda feels that her parents do not even notice her; her mother struggles to balance between home and work, while her apathetic father mostly watches television and drinks beer. Melinda thinks in a contradictory way that her parents remain married because they have a daughter, but they do not value her: "I bet they'd be divorced by now if I hadn't been born. I'm sure I was a huge disappointment. I'm nor pretty or smart of athletic. I'm just like them – an ordinary drone dressed in secrets and lies" (Anderson 1999, 70). Often she wants to confide in them, an urge that is especially strong at Christmas when they give her charcoal pencils:

> I almost tell them right then and there. Tears flood my eyes. They noticed I've been trying to draw. They noticed. I try to swallow the snowball in my throat. This isn't going to be easy. [...] But I want to tell them everything as we sit there by our plastic Christmas tree while the Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer video plays. [...] They leave the room. I am still sitting on the floor, holding the paper and charcoals. I didn't even say 'Thank you'. (Anderson 1999, 72)

For a moment, Melinda realizes that her parents have taken an interest in her since they noticed that she enjoys drawing, but she says nothing and they leave her alone. In a way, Melinda attempts to reach for help but, since nobody pays enough attention, she silences herself again.

As she falls deeper into despair, Melinda's grades at school become worse and she begins to skip her classes, wandering around the town instead. Once school officials and her parents learn about Melinda's worsening state, they gather to try to persuade Melinda to start speaking and explain her behaviour:

> Mother's mouth twitches with words she doesn't want to say in front of strangers. Dad keeps checking his beeper, hoping someone will call. [...] They want me to speak.
> "Why won't you say anything?" "For the love of God, open your mouth!" "This is childish, Melinda." "Say something." […]
> Mother: "That's the point, she won't say anything! I can't get a word out of her. She's mute."
> Guidance Counsellor: "I think we need to explore the family dynamics at play here."
> Mother: "She's jerking us around to get attention." […]
> In my headword, they jump on Principal Principal's desk and perform a tap-dance routine. A spotlight flashes on them. A chorus line joins in, and the guidance counsellor dances around a spangled cane. I giggle. (Anderson 1999, 114-115)

Melinda does not believe anyone will try to help her; since the adults in the novel constantly emphasise that she is undergoing a typical, minor rebellious stage and is misbehaving on purpose. When Melinda hurts herself with a paperclip in front of her mother, trying to gain her attention, the latter dismisses her, stating that she does not have time for Melinda's games.

In the novel Melinda has one other place, aside from the closet, where she feels safe. This is her art class, as her teacher, noticing Melinda's problems, encourages her to express herself through painting a tree. In the first lesson, the art teacher, Mr. Freeman, says: "Welcome to the only class that will teach you how to survive […]. Welcome to Art. […] This is where you can find your soul, if you dare. Where you can touch that part of you you've never dared look at before" (Anderson 1999, 11). Throughout the year, this is the single activity that Melinda enjoys doing since through it she is able to explore her emotions and forget the pain.

Melinda opens up to Mr. Freeman to some degree; this is evident after the Thanksgiving holiday when Melinda decorates and creates a doll from a turkey bone to which the teacher reacts very sensitively: "I see a girl in the remains of a holiday gone bad, with her flesh picked off day after day as the carcass dries out" (Anderson 1999, 29). In addition, instead of pressuring her speak or repeatedly asking her why she remains mute, he helps her to concentrate her attention on her art project and pushes her to do her best. Once, while taking her to her mother's shop in the city he tells her: "You're a good kid. I think you have a lot to say. I'd like to hear it" (Anderson 1999, 58). The art teacher does not ask Melinda to speak; however, he shows his willingness to listen to Melinda without judging her. At the end of the novel, she finally reveals the truth to him by saying: "I have something to tell you" (Anderson 1999, 196). This is Melinda's way of regaining herself and voice again and so beginning to return to a normal life.

By the end of the novel, Melinda begins to change and starts to gradually regain control over her life. One day Melinda becomes ill and stays alone at home watching different television shows. She imagines participating in one of these shows and speaking about the rape:

> Was I raped?
> Oprah: "Let's explore that. You said no. He covered your mouth with his hand. You were thirteen years old. It doesn't matter that you were drunk. Honey, you were raped. What a horrible, horrible thing for you to live through. Didn't you ever think of telling anyone? You can't keep this inside forever. (Anderson 1999, 164)

Here Melinda expresses her feelings about the rape for the first time: she is not sure whether she was actually sexually abused. Melinda was attacked by her perpetrator during a party and therefore she is confused about how guilty she was because she was inebriated and had agreed to dance with the boy prior to his assault. When, in her mind, Melinda reveals her secret to Oprah, the famous American talk show host, the latter explains that because Melinda said 'no,' and her assailant put his hand over her mouth to keep her quiet, it was rape. Before this moment, Melinda used to refer to her attacker and the incident as 'IT': "IT's face suddenly pops up in my mind."; "IT creeps up. Little flecks of metal slice through my veins. IT whispers to me. [...] IT found me again"; "IT's face suddenly pops up in my mind"; "IT happened" (Anderson 1999, 74, 86). In her imaginary conversation with Oprah, when Melinda says the word 'rape',

acknowledging what happened to her, this is the first step towards coming to terms with her trauma.

Anderson does not provide much information about the boy, Andy Evens, who assaulted Melinda; the readers learn about him only through Melinda's perspective, which drastically shifts before and after the rape. At first she is very impressed by him: "A step behind me. A senior. And then he was talking to me, flirting with me. This gorgeous cover-model guy. His hair was way better than mine, his every inch a tanned muscle, and he had straight white teeth. Flirting with me!" (Anderson 1999, 134). She is clearly attracted to him and even calls him a "Greek God" (Anderson 1999, 134) so that, when he invites for a dance, she agrees without any hesitation. Then, after he rapes her, Melinda sees him as kind of a villain and monster:

> Andy Beast swoops over their heads, folds his wings, and sets himself between the girls as they start up the stairs. […] Somebody flicks the lights off. My head snaps up. IT is there. Andy Beast. Little rabbit heart leaps out of my chest and scampers across the paper, leaving bloody footprints on my roots. […] I smell him. Have to find out where he gets that cologne. I think it's called Fear. (Anderson 1999, 150, 160)

Melinda visualises herself as a victim, a hurt and powerless rabbit who is terrified every time when she is near to Andy, whom she depicts as a strong animal-like creature who often "creeps up to her" and whom "she can smell" (Anderson 1999, 86). Since no one at school knows about the rape, Andy is able to walk around freely and do whatever he pleases. Although for Melinda his presence is frightening and even unbearable, when Andy and her former best friend, Rachel, begin to date, Melinda feels the need to protect her from possible abuse. To do this, she needs to break her self-protective silence and begin communicating with her friend, though, when they meet in a library, though instead of speaking, they write notes to each other:

> *It's nice to talk to you again. I'm sorry we couldn't be friends this year*. […]
> *Yeah, I know. So, who do you like?*
> *No one, really. My lab partner is kinda nice, but like a friend-friend, not a boyfriend or anything.*
> Rachel nods wisely. She's dating a senior. She is so beyond these freshman 'friend-friend' relationships. […]
> *I didn't call the cops to break up the party, I write. I called […] them because some guy raped me. Under the trees. I didn't know what to do. [...] I was stupid and drunk and I didn't know what was happening and then he hurt* – I scribble that out – *raped me.* (Anderson 1999, 182-183; emphasis in original)

Melinda confesses to Rachel what has happened to her during that night. Most importantly, when Melinda writes the note, instead of asserts vaguely that "he hurt" her, she replaces this with he "raped me". In this episode, she clearly comes to term with what has happened to her and is able to share the truth with a friend in order to prevent another act of violence. Rachel does not believe Melinda and screams 'liar' at her for saying that it was Andy who assaulted

her, which does not surprise Melinda. Still, her warning makes Rachel more suspicious of her boyfriend; she confronts Andy during the school dance, which finally leads Rachel to break up with him.

In a final climactic scene the novel shows how a furious Andy corners Melinda one more time and tries to re-enact the rape. This time he does it in her safe place, the janitor's closet, intruding into her safe space:

> His mouth is on my face. I twist my head. His lips are wet, his teeth knock against my cheekbone. I pull my arms again and he slams his body against mine. I have no legs. My heart wobbles. […] No. A sound explodes from me.
> "NNNOOO!!!"
> I follow the sound, pushing off the wall, pushing Andy Evans off-balance, stumbling into the broken sink. (Anderson 1999, 194)

At last Melinda finds the psychological strength to protect herself from Andy's sexual attack. She manages to break the mirror and holds a shard of glass near his neck, screaming as loudly as possible so that other girls hear her and rush into the janitor's closet. In this scene, Melinda becomes an agent who is capable of confronting her attacker. Herman, who discusses the stages that a person who has undergone a severe trauma needs to pass through, points out that to achieve full recovery, "it should be possible to recognize a gradual shift from unpredictable danger to reliable safety, from dissociated trauma to acknowledged memory, and from stigmatized isolation to restored social connection" (Herman 1997, 110). Melinda not only stands up against her assailant but also reaches out to her former friend; at the same time, she feels ready to tell the truth to her art teacher and gradually manages to re-establish a closer relationship with her parents. By moving out from the janitor's closet where she hid for the entire school year, Melinda leaves her closeted and fragile personality, and feels confident enough to return to living her normal life.

The period of adolescence is stressful even for ordinary adolescents, while in her novel Anderson shows how complicated it can become for a teenager who undergoes a traumatic experience. The writer chooses to dwell on the issue of rape and a young girl's long inability to deal with this or to tell others about it. Anderson's novel shows that only when Melinda finally decides break her silence about the rape, that she takes control over her sense of self and is able to return to normal life. By the end of the novel, Melinda can state: "It wasn't my fault. And I'm not going to let it kill me. I can grow" (Anderson 1999, 198). She no longer considers herself a passive victim, but now has an identity as a survivor.

Doing It and *Speak* are just two examples of current young adult fiction that deal with sex within a flood of novels aimed specifically at this audience. The latest trends in Anglo-American writing for teens show that the topic of sex and sexuality have been discussed by writers for long

enough to make the subject less taboo, despite continued controversy. The majority of publishers, readers and writers now agree that, if sensitive issues as sex are dealt with appropriately, such narratives do not become pornographic or harm a young adult reader. In *Doing It* and *Speak*, sexuality is presented differently than in Lithuanian novels for young adults. Contemporary Lithuanian teen novels do fill certain gaps in the fictional presentation of teen realities; however, translated texts fill in far more gaps, and go much further in language, details and sexual activity. The fact that both of these novels were translated into Lithuanian and have been very successful among young readers in this country shows that Lithuanian teenagers are eager to read well-written stories with more explicit sexual content and realistic characters dealing with issues of sexuality that can help them to deal with these questions in their own lives. The expansion of the repertoire through such translations may lead to Lithuanian writers becoming ready to deal more explicitly with sex; the translations do show that taboo subjects can be expressed in Lithuanian and not be offensive if the narrative justifies such inclusions.

6.2.2 New Ways of Presenting Teen Suicide in Problem Novels: Jay Asher's *Thirteen Reasons Why* and Carmen Rodrigues' *34 Pieces of You*

Though explicit references to and descriptions of sexual activity are probably the clearest examples of taboo subjects for teen fiction, the topic of suicide is equally sensitive, although in a different way. The suicide of major or minor characters is not unknown in narratives for teens, but it has often been treated in a rather sentimental and unrealistic way. During the 2014 Young Adult Literary Symposium that took place in Austin, Texas, the participants discussed the latest tendencies in young adult literature and agreed that realistic fiction has lately become the most attractive to teens, since they are eager to read books that reflect their daily lives. Although there are many definitions of contemporary realism in young adult literature, the following one by Sara Zarr is used in this dissertation: "it is a story that takes place more or less in the present in which nothing happens that could not feasibly happen in our world and nothing occurs that might violate the space-time" (Zarr 2014). To attract teen readers, these stories need to include issues and experiences that they are able to relate to. Moreover, often these narratives are multi-themed, as they deal with a number of complex topics. At the same time, they are set in familiar settings such as schools that would be common for teenagers from most parts of the Western world. Further, these novels are written in a style that young adults can easily understand; the story speaks to them in their own voice without any overt moralizing. As for the endings of contemporary realistic novels, unlike the typical Bildungsroman that, "by nature, is a romantic genre with its optimistic ending of adulthood for the main character" (Habegger 2004, 34), recent teen novels do not always provide happy ending. Often at the conclusion a female

protagonist or gives up baby for adoption, commits suicide or dies from a drug overdose; however, the writers create such conclusions intentionally to encourage readers to think critically about the problems that they are facing.

There are almost no taboo themes in contemporary realistic young adult literature; currently writers tackle everything from teenage pregnancy, substance abuse, sexual and physical abuse to dysfunctional families, homosexuality, bullying, peer pressure, violence, suicide and death. In this part of the dissertation, two examples of contemporary young adult novels in which suicide is addressed in different manners, Carmen Rodrigues' *34 Pieces of You* (2012) and Jay Asher's *Thirteen Reasons Why* (2007), are analyzed in more detail.

There are good contextual reasons for choosing to analyse suicide as a leading topic in adolescent fiction. Every year thousands of teenagers commit suicide in the United States. According to Scottye J. Cash and Jeffrey A. Bridge, between 2007 and 2009 "suicide was the third leading cause of death among young people in the U.S. and represented a significant public health problem worldwide. [...] The suicide rate among adolescents has increased dramatically in recent years, especially young girls" (Cash and Bridge 2010). Robert W. Blum supports this argument, stating that "13,8% of youth contemplated suicide in 2009, and 10,9% of youth reported having made a plan about how they would attempt suicide" (Blum 2011, 3). There are a variety of reasons found among adolescents who exhibit suicidal behaviour; for instance, David W. Kaplan points out that "psychological problems and stresses, such as conflicts with parents, breakup of a relationships, school difficulties or failure, social isolation commonly are reported or observed in young people who attempt suicide" (Kaplan 2000, 3). Therefore, teen suicide has become a significant topic widely discussed by writers in the USA and other countries.

