

The Kind Millionaire, Lemonade Joe *and* Superman. *On Czech Film Parodies*

The figures named in the title of this article represent but a fraction of the set of characters who have appeared in film parodies produced by Czech cinema. Since the 1940s, and especially in the 1960s, a remarkably large number of the comedies created by the Czech film industry have been parodies. Most of them achieved remarkable success (the viewing figures for two of the films exceeded four million), and they are still shown on various TV channels and distributed on DVD; at least one of the films, *Lemonade Joe* (1964), has earned international acclaim.

Parody[1] is usually labeled as a genre, and is often discussed in the context of genre[2] nevertheless, it is more of a specific approach[3] based on an intertextual relationship, that is, on the relationship between a pre-text (a parodied text) and a post-text (a parodic text): the parodic text focuses on the parodied text (or on a whole complex of source texts), and adopts or imitates some of its specific features, but at the same time, operates with modifications and deformations which lead to a change in the textual function towards comicality, ridicule or polemics.

In speaking here about a text, it is necessary to point out that *text* is meant in a broad sense, that is, a text can include both verbal and non-verbal elements. Thus, intermediality is closely connected to intertextuality; parodies are typically realized not within just one medium, but across a variety of media, so that the process of intermedial transcoding, the transposition of one sign system into a different system, often becomes an integral part of the creation of parody.

Another important aspect is closely connected to the question of what can function in the position of a pre-text for parody: in addition to parodies based on one concrete text, there are many parodic works which represent a reaction to the characteristic features of the texts of a specific author (his or her individual style) or of the texts of a group of authors, and also to the conventional characteristics of a genre, functional style, discourse (determined by topic, situation, the social status of participants) or medium.[4] In such cases, an architext (in the defi-

The Characteristics of Parody

[1] For the basic characteristics of parody and the difficulty of defining it, see P. Mareš, "Parodie jako forma intertextuality" [Parody as a Form of Intertextuality], *Slovo a slovesnost* 73, 2012, no. 4, pp. 285–298.

[2] See, for example, D. Mocná, "Parodie" [Parody], in D. Mocná, J. Peterka et al., *Encyklopedie literárních*

žánrů [Encyclopedia of Literary Genres], Paseka, Prague–Litomyšl 2004, pp. 441–447.

[3] T. Verweyen – G. Witting, *Einfache Formen der Intertextualität. Theoretische Überlegungen und historische Untersuchungen*, Mentis, Paderborn 2010, p. 268.

[4] For more on this, see also P. Mareš, op. cit., p. 290.

inition proposed by Gérard Genette[5] in his theory of transtextuality) becomes the pre-text for the parody.

Finally, it should be emphasized that parody is not only an artistic or aesthetic phenomenon, but also a phenomenon of culture and cultural politics. The position of parodies within a cultural and social context is significantly influenced by the fact that they are often connected with value tensions and contradictions that appear to be significant at a given moment in history. Parodies thus reflect contemporary ideas (often enforced by political power) about the oppositions between art and non-art, “high” and “low” art, (merely) entertaining art and art that cultivates the public, harmful and beneficial art, outmoded and progressive art, rigid and innovative art.

To capture the distinctive features of Czech film parodies, their effect and the reasons for their popularity with audiences, we need to have these characteristics in mind.

Parody in Czech Cinema

The high number and popularity of film parodies is undoubtedly connected to the rich representation of parodic works in Czech literature and theatre.[6] Some of these works became the basis for film adaptations, but they were by no means the sole source. Texts by foreign authors were also adapted; for example, the impulse for one of the most successful parodies, *Four Murders Are Enough, Darling* (1970), came from *No Entry for the Dead*,[7] a humorous detective novel by the Croatian author Nenad Bixi. In addition, a number of parodies were based on original screenplays.

Most significant, however, is the fact that many literary and film parodies were directly or indirectly motivated by journalistic and cultural-political activities. By the 1930s, a campaign had developed against so-called trash literature, including popular genres such as the mystery novel, Westerns and romances. After World War II there was a marked intensification of this campaign, and from February 1948 (when the Communist Party took power in Czechoslovakia) the attempts to reduce “trash literature” developed into serious administrative interventions. Censorship, state control of publishing houses, and the discarding, confiscation and elimination of older publications led to the above-mentioned popular genres being generally forced out of cultural circulation.[8]

Parodies, which arose mainly in the 1940s, contributed to the campaign against trash by reflecting, caricaturing and ridiculing the conventions of the genres being criticized. Due to the intertextual nature of parody, however, the influence of these works was not entirely

[5] G. Genette, *Palimpseste. Die Literatur auf zweiter Stufe*, Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt am Main 1993, pp. 13–14.

