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Irony, Parody and Collage: Postmodernism in Monty Python Films

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Zásady pro vypracování:

Předmětem práce bude vybraná filmová tvorba britské komediální skupiny Monty Python proslavené nekonvenčními přístupy k rozličným tématům a jejich zpracováním. Úvodní část práce podá stručný nástin postmoderního umění s akcentem na hlavní trendy a techniky užité v oblasti kinematografie. S pomocí relevantní sekundární literatury autorka vypracuje detailní analýzu ironie a parodie ve filmech Python's Life of Brian, Monty Python and the Holy Grail a Monty Python's The Meaning of Life. Důraz bude kladen na užití těchto prvků ve vztahu k britské a evropské minulosti, které se tvůrci ve svých filmech často dotýkají. Autorka se také pokusí charakterizovat užití koláže a příbuzných nekonvenčních technik. Práci uzavře kapitola shrnující předchozí úvahy a zjištění.

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Souhrn

Monty Python je britsko-americká skupina, která se proslavila svým kontroverzním a netypickým humorem. Jejich práce převážně zesměšňuje jak britskou, tak evropskou společnost a její nešvary. Cílem této práce je analyzovat postmoderní prvky, jmenovitě ironii, parodii a koláž, v díle této kontroverzní skupiny a zároveň poukázat na paralely mezi evropskou historií a jejich tvorbou.

Tato práce na úvodu představuje formaci skupiny a jejich dílo, jak seriál *Monty Pythonův Létající Cirkus*, tak filmovou tvorbu, která skýtá 3 celovečerní filmy v jejich vlastní režii. Hlavním cílem této práce je analyzovat výše zmíněné postmoderní prvky - ironie, parodie a koláž. Tato práce zkoumá tři celovečerní filmy z dílny Monty Pythonů – *Monty Python a Svatý Grál, Život Briana* a *Monty Python a Smysl života*.

Klíčová slova

Monty Python, postmodernismus, ironie, parodie, koláž, satira, sarkasmus, film, skeč,

Abstract

Monty Python is a British-American comical group, famous for its controversy and typical humour. Their work mostly burlesques British and European society and its abuses. The aim of this thesis is to identify, describe and demonstrate the postmodern features in Monty Python's work and at the same time to focus on parallels between European history and Python's creation.

The thesis introduces the formation of the group and also their work in a series called *Monty Python's Flying Circus* so film production which includes three full-length movies, unfed their direction. Further, it is focused on postmodernism itself and on its postmodern features – irony, parody, collage. The thesis explores the three full-length movies made by Monty Python – *Monty Python and The Holy Grail*, *Life of Brian* and *Monty Python's The Meaning of Life*.

Contents

Introduction

This thesis, for the most part, concentrates on postmodern features - parody, irony and collage in the film creation of British comedy group Monty Python that has significantly influenced not only the British humour scene. The goal of this thesis is to analyze these three postmodern features in Monty Python's movies – *Monty Python and The Holy Grail* (further only *The Holy Grail*); *Life of Brian* and *Monty Python's The Meaning of Life* (further only *The Meaning of Life*). These elements will be analyzed in the background of British and European history.

The first chapter of the thesis deals with the rise of postmodernism and its characterisation in comparison with modernism. It describes the beginning of postmodernism and also mentions its founders who started the 'storm of postmodernism'. This chapter further focuses on modernism, describes its main features and highlights the changes from the modern to postmodern era. The last part of this paragraph that is focused on postmodern art characterises and describes devices that postmodern artists use to make their pieces clearly fictional for their readers or viewers. From vision art technique pastiche is mentioned and its use in postmodern art and the literal techniques are represented here by historical metafiction that it introduces on a few pieces of literature. This part also highlights the film production which is described as a crucial element of postmodern art to evoke the illusion of what is real and what is a fake.

The main goal of the second chapter is to introduce the comedy group Monty Python, its creation and also development. Further, it briefly presents plots of Monty Pythons' movies namely *The Holy Grail*; *Life of Brian* and *The Meaning of Life*.

The main aim of the further paragraphs is to analyze postmodern features: irony, parody and collage in Monty Python's movies. This analysis is drawn with stress on the history of Great Britain as well as European history. These three chapters are divided into theoretical parts, which introduce the postmodern technique itself and continue with a practical analysis of each movie individually. The analysis is based on practical examples selected from screenplays. The examples should examine all postmodern features mentioned above and analyze them due to European and British history. These examples should prove the parallels between storylines and real British and European historical events and characters.

1. Rise of Postmodernism

The term postmodernism denotes a particular period in society and art. This term was first mentioned at the end of the 19th century, by John Watkins Chapman to describe a painting which he saw as more advanced than a painting of Monet. In Chapman's usage of the term 'postmodern' meant something new from Impressionism. In the 1960's British historian Arnold Toynbee made a mention of the 'post-Modern age'. According to Toynbee's analysis the beginning of the postmodern era is characterized by the end of the dominance by Western countries and inhabitation of individualism, capitalism or Christianity (Grenz, 1997, 24).

Although the term postmodernism ensured itself in the 1930's, it gained in importance almost 30 years later. In the 1960's postmodernism became a very attractive tag mostly for artists on the edge of society, who we trying to offer new alternatives, but over time became a part of universal vocabulary. Grenz calls it "the postmodern storm" which drifts through different social aspects and several cultural fields including literature, architecture, film and philosophy (Grenz, 1997, 25).

1.1. Modernism

It has already been mentioned; postmodernism carried modernism further and partly replayed against it. So, to apprehend correctly what postmodernism really means, modernism has to be explained. Peter Childs characterizes modernism in two different ways. In one his points of view is modernism 'time bound concept' which is possible to define between 1890 and 1930. The second point of view describes modernism as a 'timeless' conception which is defined by the creation of writers like Joyce, Mann, Proust, Eliot, etc., whose works Childs describes as "aesthetical radical, contain striking technical innovation, …and involve a certain 'dehumanization' of art". Childs also admits modernism can be seen as a response to industrialization, urban society, new philosophical ideas as well as both World Wars. (2000, 20-21)

1.2.End of the Modern Era

Many theorists unite the modern era closely with manufacturing and production. From these facts, one may conclude that this era is called 'industrial' and the main symbol of it is a factory. On the other hand, the postmodern era is focused on the production of information and its symbol is, of course, the computer. According this fact Grenz explains that "more the modern ability to travel around the world relatively quickly and painlessly is the postmodern capability to gain information from almost anywhere on earth almost instantaneously" (Grenz, 1996, 18).

The differential point between the modern and postmodern era is in the fact that the postmodern era refuses integration and general explanations. These are substituted by respect to deference. Grenz explains that the postmodernists do not consider cognition as objective, because the truth depends on society. He affirms:"whatever we accept as truth and even the way we envision truth depends on the community we participate." (Grenz, 1997, 8) On the other hand Glenn Ward warns that postmodernism should not be considered a rejection of modernism, because postmodernism is more of a dialogue with modernism. (Ward, 2003, 12)

1.3.Postmodern world

Postmodernism is usually linked to a recent change in Western culture, or society, and it is seen as "something" current and new. But Linda Hutcheon, American literal theoretician, explains that "postmodernism cannot simply be used for the contemporary." She sees postmodernism: "…as a cultural activity that can be discerned in most art forms and many currents of thoughts today…" Hutcheon also calls postmodernism"…fundamentally contradictory, resolutely historical and inescapably political." (Hutcheon, 1997, 4-5)

Many theorists still cannot agree with the first mention of the term postmodernism. Grenz presents some theories about when and in what connection, and especially by whom, the term postmodernism was first used. As the most probable, Grenz considers Arnold Toynbee and his multi-volume work *The Study of History*. In this work Toynbee indicates the individualism. Although this definition of 'postmodernism' was already established in the 1930's, its real power came during the 1960's. Art underwent major changes during the transition from modern to postmodern concepts. Postmodern society is full of diverse elements, which are mostly contrary. Due to this fact, postmodern society can be regarded as

a society without any centre, which no longer applies to any scale or any common source of authority. With the advent of postmodern era is closely connected the accession of new moral values that has brought by huge rise of capitalism. People have stopped to feel moral values and rather clamped to money power closely linked to capitalism. Peck and Covel catch the general change in their *Literary Terms and Criticism*, "Characteristics of that society are not only an increasing fragmentation but dominance of commercials values and of technology over human actions and values." (2002, 169) Money has become a symbol of modern society, but also the target of many postmodern authors.

1.4. Postmodern Art

As was mentioned in the previous chapter, the postmodern ethos has brought a loss of grounding in the centre. This change that society went through, from modern to postmodern, is most obvious in cultural life.