Overall, teen suicide has come dangerously close to being a banal subject for fiction, since usually those who die were depicted simply as victims of sexual abuse, bullying, unwanted pregnancy, or failed love relationships. Still, a newer approach towards teen suicide has been noticed in the latest contemporary novels for adolescents. Such narratives have become less sentimental and one-sided; they tend to reflect the harsher reality that teenagers deal with and are strongly interested to read about. Writers do not refer to protagonists who kill themselves as to perfect people who suffer from a great deal of stress or pressure from parents to achieve good results. This older type of protagonist can be seen in Vytautas Račickas' novel *Nebaigtas Dienoraštis*, where a teen girl is depicted as an excellent student at school, popular among her peers, excels at sports and is a loving daughter to her mother; however, cannot cope with such pressure and at the end it is vaguely mentioned at that she jumps under a train. From the beginning of the narrative, many readers feel sorry for this girl since she is the only focalizer and all the events are depicted from her side. The novels analysed in this part of the dissertation

are aimed at more sophisticated readers since it is not easy to sympathize with protagonists as they are not perfect. Both writers, Asher and Rodrigues, present multiple points of view towards the events in the novels which make them more realistic and tough, but highly interesting for teen readers. In Rodrigues' and Asher's novels, teen suicide is presented in an unusual manners. Although the writers spend a good deal of time on those characters who commit suicide, the emphasis is still mainly on others who have to cope with the loss of a peer.

Although suicide is among the most common causes of death among adolescents around the world, this topic still arouses controversy when it appears in literature for young adults. Nonetheless, according to Paula S. Berger, "by approaching this disturbing topic within the safe confines of a novel, the adolescent reader, even if he or she identifies closely with any of the characters, can maintain a discrete distance while absorbing potentially valuable information. The young adult is able to learn some of the reasons why teenagers commit suicide" (Berger 1986, 14). In this way, novels that deal with adolescent suicide often serve as a tool not only for teenagers who may be considering suicide but also for their peers who need to come to terms with the death of a friend or classmate.

Carmen Rodrigues' *34 Pieces of You* and Jay Asher's *Thirteen Reasons Why* are both about the death of an adolescent girl. Additionally, the two novels appeal to young readers through their narrative structures, as both stories are told through multiple perspectives; moreover, each of them is filled with mystery and suspense since readers are able to learn what happened to protagonists only through a series of clues. Both novels were published in Lithuanian by Alma Littera, Asher's novel in 2011 translated by Lina Būgienė, and Rodrigues' in 2013 by Aušra Kaziukonienė.

At the beginning of both novels, it is clear that the protagonist is dead, but the circumstances and reasons are not yet explained. In *Thirteen Reasons Why* the readers know early that the main character Hannah commits suicide since the first chapter begins with her mailing the tapes she has made: "*At the front of the room, facing the students, will be the desk of Mr. Porter. He'll be the last to receive a package with no return address. And in the middle of the room, one desk to the left, will be the desk of Hannah Baker. Empty*" (Asher 2012, 4; emphasis in original). With each tape the writer builds up more tension. Additionally, Hannah has left individual starred maps to her listeners, which they are supposed to follow as they listen to her recordings. At the beginning, when Clay, one of Hannah's schoolmates, starts to listen to the cassettes, Hannah's anger and determination regarding her plan of revenge appears in her threats to her listeners:

> *The rules are pretty simple. There are only two. Rule number one: You listen. Number two: You pass it on. [...] In case you're tempted to break the rules, understand that I did*

make a copy of these tapes. Those copies will be released in a very public manner if this package doesn't make it through   all of you. [...] Do not take me for granted....again. You are being watched. (Asher 2012, 8-10; emphasis in original)

Through internal focalization the readers see and feel everything as Hannah does, which is Asher's way to draw in readers as well as the fictional listeners of the tapes, Hannah's tormentors, into her life and make them feel what she did before committing suicide. At first the readers may question Hannah's decision to commit suicide, because most of the events in Hannah's life are commonplace and usual in contemporary high schools. Nevertheless, with every tape and new accusation, it is clear that the abuse become too overwhelming for Hannah to handle.

Like Asher's novel, Rodrigues' *34 Pieces of You* is also written in a mystery-like format. Although Ellie is dead, readers are able to learn about her through flashbacks and reflections by major characters, as well as the 34 strips of paper hidden in a box beneath her bed, one of which is cited at the beginning of each chapter. These strips of paper were written by Ellie and provide clues about her secrets. When read by themselves, the short messages do not always seem clear for readers; however, multiple focalization and each characters' memories explain each message.

Through these numbered messages readers learn that Ellie is fragile and depressed:

7. This emptiness. /
9. I'm convinced I could stand in the middle of the road and not be hit by a car. I am invisible. I do not exist. /
14. Some days I want to tell you that I can't do it on my own. But even on those days, I can't bring myself to say these things to someone who might not always be here. (Rodrigues 2012, 73, 97, 149)

In other parts of the novel, Ellie does not say much about how she feels, whereas these passages indicate that she was suffering from a serious trauma. Later the short paper strips reveal that Ellie was raped:

You said, No, we can't press charges. You don't want that. You'll have to testify. You'll have to see him again. The best thing to do is to make him leave the city. And tell him he can't come back. And that'll be good enough. And I believed you, because at the time I didn't know better. At the time, I was too afraid. (Rodrigues 2012, 211)

Here the "you" that Ellie refers to her mother, one of whose ex-husbands raped Ellie; however, she was reluctant to believe her daughter and never did anything to protect her. Instead, she blamed Ellie for the act since she allegedly wore revealing clothes and her behaviour seemed too free, making Ellie even more depressed.

In addition, through these messages readers learn that Ellie's decisions mainly stem from family relations. For example, the first clue shows that Ellie comes from a ruptured family and

refs to her brother Jake's subsequent problems: "That year Dad left us, I pressed my ear to the wall between our bedrooms, listening to your quiet cries" (Rodrigues 2012, 17). After this first message, Jake's reflection on his life before and after Ellie's death is given. Jake is portrayed as Ellie's troubled older brother. At first he is the one who consoles their devastated mother: "I cover her hand with mine and say, 'It's a good spot, Mom. A real good spot.' She starts to cry then. Her shoulder slumps against mine; her tears hit the collar of my shirt. A low moan emerges from her lips" (Rodrigues 2012, 21). Nevertheless, because the readers can enter Jake's mind through internal focalization, they know that he does not tell the entire truth to his mother: "I don't confess, I knew something was wrong. I don't confess, It was my fault. Instead I watch her eyes search the room for an anchor" (Rodrigues 2012, 20). In this way, characters in each chapter reveals slightly more information about Ellie's family life:

> Once, when I was eleven, I told Mom she shouldn't date. That he [Dad] would never come back to us if she kept having boyfriend after boyfriend. <…>Even then I knew there were worse things a mother could do than have too many boyfriends and drink the weekend away. A mother could die and leave you behind, defenceless in a crazy world. (Rodrigues 2012, 93-94)

As this shows, Ellie is not the only psychological victim in this damaged family. Jake and Ellie's father left them when Jake was still a pre-teen, making him feel responsible for his mother and younger sister. With their mother an alcoholic absorbed in her boyfriends, neither Jake nor Ellie receive any care or control from her. According to the child psychologist Ronald Rohner, unloved children become anxious and insecure; additionally, "anger and resentment can lead to them closing themselves off emotionally in an attempt to protect themselves from further hurt. This may make it hard for them to form relationships. They can suffer from low self-esteem and find it difficult to handle stressful situations" (Rohner 2012). This can be seen with Jake: too heavy a burden is placed on him because he is a boy and the oldest of the children. His mother transforms her sense of betrayal by her former husband into demands on her son: "Jake, promise me you'll always be responsible. That you'll never break your world. That you'll never be like him" (Rodrigues 2012, 154). Not surprisingly, as soon as Jake gets the opportunity, he leaves his mother and sister and moves to another state for college: he feels that "there is a part of me that just wanted out and away from all this confusion. From my on-and-off-again situation with Sarah. <...> From the drama of Ellie, her moodiness and urges to self-destruct" (Rodrigues 2012, 23). This decision is his way of escaping the problems of his family and relationships.

Once Jake is free from feeling responsible for mother and sister, he goes to another extreme, adopting a wild lifestyle and having casual sex, unable to form any meaningful relationships. Jake breaks his promise and does not go home when his distraught sister calls and

asks for help in the middle of the night. It turns out that Ellie dies that night. Although he has attempted to protect Ellie almost all her life, he fails to do that at the end, which haunts him throughout the novel. Significantly, the final strip of paper given in the novel records Ellie's memory of her family when her parents were not divorced and they were still happy:

> I like to remember trips to Cedar Point. The summer wind warm on our backs. Candied apples and neon-green bracelets glowing at night. And Jake on Dad's shoulders, too tired to walk, and Mom holding my hand. (Rodrigues 2012, 324)

Though in reality Ellie does commit suicide, Rodrigues depicts her as safe and happy with her family in this last strip of paper, as if she has finally found peace.

What makes Asher's and Rodrigues' stories stand out from other novels about teen suicide is that these writers show different perspectives on one person's suicide and its aftermath by using multiple focalisers. In *Thirteen Reasons Why*, Asher uses two teen focalisers: a girl, Hannah, and a boy, Clay, who not only goes to the same school as Hannah but has always been attracted to her. Through him readers are able to see the viewpoint of a teenager who has to come to terms with the suicide of his peer. Listening to her tapes and so discovering what really happened to Hannah, Clay is overwhelmed by ambiguous emotions. Most importantly, Asher does not divide Hannah's and Clay's narratives into separate chapters; Clay's reactions appear right after Hannah's narrative, which is given in italics:

> *So I put the dog in the garage, where he could yap all he wanted.*
> Wait, I remember it now. The last time I saw you.
> *The bass thumping down the block was impossible to shut out. But I tried.*
> I remember the last words we said to each other. (Asher 2012, 258; emphasis in original)

Often Clay responds to what Hannah says so that they seem to be having a dialogue, while in other cases, he adds information or simply reacts to what she has to say on the tapes.

34 Pieces of You uses the different perspectives of the three characters closely related to the girl who kills herself, Sarah, Jess and Jake: the story is divided into chapters that move among their points of view. For the most part, the narrative dwells on the lives of the characters before and after Ellie's overdosing on pills: Sarah and Ellie are best friends, Jessie is Sarah's younger sister and Ellie's secret girlfriend, while Jake is Ellie's older brother, who also used to date Sarah. All the characters are different in age: Sarah and Ellie are high-school students who are 16 years old, Jessie attends a similar school but is two years younger, and Jake has just become a college student. Although these age differences seem slight, they are significant for adolescents.

In *Thirteen Reasons Why*, Hannah Baker is depicted as a typical teenage girl who is new at school but, instead of getting a fresh start, hurtful rumours gradually destroy her. The central issue of the novel is the girl's suicide or, more specifically, its aftermath; however, as in

Rodrigues' novel, this narrative addresses a variety of other problems that contemporary teenagers often face. From the beginning of the novel, Hannah explains that she has become the victim of psychological bullying. In her tapes, her voice is strong, often sarcastic and painfully honest; for instance, in the very first tape she states: "*I know what all of you are thinking, Hannah Baker is a slut*" (Asher 2012, 23; emphasis in original). She uses the nasty word 'slut' to explain how she has been labelled. People tend to label others by a certain nationality, religion, ethnicity, gender, or some other group. As David B. Wooten explains that labelling and ridicule are "a mechanism through which adolescents exchange information about norms and values. Adolescents use labels and ridicule to ostracize, haze, or admonish peers who violate such norms. Targets and observers learn stereotypes about avoidance groups, consumption norms of inspirational groups, the use of possessions to communicate social linkages and achieve acceptance goals" (Wooten 2006, 8). In school, teenage girls aspire to be popular, have many friends, and be attractive to boys; however, none of them wish to be called a 'slut'. Hannah explains that the rumour is false and that she has been particularly hurt by Justin, who started spreading this rumour, is a boy she liked. According to Hannah, Justin was the first boy she kissed but he turned this into a sexual encounter, wishing to parade his masculinity among his male friends. The same boy appears twice on Hannah's tapes, since she holds him more responsible for her planned suicide as the rest of the people on the tapes. She is humiliated by being voted "*Best Ass in the Freshman Class*" (Asher 2012, 40; emphasis in original). Once everyone learns about the list, Hannah is sexually harassed by some of her fellow male classmates who now lose all respect for Hannah and treat her as available sexual prey: "*A cupped hand smacked my ass. And then, he said it. 'Best Ass in the Freshman Class, Wally. Standing right here in your store!' […] Did it hurt? No. But that doesn't matter, does it? Because the question is, did he have the right to do it?*" (Asher 2012, 47-48; emphasis in original). Since then, Hannah's bad reputation follows her and she finds she cannot do anything to change it.

However, though Hannah in *13 Reasons Why* and Ellie in *34 Pieces of Me* both choose to end their lives, the reasons for their drastic decisions differ: Hannah is a victim of severe bullying, whereas Ellie suffered her stepfather's sexual abuse. Nevertheless, the ways that both writers address such delicate issues are similar in that the readers know throughout the novels that these girls are on their way to destruction. No one around them notices this or provides the necessary support. Throughout the tapes, Hannah explains that the events in her life created a so-called snowball effect:

> *Put all of your heart into getting that first kiss...only to have it thrown in your face. Have the only two people truly trust turn against you. Have one of them use you to get back at*

the other, and then be accused of betrayal. Are you getting it now? Am I going to fast? <...> Let someone take away any sense of privacy or security you might still possess. Then have someone use that insecurity to satisfy their own twisted curiosity. (Asher 2012, 144-145; emphasis in original)

With each tape, Hannah reveals that not only was she bullied but also ridiculed and betrayed by those she saw as her friends.

