

## Summary

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literary comic, comic model, theory of carnivalesque, theory of the play, imagination, incongruity

The dissertation pursues three main goals: to define the differentiating features of specific comic models (goal A – the differentiation goal); to introduce the principles of the comic in “Švejk”, and its polyphony and originality, the technical devices, which shape it, and the semantic procedures of its creation (goal B – the analysis goal); to prove that between Hašek’s “Švejk” and the other four works of Bulgarian, Russian and Serbian satirical prose (“Bay Ganyo”, “The Twelve Chairs”, “The Little Golden Calf” and “Autobiography”) there is a stable common basis (**a comic model**), which is specified in each of those works (goal C – the juxtaposition goal).

The conceptual approach in the methodology of the exploration is based on the conviction that the core of the fictional magic in Hašek’s “Švejk” is precisely the comic.

The methodological approach of the hierarchical systematization yields all known qualifications of the comic in the models displayed here, which have the nature of unifying classification frames. The methodology of the choice and application of the conceptual instruments is based on the taxonomy of the famous Czech cultural critic **Vladimír Borecký**, whose terminological apparatus clearly defines the forms and manifestations of the comic according to established criteria.

The practical methodological approach consists of the application of the principles of incongruity as the essential notional mechanism of the inception of the comic impulse.

The work consists of three parts, divided into separate chapters. The first part analyses the comic of “Švejk” from the perspective of **Mikhail Bakhtin’s** theory of the carnivalesque and the conceptual standpoints laid out in his books about Rable and Dostoyevsky.

The second part explores the aspects of the comic from the perspective of Johan Huizinga's theory of the play (*Homo ludens*), **Eugen Fink** (*Play as Symbol of the World*) and **Roger Caillois** (*Les jeux et les hommes*), also using, in some smaller aspects, the conclusions of **Henri Bergson** (*Le rire*).

The third part compares the comic of the novel of Jaroslav Hašek with the top satirical works in the Bulgarian, Russian and Serbian fiction, more specifically with "Bay Ganyo" by Aleko Konstantinov, "The Twelve Chairs" and "The Little Golden Calf" by Ilf and Petrov, and "Autobiography" by Branislav Nuši .

The first part consists of some introductory reflections, followed by four chapters. In the introductory reflections the co-existence of the two worlds in Hašek's "Švejk" – the real and the carnivalesque – is established, along with the role of the good soldier as a hero-function of the knowledge of the carnival world, a world, which functions according to the laws of carnivalesque liberty. The one-sided perception of "Švejk" is problematized. The fundamental notions of M.M. Bakhtin's theory of the carnivalesque are indicated, and the subsequent development of the analysis in two major aspects – the victory over fear and the debasement of materialization – is outlined.

The first chapter concentrates on the victory over fear from several different perspectives. The terminologically valid notion "funny bugaboo" is established. The ways of ridicule are analyzed on the basis of specific textual passages: through auto-discrediting, through the carnivalizing function of "Švejk" or through the "sacred" military symbolism of saluting. Finally, the idea of liberation from the inner fear is examined, liberation from the so-called "moral fear", the "inner censor", which strongly links Hašek's novel with the psyche of the carnivalesque, as perceived by Bakhtin.

The second chapter focuses on the problem of the schematization of the bureaucratic lexis and searches for the so-called "practical ballast" of the prescriptions and regulations, i.e. the redundant specifications, which, when interpreted differently, can practically alter their initial function and shift notionally from their prototype, even if by doing so they deflate their initial meaning. Further in the chapter the parodist degradation of certain pseudo-pathetic poses and the depiction of a ridiculing double of the seriousness and the dogmas of the military discipline are presented. Lastly, the lexis of

bureaucratic documents is analyzed from several perspectives and the elements of the medieval carnivalesque laughter in Hašek's novel are described.

The third chapter is dedicated to the degradation and materialization in Bakhtin's conception of the carnivalesque laughter. Specifically, the analysis is directed towards the categories "reversed world ("**monde à l'envers**")", and "familiarization".

At the beginning the foundation and the four major categories of the carnivalesque are defined, while its ambivalent nature is emphasized: the reversed world, the transporting to the zone of the familiar contact, the eccentricity, the carnivalesque misalliances and profanity. Some concerns regarding the analysis of the comic in "Švejk" are mentioned with regards to the commonly accepted initial model of the carnivalesque. The reversal of the world is illustrated against the background of one famous episode, while the familiarization is explored on the basis of the so-called "total contextualization" in an extramural discussion with **Sylvie Richterová's** standpoints. The comic allusion is analysed, as well as the phases of the comic reassessment against the background of Jacobson's conception of the selection and subsistent in the lexis. Finally, the zone of the familiar contact as a category of the carnivalesque is introduced in its most typical manifestations – in the eccentricity and the ecstasy.