[6] The development of parody in Czech culture is outlined by D. Mocná, op. cit.

[7] *Mrtvacima ulaz zabranjen* (1960); A Czech

translation, *Mrtvým vstup zakázán*, was published in 1965.

[8] See P. Janáček, *Literární brak. Operace vyloučení, operace nahrazení, 1938–1951* [Trash Literature. Operation of Exclusion, Operation of Replacement, 1938–1951], Host, Brno 2004.

clear-cut as, at the same time, they continued to raise awareness of the characteristic features of the genres being parodied. With respect to films, the Martin Frič comedy *The Hard Life of an Adventurer* (*Těžký život dobrodruha*, 1941) fits partly into this category: the author of crime stories about a gentleman burglar is suddenly drawn into a world of crime which functions exactly as he described it in his trash works; however, it turns out that this was just a game intended to prove to the author that the stories he tells in his books are untrue and immoral; as additional evidence, a young man who, following the example in his crime stories, attempts a robbery is arrested. Later, following the campaign against trash, a film was shot which became a classic representative of Czech parody, *The Poacher's Foster-Daughter or The Kind Millionaire* (*Pytláková schovanka aneb Šlechtný milionář*, 1949).[9]

The Poacher's Foster-Daughter is a complex and elaborate parody on literary and cinematic conventions, which, however, reached its audience – from the point of view of the development of the anti-trash campaign – with a delay (its first run was in April 1949), and thus its reception was reserved; the discussion about “harmful” genres, however humorous and ridiculing it was, did not correspond to the time when power interventions intended to eradicate these genres and make them fall into oblivion were realized.

Frič's parody chose sentimental romance for its main pre-text. This literary genre was popular and widely circulated in the 1930s and was the object of numerous film adaptations.[10] However, the rise of state-directed, “nationalized” cinema in 1945, the proclaimed goal of which was to improve the quality of films being shot, brought a categorical rejection of these themes. *The Poacher's Foster-Daughter* thus recalled, after a break of several years, a once favourite but now condemned genre.

The film's screenwriters made use of a typical parodic technique, namely the accumulation of characteristic motifs of the genre and their escalation to absurdity.[11] The complicated story, in which an inexperienced girl, Elén, and a “kind millionaire”, René Skalský, are the central characters, is based on changes in love relationships full of misunderstanding, twists and accidental encounters, which are, nevertheless, interpreted as interference by fate. Related to this is a completely inappropriate application of the motifs of secrecy, loss and searching:

If [...] in serious titles, one, or a maximum of two, characters were endowed with a mysterious past, in *The Poacher's Foster-Daughter*, their number is

[9] The film was again directed by Martin Frič. It was based on an original screenplay written by Rudolf Jaroš, Milan Noháč, Josef Neuberg and František Vlček.
[10] According to the most popular publishing series, romances were, in the Czech context, mostly called the *red library*. D. Mocná discusses the film adaptations of these prosaic works in her “Červená knihovna v českém filmu třicátých let” [The “Red

Library” in Czech cinema of the 1930s], *Illuminace* 7, 1995, no. 2, pp. 53–100.

[11] A thorough analysis of the film is given by D. Mocná, “Pytláková schovanka aneb Fričovo velké loučení” [The Poacher's Foster-Daughter or Frič's Big Farewell], *Illuminace* 8, 1996, no. 2, pp. 77–105. The interpretation given here is based on a number of the author's conclusions.

The Poacher's Foster-Daughter

highly exaggerated. As a result, the film is peopled by orphans, foster-daughters and protégés [...] and is wandered around by people with memory loss, parents looking for their children and, vice versa, children looking for their parents, or old lovers lacking their former counterparts.[12]

Moreover, the genre base of the film is complemented by elements coming from different contexts, which results in a mixture of heterogeneous components. For example, the character of a passionate poacher has its origin in the popular rural story; in contrast to this, in *The Poacher's Foster-Daughter* there is also a perfect English servant and an unscrupulous businessman with contacts in the underworld, which corresponds to the world of American thrillers.