In addition, she admits that her apparently secure middle-class American community allowed such abuse to happen to other girls. She speaks about witnessing how an unconscious girl is raped at a party that she attends. A boy puts a girl on a bed at a party after she has had too much to drink; he starts kissing her but stops because she is unresponsive. Instead of leaving the girl, he allows a friend to go into the bedroom and rape her:

So what do you think of him now, Justin? Do you hate him? Your friend that raped her, is he still your friend? Yes, but why? It must be denial. It has to be. <...>And you have no idea how much I wish I didn't ruin that girl's life. <...>No, you're right, you didn't rape her. And I didn't rape her. He did. But you...and I...we let it happen. (Asher 2007, 230-231; emphasis in original)

Asher does not give any explicit details, paying more attention on how the rape traumatises Hannah who witnesses everything while she is hiding in a closet. Her sense of culpability only grows when she understands that she is involved in another tragic event, and one of her schoolmate's death that same evening. In both cases, Hannah seems unable to do anything to help the girl or the killed boy: "*and I could have stopped it. If I could have talked. If I could have seen. If I could have thought about anything, I would have opened those doors and stopped it. But I didn't. And it doesn't matter what my excuse was*" (Asher 2012, 226-227; emphasis in original). Overwhelmed with her own problems, she is unable to stand up for her schoolmates, which pushes her even more to self-destruction. Rather than make Hannah a completely innocent victim of bullying at school, the novel involves her in other cruel acts as indifferent bystander. Again, Asher refuses to be simplistic.

It is now that earlier occasional thoughts about suicide become much more serious for Hannah. During her fellow student's funeral, she imagines her own funeral: "*More and more, in very general terms, I'd been thinking about my own death. Just the fact of dying. <...>I could picture life – school and everything else – continuing on without me*" (Asher 2012, 248; emphasis in original). Hannah speculates on how she could kill herself: "*But sometimes I took things further and wondered how I would do it. I would tuck myself into bed and wonder if there was anything in the house I could use. A gun? No. We never owned one. And I wouldn't know where to get one. What about hanging?*" (Asher 2012, 254; emphasis in original).

Asher does not make it easy for readers to feel sympathetic towards Hannah, especially

near the end of the novel when her actions become even more self-destructive. Once feeling completely desperate, she meets two of her schoolmates, a former female friend, and the boy who raped the unconscious girl during the party. While all of them are in a hot tub, the boy initiates sexual intercourse with Hannah and she does not stop him: "*Not once had I given in to the reputation you'd all set for me. <...> Until Bryce. So congratulations, Bryce. You're the one. I let my reputation catch up with me – I let my reputation become me – I let my reputation become me – with you. How does it feel?*" (Asher 2012, 264-265; emphasis in original). At this point, it seems that Hannah has already made up her mind about suicide because, as she puts it, she allows her reputation to become her identity. Instead of trying to escape the labelling that started with her boyfriend's lie she succumbs to it.

Nevertheless, Hannah still tries to seek help: "*I needed a change, just like they said, so I changed my appearance. The only thing I still had control over*" (Asher 2012, 163; emphasis in original). In one of her favourite classes, Hannah writes an anonymous note that she wishes to commit suicide as a way of getting attention. But no one takes this note seriously and most laugh at the anonymous writer. Hannah's teacher only responds by handing out a pamphlet about signs of suicide where a drastic change in appearance is one of items. Following this Hannah decides to cut off her hair, again a silent cry for help, as well as an attempt to regain some control over her body.

At the end of the novel, Hannah makes a final effort when she goes to the school counsellor:

> *I need it to stop.*
> *You need what to stop?*
> *I need everything to stop. People. Life. <...>*
> *Or two, and I'm not trying to be blunt here, Hannah, but you can move on.*
> *You mean, do nothing?* (Asher 2012, 276-278; emphasis in original)

Instead of really listening to Hannah's problems, the counsellor tells her to simply forget the gossip and the sex in the hot tub; his indifference offends and disappoints her. He seems to feel she is too immature and overly dramatic. Desperate, Hannah rushes from the counsellor's office, still hoping that he will call her back: "*I'm walking down the hall. His door is closed behind me. It's staying closed. He's not coming. He's letting me go. I think I've made myself very clear, but no one's stepping forward to stop me*" (Asher 2012, 279-280; emphasis in original). Throughout the tapes, and especially at the end of the final one, it is clear that Hannah does exhibit many signs of a troubled and even suicidal teenager, who attempts to seek help; however, the seriousness of her condition is repeatedly ignored, which quickens her decision.

Clay, the schoolmate who listens to her tapes after her death, at first sees Hannah's actions as selfish and questions her decisions: "Why would you want to mail out a bunch of tapes

blaming you in a suicide? You wouldn't. But Hanna wants us, those of us on the list, to hear what she has to say" (Asher 2012, 14). In this passage, Clay is attempting to defend her behaviour while at the same time accusing her.

Hannah herself feels destroyed and betrayed by almost everyone: "*A lot of you cared, just not enough. And that....that is what I needed to find out. [...] And I did find out*" (Asher 2012, 280; emphasis in original). She believes that she did everything she could to show that she was on the verge of suicide. However, the narrative structure, with another perspective provided, shows that though Hannah was aware of what was actually happening to her, people around her did not understand. Through Clay's narrative, readers are able to see that people were not aware about Hannah's intentions: "But I didn't know what you were going through, Hannah. [...] I would have helped her if she'd only let me. I would have helped her because I want her to be alive" (Asher 2012, 280). Clay's voice throughout the novel gives readers a more objective perspective, while Hannah's focalization often lacks complete reliability. In such a way, Asher does not glamorise his protagonist or her decision to kill herself. On the contrary, Hannah is often depicted as dark and too self-absorbed; readers tend to sympathise more with Clay. His reactions are similar to those of the readers; sometimes they may feel angry with her, or are not able to justify her actions, or accuse her of not allowing anyone to become close to her. Through Clay, Asher shows that such emotions are natural and necessary for a person to come to terms with a loss like this one.

Unlike Hannah, Clay has an excellent reputation at school: "*Everything I heard – and I mean everything! – was good. [...] Normally, when a person has a stellar image, another person's waiting in the wings to tear them apart. They're waiting for that one fatal flaw to expose itself. But not with Clay*" (Asher 2012, 198-199; emphasis in original). Hannah is attracted to him for his sincerity and honesty, as well as the fact that he is completely different from her, whereas Clay is attracted to her despite the nasty labelling: "And she was new to the school, so the rumours overshadowed everything else I knew about her" (Asher 2012, 25). Clay hears the gossip that Hannah is a loose girl; however, he still cares about her but, due to his shyness, he is not able to become closer to her. Moreover, her reputation does intimidate Clay, who is not as experienced and self-confident as he believes Hannah to be. In this sense he is like so many adolescents who realize too late that one of their fellow students has been suffering

Although in her tapes Hannah does not blame Clay for anything or treat him as a major figure in her decisions to kill herself, his role is crucial in the novel since through him the writer portrays how Hannah and her tapes can make an impact on another peer's life. Almost all the time, Clay feels guilty for not having been brave enough to help Hannah when he saw that she was suffering. Asher shows his transformation through two very similar events: when Hannah is

still alive, both attend a party and share their first kiss. Nevertheless, Hannah suddenly pushes Clay away and asks him to leave her alone. Clay reflects later: "Why did I listen? Why did I leave her there? She needed me and I knew that. But I was scared. Once again. I let myself get scared" (Asher 2012, 216-217). After listening to Hannah's tapes, Clay re-lives that moment again and feels responsible for leaving her alone at the party. Therefore, at the end of the novel, when Clay is placed in a similar situation with another girl whom he has realized is desperately unhappy, he takes action:

> I want to say something, to call her name, but my throat tightens. Part of me wants to ignore it. To turn around and keep myself busy, doing anything, till second period. But Skye's walking down the same stretch of hall where I watched Hannah slip away two weeks ago. On that day, Hannah disappeared into a crowd of students, allowing the tapes to say her good-bye. But I can still hear the footsteps of Skye Miller, sounding weaker and weaker the further she gets. And I start walking toward her. […] Two steps behind her, I say her name. "Skye". (Asher 2012, 286-287)

After seeing what his and other people's indifference did to Hannah, Clay reaches out to Skye Miller, a silent outsider at school, who is portrayed as a possible suicide risk.

In a manner similar to Asher's in making readers more distant from the girl who kills herself in *34 Pieces of You*, Rodrigues uses the reactions and viewpoints of other three characters, Sarah, Jess and Jake, all of whom were close to Ellie, the girl who kills herself, to show how they cope with the situation. Additionally, by more detailed presentation of these characters the narrative incorporates a variety of problems familiar to many contemporary teenagers.

Ellie is depicted as the most popular girl at school, with whom everyone wants to spend time yet she is also shown as an unpleasant person to others: "Ellie in mean-girl mode was a scary thing. I couldn't count the number of times I'd watched her reduce the school's most confident, popular girls to tears without a blink of her lifeless blue eyes" (Rodrigues 2012, 132). Overall, through different perspectives it becomes clear that Ellie takes advantage of people. Such aggressive behaviour helps her to conceal the real pain that she has been hiding from everyone except her brother. In one of his flashbacks, it is hinted that Ellie was sexually assaulted by one of her mother's husbands: "You know she bought me an extra-long robe to use when Sergeant's around? She tells me my shirts are revealing when they're not. <...> She blames me for what happened. I know she does" (Rodrigues 2012, 191). Although neither Jake nor Ellie ever speak about the assault directly, it is clear that Ellie suffers from posttraumatic stress disorder which appears in acts of self-harm, sexual promiscuity, drinking, drug abuse, and wild behaviour. Despite her apparent power over her peers, she feels powerless and constantly seeks for ways to re-establish her sense of control. Therefore, she starts to cut herself: "Ellie

licked her index finger and used the tip to blend a streak of blood into her skin. 'I don't know. You tell me.' 'There's time,' she said" (Rodrigues 2012, 44). Ellie cuts herself in order to numb the pain and anxiety she has long suffered from. Even Ellie's mother is mostly in denial about her daughter's trauma; although she takes her to a therapist, she never tries to make contact with her, mostly sharing her thoughts with her son Jake.

Each of the other main characters sees and remembers Ellie differently, showing that her behaviour varied with every person. Therefore, the readers do not get a sense of exact truth; as in real life, readers can only guess and create their own opinion about Ellie from clues and impressions.

Rodrigues juxtaposes Ellie and Sarah to highlight similarities and differences, something that becomes clear only at the end of the novel. At first both teenagers adopt a rebellious lifestyle by drinking, using drugs, disobeying their parents, and having sex with different partners. However, Ellie's erratic behaviour stems from the fact that she was sexually abused. Through multiple flashbacks, readers see that from the beginning Ellie's behaviour is not normal; nevertheless, none of her friends and, most importantly, family members attempt to help her. Unable to find help, she commits suicide by overdosing. As mentioned earlier, readers learn this through flashbacks to the narrative past. On the contrary, Sarah's story takes place in the narrative present; in a sense the novel gives Sarah a second chance by making her witness Ellie's death.

Readers first meet Sarah in a mental hospital, forced to attend meetings with her psychiatrist. Like Ellie at the beginning of the novel, Sarah does not wish to get any help and so is reluctant to accept any therapy. She falls back on sarcasm and lies as mechanisms of self-defence, letting readers see how she deceives herself:

> Concerned Therapist motions for me to continue. <...> This isn't true – this whole overdose business. At least not the way the doctors make it sound. <...> I don't have to explain anything to anyone. I just have to tell them enough to be released. *Stoic*. That's the word I keep putting in my mind. I hold it there like a ball suspended in mid-air. <...> 'Responsive' is a big word in the junior psych ward. If I stop acting responsive, I might never get out. So I'm careful to respond and to hide that I've been crying a lot. (Rodrigues 2012, 10, 11, 14)

Sarah ironically refers to her psychiatrist as a 'Concerned Therapist'; distancing herself from her by not even using her name. She brags that she knows what the therapist wants to hear from her, lying about her feelings and events. Unlike Ellie's, Sarah's parents are caring people who have done their best to deal with Sarah's troubling behaviour since she became friends with Ellie; after Ellie's death. Sarah always speaks fondly of her stepfather: "Glenn isn't my biological dad – no, that man abandoned me before I was born – but he's my real dad and so I call him Dad,

because he's always been there for me. When I look at him, I see all these pictures." (Rodrigues 2012, 14). Nevertheless, Sarah refuses to accept any help from her parents or her doctors, spending her days in bed doing absolutely nothing. She refuses to return to school and, once at home, continues acts of rebellion like searching for alcohol.

The novel emphasizes that Sarah has to come to terms with the death of her best friend and with the haunting feeling of guilt since she was with Ellie at the critical moment. When depression finally overwhelms her, Sarah attempts to kill herself. Ironically, Ellie's brother, Jake, who did not keep his promise to Ellie and so was not able to save her from an overdose, is on time to save Sarah: "I am covered in Sarah's blood. That's why I am sitting here, in the hospital's designated smoking area, talking to a detective. [...] The loop in my head grows stronger. It says, *If I need you, you'll come back for me*?" (Rodrigues 2012, 283, 286; emphasis in original). This passage shows what Jake is thinking after he finds Sarah with her wrists cut and rushes her to the hospital. The words in the italics are those said by Ellie to Jake when he left for college. He experiences Sarah's attempt as a re-playing of Ellie's suicide. Unlike Ellie, Sarah remains alive and is once again placed in a mental institution. This time Sarah is able to begin her recovery because she accepts the fact that she needs help. In a moving scene, she appeals to her therapist, about whom she has been so sarcastic:

> "Wait." The word propels me forward, my hand stretching out toward her. "Wait!" […]
> "Wait," I beg in a feeble voice. "Wait." I hate myself for sounding weak, but I don't try to stop the words from falling. "Wait." Tears slide down my cheeks. I push myself farther off the bed. "Wait." Because the truth is: I don't know if she can help me, but I want to let her try. (Rodrigues 2012, 299-300)

Additionally, at the end of the novel, Sarah learns the crucial truth about how Ellie was raped, whom helps her to come to terms with her own guilt:

> 'Jake, I know about Ellie, about what happened to her. [...] This whole time I've been going over that night. [...] You know, just going in circles, and I felt this guilt. This horrible guilt, like if I had just, I don't know, been a better friend or a better person, I could have prevented it. But...now....Why didn't she tell me? [....] He's quiet for a while, but finally he says, 'I've never told anyone. Ellie and I – even we barely talked about it after it happened, after Mom got rid of him. (Rodrigues 2012, 303)

Although Sarah still feels guilty, knowing the full story helps her to comprehend Ellie's behaviour and her decision to kill herself.