The aim of postmodern artists is to bring art to the lay audience. These artists use compositions that are accessible to both artists and non-artists. These devices combine the professional and popular world. It is a kind of rejection of high art, which was as stated by Grenz: "Postmodernism is among the various streams of the avant-garde movement unique in that it does not refer to the artistic elite, but to all those who by popular culture and mass media are involved in everyday life." (Grenz, 1997, 38)

Grenz describes the term pluralism as a most characteristic element of this change. The artists juxtapose contradictory elements of the style that serves as a celebration of diversity, but it is also used as a 'means of ironic rejection of logical reasoning'. Dual coding, that postmodern works are usually characterized by, used to ridicule and the rejection of certain modern era. One widely used artistic method, placing things unrelated to each other, is a collage. This method, with the ability to "quote, and constantly repeat the already existing images" helps to highlight the artists of the postmodern critique of the myth of a single creative artist.

The other method based on juxtaposition is pastiche. The aim of this method is to inundate the viewer with heterogeneous pictures which contest a viewer's impression of entirety. This originally avant-garde method became part of the ordinary, everyday mass art. The diversity of postmodern artworks is not seen as a device to capture the attention but to undermine modernist's cult – 'individual artist". Even postmodernism is sometimes

considered as a new art tendency, but according to Linda Hutcheon is this claim not exactly truth. She does not see postmodernism as a new paradigm, because it is always reworking and never a nostalgic 'return'. Hutcheon describes postmodernism as a struggle for something new and considers bizarre and indefinable works, like Terry Gilliam's film *Brazil*, as a kind of manifestation in art. Hutcheon reminds that "ironic re-thinking of history is texturized here in many general parodic references to other movies." (Hutcheon, 1996, 5) Glenn Ward supports this idea in his book when he declares the feeling of postmodern artists that all goof ideas were already been devised. Postmodern artists have a common feeling of stagnation and through the recombination of existing forms, were looking for a way out of it. Because of that, postmodern texts are "assembled from the different genres and styles." (Ward, 2003, 29)

Glenn Ward points at such a confusing distinction between modern and postmodern literature. It is a fact that both refer to low literature (science fiction or detective novel), but modernists refer to the fact that low-literary needs to improved while high literature is seen as the best way to be. (Ward, 2003, 31) Postmodern art has also brought about a new genre that Linda Hutcheon, and many other authors, call historigraphic metafiction. It can be found in well-known novels such as '*French Lieutenant's Woman*, or *Midnight's Children*. She sees these novels "intensely self-reflexive and yet paradoxically also lay claim to historical event and personages." (Hutcheon, 1996, 5) While Ward presents his theory of the postmodern novel, which use the term 'metafiction'. He describes metafictional novel as a "work of this kind knowing lays bare the conventions of fiction, and draws attention to the language(s) and literary style(s) it uses. In short, it is fiction about fiction." (Ward, 2003, 31) He also indicates devices that according to Patricia Waugh are used to produce a fiction and to make an announcement about creation of that fiction as:

- mixing several styles or genres of writing,
- deliberate use of anachronisms,
- directly addressing the reader in the act of reading,
- commenting on (through parody, for example) other fictional works,
- beginning and ending the story by discussing the convections/difficulties of beginning and ending stories.

These devices help the authors to evoke in the reader (viewer) concern for the characters and also awareness of the illusion of the story. Some postmodern authors use different devices of proving that the story is fiction. For instance they enter to the plot as a narrator, in the middle of narration or they can discuss the techniques of narrative, or

postmodern literature usually places in two different worlds. These techniques show the author's connectedness with his work.

A very popular tool of the author is that the plot contains other timelines; the authors make it clear that it is fiction. An example is shown by Monty Python in the film *The Meaning of Life* where exactly in the middle, the film's plot is interrupted by the following message: „Welcome to the middle of the film." (Jones, 1982, 00:47:40-00:47:13) Another example of this element can be found in the very first film, *The Holy Grail* when the story is interleaved with an excerpt of a famous historian monologue"

HISTORIAN: Defeat at the castle seems to have utterly disheartened King Arthur. The ferocity of the French taunting took him completely by surprise, and Arthur became convinced that a new strategy was required if the quest for the Holy Grail were to be brought to a successful conclusion. Arthur, having consulted his closest knights, decided that they should separate, and search for the Grail individually. Now, this is what they did--Lancelot...
(Jones, 1975, 00:32:00).
And then he is killed by a knight on a horse.

As already mentioned, the postmodern period is considered the 'production' of information, with its spread. Thanks to this phenomenon the development of the media, both radio and television was clearly influenced, this development is closely linked to another postmodern phenomenon, namely the development of film production. Production of films totally responds to the postmodern ethos, because it evokes the illusion that it is not what it exactly is. Grenz calls 'film' a kind of trick in which the viewer perceives a film as a whole, but this is made up of parts, which are filmed at different times and different places. And the fact that the film makers attributed Grenz's "opportunity to juxtapose the different pieces of footage and take what the viewers appear as a unified whole ... and thus blur the differences between 'true' and 'fabrication', between 'reality' and 'fantasy'". (Grenz, 1997, 133) The film has become absolutely the best and most appropriate way to express the post-modern artists. Those, including Monty Python, added completely incompatible elements to their work, and thus bringing the audience to doubt what is fiction and what is true. To evoke these feelings in the audience, a collage used is by Monty Python. This feature is considered, by their fans, as an integral part of their entire film production and can thus be found in all the films that are discussed in this paper. The next chapter will discuss the collage as a separate element and then also a part of making Monty Python.

Postmodern writers use novel as a traditional form, but Ward sees the differences

between the past and what is "a critical, ironic awareness of that tradition."(Ward, 2003, 35)

        Glenn Ward asks a very good question: "What is popular culture, anyway?" He compares the modern and postmodern approach to this question. Today's world brings many opportunities to choose whatever you want. We can listen to the compilation of classical, rock and pop music because many of us have varied taste of music. Modernists would criticise it and tells us what we should listen to or read. But in times of mass media when "anything can go with anything" (Ward, 2003, 35) cultural taste of individuals cannot be given or limited by aesthetic criteria.

2. Monty Python

This legendary, satirical band of comedy geniuses consisted of five Britons – John Cleese, Michael Palin, Terry Jones, Graham Chapman, Eric Idle and one American, Terry Gilliam. Graham, Idle and Cleese met at Cambridge University, where they all studied. After his studies John Cleese left for the United States of America where he met Terry Gilliam. Michael Palin and Terry Jones met at Oxford University and then worked together for the BBC.

The group itself began to be shaped in 1969 when the first project was created. It was a comic sketch serial called *Monty Python's Flying Circus* (further only *Flying Circus*) made for the BBC. These scathes were successfully broadcast for four seasons (1969-1974). Marcia Landy in her book deals with the fact that:

> "*The Flying Circus* adopted a visual and verbal language that enabled transplantation crossing in relation to questions of time, space, modes of narration, pastiche, and intertextuality. Specifically, the mix of high and low culture, the intertextual dimension of the comic material, the daring treatment of the body and the sexuality, and the unrelenting critique of television medium made the shows accessible to wide audience despite the often erudite character of allusions to literature, philosophy, and history." (Landy, 2005, 3)

After their success with *Flying Circus* Monty Python appeared in their first full-length movie *Monty Python and the Holy Grail.* In 1979 their next film called *Monty Python's Life of Brian* came into being, over the next decade Monty Python made two another full-length movies *The Meaning of Life* and *Monty Python Live at the Hollywood Bowl.*
Their work is extraordinary and characterized by their humour and the fact that most of the characters, and roles, in their pieces are portrayed by themselves.

They, however not only cover film and television work, but also have the ability to make fun of anything, which has covered all sectors of art and entertainment. For example, the musical comedy, based on *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, *Monty Python's Spamalot,* won three Tony Awards in 2004-2005 seasons.

Although this group celebrated 40 years of Monty Python, their pieces are still actual and their incomputable style of humour calls out to the next generations of viewers. The proof of Monty Python's popularity is the success of last performance *The 400th anniversary of Monty Python – Not the messiah, he is the very naughty boy*. This musical performance was

prepared by Eric Idle and it is based on Python's movie *Life of Brian*.

Monty Python's work is full of grotesque and humorous elements which are supposed to change serious topics into funny sometimes quite bizarre situations. Authors use different devices and this thesis focuses on three of them that are typical for postmodern art - parody, irony and collage. Each of them has a non-suitable place in the art of comedy and they can be found in many postmodern works.

2.1. Monty Python and the Holy Grail

This paper analyzes three full-length Monty Python movies of which the first being called *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*. The story is set in England in 932AD when King Arthur is looking for knights to join his court in Camelot. When he has chosen the bravest and the most courageous knights, God reveals Himself and gives Arthur the task of finding the Holy Grail. The band of the knights split up to have a better chance of finding the Holy Grail. During their quest, the knights meet many strange and weird figures, like the three-headed Giant, knights who say 'Ni', who want to bring shrubbery, Tim the Enchanter, or the Rabbit of Caerbannog. The final destination of the knights is the Bridge of Death where only Arthur and Sir Bedevere survive, and then these two knights travel to the Grail castle that is occupied by French army. The last scene displays Arthur and Bedevere being arrested by the police.