A notable feature of *The Poacher's Foster-Daughter* is that the principle of parodic deformation is realized not only on the level of the narrated story but also on the visual level, which builds the specificity of the film medium. Its rapidly changing and disparate settings evoke the conventions of both Czech and foreign films (for example, the millionaire's estate, the deck of a luxury liner). Moreover, conventions connected with the development of cinema are also brought to attention: two flashbacks set in the time period before sound was used in film highlight techniques of filming and acting typical of the silent era and also simulate signs of wear and tear on an old film strip. Parody also becomes a form of cinematic self-reflection here: the heroine, Elén, cannot learn from her mother who her father was because even though he told her mother his name, he did so during the time "when [...] film was still silent". Finally, notable visualizations of banal symbols present a very distinct component of the humorous and parodic effect of *The Poacher's Foster-Daughter*: the blazing and fading fireplace correlates to the positive or negative development of the love-affair between Elén and René. Later, in a hospital, the spirit of René, who is on the verge of death, climbs a rope ladder to heaven, but Elén's singing forces him to return to his body.

As a whole, *The Poacher's Foster-Daughter* provides telling proof of the ambivalent nature of parody. Its creators mocked the conventions of the genre with great delight, but at the same time, the fascination with the artificial world, which was the object of their attacks, was always evident. *The Poacher's Foster-Daughter* aimed to enlighten its audience, who were to realize the poor quality and untruthfulness of the parodied texts and films; at the same time, access which would consider the work to be a valid representative of the sentimental romance genre was not completely blocked. A way out, although highly questionable from an artistic point of view, was found at the very end of *The Poacher's Foster-Daughter*: the "kind millionaire" steps out of his role and explicitly points to the parodic modus of the film.

Lemonade Joe

The film *Lemonade Joe, or A Horse Opera* (*Limonádový Joe aneb Koňská opera*, directed by Oldřich Lipský, 1964), which stands at the

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 88.

head of a strong wave of parodies in Czech cinema, is also rooted in the campaign against trash. The first item in the intertextual chain of which the movie is a part is the short story by Jiří Brdečka from the year 1940; the author was parodying popular Western stories, particularly those published in the *Novels for the Pocket* (*Romány do kapsy – Rodokapsy*) series. Brdečka later elaborated the adventures of his perfect gunman in two theatre productions (1944, 1955), in novel form (1946), and finally (as a screenwriter) in a film version.

Over the years, the cultural context changed considerably. While older versions of the story counted on being interpreted against a background of knowledge concerning the parodied genre, the film entered a context in which literary and film Westerns were almost inaccessible to audiences; more or less around the time of the premiere of *Lemonade Joe*, American Westerns began appearing sporadically in Czech cinemas after a long gap (which started with the ban on the import of American movies during World War II). Paradoxically, therefore, on the one hand, *Lemonade Joe* emphasized the unveiling and ridiculing of the conventions of the Western, while on the other, it mediated information about the characteristics of the genre in question and helped to restore the break in its continuity. It is likely that both factors contributed to its popularity with audiences.

The film *Lemonade Joe*, following previous versions of the story, creates its comic effect primarily by the fact that it shows the plot patterns of Westerns in concentrated form: the usual constellation of characters, the typical situations and settings (a foreigner coming to enforce law and order, a fake poker player, gunmen, entertainment in the saloon, duels, bank robbery and so on), and operates with simple opposites (good–evil, innocent–corrupt, polite–rude, beautiful–ugly). In addition, similarly to *The Poacher's Foster-Daughter*, but much more comprehensively and consistently, *Lemonade Joe* uses techniques typical of early phases of development within cinema, such as tinting, fast motion, reverse motion, jump cut, and iris shot. The result is a picture of the Wild West that gives a comic impression, but which is also marked by a certain naïve charm and which evokes feelings of nostalgia. At the same time, however, a subversive element is applied, which is an innovation introduced to the story by the film. While in earlier versions, *Lemonade Joe* was a selfless lover and promoter of lemonade, from which he drew his invincibility, the “film Joe” becomes a representative and co-owner of the factory that produces the lemonade. This leads to a mocking disruption of the Western myth in that the actions of the “avenger of injustice” are in fact motivated by economic interests.