Although the presentation of Ellie in the novel makes it impossible for readers to always empathise with her, she shows a gentler side with Sarah's younger sister, Jess. Interestingly, through Jess' perspective, readers learn some things about Ellie that are not known to Sarah or Jake, since Jess' memories come from outside of the older teens' circle. In the novel, Jess mainly acts as a structurally necessary device, like Clay in Asher's novel, a secondary character

who observes the life of the protagonists and knows many of their secrets: "Sarah is the reactive type. Meg is the silly type. Mattie is the sweet and cuddly type. I'm the thoughtful type" (Rodrigues 2012, 29). Both Jess and Clay are what the novelist Henry James identified as "friends of the reader", he called certain characters in his novels "ficelles, characters whose main reason for existence is to give the reader in dramatic form the kind of help he needs if he is to grasp the story" (James in Booth 1983, 102-103).

The first chapter of the novel is told from the perspective of Jess on the night of a bizarre scene in which Ellie gobbles pills and encourages Sarah to do the same: this kills Ellie and makes Sarah ill. It is immediately clear that Jess knows more than her parents about Sarah. The chapter does not give many details about the characters and there is a good deal of confusion about exactly what has happened. Later in the novel, it turns out that Jess, though younger than the others, has a secret relationship with Ellie: "Then, once again, she pressed her mouth to mine. This time her lips were firmer, her tongue soft and wet. I closed my eyes, and even though I knew it was wrong, I let her kiss me for a long time" (Rodrigues 2012, 135). The text does not dwell much on whether Jessie considers herself homosexual; however, it is soon clear that Ellie is not serious about their relationship: "I wanted answers that I knew only Ellie could give, and I wanted to tell her she was an awful person for misleading me and betraying Sarah" (Rodrigues 2012, 4).

Although most of the characters, including Ellie, in the novel are not particularly likable, Jess is one of the exceptions because she is not involved in self-destructive behaviour and is the only one who really cares about her sister's well-being after Ellie's death, while the others are absorbed in their own problems. Jess even attempts to pay tribute in a sense to Ellie: she cleans her room from vomit: "When I finished cleaning Ellie's room, I emptied the bucket of water in the backyard and put away my supplies. Then I lit her favourite vanilla candle and placed it on the centre of her dresser" (Rodrigues 2012, 244). Although Ellie's death and her betrayal have strongly affected Jess, she does not admit it, but Ellie's death has an impact on Jess' eating disorder: "then I told the truth: 'My diet's simple, so simple you don't even have to write it down. Just throw up after most meals, and sometimes don't eat at all" (Rodrigues 2012, 30). As is usual in such cases, the girl denies that she is ill: "Besides, it's no big deal. I'm okay. I don't have a problem" (Rodrigues 2012, 31); Jess repeats this as if trying to prove that to herself. Everyone in her family is focusing on her older sister Sarah's mental health after Ellie's death so that nobody notices that Jess has lost weight and suffers from bulimia.

Although Jake and Jess have to come to terms with feelings of guilt about Ellie's death, it is Sarah, with whom Ellie was the closest, who undergoes the most severe post-traumatic stress disorder. Sarah almost died together with Ellie: "It's easy to scare people once they've heard a

rumour that you've killed your best friend" (Rodrigues 2012, 34). Sarah and Ellie were friends for five years; before that, Sarah was a quiet, unpopular girl, she is the contrary to Ellie, the most popular teenager at school. Nevertheless, things change for Sarah since both girls become inseparable: "Before she met Ellie and became popular, Sarah spent hours hiding behind her bed, building a glamour-doll city" (Rodrigues 2012, 66). Their relationship is shown as mutually destructive since their activities include drugs, sex and heavy drinking: "I was still completely buzzed from earlier, when Ellie had convinced me to dress up like a Mad Men character – our hair in French twists, Jackie O sunglasses on our faces – and drink martini after martini while we danced to some Motown records" (Rodrigues 2012, 144-145). Nevertheless, the relationship is very important for the girls since they find a degree of necessary support within the other. Sarah does notice Ellie's destructive and even cruel behaviour, which she sometimes questions: "Tears streamed down my face as the emotions settled across hers. And just for a minute, she seemed like that same little girl I met when we were twelve. But seconds later, she raised her drink, and I saw the grown-up Ellie, the one I secretly wanted to leave behind" (Rodrigues 2012, 148). Sarah understands that something is wrong with Ellie; however, she never confronts her or makes any attempt to stop her from self-destruction. Instead, Sarah follows Ellie's lead until both girls take too many tablets and Ellie dies.

To some extent, both Asher and Rodrigues give in to the general notion that teen fiction should end happily. Although their central characters die, secondary ones are depicted as having suffered yet learned from this experience, especially Clay in Asher's novel and Jess in Rodrigues'. Nonetheless, the novels are much bleaker and more psychologically brutal than is typical in teen fiction about death or suicide. This explains their resonance among Anglo-American readers and a popularity that led *Alma Littera* to choose them for translation by publishing two books on teen suicide within two years. As the leading publisher of literature *Alma Littera* shows readiness to fill in gaps in the Lithuanian adolescent market.

6.3 Translation as a Form of Resistance to English Language Norms in the Lithuanian Versions of Young Adult Novels: the Examples of the Translation of Taboo Language

In this dissertation the emphasis has been on a unilateral movement of literary texts and their generic and thematic features from Anglo-American models to novels for young adult readers being published in Lithuania today, both those written in Lithuanian and others, a larger number, translated from English. However, it is an error to assume that are recipient system is completely passive in this kind of exchange. Lithuanian translators tend to render as many features and elements from the source texts as possible, but this still leaves room for some adaptation that makes the final products more Lithuanian. According to Toury's theory, translator plays social

and cultural roles, meaning that he or she does not operate in a vacuum, but rather "fulfils a function allotted by a community, which means that translation as cultural activity is governed by certain constraints, or norms" (Toury 1995, 53). In order to meet the norms of the particular society in an appropriate way, translators not only have to be well acquainted with the relevant language norms, but also to be able to apply them in the translation.

This part of the dissertation takes an element in English young adult fiction today, its imitation of real teen language, including the use of taboo and vulgar language, and considers how Lithuanian translators render this. After a review of translation strategies used in such cases in Sub-section 6.3.1, the next subsection 6.3.2 surveys how the Lithuanian translators Gabija Ryškuvienė and Rūta Razmaitė deal with vulgarisms and taboo language, especially those referring to sexual activity, in their versions of specific novels: Cecily von Ziegesar's *Gossip Girl* and Melvin Burgess' *Doing It*. This analysis shows that Lithuanian norms have not been fully replaced by Western ones in respect to taboo language.

6.3.1 Typical Translation Strategies in Dealing with Taboo and Vulgar Language

Translation allows the effect of new repertoires and norms entering a literary system to be moderated by the target culture. Tiina Puurtinen notes that "translated literature may have norms of its own which are not identical to those of original target-language literature. Translations tend to be conventional, even conservative in some cultures" (Puurtinen 1992, 85). Gideon Toury discusses the same question, stating that "the notion of norms assumes that the translator is essentially engaged in a decision making process […] the translator fulfils a function specified by the community and has to do so in a way that is considered appropriate in the community" (Toury 1995, 54). In order to find "appropriate" way, translators have to be sensitive to language norms in their own society and prepared to be flexible in using the target language. Generally, using a variety of strategies helps to transfer the text into the target language without violating the norms of their own cultures while, at the same time, retaining as much as possible of the original meaning. Toury comments that "at any rate, translators performing under different conditions often adopt different strategies and ultimately come up with markedly different products" (Toury 2000, 39). Similarly, Mona Baker emphasises that "the translator is always engaged in a decision-making process" (Baker 2009, 185).

Finally, Toury emphasizes that translators' decisions are never fully consistent, as they may change when they encounter a particular problem. As Toury notes, "consistency in translation lies somewhere in the middle between total randomness and absolute regularity and can only be determined at the conclusion of studying the piece and not at the onset" (Toury

1995, 65-66). The reasons for choosing a particular work to translate as well as the strategies applied by translators are often conditioned by social rules and expectations.

In terms of translation strategies, Dorothy Kenny states that "translators agree that equivalence is a central concept in translation theory" (Kenny 1998, 80). She offers the following definition of this term: "translation equivalence occurs when source text and target text are relatable to at least some of the same features of this extra linguistic reality, that is when source text and target text have approximately the same referents" (Kenny 1998, 81). A further useful distinction is presented by Kirsten Malmkjaer: she suggests that the concepts of full and partial translations, where "in a full translation every part of the source language text is replaced by target language material and in a partial translation some parts of the source language text are left untranslated, they are simply transferred into the target language text" (Malmkjaer 2005, 21). When dealing with the translation of taboo language translation, Butkuvienė also mentions the strategy of **direct transfer** that "takes place when words from the source text are translated directly and unchanged into the target text" (Butkuvienė 2015, 51); this is a kind of equivalence.

Problems that translators have achieving equivalence are commented by more than one specialist. For example, Catford notes that "since there are also other factors, such as textual, cultural and situational aspects, they should also be taken into consideration when translating" (Malmkjaer 2005, 20). Similarly, Susan Bassnett argues that it is not easy to reach equivalence between two languages: "equivalence in translation should not be approached as a search for sameness, since sameness cannot even exist between TL versions of the same text, let alone between the SL and the TL version" (Bassnett 1998, 124). Therefore, different translation strategies have to be used when translators deal with the issue of non-equivalence.

When dealing with taboo and vulgar language, translators also apply **softening** or **synonyms**. Softening is a term used by the Latvian specialist, Ieva Zauberga in writing about the present situation in Latvia: "translators often use softening strategy to cope with strong language in the source language; sometimes fewer words are needed to achieve the same effect" (Zauberga 1994, 141). Overall, the employment of softening results in a partial loss of the effect of vulgarity or rudeness which is presented in the source text, though, it allows some of the source meaning to be transmitted. A linguistic and translation specialist, Said Shiyab, notes that "synonymy is a non-problematic issue in translation, because there are either synonyms with meanings that are completely identical and hence easy to deal with, or there are non-synonyms, in which case they can be treated as just different words" (Shiyab 2007,1). In addition, he argues that synonymy does not mean sameness and distinguishes two types of synonymy, as complete and partial (Shiyab 2007). The use of synonyms helps the translators to make their literary

translations less repetitive, although it weakens the original writer's choice of repetition as a stylistic device.

Another means of reducing the rudeness of swearwords and offensive language from the original text is to use **omission** as a strategy. Eirlys E. Davies suggests that there may be different reasons that translators adopt this particular strategy (Davies 2003, 79). Wanlong Gao, who also discusses the strategy of omission, comments that the main reasons for choosing it include "the acceptance of readers, current social, political or historical conditions, or the verbosity and untranslatability of the original text" (Gao 2003, 232). Karolina Butkuvienė asserts that "omission is often neglected in discussions of translations strategies because of the negative connotations of the term and the value given to the fidelity of a translation. However [...] translators occasionally resort to this strategy as one which helps to solve many problems during the translation process" (Butkuvienė 2015, 52).

Very often, omission is not as extreme as it sounds, as its use in one part of a text is often accompanied by **stylistic compensation** in another. Keith Harvey defines compensation as "making up for the loss of a source text effect by recreating a similar effect in the target text language" (Harvey 2001, 37). In addition, Ian Higgins claims that "compensation is considered in respect of translating polysemy, hyponymy, pun, cultural allusion, quotation and texts which are sometimes said to be rendered virtually untranslatable by their combination of formal convention and cultural presupposition" (Higgins 2008).

The strategy of **generalization** refers to a translator's choice of more general or neutral terms. Lucia V. Aranda explains that generalization is "also called simplification [that is used] in the TL because of loss of linguistic or cultural meaning" (Aranda 2007, 17). Generally, there are many strategies which can help translators to deal with taboo language in literary texts; translators choose those that seem the most appropriate for a particular point in the text, keeping in mind both the function of the taboo word and the norms of the target culture.

6.3.2 The Lithuanian Translations of Swearwords, Sexual Activities and Vulgarities in Melvin Burgess' Novel *Doing It* and Cecily von Ziegesar's Series *Gossip Girl*

The specific choices of translation issues and texts is not accidental. Lithuanian fiction does not have the same tradition of including swearwords and explicit references to sexual activities that has developed in the last half-century in English-language fiction. Therefore, for Lithuanian translators this kind of language presents a conflict with established norms. Further, the two novels that have been selected are those among others Anglo-American ones analysed that have many taboo words. In this sub-section first the reasons given by specialists for the frequent use

of taboo words by teenagers is presented, and then the way in which selected translation examples of English young adult novels render such language is examined.

