

Abstract

Key Words: Comparatistics, Intertextuality, Essayism, Esem, Milan Kundera, Ričardas Gavelis, Laughter, Kitsch, Vulgarly, Carnevalism, Thanatos, Sexuality

This comparativist thesis discusses the intellectual novel of the end of the 20th century. The study objects chosen for this paper were the works of Ričardas Gavelis and Milan Kundera. Due to the differences in the poetics of the works, it was chosen to analyze four works of each writer's large prose.

In the case of Gavelis they are as follows: *Vilnius Poker* (Vilniaus pokeris, novel, 1989), *Vilnius Jazz* (Vilniaus džiazas, novel, 1993), *The Last Generation of People on Earth* (Paskutinioji Žemės žmonių karta, novel, 1995) and *Six Ways of Suicide* (Septyni savižudybės būdai, novel, 1999).

From Kundera's works we picked out *The Farewell Party* (*Valčík na rozloučenou*, novel, 1972), *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting* (*Knihou smíchu a zapomnění*, novel, 1978), *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* (*Nesnesitelnou lehkostí bytí*, novel, 1984) a *Immortality* (*Nesmrtelnost* in french, 1990, in czech 1993).

One of the main aims of this study is to introduce the Czech reader to Ričardas Gavelis: one of the most important and influential writers of Lithuanian literature of the late 20th century. The works of this writer are not yet properly evaluated even in his native Lithuania, while the writer is hardly known in Czechia.

Gavelis' works were not comprehensively compared with works of other writers before. Therefore, in order to reveal the value and uniqueness of this Lithuanian novelist's creative work, it was chosen to compare his work with one of the most famous end of the 20th century writers, the founder of the intellectual novel, Milan Kundera.

Thusly, the study presents the authors themselves and the parallels of their creativity context.

The main theoretical approach of this work is the comparative method. This particular method makes it impossible to compare only the writers' work, but also the context of their lives. The work tries to point out the most important points of contact, parallels and differences between Gavelis and Kundera's works.

Intertextuality theory has been used as the main analytical tool. The paper covers a wide range of topics, but is mainly based on Gérard Genett's ideas. Among intertext motives, we include

not only quotation, but also plagiarism and allusion. Gérard Genette concepts of *transformation* and *imitation* are thus invoked.

The theory of essayism by Mikhail Epstein was selected as an interpretative tool. Here, indirect quotes and allusions are called "esems". The theory of intertextuality in this work is applied precisely by the method of revealing the esems using the theory of essayism.

The practical part discusses the peculiarities of novel composition using the defined reading tools, motives of laughter, grotesque, kitsch, vulgarity, thanatos, sexuality and carnivalism are analyzed, which in turn connects it together. The last part mentions the differences between characters, focusing on the expression of female heroes in the novels of both authors.

To summarize, it can be stated that in the works of both writers one can see a common intertextual context (like a background). Characters, narrative forms, but also by the roles of the narrator are being played with. Common trends can be seen not only in the images of the characters, but also in the selected essayist themes. The most striking difference, however, is the depiction and role of women characters.

The intellectual creator of the late twentieth century, even having matured in different circumstances, is looking for creative support in the same places. He reads and faces the same texts, appreciates similar artistic tendencies and is able to not only absorb or accumulate, but also pass them on in his own creative texts.