After the major success of *Lemonade Joe*, a number of other films that parodied different popular genres (or their subtypes and stages of development) were created over the following years. What they had in common was that, like the Western shot by Oldřich Lipský, they broke the rule that is usually considered to be a condition for

The Golden Age of Genre Parodies

the proper reception of parody. Their pre-texts were not works that were generally well-known and they could not therefore be assessed in terms of their humourous or ridiculing reshaping; on the contrary, they were works that were difficult to access for the audience of the time. The parodies either turned to the genres that were removed from the awareness of readers and audiences by the above-mentioned campaign against trash, or to contemporary genres developed in the “West” which appeared to be difficult to accept for ideological reasons. The often-mentioned ambivalence of parodies thus came to the fore here in a very distinctive form: on the one hand, genre conventions were disclosed, ridiculed and taken to extreme in these films; on the other, parodies could also function as a source of ideas concerning the main features of the originals and as a substitution of what was inaccessible and rejected by officialdom.

In July 1966, *The Phantom of Morrisville* (*Fantom Morrisvillu*) was released in cinemas.^[13] This was a parody of the classic English detective story in its trivialized form (represented *inter alia* by Edgar Wallace) which had been, mainly in the interwar period, widely translated and also had its Czech imitators. In its construction of the story, *The Phantom of Morrisville* simply repeats proven parodic techniques with an assembly of typical features: a noble aristocratic milieu and ancestral secrets, a castle full of secret passages, a mysterious masked man, an amateur detective capable of penetrating deduction, a crime genius who rules a group of gangsters, an innocent beauty in peril, and so on. What is significant, however, is the framework with which the film is equipped: an insufficiently busy musician secretly reads an old pulp detective story during a performance of *Carmen*, and in his imagination, which is visualized through the film’s central plot, he identifies himself with its protagonist (this is pointed to by the fact that the same actor plays the diffident musician as well as the rich and elegant Sir Hanibal Morris). The pulp detective story thus appears to be more attractive than the high art of the opera, as it fulfills the need for fantasy and acts as a means of compensation for an uninteresting life. This is also highlighted in the closing scene of the film, in which the detective story is eagerly taken by another musician.

In August 1966, another parody, *Who Wants to Kill Jessie?* (*Kdo chce zabít Jessii?*),^[14] had its first run. The source of humour this time was American comic strips with fantastic inventions and heroes endowed with supernatural powers; the fact that knowledge of the authentic form of such comics was rather restricted in Czech culture at the time is shown by the representation of Superman as a prototypically negative figure.

Vorlíček’s next film (based on a story by Oldřich Daněk) focused on the spy genre and was evidently influenced by the new (at the time) series of films about the agent James Bond: *The End of Agent W4C*

[13] Directed by Bořivoj Zeman; screenplay by František Vlček.

[14] Directed by Václav Vorlíček and based on a screenplay by Miloš Macourek and Václav Vorlíček.

(*Konec agenta W4C prostřednictvím psa pana Foustky*, 1967).[15] Miloš Macourek returned to parodying comics as the screenwriter for Oldřich Lipský's comedy *Four Murders Are Enough, Darling* (*Čtyři vraždy stačí, drahoušku*, 1970), which tells the story of a battle between two bands of gangsters (it is interesting that Nenad Brixi's novel, upon which the film plot drew, contains no reference to comics). After a gap of several years, the film *Adele Hasn't Had Her Dinner Yet* (also known as *Dinner for Adele; Adéla ještě nevečeřela*, directed by Oldřich Lipský, 1977) was shot; the author of the script, Jiří Brdečka, was inspired by stories of the incredible adventures of private detective Nick Carter, which had been published in the USA since 1886 and had provided highly popular, albeit "trash" reading; at the same time, the Nick Carter stories represent a phase in the development of detective prose.

This whole group of parodies is connected by the fact that they all use, although in different variations, the technique of confronting disparate elements. A certain prototype of such a structure of parody can already be found in the film *The Hard Life of an Adventurer*, where the writer was forced into a conflict with a fictional world which he himself created in his texts. In the above-mentioned comedies, the conventions and artificiality of the world built by the parodied genre is repeatedly documented and revealed through its collision with the world, which is presented as real, common, and at least in some aspect, close to the Czech audience at that time. It is important that characters representing commonness disrupt the smooth functioning of the mechanism of the world of the genre, gain ground against it, and sometimes even destroy the structure of the parodied genre.