Young people use a good deal of slang to express themselves within their peer groups, words, and expressions which are understood by specific teen groups, and form a group language. Adolescent slang is often used to express emotions or to discuss such subjects as drugs, drunkenness, sexual organs and sexual activities, as Teresa Labov states:

> Adolescents today, as ever, have terms by which they express approval (cool) or disapproval (bummer, it stinks); classify others (jocks, punks, or druggies); characterize events as enjoyable or boring, success or failures; describe their coming or goings; and distinguishing whether someone is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or both. (Labov 1992, 334)

Teenagers have developed such terms not merely to express their feelings, but also to distinguish themselves from the adults around them. They feel more comfortable expressing their emotions in their own language, as this creates a private linguistic world. Therefore, slang becomes fashionable among teenagers; in addition, they get accustomed to using it. Slang becomes an inevitable part of the life of teenagers and helps them to find friends within their school world. Teenagers create their codes for particular terms, actions or words referring to sex, different bodily functions and love, which they feel embarrassed to discuss in the more formal language they associate with the adult world. Teenage slang, according to Christina Berton,

> is a totally normal part of the growing up process and something that parents should try to accept. As your daughter grows, she will be constantly trying to find ways to define her own personality and mark out her independence. Naturally, part of this is about setting herself apart from her parents, and having a 'private' language between her and her friends is one way of doing this. (Berton 2015)

Similarly, Lilian Rönnqvist suggests that "teenagers use slang words for a couple of reasons: firstly, slang helps bonding with friends; secondly, using slang makes them feel more comfortable while talking about particular topics" (Rönnqvist 2007). Colleen Gengler explains that "the importance of friends to teenagers is well known. Teens often describe their best friends as the ones who understand exactly how they feel and will stick with them no matter what" (Gengler 2007). Since teenagers often have trouble finding friends, so that discovering something in common with other people helps the process; in such cases slang is usually helpful. In *Slang and Sociability: In-group Language among College Students*, Connie C. Eble also argues that "standards of behaviour that one does or does not live up to are implied, as more than one-third of the slang items can be classified as judgements of acceptance or rejection" (Eble 1996, 52). The type of language used by teenagers shows they belong in a particular group.

In addition to slang, teenage language is often full of swearwords, which ordinarily are considered to be offensive, rude, insulting and inappropriate; normally people use swearwords and offensive language to express strong emotions and attitudes such as aggression, anger, surprise or frustration. Maria Jesus Fernandez states that "swearing is, if not a universal feature of human communication, at least common to most societies and civilizations. In most languages, swearing is mainly related to personal and bodily functions, sex or religion" (Fernandez 2007). In addition, Maria Sidiropoulou explains that "sociology has associated taboo language with class, generation and gender" (Sidiropoulou 2005, 183), while Andersson and Trudgill state that "taboo language or swearing is often associated with toughness and strength, properties that are highly valued among many people" (Andersson and Trudgill 1990, 9). This can be noticed while analyzing teenagers' speech, where different kinds of swearwords and offensive language are linked to desirable characteristics. Current analysis provide different reasons why many teenagers swear so much: for example, Gina Roberts points out that "many young people resort to swearing as a means to try to demonstrate their level of maturity or they swear because it is part of the language of their school yard" (Roberts 1999). She indicates that some teenagers, especially boys, swear because they wish to seem manly (Roberts 1999). The other instances in which teenagers tend to swear coincide with general adult patterns of use: they swear when they wish to express emotions such as anger, dissatisfaction or excitement.

According to Paul Kerswill, "words are contagious, they can be spread by music and Facebook and TV" (Kerswill 2010); in this way today, with the help of media and modern technologies, teenagers all over the world cab become familiar with taboo language can also be found in contemporary young adult fiction, as Natalie Haney Tilghman notes, "language is paramount to making a young voice believable in young adult literature" (Tilghman 2011). In order for fictional characters to speak a language to that of contemporary teenagers, writers need to include some examples of fashionable slang or taboo language in their speech.

A useful study was carried out by researchers from Brigham Young University who analysed profanity in forty teen novels on the *New York Times'* best-seller list of children's books published in 2008 (Sifferlin 2012). Before conducting the analysis, the researchers rather vaguely defined profanity "as any language considered obscene, offensive, taboo or vulgar by the American public. They categorized profanities into five groups" (Sifferlin 2012):

1. The Seven Dirty Words: Words the Federal Communications Commission considers unspeakable for broadcast television.
2. Sexual Words: Words describing body parts or sexual behaviour in a coarse way.
3. Excretory Words: Words that have direct or literal reference to human waste.
4. Strong Others: Words defined as strong based on their level of offensiveness or "tabooness."

5. Mild Others: Words that are mild based on their level of offensiveness or "tabooness." (Sifferlin 2012)

Although these categories are vague, it is still interesting that this research shows that "on average, teen novels contain 38 instances of profanity, which translates to nearly seven curse words per hour of reading. Of the 40 books in the study, 88% contained at least one bad word" (Sifferlin 2012). The research includes well-known novels for young adults that are popular not only among American teenagers but have also been translated into different languages and are successful in foreign teen novels. For example, the famous *Gossip Girl* series was among the novels analysed; the initial text contains "50 instances of the 'F-word'" (Sifferlin 2012).

As the tone of this study shows, the appearance of sensitive language in young adult literature tends to be criticized by adults. To explain this, Shelley Stoehr suggests that teenagers have always been more interested in actions and speech which they can easily relate to (Stoehr 2012). On the other hand, Sarah Coyne argues that, although teenagers meet profanity in different media such as television, films and the internet, written literature has had a different value system: "we hold books to a higher standard compared to other forms of media" (Coyne in Koebler 2012). In addition, fiction that includes profane language causes a problem when a translation has to be made for a more conservative culture. Karolina Butkuvienė notes that "what is assumed to be inappropriate use of language in one culture is not necessarily condemned in another" (Butkuvienė 2015, 35), while the opposite is also frequently the case.

In *Young Adult Literature in the 21st Century* (2009), Pam B. Cole distinguishes fifteen characteristics of quality in language of contemporary young adult literature, with "the voice of a young adult" being among these (Cole 2009, 49). According to Cole, "a good novel captures the language of the characters, which includes dialect, word choice, and cultural expressions. It stands to reason that some characters may use profanity, racist language, or otherwise offensive expressions" (Cole 2009, 63). She continues by saying that teenage readers have to be able to easily distinguish who is speaking in a passage so that the use of taboo words may be part of characterization (Cole 2009, 63). In addition, teenagers in real life tend to use more casual and informal language compared to adults. To illustrate this idea, in "Finding a Voice: First Person Narration in Young Adult Literature and Coming-of-Age Adult Fiction", Natalie Haney Tilghman gives a useful example, citing a passage from Margo Rabb's young adult novel *Cures for Heartbreak* (2007):

> I still wasn't used to saying the word dead out loud. I felt half disgusted and half fascinated by the word, as if it was a new, forbidden curse: dead, the real and unreal sound of it, absorbing and repelling, like a horror movie. Night of the Living Dead. The Dead Return. My father used the euphemisms—she's gone, she passed away—which my sister

pointed out with her usual delicacy sounded like Excuse me, I just passed wind. "Say fart, Dad," she'd demand. (Tilghman 2011, 66)

As Tilghman points out, the language used in the passage, voiced by the narrator, helps readers to distinguish the age of the characters: the father speaks in a more polite and formal language, using euphemisms instead of the actual word 'death' when referring to that of his wife, whereas his teenage daughters prefer to use more straightforward words (Tilghman 2011). The language used by characters in young adult novels helps young readers to relate to them more easily, mainly because they speak versions of the real-life language that teenagers use. Therefore, in novels, writers often include the contemporary slang, colloquial, and taboo language that is common among young adults in order to create characters that are both realistic and promote identification.

Although slang and taboo language have become widespread in many Western young adult novels, in more conservative cultures, like that of Lithuania, they remain uncommon in literature in general and especially when it comes to young adult fiction. This linguistic restriction is gradually weakening since today's young adult literary market in Lithuania is dominated by translations from English, in which language standards are less strict. Theoretically, all taboo language could be censored in Lithuanian translations, but this is not done and not likely to be done. In the Soviet period censorship of translations took place mainly at the stage of what Gideon Toury calls preliminary norms, the decision to translate a text or not, and whether to translate it directly or through another language (Toury 1995, 277). Otherwise, Lithuanian translators tend to render the whole text, if possible. For example, when Povilas Gasiulis translated J.D. Salinger's *Cather in the Rye* in 1966, he did not censor most of taboo language that the teen narrator uses, only occasionally softening or omitting it. One may add that in Lithuania today, although there is a Lithuanian Language Commission that examines and frequently comments a language use in the media, it does not supervise the translation of foreign novels. In system theory one would say that there is no institution to regulate literary translation.

Because there is a lack of original young adult novels, publishers understand that translations of popular young adult series can fill this niche and make a profit for them. Even-Zohar's literary polysystem theory can be used to illustrate the situation. According to him, in the repertoire some elements are primary while others are secondary, and may also be seen as conservative or innovative. In a conservative repertoire, each product will be highly predictable, while an innovative repertoire includes new elements, which can change the product and with time may become primary (Even-Zohar 1990, 68). This is what is happening in the Lithuanian case of young adult literature: due to the lack of enough source-language teen literature, publishers import foreign novels that introduce not only new topics and a specific type of

language in young adult books but also encourage the production of a different kind of Lithuanian literature for teens.

Nevertheless, when it comes to translating young adult fiction, language can become one of the major challenges for translators since they need to convey the original meaning of the source text but at the same time they are constrained by cultural norms. Slang and swearwords often create problems for Lithuanian translators, mainly because, when it comes to young adult literature, Lithuania is still a more conservative country compared with other Western societies. Therefore, a Lithuanian translator is more likely to soften some vulgar words by replacing them with more general, neutral words or omitting them entirely in the target text in order to suit cultural norms.

However, Toury emphasises that norms change with time and culture, meaning that they should always be evaluated in their socio-historical context. He adds that "norms are basically unstable" (Toury 1995, 54-62) and have tendency to disappear or appear over time. Therefore, it is useful to look at how such norms affect the choice of Lithuanian translators dealing with slang and taboo language, as this shows what norms exist in Lithuanian culture today. In terms of translation of Western novels and especially the emergence of young adult fiction as a significant part of the Lithuanian-language literature sold in bookstores and read by teenagers, this phenomenon has developed suddenly from about 2000. It is possible that translators of Anglo-American teen fiction have moved away from conservatism.

In her doctoral dissertation *The Translation of Adolescent Language from English into Lithuanian: the Case of Fiction for Young Adults* (2015), Karolina Butkuvienė analyses the translations from English into Lithuanian of five contemporary young adult novels, including Burgess' *Doing It* and Ziegesar's *Gossip Girl*. She explains that, "according to the quantitative analysis of the translation of selected slang items from English to Lithuanian, it may be seen that, out of a total of 76 examples of general slang, 41 cases are retained in the Lithuanian translations by finding equivalents for the slang words of the source text" (Butkuvienė 2015, 58). Therefore, equivalence is not found for 35 or nearly half of the items. In addition, Butkuvienė looks at the translation of swearwords and vulgarisms into Lithuanian; the results show that out of a total of 240 examples of swearwords and vulgarisms, "141 (58%) cases are translated by finding appropriate swear word equivalents in the target culture" (Butkuvienė 2015, 74). Again, her analysis demonstrates that in 42% of cases, offensive language is replaced, softened or even omitted (Butkuvienė 2015, 74). These findings suggest that Lithuanian translators are careful about taboo language and attempt to resort to a more standard language in literature, as is more common in Lithuanian literature. Still, applying Even-Zohar's theory, since Butkuvienė's findings indicate that translators do not fully omit slang and vulgarisms while

translating contemporary young adult fiction into Lithuanian, this shows that an innovative repertoire has introduced new elements into its products for Lithuanian teens.

This part of the dissertation looks at the use of slang and swearwords and their translation into Lithuanian in two contemporary young adult novels *Gossip Girl* by Cecily von Ziegesar and *Doing It* by Melvin Burgess. The basic translation issue is an intercultural one; as Barbara Schwarz notes: "although more and more concepts are shared and understood between different cultures, there are still many terms and expressions which reflect the morals and values of a particular culture and have no true equivalent in the target language" (Schwarz 1999). Some cultures allow fairly sensitive topics to be discussed openly in literary texts, while others avoid this and also prefer not to use slang in literary prose, with the same rules applying to language in young adult literature. For this reason it was not easy for the two translators to translate these novels so that they would suit Lithuanian norms and still, like the originals, appeal to teenage readers. Indeed, though the translations of the novels certainly provide readable texts for teenagers, both versions are still adapted to the current cultural norms referring to the degree that slang and swearwords can be allowed in Lithuanian literature. Since people from different cultures react to swearing in different ways, even when the original text contains a good deal of strong language, this does not necessarily mean that the translation should as well. In this case, although two novels are different in tone, with swearing much more common and cruder in *Doing It* than in the first *Gossip Girl* novel, the two Lithuanian translators often use similar strategies when dealing with swearwords. It should be noted that Ziegesar's novel is mostly aimed at teen girls, whereas Burgess's novel mostly written from boys' perspective. Although Burgess' *Doing It* contains more sexual slang and swearwords than *Gossip Girl,* there is a good deal of slang and swearing in the latter novel as well. Dale Cressman's assertion that "although males may use profanity with greater frequency, women are using coarse language more than ever before" (Cressman 2009, 120) is supported in these contemporary novels.

This part of the dissertation discusses the way in which Gabija Ryškuvienė and Rūta Razmaitė frequently use alternatives to equivalent translations of slang and taboo language in their Lithuanian versions of *Gossip Girl* and *Doing It*. The first examples are from *Gossip Girl*.