The fourth chapter focuses on the vulgar lexis in Hašek's novel and its connections with the comic. It contains a detailed parsing of the most expressive verbal units. It makes a distinction between the arrogant words in the areas of the rejecting laughter and the vital laughter. The notions "*the second truth about the world*" and "*the second nature of man*", which define the carnivalesque function of the vulgarisms, are introduced.

In the logic of this idea the vulgar language may have a "ludistic" function (**ludus**) and unveil the "**othernesses**" of the world and its separate elements. Prior to the specific parsing of some emblematic "indecent" situations in "Švejk", the notions "incongruity" and "reduplication" are distinguished from each other. The analysis rests on the significant role of imagination – precisely in accordance with the theoretical observations of Vladimir Boretsky.

The second part of the dissertation analyses the comic in Hašek's novel in the aspect of the play and respectively puts forth the thesis of the existence of the so-called

**play model of the comic** in the novel. Still, the development of the idea of the play model is linked to the foundations of Bakhtin's theory of the carnivalesque. The second part consists of six chapters.

The fifth chapter of the analysis's development begins with a comparison of the two phenomena – the play and the carnival, – in the search of their similarities and differences. The main terminological elements of Bakhtin's notional apparatus are summarized and the fundamental definitions of the play of Johan Huizinga and Roger Caillois are examined. At the end of these reflections an attempt is made to distinguish the notions "play" and "carnival" on the basis of the standpoint that the carnival is the biggest and most remarkable play in the culture of mankind. The reflections continue with the analysis of the renowned paragraph of the Kantian "Critique of Pure Reason" in the strive to prove that in the famous formula "*Laughter is the sudden change in the suspenseful awaiting in nothingness*" Kant does not mean "emptiness" and "lack of content", but the contrary – that nothingness decrees the foundations of the play in the comic. The last point of the chapter interprets Boretsky's notion "ludism", which links the **worlds of the play, the comic and the imagination** together in the spirit of Fink's perception of the play as a joy incepted by imagination.

Chapter six introduces the incongruity as the core of the comic in an indirect debate with the article by **Tomáš Kulka** and suggests that the amusing in it be perceived not as a problem to the solution of the paradoxical nonsense, but as an impulse for playful dance with the restructured world. It continues with some views on the figure of the good soldier Švejk and the tavern story (*hospodská historka*) and it sketches the specifications of this genre, as defined by the Czech literary criticism. It accepts that the tavern story has an internal and external layer (factual and imaginary). Finally it expresses the view that Švejk's narrative is an absurd operating with the absurd world, which is rooted in imagination as a typical "*play of the imagination*" (**Milan Jankovi**), as a „*transferring of the imaginary scene*” (**Emanuel Frynta**), as a „*clownish demounting of reality*” (**Vladimír Just**).

Chapter seven transforms the notions "national justice" and "carnavalesque misalliances" of Bakhtin's theory of the carnivalesque into projections of the play of the comic. The national justice is interpreted as a peculiar logic of the interaction play in the

tavern story – the so called “plausible logic of the extraordinary”, in which the motivational impulse is transformed into a constructive device. Three main principles are established in the tavern story in relation to the national justice and the national justice itself is defined as the major category **mimicry**, according to the taxonomy of Caillois’s concepts of the play. The text proceeds with the parallelization of Bakhtin and Caillois from an angle, which explores some of the typical cultural and social manifestations of the carnivalesque tempest as the subsequent categories of the play according to the Caillois’s classification system. A review of the potential applications in the contextual and compositional plan of the tavern story is introduced. The notion “misalliance” in Bakhtin’s works is explored with his interpretation in view. Finally, the carnivalesque social phenomena “the cries of Paris”, „coq-à-l’âne” and Dr. Rable’s specific device “listing of the cleaning cloths” are introduced as forms of Caillois’s categories of the play: **ilinx**, **agon** and **alea**.

Chapter eight makes an analytical review of the comic in Hašek’s novel on the basis of the four categories of the play in Caillois’s taxonomy. Their exploration is executed exclusively on verbal basis, more specifically – the basis of Švejk’s narrative. The analysis thoroughly examines specific episodes of the novel. The national justice is perceived from the perspectives of the *logic of deliberately established interconnections* (whose notional charge is derived from the role-transpositions), and the *organization of the elements of the extraordinary*, and is defined as a comic of the mimicry type. The misalliances of the ilinx type present the principle of *destabilizing empirical excessiveness*, or the piling-up of useless factual lists. The misalliances of the agon are connected through the principle of the *total multiplicative auto-thematisation* of the engrossing pressure of Švejk’s stories. And finally, the misalliances of the alea type operate on the principle of the *paradoxically discovered notional contact*, in which the incidentally discovered notional connection between things consists of the extraordinary, the lack of planning and spontaneity of the structure of expression, the break from the logistic skeleton, or the form, of the known language.