2.2. Life of Brian

The second movie, called *Life of Brian*, is set in Judea 33AD. This film describes the story of a Jewish boy who, for his whole life, is confused with Jesus Christ. The first confusion is made by three wise men that come to the Bethlehem to pay homage to the newborn Messiah. Brian's suffering continues when he joins the revolutionary group 'People's Front of Judea' (further only PFJ) which fights against the Romans and their oppression. During the attack on the imperial' Palace, Brian falls into Roman captivity; but he escapes. Brian experiences many difficulties when people mistakably follow him as the Messiah, but he just wants be alone with his girl Judith. Brian's story ends up when he is, as Christ was, crucified. After the crucifixion Brian still has a hope when several rescuers, such as suicide commando PFJ, his mother, or his love Judith appear. But no one is going to rescue him. The suicide commando commits suicide, of course, his mother tells him off and Judith assures him that she will never forget him. So, Brian is fated to die, but unlike Jesus, he dies with a song on his lips.

2.3. The Meaning of Life

The Meaning of Life is the name of the final full-length film that this paper examines. It is also the last movie made by Monty Python. The story of this piece cannot be considered as an integrated narration, because it returns to the structure and style of *Flying Circus*. This movie is rather a compilation of sketches that are more or less connected by the topic of human life. The whole picture is divided in seven parts from 'The Birth' ending in 'Death'.

   The Meaning of Life had the hardest conception of all of Python's movies. The individual members of the group already had their own projects and they had little interest in cooperating together. Eventually they get together and created a movie made of sketches with a topic, "What is life about".

2.4. Python after *The Meaning of Life*

This movie was their last project as a group. In 1989 a very sad incident terminated Monty Python. It was a death of Graham Chapman, who passed away at the age of 48. He had been suffering from cancer. After his death the team of Monty Python have never got back together as a group. Audiences have a few occasions to see some of the rest of the Pythons together, but they have never really got back together as a whole team. On the occasion of Monty Python's 30th anniversary Eric Idle has the idea of reunion of the team, but Michal Palin stopped it. According to his words:

   "Because I felt without Graham it wouldn't be quite the same. You can argue that it would be quite similar or quite dissimilar. I thought Graham was very important balance, very much, with his writing, his performing. He was necessary for the group." (Almost the Truth, Part 6, 2009, 00:35:36-00:35:52)

   The Python's work has already inspired many contemporary humorists and their marvellous humour has become a treasure of worldwide entertainment. Gary L. Hardcastle states that,

   "…Monty Python had found its audience, wigging into the collective consciousness, and became one of the most successful and influential comedy institution of the twentieth century. After four seasons and forty-five episodes of *Monty Python 's Flying Circus*, the Pythons did the proper British thing and established an empire of books, audio recording, and feature films, notably *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* (1975), *Monty Python's Life of Brian* (1979), and *Monty Python's Meaning of Life* (1983)….Indeed, much of popular culture had been Pythonized….Read contemporary criticism of entertainment and

culture, or nearly anything "postmodern" and you'll see the word 'pythonesque' or knowing reference to "spam" or "nudge nudge, wink wink" that mark a common bond between author and reader-yep, Python fun." (Gary L. Hardcastle, George A. Reisch, 2006, 2)

With no doubt, Monty Python became a humoristic phenomenon that influenced many contemporary artists, as well as Pythons' fans. These six men with their extraordinary sense of humour are indelibly placed in the history of entertainment.

3. Irony

This chapter describes the term irony, its formation and evolution in history. The main aim of this part is to analyze irony in Monty Python's movies. In previous chapters it was said that irony plays a governing role in postmodernism that implies elements of irony plays a very important meaning in the work of Monty Python.

Although the first mention of irony was given by Aristophanes, the definition which were close to contemporary meaning, were given later. The common definition given by Quintilian mentioned in Claire Colebrook´s book declares "saying what is contrary to what is meant" means irony, does not involve the whole problematic denotation of irony. According to Linda Hutcheon irony is considered as a current "problematic mode of expressions at the end of the twentieth century." (Hutcheon, 1996, 11) Hutcheon does not deny that irony has never been without its problems but today's media use the word irony too much often without certainty of its exact meaning. According to her, irony is "the intentional transmission of information and evaluation attitude other then what is explicitly said." (Hutcheon, 1996, 11)

Martin Gray has a more general point of view of irony in his *A dictionary of Literary Terms* by the definition that describes irony as "a manner of speaking or writing that is dispersed through all kinds of literature; 'irony' consists of saying one thing while you mean another." (Gray, 1992, 152)

Gray also mentions the term 'sarcasm' that is very closely linked with irony. He explains sarcasm as "an ironical statement intended to hurt or insult." (Gray, 1992, 32) He adds the problematic issue of sarcasm that it is not easily recognisable in written form as in a spoken form. In spoken form is much easier to discern and understand to an ironical statement because of the speaker's intonation, gesticulation and also the expression of speaker's face is important. While Gray mentions the term irony in connection with sarcasm, Canadian literary critic Northrop Frye compares irony with the term satire. (Frye, 2005, 258)

According to all these statements it can be said that irony is mainly used by authors to criticize and attack some issues. Irony has usage in literature, painting, theatre and also in film creation.

3.1. Irony in *The Holy Grail*

The first researched movie *The Holy Grail* is based on the legend of the king Arthur and the story is about the King Arthur who searches for the Holy Grail with his band of the Knights of the Round Table. Monty Python do not hesitate to ridicule the best known British legendary king as Richard Barber finds "King Arthur is the greatest of British literary heroes, celebrated by poets and writer for over a thousand years." (Barber, 2004, 1) According to Barber, Arthur's legend has been celebrated in prose and verse for 9 centuries. But the Pythons' conception of Knights of the Round Table who are singing and dancing in the Camelot (Gilliam, Jones, 1975, 00:22:31- 00:23:35) is a bit different.

In this movie, Monty Python worked with theme of searching for the Holy Grail, one of the holiest relics of Christianity. The legend tells the story that in this cup, the blood of Jesus Christ was supposed to have been kept. Justin Griffin in his book *The Holy Grail: the legend, the history, the evidence* presents the theory that the Grail was removed to England by Joseph to protect Britain against the attack of Rome. Because of this assumption is the searching of the Holy Grail probably derived to the legendary king Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. (Griffin, 2001, 119)

The whole Pythons' story about the Knights of the Round Table is full of the references to knight code which was typical of medieval literature. The ironical paraphrases to medieval knights merits like braveness, loyalty, honour, generosity and faith in God, can be found throughout the movie. For instance, Eric Ideal who plays the character of Sir Robin, travels with his servant and singer, meet the three-headed knight:

> THREE HEADS: Halt! Who art thou?
> SINGERS: He is brave Sir Robin, brave Sir Robin, who ...
> ROBIN(to SINGERS): Shut up. Oh, nobody really. just passing through.
> THREE HEADS: What do you want?
> SINGERS: To fight and ...
> ROBIN: Shut up. Nothing really. just to pass through, good Sir knight.
> THREE HEADS: I'm afraid not. This is my bit of the forest. Find your own bit.
> ROBIN: I am a Knight of King Arthur's Round Table. I seek the Holy Grail - Stand aside and let me pass.
> THREE HEADS: You are a Knight of the Round Table?
> ROBIN: I am
> From now on the THREE HEADS speak individually.
> SECOND HEAD: Shit.
> FIRST HEAD: In that case I shall have to kill you.

Then three heads starts to argue and Sir Robin runs away without any notice. (Gilliam, Jones, 1975, 00:32:46-00:34:31) According to Medieval romance about brave and fearless

knights who fought alongside their king can be said that brave Sir Robin is here displayed as a total coward and useless knight. The image of a useless knight compared to, for example, Walter Scot's Ivanhoe, supports the statement of Vladimír Borecký that irony is used to ridicule the object of mockery (Borecký, 2000, 30), in this case the chivalry merits.

Through irony, derision does not spare the British system of government itself in the scene where King Arthur passes through the countryside and encounters two peasants, who collect mud. Arthur starts the conversation with Denis, who refuses Arthur as a king.

> ARTHUR: Well I *am* king...
> MAN: Oh, king, eh, very nice. And 'ow'd you get that, eh?
>   (he reaches his destination and stops, dropping the cart)
>   By exploiting the workers! By 'angin' on to outdated imperialist dogma
>   which perpetuates the economic and social differences in our society.
>   If there's ever going to be any progress,--
>   (Gilliam, Jones, 1975, 00:09:35-00:09:50)

Arthur's frustration further increases in the debate with Denis' mother who absolutely denies the possibility that their country should have a sovereign, who has not been voted.