Table 1. Translation of examples of general slang in Liežuvautoja

Cecily von Ziegesar, Gossip Girl (2003)		Gabija Ryškuvienė, Liežuvautoja (2006)
1.	She picked up her drink and clinked glasses with Serena. "**To cool-ass chicks**," she said, knowing it sounded seriously gay, but **not really giving a shit**. (176)	Ji paėmė savo taurę ir susidaužė su Serena. -**Už kietas panas**, - pasakė puikiai suprasdama, kad tai skamba kaip lesbiečių šūkis, bet **jai buvo nusispjauti**. (202)
2.	**Fuck 'em**. Totally. You don't need them. You're like, **the coolest chick** in the Western **Hemisphere**. (166)	-**Tegul jie eina velniop**. Ir negrįžta. Tau jų nereikia. **Esi kiečiausia** Vakarų **Hempšyro pana**. (191)

3.	Blair's new plan was **to knock back a few drinks** with Serena at the Tribeca Star, leave early, go home, fill her room with candles, take a bath, and wait for Nate to come. Even the best-bred girls resort to **cheesy** things like burning CD mixes when they're losing their virginity. (107)	Bleir naujasis planas buvo toks: **pasiurbčioti porą kokteilių** su Serena „Tribeka Star" bare, anksti išeiti, parvažiuoti namo, apstatyti kambarį žvakėmis, nusimaudyti ir laukti ateinančio Neito. Nutarusios prarasti nekaltybę, net aukštuomenės merginos kartais griebiasi tokių **nemadingų** priemonių kaip kompaktinės plokštelės. (125)
4.	S may be **a ho**, but she has excellent taste. (145)	S gal ir **pasileidusi**, bet jos skonis puikus. (167)

In these four examples, female characters and their problems are the centre of attention. In the first instance, the action takes place in a bar where Vanessa Abrams, who is a filmmaker and the complete opposite of most of her fashion-obsessed upper-class classmates, attempts to bond with Serena, the most popular and beautiful girl in their school. Vanessa not only feels intimidated by Serena but also by her own sister, Ruby, who plays in a band and is able to provide everyone with free drinks in the bar, which makes Vanessa even more nervous. She tries not show this to Serena by giving an odd cheer, "to cool-ass chicks", while knowing full that this does not make her "cool" or confident at all. Ryškuvienė translates the phrase as "už kietas panas" which is a partial equivalent in Lithuanian, since she omits the most vulgar word, "ass". The swearword "ass" is used deliberately by Vanessa to emphasize her "coolness", though in fact it reveals her awkwardness, something which is lost in the Lithuanian translation. Ryškuvienė uses a similar equivalent in Example 2, in which she translates "coolest chick" as "kiečiausia pana"; both of these words are considered slang in Lithuanian and are commonly used by Lithuanian teenagers. In both of these cases, Ryškuvienė manages to convey the slang in the Lithuanian text; however, when it comes to vulgarities such as "ass", "giving a shit", "fuck 'em", Ryškuvienė tends to omit these or to substitute a weaker equivalent. For instance, Ryškuvienė translates "not giving a shit" as "nusispjauti" (back translation: to spit), which conveys a similar sense but a weaker flavour of vulgarity in Lithuanian.

In Example 3, Blair is the main focaliser: she is finally ready to have sex for the first time with her boyfriend Nate and has planned everything for their special night. First, in order to feel more courageous before sleeping with him, she plans to "knock back" some drinks in a bar. In English, "knock back a drink" is an informal slangy expression which means "to drink up in one draft" (*Oxford Dictionary of Slang*). Meanwhile, Ryškuvienė translates this expression as "pasiurbčioti kelis kokteilius" (back translation: to sip a few cocktails), which gives a more lady-like impression of what Blair will be doing and does not convey the urge of the situation and Blair's attempt to feel in control of the situation. In the same passage, Blair indicates that she plans some "cheesy" background effects for special evening, such as making a mix tape of

romantic songs. The *Merriam Webster Dictionary* defines "cheesy" as an informal word meaning something "cheap, unpleasant, or blatantly inauthentic" (*Oxford Dictionary of Slang*). Here Ryškuvienė uses a more formal and general word, "nemadingas" (back translation: out of fashion), instead of a Lithuanian slang equivalent.

Example 4 depicts the *Gossip Girl* blogger who follows the lives of the main characters then posts all the details online: she is answering a question about Serena. A boy wonders whether a drunken Serena would have sex with him, if he asked her. The blogger confirms that Serena is known for her wild behaviour and calls her "a ho" which is a short informal form of the word "whore". Ryškuvienė translates it with a derogatory equivalent in Lithuanian, calling Serena "pasileidusi" (back translation: loose). Although the Lithuanian equivalent is commonly used by teens when referring to girls of free sexual behaviour such as Serena in *Gossip Girl*, it is less offensive than the word used in the source text, as this means a prostitute, someone who takes money for sex.

Sexual slang is also common in *Doing It*, with words that refer to the sexual part of male and female bodies.

Table 2. Translation of examples of sexual slang in Darant Tai

	Melvin Burgess, *Doing It* (2003)	**Rūta Razmaitė, *Darant Tai* (2004)**
1.	And now I am, watching her long fingers pop open the top button on her jeans for me while I **stroke her tits** in the rhododendron bushes down Crab Lane on the way home, and it makes me **feel so fucking good**. (29)	Ir štai dabar žiūriu, kaip jos ilgi pirštai dėl manęs prasega savo džinsų sagą, o aš rododendrų krūmuose **glamonėju jos krūtis**. Krab Leinas pakeliui į namus ir **tai velniškai nuostabu**.(33)
2.	There was a pause while Dino presumably kissed her. Then a bit more noise. 'I said, No.' '**Go on. Feel yer tits.**'(198)	Stojo tyla, Dinas tikriausiai ją pabučiavo. Paskui kilo triukšmas. -Pasakiau NE. -**Paliesk savo krūtis**.(184)
3.	She was over by the work surface putting on the plastic gloves. Plastic gloves? I'd washed it. **My knob is spotless**. She'd pulled the gloves off and went to the sink to wash her hands. What did she think she was handling? (305)	Ji prie stalo movėsi gumines pirštines. Gumines pirštines? Aš juk jį nusiploviau. **Mano penis švarutėlis.** Ji nusimovė pirštines ir nuėjo prie kriauklės nusiplauti rankų. Ką, jos manymu, ji čiupinėjo?(279)
4.	'Is it in a private place?' 'Um,' I agreed. 'Testicles?' 'Nun.' I couldn't work it out for a minute, but then it occurred to me; she thought **I might have cancer of the arse as well**. (304)	-Jis intymioje vietoje? -Mhm, - prisipažinau. -Sėklidėse? Aš linktelėjau, o mano smegenys karštligiškai dirbo. Akimirką nieko nesupratau, paskui man dingtelėjo – **ji pamanė, kad man vėžys subinėj**. (279)

Burgess' novel *Doing It* centres on teenage boys and their daily anxieties so that the novel contains significantly more examples of sexual slang since sex and their genitals are constantly on boys' minds. In Example 1, Dino describes how Jackie and he meet on their way home; they kiss and caress each other in the rhododendron bushes. Dino is very happy that he finally can do this with Jackie, whom he has desired for a very long time. Burgess uses slang in this text because the situation is told from Dino's perspective, whereas Razmaitė avoids slang, preferring a more formal word for "tits", which she translates as "krūtis". She also softens Dino's phrase about feeling "so fucking good" to "velniškai nuostabu", which is expressive but not taboo language. The same occurs in Example 2, in which Razmaitė employs the same term "krūtis" to translate the slang word "tits". Although in the second example the story is being told from Jackie's perspective, she is repeating Dino's words: "Go on. Feel yer tits". Burgess imitates the boy's colloquial talk both with "yer" rather than "your" and with the slang word "tits". Still Razmaitė decides to avoid slang altogether in this case and uses a neutral term that in Lithuanian is acceptable in terms of language norms.

One of the most comic moments in this novel occurs in Example 3, Jonathon wonders why the doctor puts on plastic gloves to examine his penis and later even washes her hands after the examination; he actually feels offended by her behaviour. In this case, too, Razmaitė also chooses the more general term for a penis twice, although in the English text Jonathon calls it a "knob" both times. Overall, it can be said that Razmaitė attempts to soften taboo language in her Lithuanian translation by applying the most formal word for the penis. In Example 3, Razmaitė also employs preservation: "I might have cancer of the arse as well" is translated "ji pamanė, kad man vėžys subinėj" (back translation: she thought I had cancer in my ass). Razmaitė translates the vulgar English "arse" as the vulgar Lithuanian "subinė". Overall, Ryškuvienė and Razmaitė use more substitutions in Lithuanian for a similar word in English. Although both translators tend to soften some slang and vulgar words in Lithuanian, they manage to produce texts about sexual issues that are still easily read and understood by Lithuanian teens.

In general, then the translation strategies used by Gabija Ryškuvienė and Rūta Razmaitė to translate swearwords and offensive language in Cecily von Ziegesar's *Gossip Girl* and Melvin Burgess' novel *Doing It* tend to be similar. Some of the most common strategies used in such cases are equivalence, softening, compensation and omission.

A particularly sensitive issue is the Lithuanian translation of the strong but often present English swearword 'fuck'.

Table 3. Translation of "fuck" in Liežuvautoja

	Cecily von Ziegesar, Gossip Girl (2003)	Gabija Ryškuvienė, Liežuvautoja (2006)
1.	But Chuck Bass knew, which was almost worse. Nate had blurted the information out at a party only two nights ago in a drunken fit of complete stupidity. They'd been doing shots, and Chuck had asked, "**So, Nate. What was your all time best fuck**? That is, if you've done it all yet." (28)	Bet žinojo Čakas Basas, ir tai buvo dar blogiau. Neitas viską išplepėjo prieš dvi dienas prisigėręs per vieną vakarėlį, užėjus kvailumo priepuoliui. Jie išlenkinėjo po burnelę ir Čakas paklausė: **-Klausyk, Neitai, kada tau labiausiai patiko mylėtis**? Na, aišku, jei iš viso esi tai daręs. (35)
2.	And Chuck wasn't going to keep it a secret for long. It was way too juicy and way too useful. Chuck didn't need to read that book *How to Win Friends and Influence People*. **He fucking wrote it**. (28)	Čakas nesiruošė ilgai laikyti paslaptį. Tai buvo per daug pikantiška ir per daug naudinga žinia. Čakui nereikėjo skaityti knygos "Kaip įsigyti draugų ir daryti žmonėms įtaką". **Jis pats, po galais, gali ją parašyti**. (36)
3.	Blair stomped into her bathroom and snatched her pink satin bathrobe off its hook. She put it on, cinching the belt tight. "**Get the fuck out of here, Nate**," she said, angry tears sluicing her cheeks. (138)	Bleir nutipeno į vonią ir nutraukė nuo kabliuko savo rausvą satino chalatą. Apsivilko jį ir stipriai susiveržė diržą. **-Nešdinkis po velnių, Neitai**, - pasakė ji. Pykčio ašaros sruvo jai per skruostus. (160)

Examples 1 and 2 describe an episode in which Chuck, who is Nate's best friend, but also a great manipulator finds out Nate's secret that he cheated on Blair with her friend, Serena, and uses this information for his own benefit. In Example 1, Ryškuvienė softens the swearword: "best fuck", translating it as "labiausiai patiko mylėtis" (back translation: liked to make love with the most), which has the same basic meaning. However, Ryškuvienė's choice is both more general and has a positive connotation, since it suggests that this is not a random sexual act but one that involves some romantic feelings. However, in the English original, Chuck intentionally uses the verb "to fuck", first showing his toughness as a male, and additionally, reducing any emotional connotation. Therefore, in Ryškuvienė's translation this initial meaning is lost, although teenage Lithuanian boys would probably rarely use the word "mylėtis" when discussing among themselves their sexual adventures and experiences. In Example 2, the translator similarly employs the strategy of softening, turning "he fucking wrote it" into "po galais, gali ją parašyti" (back translation: after all). In this case, Ryškuvienė softens the word with a much milder and not as offensive Lithuanian word, which some people in Lithuania would not even consider as a swearword. She uses a similar strategy in Example 4, translating "get the fuck out" into "eik po velnių" (back translation: go to the devil). In this passage, Blair finally learns the truth about Nate's infidelity: swearing at him expresses her frustration and anger. Although Ryškuvienė applies a milder Lithuanian swearword in this case, her choice of a religious one does convey Blair's strong reaction to the unpleasant news.

The same tendency to soften is seen in Ryškuvienė's treatment of the English vulgarism "to piss someone off", used metaphorically to mean acting in such a way as to upset someone.

Table 4. Translation of "piss" in Liežuvautoja

	Cecily von Ziegesar, Gossip Girl (2003)	Gabija Ryškuvienė, Liežuvautoja (2006)
1.	Just to be safe, we should all synchronize our watches. If we aren't careful, S is going to win over our teachers, wear that dress we couldn't fit into, eat the last olive, have sex in our parents' beds, spill Campari on out rugs, steal our brothers' and our boyfriends' hearts, and **basically ruin our lives and piss us all off in a major way**. (4)	Dėl viso pikto nustatykim vienodai savo laikrodžius. Jei nebūsim atsargios, S užkariaus mūsų mokytojus, vilkės sukneles, į kurias mes nebeįlįstume, suvalgys paskutinę alyvuogę, mylėsis mūsų tėvų lovose, laistys kamparį ant mūsų kilimų, užkariaus mūsų brolių ir mūsų vaikinų širdis ir **iš viso sumaus mums gyvenimus ir užknis negyvai**. (7-8)
2.	TWO QUESTIONS First: If you knew about a party that you weren't invited to, wouldn't you go, **just to piss people off**? I would. (168)	DU KLAUSIMAI Pirmas: jei žinotumėt, kad vyksta vakarėlis, į kurį esi nekviesta, **ar eitum panervinti žmonių?** Aš eičiau. (187)

In Example 1, the mysterious blogger Gossip Girl introduces the setting and the main characters of the series, although their names are not revealed; only the first letters are indicated. Gossip Girl warns everyone should beware of the S character, who is depicted as very beautiful but intimidating and dangerous to others. In order to intrigue the readers with the S character, Gossip Girl provides a list of everything she would do to "piss off" others. In this instance Ryškuvienė uses the strategies of compensation and softening at the same time; she translates "ruin our lives" as "sumaus mums gyvenimus" (back translation: crap our lives). A Lithuanian equivalent for "ruin" is "destroy", but in this case the translator uses a more vulgar and offensive slang word for the English verb. Ryškuvienė decides to soften the verb "piss off" with a slang word, popular among Lithuanian teenagers but less offensive "užknisti" (back translation: dig up). In Example 2, Ryškuvienė softens the swearword "just to piss people off", translating it as "panervinti" (back translation: slightly annoy). According to Dalzel and Victor, the English swearword "piss off" expresses strong annoyance or anger with somebody (Dalzel and Victor 2006, 245). In the Lithuanian version, the translator avoids using a vulgar equivalent; instead, she tones down the swear word following Lithuanian literary norms.