In the film *Who Wants to Kill Jessie?*, the figures materialized from the comics do not, therefore, despite their fantastical abilities, experience conflicts with the needs, desires and ambitions for power that rule everyday life. A way out is provided by an escape from the human world in the form of a tragicomic humanization: a beauty from the comics, who had until then expressed herself through "bubbles", suddenly starts to talk, offering the hero of the film the perspective of the same marital stereotype that had previously been his fate. In *The End of Agent W4C*, a homely and clumsy accountant is involved against his will in a fight with a spy headquarters, which has super-agents and sophisticated gadgets at its disposal, and which not only acquires the strategic documents searched by the agents, but also destroys the until-then invincible spy. A similar role is assigned to the shy and inconspicuous teacher in the film *Four Murders Are Enough, Darling*. Finally, in the comedy *Adele Hasn't Had Her Dinner Yet*, Ledvina ("Kidney"), a plebeian Prague policeman, acts as a counterweight to the neat, perfect and technically well-equipped American detective, Nick Carter. With his peculiar methods, Ledvina contributes significantly to the success

[15] The Bond movies were obviously not screened in Czech cinemas and the press provided only limited and biased information about them.

of the detective's mission (where Carter's device emitting a beam of light – "a gift of my friend Laser" – does not suffice, Ledvina's pocket knife helps). It highlighting of the ordinary and the everyday undoubtedly resonated with the preferences of Czech audiences and represented an essential value that added to the humorous effect of its parodying.

The medium-length film *Teamwork* (*Na brigádě*) continues this series of genre parodies; it forms one part of the movie *The Prague Five* (*Pražská pětka*, directed by Tomáš Vorel, 1988), which is mainly a presentation of the poetics of experimental theatre ensembles. The production novels and films typical of the 1950s provided the impulse for the parody *Teamwork*. Played by the members of *The Cellar Theatre* (*Divadlo Sklep*), the film deals with the help of organized communist youth in an agricultural cooperative and shows how love helped to re-educate an individualist. Although parody as a genre was not a common part of the culture of the time, in this case, the genre survived in the collective memory as an oppressive element of development that was still alive. The parody functioned as a means of accepting this development through grotesque exaggeration and the highlighting of absurd moments.

The Mystery of the Castle in the Carpathians

A distinctive place among Czech parodies is held by *The Mystery of the Castle in the Carpathians* (*Tajemství hradu v Karpatech*, directed by Oldřich Lipský, 1981), an adaptation of Jules Verne's novel *Le château des Carpathes* (1892); the screenplay was again produced by Jiří Brdčka. It is a parody related to a single piece of serious mainstream literature. At the time the film was released, Verne's novels were in wide circulation and, with respect to their emphasis on scientific advancement and social and moral appeals, were considered to have educational potential as literature for youth. Moreover, Czech cinema was proud of several differently approached adaptations of Verne shot by Karel Zeman and based on a visually impressive, poetic and deliberately naïve style.^[16]

The Mystery of the Castle in the Carpathians is based, with considerable accuracy, on the original romantically exalted story, but the manner of depiction converts it into a ridiculous and grotesque form. The parodic aspect is particularly present in the speech component (puns, comic language) and in the bizarre stylization of costumes, props and decorations. In addition, the heroes of the story become caricatures of characters who appear in various popular genres and thus refer to traditions within literature and cinema (the idealized positive hero in conflict with the evil villain, the mad scientist, the courageous forest keeper, the devoted butler, and so on).

The way *Le château des Carpathes* is adapted can be seen as a reference to the antiquity of Verne's adventure novels (it is suggested by the use of techniques evoking the early years of cinema, such as tinting); at the same time, the value of this kind of literature is not in doubt, but

[16] The most famous of these films is *The Fabulous World of Jules Verne* (*Vynález zkázy* "Deadly Invention", 1958).

rather, what is being shown is presented as one of the possible ways of its survival in different cultural and social contexts. On the other hand, it is not without significance that the spheres touched upon by film parody broadened, as the pre-text was a novel belonging to a tolerated genre and written by an author who, despite certain doubts, was not among the targets of the campaign against trash.[17]

Parodies produced in the post-1989 era did not manage to catch the attention of audiences so well. They failed to assert themselves in the competition with older parodies, which are endlessly repeated on various TV channels. An undoubtedly important factor in this was that the previous multiple functions of parodies had been reduced: they started to be perceived merely as a source of entertainment (sometimes quite pandering entertainment), supposedly intensified by the audience's pleasure at recognizing the pre-texts.[18]