> WOMAN: "Order", eh, 'oo does 'e think 'e is?
> ARTHUR: I am your king!
> WOMAN: Well I didn't vote for you!
> ARTHUR: You don't vote for kings!
> WOMAN: Well 'ow'd you become king then?
> ARTHUR: The Lady of the Lake-- her arm clad in the purest shimmering samite,
>   held aloft Excalibur from the bosom of the water, signifying by
>   divine providence that I, Arthur, was to carry Excalibur. THAT is why
>   I am your king!
> MAN: (laughingly) Listen: Strange women lying in ponds distributing swords
>   is no basis for a system of government! Supreme executive power
>   derives from a mandate from the masses, not from some... farcical
>   aquatic ceremony!
>   (Gilliam, Jones, 1975, 00:10:55-00:11:28)

Through this scene, the authors have doubts not only about their own system of government, but also the position of the queen alone. At the time this film was made (1970s), Britain found itself in a difficult economic situation, which was the cause of general doubts about the regime and the monarchy. Already this fact alone, when Denis, as the average peasant living at the time of King Arthur is able to discuss the political system of the twentieth century disturbs the historical line of this story. Disruption of this historical line is one of the elements used by postmodern artists, whose aim was to break this line.

Denis also mentions the incompetence of a strange woman from the pond, to crown the British monarch. This idea stresses the fact that the succession to the throne of Great Britain is absolutely uninfluenced by ordinary people who cannot vote their own monarch. In

this case, it is more about the use of sarcasm that is by its significance very close to irony. However, with the difference that irony is based on understanding, but sarcasm is used with the intent, as Gray clams: "hurt and insult."(Gray, 1992, 153) Gray adds that sarcasm: "is direct against a person or a type, and it is usually morally censorious." (1992, 255) And indeed it is as shown when Denis titles the way how the legendary British leader gained his sword and crown as a "farcical aquatic ceremony".

The obvious rivalry between Britain and France is displayed in scene where the King and his band come to the castle that is occupied by these French knights, the authors demonstrate on the conversation between Arthur and the French soldier who is obviously unresponsive to talk with the King of the Britons. This poor relationship between these states has been going on since 10th century, where Britain was under control of Norman tribe which lately caused the One Hundred Years War. In those days this historical rivalry is mostly forgotten and became an object of humorous skits which only mock their relationship.

"ARTHUR: Halt! Hello! Hello!
GUARD: 'Allo! Who is zis?
ARTHUR: It is King Arthur, and these are my Knights of the Round Table. Who's castle is this?
GUARD: This is the castle of my master, Guy de Loimbard!
ARTHUR: Go and tell your master that we have been charged by God with a sacred quest. If he will give us food and shelter for the night he can join us in our quest for the Holy Grail…
…GUARD: I'm French! Why do think I have this outrageous accent, you silly king!
GALAHAD: What are you doing in England?
GUARD: Mind your own business!
ARTHUR: If you will not show us the Grail, we shall take your castle by force!
GUARD: You don't frighten us, English pig-dogs! ---Go and boil your bottoms, sons of a silly person. I blow my nose at you, so-called Arthur-king, you and all your silly English knnnniggets. Thppppt!
GALAHAD: What a strange person.
ARTHUR: Now look here, my good man!
GUARD: I don't want to talk to you no more, you empty headed animal food trough wiper!...... I fart in your general direction! . Your mother was a hamster and your father smelt of elderberries!
GALAHAD: Is there someone else up there we could talk to?
GUARD: No, now go away or I shall taunt you a second time-a!
ARTHUR: Now, this is your last chance. I've been more than reasonable.
(Jones, 1975, 00:26:04-00:28:15)

This dialogue between Arthur and the guard also refers to legendary British emotionless, and politeness. When the guard swears them: "*You don't frighten us, English pig-dogs! ---Go and boil your bottoms, sons of a silly person. I blow my nose at you, so-called Arthur-king, you and all your silly English knnnniggets. Thppppt!*" the only thing that Galahad says is: "*What a strange person.*" (Jones, 1975, 00:27:20-00:27:45) Galahad's calm reaction demonstrates the standoffish attitude of the British to show emotions. The calm and inappropriately reaction points to the British emotionless that is based on legendary British

gentlemanliness. Most people in this situation would shout and maybe swear. But a typical British gentleman has to stay calm and be polite in every situation.

Although the historical existence of King Arthur, for many historians is still unfounded, all over Europe this legendary character is adopted. Thanks to this fact, Monty Python with the help of irony and its relative techniques could ridicule the story about Arthur and his famous Knights of the Round Table. Although it may seem superficial, the figure of King Arthur is not the main subject of ridicule jokes. The authors in this film mainly take to ask human stupidity, and through the irony mock British stereotypes, largely based on historical context of development across the country. Although Arthur is not the main object of humour, writers are not afraid to make a fool of this legendary king who wanders the countryside, accompanied by servants with coconut shells in hand. Instead of a group of gallant knights King Arthur is accompanied by the band of cowardly and sometimes mostly thick-headed guys. The choice of King Arthur as the hero of this satirical story is more logical for his wide popularity. This allowed the authors to ridicule and mock through this historical character and situations that are still current.

3.2. Irony in *Life of Brian*

The previous chapter has already described the second Monty Python's movie which is set in Judea 33AD and where a young Jewish man called Brian who for his whole life confused with Jesus. This film after its opening caused a wave of dislike, because it is closely connected with the life story of the Messiah and his followers. Even if the jokes there are not aimed directly at Jesus, the British censorship in some regions prohibited this movie, because according to the church it humiliated the Messiah and faith in him. (Almost the truth, 2006, 00:31:56-00:32:02) But the purpose of this movie is not to humiliate or ironically ridicule Jesus or faith in him, because even the authors in the document *Almost the Truth* accepted that there is nothing funny about Jesus. (Almost the Truth, 2006, 00:08:48-00:08:56) The screenplay is inspired by the life of Jesus but the authors decided that the main theme of this picture will be an alternative figure with a similar life to Jesus but not being Messiah. He is not blessed but on the contrary describes with all his typical human being characters: "...he is a very naughty boy." (Jones, 1979, 00:62:42-00:62:45).

As mentioned above this movie does not want to ridicule the ideas of Jesus, behaviour or his message. The main purpose of the movie is to show the Jesus' followers who

misinterpreted his ideas and teaching. This misunderstanding is shown in the scene where Jesus speaks to a bunch of people, including Brian, but they cannot hear him and just speculate what he is talking about.

> ...GREGORY: What was that?
> JESUS: ...for their possession. How blest are those...
> MR. CHEEKY: I don't know. I was too busy talking to Big Nose.
> JESUS: ...who hunger and thirst to see...
> MAN #1: I think it was 'Blessed are the cheesemakers.'
> JESUS: ...right prevail.
> MRS. GREGORY: Ahh, what's so special about the cheesemakers?
> GREGORY: Well, obviously, this is not meant to be taken literally. It refers to any manufacturers of dairy products. ...
> (Jones, 1979, 00:08:22-00:08:34)

This scene refers to misunderstood people trying to spread the Messiah's words and his ideas in their own misunderstood way. The authors take to task those people, ridicule them and mock their behaviour and foolishness and they show how wrong interpretation of belief and strong words can lead to very bad consequences.

This ironical view on wrong interpretation has become a timeless matter. Many kinds of religious misinterpretations can be found nowadays, not only ironical or mocking. As a typical example we can present Jesus' country of birth, controlled by intolerance and violence meeting the misunderstanding every day. (Polreich, 2002, online)

The second example of ridiculing people appears in the scene where Mandy and Brian go home from the stoning and meat the ex-leper. Brian is interested in the ex-lepers story:

> BRIAN: Did you say ex-leper?
> EX-LEPER: That's right, sir. Sixteen years behind a bell and fradock, sir.
> BRIAN: Oh...what happened?
> EX-LEPER: I was cured, sir.
> BRIAN: Cured?
> EX-LEPER: Yes, a bloody miracle, sir. God bless you!
> BRIAN: Oh, who cured you?
> EX-LEPER: Jesus did, sir. I was hopping along, minding my own business, all of a sudden up he comes, cures me. One minute
> I'm a leper with a trade, next minute I'm alive and newsgone. Not so much as a bye or league!
> "You're cured, mate". Bloody
> do-gooder.
> BRIAN: Tough. Why don't you go and tell him that you want to be a leper again?
> EX-LEPER: Aah, I could do that sir, yeah. Yeah, I could do that, I suppose. Well, what the thing was I was going to ask him if
> he'd make me a bit lame in one leg during the middle of the week. You know, something peckable but not leprosy, which is a
> pain in the ass, to be blunt dispute my French servant.
> MOTHER: Brian! Come and clean your room out!
> BRIAN: Here you are....

It is based on well-known biblical story when Jesus successfully cured sick a dying people. The parallel between Brian and Jesus' life is shown in this scene when Brian gives money to a beggar and he is angry instead of thankful.