Razmaitė's translations of 'fuck' show similar choices of strategies.

Table 5. Translation of "fuck" in Darant Tai

	Melvin Burgess, *Doing It* (2003)	**Rūta Razmaitė, *Darant Tai* (2004)**
1.	I ran after her, shouting. 'Sorry, please don't go, don't go!'. '**Just fuck off!**' I froze. I was furious. Shouting at me like that. Listen **no one tells me to fuck off**. '**Fuck you too!**' I yelled. (32)	Pasileidau paskui ją šaukdamas, "Atleisk, nenueik." bet buvo per vėlu. **-Eik tu šikt!** Aš sustingau. Buvau įsiutęs. **Šitaip man pasakyti**. **-Pati eik šikt!**- surikau. (36)
2.	**Fuck it.** I just wish so much I didn't have to do this. It's so horrible-but the alternatives are so much worse. (301)	**Šūdas.** Kaip noriu, kad nereikėtų to daryti. Tai siaubinga, bet visa kita kur kas blogiau. (276)
3.	**He was a time bomb. He was a fucking Cruise Missile.** He could not believe he had to put up with this shit. (137)	**Jis buvo tiksinti laikrodinė bomba. Branduolinė raketa**. Jis tiesiog negalėjo patikėti, kad turi kęsti jų paistalus. (130)

Burgess uses one swearword "fuck" five times in these three examples. In Example 1, where "fuck" occurs three times, the protagonist Dino is quarrelling with his girlfriend Jackie, who walks off, shouting at him. She is very angry with him, which shows by her using the swearword "fuck off", that are more aggressive and hurt Dino's feelings. Now he swears back at Jackie, using the same word to hurt her feelings as well. The fact that "fuck off" is a very insulting swearword in such a situation is made clear here by the two characters'' reaction. However, Razmaitė softens the swearword, translating it by the Lithuanian "Eik tu šikt" (back translation: go shit), which is milder and not as offensive as "fuck off" in English. She omits Dino's angry thought "no one tells me to fuck off" so that the swearword appears only twice in the passage. In Example 2, Razmaitė uses both omission and softening, Jonathon has to see a doctor about an alarming change in the appearance of his penis. He is so embarrassed that it takes him a good deal of time to get ready for the visit. The text here describes his thoughts when he finally decides to go to a doctor; still, in his mind, he is dreading the visit. Here his use of the swearword "fuck it" is not aggressive, but simply emphasizes his extreme fear. Razmaitė once again slightly softens the swearword by translating it as "šūdas" (back translation: shit), although this taboo word is not commonly used in Lithuanian literature, either. In Example 3, Dino has family problems: his mother is having an affair with his teacher, while Dino's father has decided to make up with his mother. Meanwhile, Dino has enough problems of his own and does not want to have to deal with more at home. He is furious and, at the same time, worried about his parents; he describes his stressed condition by the metaphor that his head may explode. His use of the swearword "fucking Cruise Missile" emphasizes his strong dislike of his mother's lover. Razmaitė omits "fucking" in this case, translating simply "branduolinė raketa", reducing the occurrence of a swearword in the text.

An analogous tendency has been noticed in the translation of the somewhat less offensive swearword "to be pissed off", which Razmaitė, like Ryškuvienė, tends to soften:

Table 6. Translation of "piss off" in Darant Tai

	Melvin Burgess, *Doing It* (2003)	Rūta Razmaitė, *Darant Tai* (2004)
1.	'I was asleep.' Said the girl, and she took a big hard drag on her fag. **She looked pissed off, but she wasn't leaving, not so far. (**99)	-Aš miegojau,-atsakė mergina ir giliai įtraukė dūmą. **Ji atrodė apsvaigusi, bet niekur nėjo, bent jau kolkas.** (93)
2.	He went on and on and on, and by the time I got home I wasn't feeling wonderful anymore, I was feeling horrible and crabby and frustrated and **pissed off.** (55)	Tačiau jis šnekėjo apie tai neužsičiaupdamas ir grįžusi namo jau nesijaučiau nuostabiai, jaučiausi klaikiai, suirzusi, įsiutusi-**sušiktai.** (56)

In Example 1, Burgess describes a girl who falls asleep during a teen party, wakes up after it is over and meets Dino. Razmaitė chooses the word "apsvaigusi" (back translation: dizzy) to translate "pissed off", which changes the meaning. In Burgess' case, the girl appears angry about the whole situation, while Razmaitė suggests she is dizzy or drunk. In the second example, Jackie is thinking about her boyfriend Dino, who insists on talking about their relationship: "He went on and on"; finally, instead of feeling good about herself, she has become angry. Razmaitė uses "sušiktai" (back translation: shitty), in this case, finding a good equivalent for the English swearword.

The specific kind of language used by young adults is an intrinsic part of many teen novels. Both translators manage to make their translations sound realistic and dynamic, though not following English norms of what is acceptable in teen fiction. Ryškuvienė and Razmaitė tend to soften the language wherever possible, especially when it comes to sexual slang and swearwords. Both translators are very well aware of which expressions that are not acceptable to their target audience and society; so that they apply a variety of strategies to avoid using what is considered inappropriate in Lithuanian books for teens. Nevertheless, the language in these translations contains a significantly larger number of slang and vulgarisms than the contemporary teen novels produced by Lithuanian writers. However, the fact that now some Lithuanian writers are not afraid to include more slang and colloquial language in their novels shows that such translations have already influenced the norms governing the Lithuanian literary system. This supports the ideas of the Tel Aviv specialists Even-Zohar and Toury that translated literature can bring a new repertoire and so affect norms in the target culture.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this final chapter is to draw conclusions about how the current situation for young adult fiction developed in Lithuania, with translations from English at the centre of the literary system, but also with a growing number of original works being produced in Lithuanian.

The research and analysis of this doctoral dissertation emphasize the particular historical context of the Lithuanian situation, going back as it does to the literary system created in Soviet Russia and imposed on Soviet Lithuania; since the renewal of independence, a new literary system influenced by Western models and products has come into existence. This dissertation has analysed two elements, literary history and literary analysis of selected Lithuanian young adult novels and others translated from English; it has also aimed to look at aspects of young adult fiction, both Lithuanian and translated, in the Lithuanian market within a historical context that includes Soviet and post-Soviet conditions. First, Itamar Even-Zohar's Polysystem theory was used to look at the Soviet literary system and its historical development from the Bolshevik Revolution onwards. Then this theory helped explain how the Soviet Lithuanian literary system formed during the occupation of the country from World War II to 1990. Finally, Even-Zohar's ideas were applied to the on-going changes in the Lithuanian literary system after the re-establishment of independence.

To achieve the aim of this dissertation, certain objectives were set. One of these uses the schematic model developed by Itamar Even-Zohar to analyse relevant historical details about the Soviet Russian and Soviet Lithuanian literary systems, indicating factors that inhibited the development of young adult fiction. Changes in literary systems usually take place gradually with new elements entering the repertoire and pushing older ones to the margins. In certain cases, however, as in the Lithuanian example, sudden and very radical political events hastened this process. Applying Even-Zohar's concepts about literary systems, it can be said that during the Soviet occupation, the Lithuanian literary market suffered a radical change from a largely free-market system in independent interwar Lithuania to one in which a single dominant institution, the Communist Party, and its repertoire, Communist ideology, had almost supreme power over all other market players. Still, although the Communist Party had great power in controlling publishing in the Soviet Union, Lithuanian publishing houses managed to promote the use of the Lithuanian language. Nevertheless, strict censorship, which led to banning and destroying of many books, encouraged the entry of translations to fill gaps in the literary market.

Translations from Russian were given the dominant position; however, the Soviet Union welcomed translations from other languages so long as ideological criteria were met. Even

though this kind of translation was part of a system of ideological indoctrination, it gave translated literature a positive image during the Soviet period.

Overall, Even-Zohar's theory about literary systems showed that fiction for young adults was slow to develop so long as Lithuania was under the Soviet regime. Since the literary market was controlled by the Communist Party and its ideology, books that described the life of rebellious teens or depicted more sensitive topics could not appear in the market neither as original Lithuanian novels nor as translations. The number of writers working specifically for young adults was very low. The difficulties of writing something close to Western young adult fiction in Soviet Lithuania are illustrated by some attempts made that did indeed seem significant to teen readers of that period. Novels and short novels by Vytautas Bubnys and Algimantas Zurba were among a small number aimed specifically at high school students, since the topics that these writers addressed included suicide, murder, drug and/or sexual abuse and other sensitive issues.

After 1990, when Lithuania re-established its independence, political and economic changes started to take place. The Lithuanian literary market was no longer controlled by a single political party; it became closely tied to the global publishing market. In Even-Zohar's terms, power passed from the institution to producers, especially publishers, who now kept a close eye on the needs and desires of consumers. Many newly-established publishing houses gained control in the decision-making process of what should be published, including books for the children's and young adult literary markets. Since 2000 in Lithuania, the young adult market has experienced strong growth, with a large numbers of translations being published, and more and more books by Lithuanian writers. The great popularity of different series of fiction for young adults in the West, as well as growing numbers of translations, encouraged the appearance of a new wave of Lithuanian writers for young adults, who are becoming more open and tolerant about possible topics and the kind of language used in teen novels.

The most successful novels produced recently for young adults by Lithuanian writers overlap thematically with ones that come into Lithuania through translation. Nevertheless, Lithuanian fiction is still distinctly different from Anglo-American models in many respects. Two recent examples of Lithuanian teen fiction, Vytautas Račickas' *Nebaigtas Dienoraštis* (2008) and Kristina Gudonytė's *Blogos Mergaitės Dienoraštis* (2009), were analysed in the dissertation, focusing on both similarities and differences from Anglo-American novels for young adults. This study has shown that these novels present a new kind of approach, one that is strongly influenced by Western culture. Nevertheless, the texts are still distinctly Lithuanian in many aspects of plot choice and style. Račickas and Gudonytė's narratives are structurally and thematically similar; however, the way the writers approach their subjects is different.

Gudonytė's novel *Blogos Mergaitės Dienoraštis* is a relatively light-hearted story of an egoistic contemporary teenage girl gets herself into trouble, in past because she does not care much about anyone else. Račickas' story, on the other hand, depicts a more painful teen life, where the protagonist, Deivė, is naive but more sympathetic than Gudonytė's character. Nevertheless, at the end of Račickas' novel, it is suggested that Deivė commits suicide, unable to withstand the pressures of her society. Although both of the writers bring up sensitive topics in their narratives, such as teen pregnancy, substance abuse, and broken families, Račickas goes even further by introducing the topic of homosexuality in his novel.

The analysis of these two recent Lithuanian novels has shown that they do draw readers into shifting events and the feelings of their protagonists and so probably help teenage readers to cope more successfully with their own struggles. Still, the writers of these novels do not go as far in imitating teen speech as many Western writers, probably because including a great deal of slang, vulgarisms and swearing is still not common in Lithuanian young adult fiction. Nor does Lithuanian literature have a tradition of detailed descriptions of sexual activity, though some contemporary writers for adults are taking more liberal measures in this respect. As first steps into creating Lithuanian versions of contemporary teen fiction, the two novels succeed in combining interesting plot turns with the typical concerns of many female adolescents. Nonetheless, their repertoire of topics is still limited and less fully developed than that in Western fiction, making it hard for such novels to compete with translated. The centre of the literary system for young adults in Lithuania remains occupied by the best-selling teen fiction from abroad, especially that from the United States and Britain, and is likely to remain so in the near future.

In this ways, given Even-Zohar's concept of gaps in a literary market and the global popularity of Anglo-American teen fiction today, the Lithuanian market for young adult fiction is largely composed of translations from English. The dissertation offers a close analysis of specific novels from those sub-genres in English-language teen fiction that are currently popular both in the West and in translation in the Lithuanian market. The analysis begins by looking at two very successful genres among young adults. First, the *Gossip Girl* series demonstrates the successful combination of teen romance with the glamorous life of the upper class. This series also stands as an example of innovative book marketing techniques used to promote teen literature today. The second sub-genre analysed is the dystopian one, best illustrated by Suzanne Collins' trilogy *The Hunger Games*. None of the Lithuanian writers for young adults have yet published anything like either of these series. As seen in the Lithuanian novels by Račickas and Gudonytė, Lithuanian writers are still reluctant to include explicit sex, swearing and vulgarism, thus create a more limited and censored version of fictional Lithuanian teen life. Translators do

something to fill in these gaps in subjects and styles. For example, *Gossip Girl* series allows teen readers to identify with characters, who lead very glamorous lives, as well as to comfort themselves that even rich teenagers face problems similar to those of ordinary teens. The dystopian *Hunger Games* series was also very well accepted by teens in Lithuania. When publishing houses noticed that it is a profitable niche, translations from English into Lithuanian of a large number of other dystopian novels were printed or re-printed. Moreover, it should be noted that a few years earlier, Lithuanian writers attempted to produce something similar to this sub-genre; however, the narratives did not gain nearly as much attention as *The Hunger Games*, which is not only skilfully written but also supported by international publicity and the effect of film versions of the novels.