Horror Story (Krvavý román, 1993), [19] directed by Jaroslav Brabec, is an exception and surely the most interesting parodic film of this period; at the same time, it is a peculiar individual project.[20] Brabec adapted Josef Váchal's book (published in 1924) of the same name. Váchal's text includes numerous parodic elements, yet it primarily represents a reflection (an admiring one) on popular reading in the second half of the nineteenth century and a concentrated depiction of its principles (the emphasis on sensation and horror and the mysterious nature of the plot, which disregards logic and probability in terms of the motifs of crime, murder, conspiracy, mistaken identity and strokes of fate). The author also imitated, in a stylized way, the crude language and composition of this kind of reading. Brabec could transfer only some components from the intentionally highly convoluted plot of the pre-text into the film. What is especially remarkable, however, is the fact that he found a certain equivalent to Váchal's style in the emphatic and often as if clumsy and unsuccessful use of characteristic elements of silent and early sound cinema. Thus he once more confirmed that one of the distinctive features of Czech parodies is their self-reflective orientation to the film medium.

Smart Philip (Mazaný Filip, 2003) was not as compelling. After many years, Václav Marhoul converted his own dramatic production, presented at *The Cellar Theatre* in 1986 and in a revised version in 1994, into film form.[21] *Smart Philip* parodies the American hard-boiled

Between Horror Story and Trash

[17] For more on this see P. Janáček, op. cit., p. 213, 378.

[18] The overall description and evaluation of these parodies is presented by J. Čulík, *Jací jsme. Česká společnost v hraném filmu devadesátých a nultých let* [How We Are. Czech Society in Feature Films of the 1990s and 2000s], Host, Brno 2007, pp. 530–531, 538–541, 544–545.

[19] Literally, "Bloody Novel". The term is analogous to *Penny Dreadful*.

[20] See also T. Bartošek, "Krvavý román. Studie kulturně a filmově historická" [Horror Story. A Study in Cultural and Film History], *Film a doba* 39, 1993, no. 2, pp. 72–77.

[21] The poetics of the *Cellar Theatre*, operating with grotesque humour and hyperbole, had already been used in the film parody *Teamwork* (1988).

school of detective prose, mainly the works of Raymond Chandler (the “*Smart*” *Philip* is Philip Marlowe) and their adaptations in the style of *film noir*. While in live theatre presentations the parody gained enormous success, the film gives the impression of a disparate and affectedly comic work; its only unifying theme is provided by a humourous imitation of Marlowe’s famous monologues.

Other parodies are characterized by their purely commercial nature and by cheap, even amateurish, treatment. Sometimes a provocative highlighting of “bad taste” and the bizarre is added, benefiting from the phenomenon of video-mania focused on popular genres such as horror. *The Vampire Wedding* (*Svatba upírů*, directed by Jaroslav Soukup, 1993)[22] uses traditional horror motifs and also draws on the already parodic *Dance of the Vampires* (1967). *Choking Hazard* (a story by Štěpán Kopřiva, directed by Marek Dobeš, 2004) attempts, with an emphasis on eccentric humour and scenes full of blood, to parody films about zombies. Also worthy of mention is the directorial debut of Karel Spěváček, which catches attention by its name, *Trash* (*Brak*, 2003); *Trash* is a mixture of ironic references to various films, mainly thrillers, and especially to the works of Quentin Tarantino (drug overdose, attempts to get rid of a corpse, mafia killings, and so on).

Conclusion

Although recent decades have seen a period of stagnation and decline in quality, it is clear that parodies represent a fundamental and distinctive component of Czech cinema. The period of their development falls paradoxically in the years when cinema was state-directed and the format of films was limited by a number of cultural and political demands and restrictions. Within this framework, various notable parodies were made. They reflected and caricatured genre conventions, but at the same time admitted a certain attraction to the pre-texts and contained many humourous scenes that became a foundation of their great success with Czech audiences. It should also be mentioned that some important writers and screenwriters (Jiří Brdečka, Miloš Macourek, Oldřich Daněk and others) contributed to the cultivation of parodies, as did a number of highly capable directors (particularly Martin Frič and, later, Oldřich Lipský and Václav Vorlíček).[23]

[22] The story was written by Soukup together with Miroslav Vaic.

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