> ... EX-LEPER: Thank you, sir. Than...half a dinar for me bloody life story?
> BRIAN: There's no pleasing some people.
> EX-LEPER: That's just what Jesus said, sir!
> (Jones, 1979, 00:14:36-00:15:34)

This scene uses the irony to show the laziness of people when the ex-leper is more pissed-off then happy, because he is healthy again and has to work. The ironical point of view lies in the upside-down approach to life when it is more comfortable to be sick and ask for the alms then working and being healthy

The last example focuses on the irony of women status in society, especially in the period when the positions of men and women were not equal. It is based on the fact that most of the female roles are played by Pythons themselves which even stresses the gender difference. The Bible itself is based on patriarchal principles when women were forbidden to participate or speak on public meetings and their position was absolutely subordinate to men. (Zormanová, 2011, online) To mock and ironies this fact, Pythons demonstrate the stoning scene where the crowd consists only of a bunch of women wearing fake beards and throwing stones before the beginning of the stoning itself.

> ...OFFICIAL: Come on! Who threw that? Who threw that stone? Come on.
> CROWD: She did! She did! He did! He! He. He. Him. Him. Him. Him. He did.
> CULPRIT WOMAN: Sorry. I thought we'd started.
> OFFICIAL: Go to the back.
> CULPRIT WOMAN: Oh, dear.
> OFFICIAL: Always one, isn't there? Now, where were we? ...
> (Jones, 1979, 00:12:11-00:12:27)

These unequal positions changed in the 21st century, when women earned their place in society and have the possibility of free speech. For most women in European based society it is normal and common to express their own ideas in public without any hesitations or punishment. But this situation is not familiar for women living in Arab society, who cannot express their own feelings or thoughts in public places. Arabic countries do not put women rights on the same level as rights of men. This social inequality is thanks to historical development of our continent and can be seen only in the backward countries.

3.3. Irony in *The Meaning of Life*

The philosophical question that has troubled philosophers for centuries is going to be solved tonight because, "...for tonight is the meaning of life". (Jones, 1981, 00:01:49-00:01:51) This promises the opening song of the last Python's movie '*The Meaning of Life*'. As outlined in the previous chapter, the plot of this movie is compound of many sketches connected with one main topic – human life.

Through the irony the birth of a new child is displayed in this movie when John Cleese and Graham Chapmen act two doctors followed by a crowd of journalists. The seriousness of the miracle of the birth disappears when the father of the new born child is thrown out of the room by obstetrician with words:"I'm sorry. Only people involved are allowed in here.", whilst the rest of the audience can stay. Intimacy of this moment is definitely destroyed when comes in Mr. Pycroft (hospital clerk) and changes the focus of all people from the labouring mother to the machine that goes ping.

> DOCTOR SPENSER: Morning, Mr. Pycroft.
> MR. PYCROFT: Oh, very impressive. Very impressive. And what are you doing this morning?
> OBSTETRICIAN: It's a birth.
> MR. PYCROFT: Aahh. What sort of thing is that?
> DOCTOR SPENSER: Well, that's when we take a new baby out of a lady's tummy.
> MR. PYCROFT: Wonderful what we can do nowadays. [ping] Aah! I see you have the machine that goes 'ping'. This is my favourite. You see, we lease this back from the company we sold it to, and that way, it comes under the monthly current budget and not the capital account. [applause] Thank you. Thank you. We try to do our best. Well, do carry on.
> (Jones, 1982,00:06:20-00:06:55)

Multi-irony can be found in this scene. The authors through irony mock the fact that some clerks and officials care more about money and devices than about the patient's health and viewing childbirth as an act that is not at all a matter of parents at all, but interest of doctors and officials. Trivializing parenthood and family as authors respond to the typical loss of intimacy and privacy brought by the postmodern period.

The 20th century also enabled a technical sophistication and development of many sectors which were based on those improvements. The whole century is considered as a century of scientific progress mainly thanks to new technologies and innovations. Many authors used the theme of advanced machines taking control over the world population while people are disappearing. Python this fear and disappointment shows only on a very small machine that goes ping.

Another scene is set in the period of the Anglo-Zulu wars which were fought in 1878. In this movie John Cleese and Michal Palin represent two British officers who go to check with their colleague who had part of his leg bitten off by an unknown creature. When these two officers enter the tent they find the hurt soldier calmly lying and reading a book without any stress, anxiety or pain. This demonstrates the British legendary austerity and their ability not to let anything shake them. Then a doctor comes to check the patient:

> "DOCTOR LIVINGSTONE: Ehh. Any headache? Bowels all right? Mm. Well, let's have a look at this one leg of yours, then, eh? Yes. Yes. Yes, yes. Yes. Yes. Yes, yes. Yes, well, this is nothing to worry about.
> PERKINS: Oh, good.
> DOCTOR LIVINGSTONE: Yes, there's a lot of it about. Probably a virus. Uh, keep warm, plenty of rest, and if you're playing football or anything, try and favour the other leg.
> PERKINS: Oh.
> DOCTOR LIVINGSTONE: Mhm.
> PERKINS: Right-o.
> DOCTOR LIVINGSTONE: Be as right as rain in a couple of days.
> (Jones, 1983, 00:41:13-00:41:38)

This example demonstrates through irony, the calmness and unemotional British characters for which British people are known around the world. The authors point and partly criticize this British stereotype, which is typical especially for the last century, when English gentlemen could not express their own feelings in public.

Based on the analysis of the film it can be determined that all three investigated films contain irony, through which the authors try to ridicule (with great success) and point out the bad traits in people. Thanks to this unique literary element, Monty Pythons are able to openly laugh at human hypocrisy, dishonesty and many other abuses. For better demonstration and understanding of the audience, the authors like to resort to the use of European history. However, they do not try to mock the very history or its real characters, but show through them the shortcomings of human society. The authors, perhaps because they are British, very often resort to ridicule British values and customs. In their work, stereotypes and values are ridiculed, which most British people pride on and take seriously. That is why Monty Pythons in their time became the loved ones of the young generation and an eyesore in the older and increasingly conservative population.

4. Parody

4.1. Satire

In order to analyze the term parody, it is inevitable to introduce the term satire. The origin of this word can be found in Roman times, when Roman artists performed something they called 'saturae'. These were unreal plays, with no stable plot, with dialogues, dancing and imitation of real-life situations. The first definition of satire was given by Horace. He provides his own theory of satire: "that the satirist, speaking out freely, seeks to laugh men out of their follies." (Highet, 1962, 8) Since the times of Horace hundreds of years have gone by and satire came through certain development to its present definition. *The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* says, "Satire is a way of criticizing a person, an idea or institution in which you use to humour to show their faults or weaknesses; a piece of writing that uses type of criticism." (OALD, 2010, 845). According to Martin Gray's literal dictionary it can be added that satire is "literature which exhibits or examines vice and folly and makes them appear ridiculous or contemptible." (Gray, 1992, 255)

It could be said that satire is used to ridicule and thus alert us to any problem within human society. But according to Northrop Frye's Anatomy of Criticism it is possible to ridicule almost everything and the authors must choose their own absurdities, while still preserving a certain moral value. (Frye, 1973, 224)

Satire has become very popular among artists to express criticism of either the political situation, or human ills. In the view of Gilbert Highet, satire is: "*...one of the most original, challenging, and memorable forms*." (Highet, 1962, 3) From his statement it is clearly evident why satire has become very popular among many artists over the centuries, including Monty Python. When we return to Frye's idea of maintaining morale it could be said that Monty Python had a few problems with this issue, because a few of their pieces were accepted with some embarrassment. Their sketches and later movies stirred up a lot of viewers. Courageous and previously unimaginable humour of all members of Python antagonized many people, but at the same time gained even more viewers.

4.2.Parody

After satire was defined, it can be explained what the term 'parody' means. *A Dictionary of Literary Terms* written by Martin Gray describes parody as "an imitation of specific work of literature (prose or verse) or style device so as to ridicule its characteristic features." Gray also states typical methods of parody that are "[…] exaggeration, or the application of a serious tone to an absurd subject" (Gray, 1992, 210) In connection with parody Highet also points out that

> "Parody is one of the most delightful forms of satire, one of the most natural, perhaps the most satisfying, and often the most effective. It springs from the very heart of our sense of comedy, which is the happy perception of incongruity."
> (Highet, 1962, 67)

According to both of these definitions it can be said that parody is based on a ridiculing imitation of any serious topic. But the presumption to make a good parody is that the parodied work is very well known to the audience. Otherwise, parody of such an effect is not what the authors intended. Gilbert Highet further points out that "parody is not simply imitation". He also alerts that satiric parody has to: "wounds the original, pointing out faults, revealing hidden affection, emphasizing weakness and diminishing strength [...]" (Highet, 1962, 68)

The fact that parody is mostly based on mocking imitation confirms Grenz with his theory that: "[...] parody ridicules a serious literary work or the characteristic style of an author by treating the subject matter flippantly or by applying the style to an inappropriate, usually trivial, subject." (Grenz, 1996, 28)

J. A. Cuddon considers that it is very difficult to achieve the parody and with a connection to a burlesque theme, he adverts to "subtle balance between close resemblance to the 'original' and deliberate distortion of its principal characteristics." (Cuddon, 1998, 640)

Monty Pythons in their work proves and confirms that to choose a good topic to parody and imitate is very important. They worked with very well-known stories, and topics, such as the life of Jesus, or the medieval legend of King Arthur. If any author chooses unknown title of a story to parodies, it can happen that an audience or reader do not realize the imitation correctly.