In terms of changes in the repertoire, in this dissertation the analysis of two contemporary young adult novels by Melvin Burgess and Laurie Halse Anderson has shown ways in which sex is depicted in popular narratives for teens in Anglo-American countries. Burgess' novel *Doing It* and Anderson's *Speak* are examples of current young adult fiction that mainly deal with sexuality from an adolescent point of view. The latest trends for teens show that the presentation of sex has gradually been made more explicit by writers for long enough to make it less taboo, although this depends on specific culture. For example, sexual acts are presented in these two Western novels in much greater detail than in Lithuanian novels for young adults. Although it is agreed that novels written by Lithuanian authors fill certain gaps in the teen literary market, translated texts such as *Doing It* and *Speak* go much further in breaking down still-existing norms and inhibitions about the inclusion of sexual activity in works for teenagers. In addition, the selected narratives show that the topic of sex can be dealt with in a wide variety of ways. Burgess' novel offers a more humorous perspective on teen boys and their attitude to sex, while Anderson depicts a female teenager who has to deal with the traumatic aftermath of a date rape. Lithuanian teen readers are able to relate to the protagonists of both these stories since they provide realistic plots and characters who deal with issues of sex; such fiction can also help Lithuanian readers to think more openly of their own problems concerned with sexuality.

Similarly to sex, the topics of death and suicide in particular still cause a good deal of controversy when these appear as central events in literature for teens, despite the fact that suicide is one of the most common causes of death among young adults around the world. The novels by Jay Asher and Carmen Rodrigues that are discussed in this dissertation were chosen specifically because in addition to their commercial success, they differ from older and more traditional teen narratives that depict adolescent suicide, since both are less sentimental and reflect the more complex reality that teenagers actually deal with. The girls who commit suicide are not depicted as perfect people anymore, as, for example, is still done in Račickas' novel

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Nebaigtas Dienoraštis. In his novel, the teen protagonist is shown as an excellent student, a caring daughter, and popular among her peers and boys; she is a victim who is not able to cope with social pressure and certain painful events in her life. Nonetheless, Račickas does not give any explicit details about her suicide; there is just an indication that she jumps in front of a train. In general, she is an admirable person, while it is less easy to admire the girls in Asher and Rodrigues' novels, since they deliberately cause so much pain to those around them. Furthermore, the person who commits suicide is replaced to a greater or lesser extent as the protagonists by those around them.

Finally, in this dissertation specific analysis of translation strategies and problems is limited to Section 6.3, which focuses on how Lithuanian translators deal with the taboo and vulgar language that appears frequently in current Anglo-American teen fiction. The analysis showed that Lithuanian translators of young adult fiction succeed in using strategies that transmit the meaning and style of the source texts but still respect certain Lithuanian cultural norms. In this section, one can find a form of resistance to imported norms, since Lithuanian culture still restricts the open use of swearwords and vulgarities in literary works, especially those aimed at young adults. Two very popular young adult novels, with a high number of such words, Melvin Burgess' *Doing It* and Cecily von Ziegesar's *Gossip Girl* were chosen for the analysis of translation of taboo language. The translators of both novels, Rūta Razmaitė and Gabija Ryškuvienė, manage to make the Lithuanian translations of narrative and dialogue realistic and dynamic, though not always following English norms of what is usual in teen fiction. In effect, the Lithuanian translators partially observe Lithuanian norms by softening sexual slang and swearwords. Although the translators do not censor the Anglo-American novels by removing scenes or passages that are specifically about sexual matters, they do give priority to Lithuanian norms over Anglo-American ones in the strategies they choose for rendering taboo language.

This dissertation has examined the complex history of young adult fiction in Lithuania today with the aid of Even-Zohar's system theory to interpret the shift that took place from one historical period to another. In the cultural development of many Western countries current novels for teenagers have clear ties to those produced in earlier periods. However, in Lithuania there was no fluid movement from the literary system of Interwar culture to that of Soviet Lithuania and, again to that of Lithuania when independence was re-established. Ordinarily, novelists from one period would have continued to write in the next one, while a younger generation of writers would have been influenced by their predecessors though making changes in the repertoire. In this way, the factors conditioning young adult fiction kept changing.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A Plot summaries of the Selected Novels for Young Adults

Laurie Halse Anderson's *Speak* (1999)

The summer before her freshman year of high school, Melinda Sordino is raped by Andy Evans at a senior party. Melinda calls the police, but does not know what to say and runs home. The police come and arrest some people. However, Melinda does not tell anyone what happened to her, and becomes an outcast at and is shunned by her peers for calling the police. She stops speaking and sinks into depression. For a time Melinda is befriended by Heather who abandons her for the popular girls at the school. As Melinda's depression deepens, she begins to skip classes, withdrawing from her already distant parents and other authority figures, who evaluate her silence only as a means of getting attention. She spends her entire ninth-grade year often hiding in an abandoned janitor's closet at school, trying to come to terms with happened to her and finding the voice she lost as a result of her trauma to tell the truth. Finally, Melinda's best friend Rachel, who was dating Andy, breaks up with him on prom night after Melinda confesses what happened. Then Andy attacks Melinda in the janitor's closet, Melinda's safe place. When the truth about that night is revealed, the students no longer treat Melinda as an outcast. Melinda tells her story to her art teacher, at last she feels free of the trauma.

Jay Asher's *Thirteen Reasons Why* (2007)

Clay Jensen, a shy high school student, returns home from school one day to find a shoebox containing seven cassette tapes recorded by Hannah Baker, his classmate who recently committed suicide. The tapes were initially mailed to one classmate with instructions to pass them from one student to another. On the tapes, Hannah explains to twelve people how they played a role in her death, giving thirteen reasons why she took her life. Hannah warns the people mentioned on the tapes that if they do not pass them on, a second set will be leaked to the entire student body. It turns out that Hannah has been labelled as sexually loose and easily available; in one episode she even allows a boy in a hot tub to have sex with her because she feels worthless. The last reason for Hannah's suicide is Mr. Porter, her English teacher and counsellor. Hannah records her conversation, where she turns to him for help and expresses her thoughts of suicide. He tells her that if she does not want to press charges against the boy who raped her, she should simply forget what happened. She then does kill herself. After listening to the tapes, unable to stop thinking about Hannah and meets Skye, a girl who is also showing signs of being suicidal. The novel ends implying that Clay will help her.

Melvin Burgess's *Doing It* (2003)

Three British teenagers, Jonathon, Ben and Dino, are constantly obsessed with sex. Ben is secretly involved in a sexual relationship with one of his teachers. At first he finds this exciting, but later he wants to break it off, but does not know how. Jonathon faces a dilemma, too, whether to date Deborah an overweight girl, since he is afraid of his friends' reactions. Dino, a very handsome boy, is one of the most complex characters in the novel. His life changes after he sees his mother with one of his teachers. Later his parents separate after Dino tells the truth to his father. Dino also likes the most beautiful girl in school, Jackie, whom he sees as an equal to him. Nonetheless, Jackie refuses to engage in sexual relationship. This provokes Dino to make love to another girl behind Jackie's back. Later Dino's deception is revealed: both girls leave him, other students at school make fun of him, and he falls into a serious depression. However, his best friends do support Dino. Ben finally tells his mother about their affair and break off with the teacher. Jonathon starts dating Deborah, while Jackie ultimately forgives Dino for cheating on her. It seems as though the narrative has a happy ending. Nonetheless, Dino now understands that Ben and Jonathon are his loyal friends; moreover, he breaks up with Jackie. Now Dino shows up with another girl, Marianne, whom Ben also likes. Jonathon and Deborah become angry with Dino and claim that he has done this on purpose, while Ben disagrees and believes that Dino did not known that Ben liked Marianne. Thus there is no final ending, as they boys continue to have problems.

Kristina Gudonytė's *Blogos Mergaitės Dienoraštis* (*A Bad Girl's Diary*) (2009)

Blogos Mergaitės Dienoraštis depicts a rebellious 15-year-old teenager Kotryna who makes up stories and lies in order to get attention from her mother and friends. Not only does Kotryna never listen to the rules established by her parents but she also smokes and drinks. Even stealing alcohol from her mother. One time she tells her friends that she is pregnant so that her friends feel sorry for her. When Kotryna is strongly pressured by her mother to go on a retreat in Nida, she suggests to her actually pregnant older friend that they exchange roles: Elvyra goes to the retreat in Nida instead of Kotryna, who will live in Elvyra's apartment in Vilnius on her own. Kotryna is able to carry out her plan on robbing an elderly woman; she dreams of leading an independent life from her parents. Kotryna succeeds in stealing the money, but later returns it. Gradually, the elderly woman and Kotryna become close friends.

Vytautas Račickas's *Nebaigtas Dienoraštis* (*Unfinished Diary*) (2008)

Račickas presents a contemporary Lithuanian teen girl, Deivė, who is naïve, quiet and generally obedient to rules. She excels at school and is popular among her peers and boys. In addition,

Deivė is a promising swimmer whose coach pushes her hard. Feeling too pressured, Deivė decides to stop her swimming lessons. Deivė speaks to her teacher about her dream to become a writer; however, the teacher is not supportive. Deivė's mother insists that the girl should become an odontologist since this would ensure her financial stability.

While walking her dog in the park, Deivė meets Živilė, a nineteen-year-old who has cancer. Živilė differs from typical adolescents: she reads literary classics, does not have many friends and likes taking risks. Živilė takes Deivė to nightclubs and bars that are often not appropriate for Deivė's age. Furthermore, Deivė begins a relationship with a boy, Valentinas. Račickas provides many hints that Valentinas is homosexual, but Deivė refuses to believe this and she falls in love with him. When she sees Valentinas in a swingers' club having sex with two other men, she is devastated and betrayed. From this point, events in the novel move at a quicker pace. The day after the incident in the swingers' club, Živilė's brother Gabrielius arrives to change the lock in Deivė's room and they have unprotected sex; now Deivė loses her virginity. Her first sexual experience takes place when she is still in a state of shock so that she winds up humiliated and vulnerable. Readers note that she is probably pregnant when she vomits in the morning. After Živilė suggests taking a pregnancy test, Deivė begins to comprehend the situation as well. Račickas adds to the pressure on his protagonist by a traumatic final episode related to an issue that has been mentioned throughout the story: she is taken to meet her biological father who is a Seimas member; he denies any relations and rejects her. The last entries in Deivė's diary are very short and incoherent, mostly abrupt sentences or phrases indicating that she suffers from a severe mental breakdown, hinting that she commits suicide at the end.

Carmen Rodrigues' *34 Pieces of You* (2012)

In *34 Pieces of You*, Carmen Rodrigues chronicles the "before" and the "after" of when Ellie overdoses on pills. Chapters alternate between the points of view of Jake, Sarah, and Jessie; Jake is Ellie's older brother, Sarah is Ellie's best friend, and Jessie is Sarah's younger sister and Ellie's kind of girlfriend. Ellie, however, is not the only character in this book with many problems. Jake runs away from people and responsibilities, including a promise made to Ellie. Sarah deals with depression, as well as a suicide attempt. Jessie deals with bullying at school when her classmates find out she is a homosexual. After Ellie's suicide, Jake, Sarah, and Jess are left to pick up the pieces. All they have are thirty-four clues she left behind. Thirty-four strips of paper hidden in a box beneath her bed. All three of them feel responsible for what happened to Ellie.

Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games* (2008)

The Hunger Games is a young adult dystopian novel written by Suzanne Collins. It was originally published in 2008. The book is the first in *The Hunger Games* trilogy, followed by *Catching Fire*, then *Mockingjay*. In the novel, the Hunger Games are an annual televised event where the ruthless Capitol randomly selects one boy and one girl, from each of the twelve districts, pitting them against each other in a game of survival where they are forced to fight one another to the death. The victor then wins a new house along with food, fame, and wealth. Katniss Everdeen, until her younger sister, Prim, is called to participate. She takes her sister's place as tribute to save her sister from certain death. Katniss does anything to survive, even if she has to go against her own moral standards. But when a fellow tribute Peeta reveals his affection for her and another begins to act like and remind her of her sister, it becomes harder and harder to figure out how to survive without killing those closest to her. While nearly half the tributes are killed in the first day of the Games, Katniss relies on her well-practiced hunting and survival skills to remain unharmed. In the meantime, Peeta appears to have joined forces with the tributes from the richer districts. However, when he has the opportunity to kill Katniss, he instead saves her. Apparently because of Katniss and Peeta's image in the minds of the audience as lovers, a rule change is announced midway through the Games, allowing two tributes from the same district to win the Hunger Games as a couple. Katniss finds Peeta, wounded and in hiding. As she nurses him back to health, she acts the part of a young girl falling in love to gain more favour with the audience and, consequently, gifts from her sponsors. When the couple remains as the last two surviving tributes, the Gamemakers reverse the rule change in an attempt to force them into a dramatic finale in which one must kill the other to win. Katniss, in an act of defiance against the Capitol, proposes to Peeta that they eat highly poisonous berries. Realizing that Katniss and Peeta intend to commit suicide, the Gamemakers announce that both will be the victors of the Hunger Games.

Cecily von Ziegesar's *Gossip Girl* (2003)

In Cecily von Ziegesar's *Gossip Girl* the central characters are two very wealthy teen girls, Blair Waldorf and Serena van der Woodsen, who used to be close friends. However, Serena has been away and Blair does not welcome her back. Nate Archibald is supposed to be Blair's boyfriend but he and Serena had their first sexual experience just before Serena's departure. Other teen characters include Dan Humphrey in love with Serena, and his young sister Jenny, from a middle-class family. Vanessa, who gradually falls in love with Dan, is a film-maker; she attends the same classes as Blair and Serena; her parents are hippies Chuck Bass comes from the upper-class but is often sexually opportunistic. All the characters talk about each other, encouraged by

the anonymous author of the Gossip Girl blog, which seems to know everything. The cultural context is mostly related to teen girls and their passion for brand-name clothes; there are many scenes of shopping, as well as of parties and adventures, often comic, that the characters fall into.

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LITHUANIAN AND TRANSLATED YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE IN THE CONTEMPORARY LITHUANIAN LITERARY SYSTEM AS CONDITIONED BY HISTORICAL FACTORS: AN ANALYSIS USING POLYSYSTEM THEORY

Doctoral Dissertation