Chapter nine distinguishes the play with the narrative (with the narrative act itself) from the play of the narrative (with the structuring of the narrated world) and it states that certain expressively playful relations consist of the verbal

moulding of the situation at hand – both on the narrator and the characters’ side. Several authoritative views on the “poor” and solely “referencing” language in Hašek’s narrative are presented, along with their functional applications, from the perspective of the authorial strive towards this kind of lapidary and dry manner of expression. Afterwards three distinct types of situational comic are defined, amongst which the more interesting are **paidia** and **puerilism** (Caillois and Huizinga), while the most important one is **ludus**, i.e. the playful verbal display of the situation through the narrator’s lexis. As a counterpoint of the narrative’s playful mood the *active realisation of the situation* is outlined, its *active core*, which is in itself a type of comic play from the perspective of the realisation of the act of assembling the situation and the combinatory originality of its elements. Then the distinctions between the two types of ludus – *depicting and depicted* – are thoroughly examined with an emphasis above all on the so-called *index potential of the narrative* and the literary device *merging of the paradox and the reality*. Finally the chapter outlines the connections in the relationship between the ludus and the four major categories of the play – ludistic mimicry, ludistic alea, ludistic ilinx and ludistic agon.

The final and tenth chapter of the second part of the dissertation introduces the notions paidia and puerilizmus as a primitive form and pseudo-form of the play, which are nevertheless comic in the development of the situation according to obvious, externally presented essential incongruities. A vital point of the chapter is Švejk’s talk in his sleep, explored in a discussion with Bergson’s view on the contradiction of “the natural” and “the mechanical”, which in his concept is the essence of laughter. The standpoint indicated here proceeds to theorizing that the tavern story, narrated by Švejk in his sleep, is a recessive play of the narrator (**Sergej Nikolskij**) with the reader’s anchored interest in the Švejk principle. The comic of this type is rooted in the reader’s reception, entailing the self-discovery and the discovery, the admiration of another’s intellectual and creative prowess, the realization of one’s own imperfection and of the paths of eternity, which is linked to Fink’s idea that **the play sidetracks us from our ultimate destination**. The chapter ends with a conclusive establishment of the characteristics of the play of the comic, which is distinguished from Fink’s more general perception of the “joy of the imaginary” of the imaginary world of the play.

With the conclusion of the second part the model of the comic of the carnivalesque and the model of the comic of the play are unified in the field of Bakhtin's global contemplation and Fink's symbolic impersonation. The idea of liberty in the concepts of the two authors is explored from both angles and Fink's standpoint is determined as the awarding one ("*the game liberates us from freedom*"). The comic is understood as a manifestation of the world of words, above all: the Czech national world, while the play of the comic is seen as man's human openness towards the world. The chapter briefly indicates some of the standpoints of Bakhtin-scepticism, which nevertheless do not debase Mikhail Bakhtin's enormous contribution to the world's universal culture.

The third part of the dissertation rests entirely on the scheme of the analytical approach, crafted in the process of the analysis of Hašek's "Švejk". In each of the three chapters the focus is directed towards one of the works mentioned above – respectively of the Bulgarian, Russian and Serbian satirical prose – in comparison with the comic in "*The Adventures of the Good Soldier Švejk*". The approach to the four works of fiction is quite limited, when compared to the approach to Hašek's novel. The aim is not to conduct the comparative analysis in depth, but rather to flag the potential fruitful and contributing aspects of the juxtapositional exploration. The common and individual features of the literary works are examined firstly according to "Švejk" and secondly to the specifics of the comic in the respective work. In all cases it is stated that despite the carnivalesque elements that are present, one cannot speak of "comic of the carnivalesque", because the external similarity does not mean, that the internal laws of the construction of the carnivalesque world have been kept. "The Adventures of Švejk" are a diverse carnivalesque composite, which contains all of Bakhtin's established major elements of the carnivalesque cosmos (including death and revival against the background of the war and its merry, playful, "festive" perception by Josef Švejk), and which are to a great degree absent from the rest of the works. Still, there is room to talk about the comic of the play in them. This is why the analysis of "Bay Ganyo", the novels about Ostap Bender and Nuši's "Autobiography" follows the algorithm of the discovery of episodes and manifestations of the comic of the play and their classification according to the four main categories of Roger Caillois's play. Also,

apart from the major categories of the comic of the play (mimicry, agon, ilinx and alea), the aspects paidia, puerilizmus and especially ludus are examined separately; the ludus assumes a different, always interesting position in the Serbian, as well as the Russian novels and the Bulgarian “Bay Ganyo”. The more important clarification is that mimicry, agon, ilinx and alea, which in Hašek’s novel were explored against the background of Švejk’s stories on a verbal basis, are presented exclusively in the active core of the situational chain, hereby known as active realization of the situation.

The dissertation ends with the conclusion that the goals put forth at the beginning of the work have been reached and promises that their author will dedicate himself to a more detailed comparative analysis of the problems discussed here in the future.