4.3. Parody in *The Holy Grail*

As mentioned above this movie imitates the very famous legend of the King Arthur that is set in mythical background. The whole story leads to the searching of the Holy Grail that is itself a very mystical relic. These settings allowed Pythons to create parody, which in some sort, flip over the well known story of King Arthur.

The Holy Grail begins with a scene where the audience can only see fog, hear the wind and in the background can hear the tramping of horses. The viewer expects a grand knight on horseback to appears, whereas what actually appears is a running knight, who pretends to be riding a horse, whilst his servant runs behind him, with coconuts in hands, imitating the sound of horses' hooves. (Jones, 1975, 00:04:00-00:04:20) The first scene, which predicts an epic tale about brave and courageous knight suddenly, turns into a story of a desperate knight, who is followed by a servant with coconut in his hands. According to definition of M. H. Abrams: "Parody imitates the serious manner and characteristic features of a particular literary work [...]" (Abrams, 1999, 37) it can be established that this scene, through parody detract the seriousness of the character of King Arthur, who is considered as a one of the best known legends of Great Britain. Even the most optimistic viewer has to admit that the coconuts totally de-class the honour and respectability of Arthur, the King of the Britons.

As Highet's and Granz's definitions explain parody ridicules a serious literary work, but Python prove that even a serious topic from history, for example, the terrible medieval Witch Trials, can be successfully parodied. In one of the scenes King Arthur and his company arrive at a village, where a bunch of villagers want to burn a witch. Here the knight Bedevere must decide whether, or not, to burn a woman.

> BEDEVERE: How do you know she is a witch?
> VILLAGER #2: She looks like one.
> BEDEVERE: Bring her forward.
> WITCH: I'm not a witch. I'm not a witch.
> BEDEVERE: But you are dressed as one.
> WITCH: They dressed me up like this.
> CROWD: No, we didn't -- no.
> WITCH: And this isn't my nose, it's a false one.
> BEDEVERE: Well?
> VILLAGER #1: Well, we did do the nose.
> BEDEVERE: The nose?
> VILLAGER #1: And the hat -- but she is a witch!
> CROWD: Burn her! Witch! Witch! Burn her!
> BEDEVERE: Did you dress her up like this?
> CROWD: No, no... no ... yes. Yes, yes, a bit, a bit.
> VILLAGER #1: She has got a wart.

BEDEVERE: What makes you think she is a witch?
VILLAGER #3: Well, she turned me into a newt.
BEDEVERE: A newt?
VILLAGER #3: I got better.
VILLAGER #2: Burn her anyway!
CROWD: Burn! Burn her!
(Gilliam, Jones, 1975, 00:17:04-00:18:30)

This scene displays the medieval witch-hunt, which lasted until the 18th century. (Mráček, 2006, 30) These trials were mostly sponsored by the Catholic Church, but Protestants were also included. Churches and also the public were looking for women, or men, who differed from the rest of society. These people were usually tortured until they confessed and then they were executed. Although, generally the Church is considered as inventor of witches trials, Pavel K. Mráček points out that this presumption was widespread confusion. He states that Inquisition was founded to uncover heresies but not only witches. (Mráček, 2006, 31) Pythons try to show the stupidity of these chases, but mainly the stupidity of those people who were influenced by these trials and were looking for witches everywhere; or maybe were able to 'create' their own witch. This scene openly attacks the human paranoia that was partly caused by Christian promotion. Even the beginning of the scene where bunch of monks are mumbling a prayer, walking around the courtyard and beating themselves on the head with a wooden tablet indicate some kind of fanaticism that in history was evoked by church. (Gilliam, Jones, 1975, 00:16:40-00:17:06) (Mráček, 2006, 43)

Martin Gray says that parody is "an imitation of a specific work of literature or style devised so as to ridicule its characteristic features" (Gray, 1992, 210) that confirms the scene where Sir Lancelot finds the letter that begins: "To whoever finds this note, I have been imprisoned by my father, who wishes me to marry against my will. Please, please, please come and rescue me. I am in the tall tower of Swamp Castle." Sir Lancelot who finds this letter guesses that it was written by a lady who needs to be rescued. But after entry in her prison in the tall tower Sir Lancelot founds out that she is actually he. Prince Herbert who is gay has been imprisoned by his own father, because he does not want to marry with a beautiful girl. The whole rescue of the prisoner ends up with Sir Lancelot being invited for a drink by a king and Prince Herbert drops out of the window with a little help from his father. (Gilliam, Jones, 1975, 00:51:41–00:56:65) This passage shows the imitation of the medieval heroic epos and its characteristics. These heroic eposes are characterised by narrative, adventure, educational and mystical components. (Polreich, 2002, online)

The fact that the authors laugh at the stories when knights were brave men who lived

for adventure and protection of the ladies, only underscores the aforementioned scene. In this scene is the well-known story of the imprisoned princess who is rescued by a valiant knight wrinkled and ridiculed. But in the filing of Monty Python a beautiful girl turns out to be a boy who has problems with his sexual orientation. The romantic charm of the whole story, somewhat distorted, which only underscores the idea M.H. Abrams, who claims a parody that:"deflate the origin by the applying the imitation to lowly or comically inappropriate subject." (Abrams, 1999, 27)

As mentioned above, the Python's story about the Knights of the Round Table also contains mystical components that are characteristic of heroic epos. The members of expedition meet many mythical creatures that more or less influence their searching of the Holy Grail, for instance a three headed knight or knights who say 'Ni'. One of those mystical creatures is Tim the enchanter who accompanies the knights to the cave where the creature lives.

"so foul, so cruel tha' no man yet has fought with i' and lived! Bones of full fifty men lie strewn abou' its lair. So, brave knights, if you do doub' your courage or your strength, come n' further, for death awaits you all with nasty big pointy teeth." (Gilliam, Jones, 1975, 00:68:25- 00:68:57)

But, instead of a cruel and horrible monster there is a cute bunny, jumping near the entrance of the cave. The whole effect of the parody is exaggerated by the moment when the tiny cute rabbit kills some of the Arthur's band which was totally unexpected. This scene uses the parody to ridicule the occurrence of mystical fictional creatures in heroic epics.

Based on the analysis of the first movie made by Monty Python it can be understood, that the authors worked with parody in very close connection with British and European history. The authors did not want to ridicule European or British history as such, but they rather focused on the genres like heroic epics or legends. In these classic genres are often mystical creatures, curses, but also brave knights and a charming princess. In *The Holy Grail* all these features are imitated and ridiculed through parody. Furthermore, the mere fact that the entire film revolves around a gang of inept guys in knight's armour, who went in search of the holiest cup, suggests the use of parody in this film as a whole. It must be said that parody is used not only in certain passages or scenes, but on the contrary, the course is the audience as a whole.

4.4. Parody in *Life of Brian*

Another explored movie is the second one made by Monty Python *Life of Brian* that is set in Judea 33AD. It tells the story of a Jewish boy, later man, who is wrongly considered as the Messiah for his entire lifetime. He is already confused after his birth when three wise men show up in the chalet where Brian's mother Mandy has a rest. Three wise men bring her homage for her new-born son, but very soon realise that Brian is not the Messiah. They take away all their presents and go to the chalet with the real Messiah (Jones, 1975, 00:01:24-00:04:00).

This movie is literally based on the biblical story, and even the characters of Pontius Pilate can be found here, nonetheless with a small speech defect: "I have a vewy gweat fwiend in Wome called 'Biggus Dickus'." (Jones, 1975, 00:50:58-00:51:01). The image of a Roman leader with speech defect ridicules the power of Rome that was in those times unquestionable. In times of Jesus a Roman leader was the symbol of the power and importance. To ridicule him was a sure death sentence for all people who lived under the Roman's domination. The scene where Pilate speaks to people from his balcony totally breaks his authority and respect.

> PONTIUS PILATE: People of Jerusalem! Rome is your friend!
> JEWISH CROWD: [Laughter]
> PONTIUS PILATE: To prove our friendship it is customary at
> this time to release a wrongdoer from our prisons.
> JEWISH CROWD: [Laughter]
> GUARD: [Giggle]
> PONTIUS PILATE: Whom would you have me release?
> MAN: Release Voger!
> JEWISH CROWD: Yeah! Release Voger! Release Voger! [Laughter]
> PONTIUS PILATE: Very well, I shall release Voger!
> JEWISH CROWD: Yeah!
> CENTURION: Sir, uh, we don't have a Roger, sir.
> PONTIUS PILATE: What?
> CENTURION:: Uh, we don't have anyone of that name, sir.
> PONTIUS PILATE: Ah. We have no Voger!
> CROWD: Aah...
> MAN: But what about Voderick, then?
> JEWISH CROWD: Yeah! Release Voderick! Release Voderick!
> PONTIUS PILATE: Centurion, why do they...titter so?
> CENTURION: Just some, ehm...Jewish joke, sir.
> PONTIUS PILATE: Are they...wagging me?
> CENTURION:: Oh, no, sir!
> GUARD: [Giggle]
> PONTIUS PILATE: Very well, I shall release Voderick!...
> (Jones, 1979, 00:68:23-00:69:49)

According to Arthur Grenz's who describes parody as: "a work designed to ridicule attitudes, style, or subject matter by handling either an elevated subject in a trivial manner or a low subject with mock dignity." (Grenz, 1976, 27) can be said that parody in this scene humiliates any authority of a supervised person, which is for Python's work characteristic.

Pythons are turning to ridicule the authorities throughout the film, when they try to ridicule the dogma of the Church, to which religious people sometimes resort, based on unsubstantiated facts. Ridiculing the wrong interpretation of faith is parodied in the scene when a group of believers are chasing Brian and try at all costs to find a saviour in him, who would lead them to the right way. But their fanaticism and stupidity will introduce them into a blind alley rather than to the knowledge of the Messiah's message.

> GIRL: It is His gourd! We will carry it for you, Master! Master?
> YOUTH: He's gone! He's been taken up!
> GIRL: Hhhh!
> FOLLOWERS: For He's been taken up!
> DENNIS: Eighteen!
> ARTHUR: No, there He is. Over there.
> FOLLOWERS: Oh, yeah. Master! Master!...
> ... FOLLOWERS: Oh! Oh! Ohh! Oh! Ah! Oh!
> ARTHUR: He has given us a sign!
> FOLLOWER: Oh!
> SHOE FOLLOWER: He has given us... His shoe!
> ARTHUR: The shoe is the sign. Let us follow His example.
> SPIKE: What?
> ARTHUR: Let us, like Him, hold up one shoe and let the other be upon our foot, for this is His sign, that all who follow Him shall do likewise.
> EDDIE: Yes.
> SHOE FOLLOWER: No, no, no. The shoe is...
> YOUTH: No.
> SHOE FOLLOWER:...a sign that we must gather shoes together in abundance.
> GIRL: Cast off...
> SPIKE: Aye. What?
> GIRL: ...the shoes! Follow the Gourd!
> SHOE FOLLOWER: No! Let us gather shoes together!
> (Jones, 1979, 00:57:53-00:58:12)

Another example of mocking authority can be found in the scene where John Cleese as a Roman officer tries to terrify Matthias, an old man who provide a shelter for JPF group that seeks to fight against the oppression of the Romans.

The scene where people are able to follow a shoe or gourd represents in a certain sense the entire history of religion. In search of the Messiah who will save the whole world, people are willing to follow anything, without reason. Fanaticism of a few individuals is able to drag down the whole crowd, which will follow even the holy gourd. Pythons parody of this human stupidity with which human history face for centuries. It is more than probable that humanity

will continue to face this again and again.

> CENTURION: Quiet! Silly person. Guards! Search the house. You know the penalty laid down by Roman law for harbouring a known criminal?
> MATTHIAS: No.
> CENTURION: Crucifixion.
> MATTHIAS: Oh.
> CENTURION: Nasty, eh?
> MATTHIAS: Hm. Could be worse.
> CENTURION: What do you mean, 'could be worse'?
> MATTHIAS: Well, you could be stabbed.
> CENTURION: Stabbed? Takes a second. Crucifixion lasts hours! It's a slow, horrible death!
> MATTHIAS: Well, at least it gets you out in the open air.
> CENTURION: You're weird.
> SERGEANT: No, sir. Couldn't find anything, sir.
> CENTURION: But don't worry! You've not seen the last of us, weirdo.
> MATTHIAS: Big Nose.
> CENTURION: Watch it.
> (Jones, 1979, 00:35:26-00:36:12)

Contempt for authority can be found in most works of Monty Python. In this film the character of Matthias is used to make it clear to the Romans that their punishment means nothing at all to him. First, we meet the character of the old in the stoning scene, which is already mentioned in the previous chapter. Here Matthias is sentenced to stoning, because he mentioned the name of the God "Jehovah" publicly.

> MATTHIAS: Look. I don't think it ought to be blasphemy, just saying 'Jehovah'.
> CROWD: Oooh! He said it again! Oooh!
> OFFICIAL: You're only making it worse for yourself!
> MATTHIAS: Making it worse?! How could it be worse?! Jehovah! Jehovah! Jehovah!
> CROWD: Oooooh!
> OFFICIAL: I'm warning you. If you say 'Jehovah' once more...
> (Jones, 1979, 00:37:12-00:37:26.)

The man in both cases keeps a cool head in front of the authorities and shows by his attitude that he does not consider stoning or crucifixion by the hands of the Romans as a punishment for which he should be stressed in any way. By the attitude of this old man the authors show that their very devotion to the authorities in most cases equals to absolute zero.

Generally is this movie considered a parody of the life and death of Jesus Christ, but according to J. A. Cuddon, this movie cannot be called a direct parody of this historical character. Cuddon says that the aim of parody is: "correlative as well as derisive." (Cuddon, 1999, 640) This statement confirms that *Life of Brian* cannot be considered as a parody of Jesus Christ, because the authors' aim was not to ridicule Jesus' utterances or his actions. As was emphasised by the authors, they tried to make jokes around Jesus. (Almost the truth,

2006, 00:36:28-00:36:54) It must also be stressed that Pythons did not hesitate to use this literary critical element to criticize the Church itself as well as their followers.

4.5. Parody in *The Meaning of Life*

In the contrast with the previous movies, *The Meaning of Life* is not based so much on historical events, or historical figures. This movie is more a compilation of a stories that are connected to one topic; namely human life. It mostly ridicules contemporary society and makes fun of human relations. The second story called *The Miracle of Birth, Part 2, The Third World* is set in a poor part of Yorkshire, where a catholic family do not use contraceptive protection, because of their religion and they have hundreds of children (attachment). One day the father comes home with bad news:

> DAD: Wait! I've got something to tell the whole family.
> MUM: Oh, quick. Go and get the others in, Gordon.
> CHILDREN: What could it be? Shhh...
> DAD: The mills closed! There's no more work. We're destitute.
> CHILDREN: *[talking]*
> DAD: Come in, my little loves. I've got no option but to sell you all for scientific experiments.
> CHILDREN: *[whining]*
> DAD: No, no. That's the way it is, my loves. Blame the Catholic church for not letting me wear one of those little rubber things. Oh, they've done some wonderful things in their time. They preserved the mighty and majesty, the mystery of the Church of Rome, and the sanctity of the sacraments, the indivisible oneness of the Trinity, but if they'd let me wear one of those little rubber things on the end of my cock, we wouldn't be in the mess we are now.
> BOY: Couldn't Mummy have worn some sort of pesssary?
> DAD: Not if we're going to remain members of the fastest growing religion in the world, my boy.
> MUM: Ehhh, he's right.
> DAD: You see, we believe--Well, let me put it like this.
> There are Jews in the world.
> There are Buddhists.
> There are Hindus and Mormons, and then
> There are those that follow Mohammed, but,
> I've never been one of them. ...
> ...Every sperm is sacred."
> (Jones, 1983, 00:08:55-00:11:01)

This scene, through exaggeration, reflects the very intimate, but though the last century, very often discussed topic. In this scene Python displays the problem of the Church and controlled births and the use of contraception. Parody, with its aim to criticize, helps to show the author's disagreement with this Christian ideology about parenthood. As a contrast with this crowed family is a shot of two old Protestants watching a bunch of children, going for scientific experiments, and talking about the possibility of having protected sex. The

husband explains to his wife: "...because we are members of the Protestant Reformed Church, which successfully challenged the autocratic power of the Papacy in the mid- sixteenth century, we can wear little rubber devices to prevent issue. " (Jones, 1983, 00:15:31-00:15:40) The purpose of this scene was not only to express disagreement with Christian law, but the second author's aim was to point out   about having sex. In 70's and 80's topics about sex, masturbation or planning parenthood were mostly taboos and Python's goal in this scene, was to ridicule those people who were against it.

Another reference to this taboo topic is shown in the scene about sexual education. The complete revelation of human shame and intimacy symbolize a Headmaster who explains all rules of sexual intercourse to the class of young boys who have absolutely no interested in this subject.

> HEADMASTER: The purpose of foreplay is to cause the vagina to
> lubricate so that the penis can penetrate more easily.
> WATSON: Could we have a window open please sir?
> HEADMASTER: Yes... Harris will you…? And, of course, to cause the
> man's penis to erect and har...den....
> (Jones, 1985, 00:26:14-00:26:29)

The whole lecture ends with an example of sexual intercourse with the headmaster's wife. In this weird lesson of sexual education the authors attack human shyness and also human sexuality. The authors consider human sexuality as something natural that show sexual intercourse as an object of lesson where students should pay attention to the headmaster's erect penis. It is another author's disapproval with society that makes taboos from those natural topics.

As already mentioned, this film is rather a composition of sketches, which all together give the life story. Unlike the two previous films, in *The Meaning of Life* it can be said that the last MP film is not so much connected with the European history, nor with any of the characters, as in the previous films. As it is sketched in the very beginning of the film, this film addresses the essence of human life and its development. As is the Monty Python tradition this is a controversial topic approached with a dose of exaggeration, with the intent to arouse and stir up excitement. A parody in the film is mainly used to ridicule social conventions and established traditions. There are allusions to religious dogma, authorities and human superficiality. The authors also talk openly about topics that at the time were not even conceivable to mention publicly.

5. Collage in Monty Python's movies

Collage is artistic technique based on composition heterogeneous segments together. Although these techniques are mainly considered visual art, both can be found in many different branches of art. In connection with collage G. F. Brommer points out in the glossary of his book *The Art of Collage* the collage can be described as: „pasting a piece of paper to surface to create visual statements. The process can be used alone or combined with other media (paint, drawing, print-making)." (Brommer, 1978, 8)

This paper considers collage mostly as a visual item that is an essential part of the whole Monty Python creation. It is only Terry Jones who outlined all collages, and as he says in his own documentary series Almost the Truth, the collages are supposed to take up the moment when the story gets to the top, and then move the joke to another grade. (Almost the Truth, 2006, 00:20:11-00:20:58) In the author's work many examples of this visual art can be found, which adds perfectly to the postmodernity of Python's work. As mentioned above collage is a sort of composite of disparate elements which according Grenze intends to parody the origin to point at it. Whether in a positive or negative sense. (Grenz, 1997, 37)

The combination of different components can be found in the third movie by Monty Python called *The Meaning of Life.* In the first shot, where six fish with human faces swim in aquarium in a restaurant and tattle over what is now, is a combination of featured and pictured image in one movie. According to Grenz this feature is a typical component of postmodern filmmakers because "new technology promises to make a possible event more disjunctive mergers of the "real world" with other realities." (Grenz, 1999, 39) This ambiguity directly breaks the movie plot and its running.

At the time when the film was conceived, it was not a frequent custom to involve cartoon elements in to the film itself. Due to the blending of two distinct elements, the authors even more underline the fact that the film is a fiction and not a mimetic reflection of human life, although the film is featured that way at the beginning.

In the case of the *The Holy Grail* it can be said that collage plays important role in the narration. It must be added, that this art element is used here as the breaking element of narration. The fragmentation of the story means interruption of the narrative line that helps to the authors to laugh at favourite conservative literary forms like a novel or a story that have a constant and uninterrupted narrative line.

A significant disruption of the time line is a collage in the scene where Brian runs in front of the Roman guard and tries to escape them in the tower. The tower does not have a

finished staircase up to the top and Brian falls down it. At this point, an alien ship appears which captures Brian. Eventually, however, the alien ship crashes, but Brian is the only one who survives. (Jones, 1979) Although this scene has no great significance in the storyline as such, this disruption is a distinctive element. The involvement of the insertion the authors disrupt the momentum and narrative line of the story. By the linking of two disparate stories, there is also a distortion of the historical line, in which the authors again point out that this story of a Jewish boy is really just one of the possible alternatives of how the life of Jesus could have happened.

Collage also plays a significant role in the movie *The Holy Grail.* The whole story is interrupted by painting collages that introduces a new story in the narration. These elements are also used on purpose to discontinue narration that the authors used to stress the fact that this story about a legendary king is really fiction.

Collage directly intervenes in the film at the moment, when God is speaking to Arthur from heaven. God instructs him to go on a quest for the Holy Grail. Here, Monty Pythons decided to present God as an older man with a crown on his head, but God doesn´t like it when mortals condescend him.

In this presentation the authors humanizes God in a certain way, thus approaching the perception of postmodern society sanctity.

Conclusion

The objective of this paper was to analyze postmodern features such as irony, parody and collage in the film-making of the British comic group Monty Python. It is focused on three full-length films of this group in connection with British and European history.

The thesis was divided into five chapters. The first chapter is dedicated mainly to the concept of postmodernism and the development of this artistic direction. Attention is also paid to the artistic direction of modernism, from which postmodernism itself is based on, but mainly refuses it. The chapter contains the early dating of this direction, which literary theorists themselves admit is very complicated. The first chapter of this paper is accomplished by the introduction of the basic elements of postmodernism, such as, for example, pastiche, metafiction, or disruption of a plotline. Postmodern artists have used these tools to express the loss of the art centre, or to convince a viewer or a reader that fiction is indeed fiction. The chapter also mentions the increasing importance of television and film production at the end

of the 1990's. This production became an integral part of artistic expressions of postmodern artificial, due to its versatility and flexibility in creation.

The second chapter is devoted to the presentation of the comic group Monty Python, their members and work itself. It mentions the group´s development from the early beginnings at university to the formation of the group itself in 1969. One section is also reserved for Python's performances in the form of a sketch series Monty Python's Flying Circus. This series it is not the main aim of this paper, but it should be included, because it presents an integral part of the output of this group. Later in this chapter the Python film creation is described, represented by three full-length movies, *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, *Life of Brian* and *Monty Python's Meaning of Life*. At the end of the chapter is a brief summary of the benefits of Monty Python and their works, supported by opinions based on secondary literature which deals with Monty Python.

The following chapter focuses on the element of irony. The introduction of this chapter pays attention to the definitions that were set even before Christ and their formation continues to the present day under the direction of present literary and art theorists, such as Linda Hutcheon or Glenn Ward. The chapter continues with an analysis of individual movies and the irony within them.

Based on the theoretical definitions and analysis of all the above mentioned films, it can be stated that irony is a common element that Monty Python used to ridicule various topics. In the case of the first film it is a mockery of the genre itself which is heroic epics that are ridiculed through the character of King Arthur in the Knights of the Round Table. The authors are also devoted to ridicule society and stereotypes, at the time when this film was made (1970s).

The second film is also an imitation of historical facts. This time, however, the authors take to task the biblical period in which they describe life of the alternative Messiah - Brian. The ironic attack in this film is directed against people who don´t try to understand the message, misunderstand thoughts and the words of the messiah, and distribute these delusions among other people. The irony here, however, does not attack just the religious dogmas and their fanatical fans, but also mocks the equality of women, human greed and sloth.

The irony in the third film is focused more on human features and British stereotypes. Pythons through irony openly criticize, for example, British society that avoided debate about human sexuality and contraception. Pythons consider the cause of these deep-rooted conventions mainly the fact that British society is still 71% Catholic. *The Meaning of Life* also mocks British stereotypes, such as helplessness and austerity for which are British

known.

The forth chapter is entirely devoted to the analysis of parody. The definition of parody precedes the definition of another element - satire. Although this element is not a direct object of this paper, the attention in this chapter is devoted to it, because parody and satire are very closely linked to each other.

As the theoretical definitions mention in the introduction of the chapter, parody is an imitation of a certain topic or a work that tries to point out and ridicule it. For the same purpose a parody is used in all the films from the workshop of Monty Python. The fact that parody is an imitating element helps the authors in the creation of the first two films. Historical facts and well-known characters only help the authors to ridicule, through parody, human ills, social stereotypes and religious dogmas, which the authors deride.

The last chapter deals with the visual art element - collage. The chapter begins with a short introduction of this artistic element that is supported by the opinions from relevant secondary literature. Further, it continues with an analysis of occurrence and the aim of collages in Python's movies.

Collage is in the studied films mostly used for interruption of the narrative line. It interrupts the fluidity of the story on purpose to convince the viewer that it is indeed fiction and not a credible re-telling of history.

To conclude all knowledge gained from the analysis, it must be said that all examined movies use the examined postmodern features for the purpose of ridicule. According to analysis we can be also determined that the studied films include parallels with British and European history.

Resumé

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá analýzou prvků postmoderního umění – ironií, parodií a koláží v díle britské komediální skupiny Monty Python. Hlavní důraz je kladen na celovečerní filmy *Monty Python a svatý grál, Život Briana* a *Monty Python a smysl života* ve vztahu s britskou i evropskou historií. Práce je rozdělena na pět hlavních kapitol a jejich podkapitoly.

První kapitola se převážně soustředí na vysvětlení uměleckého směru postmodernismu a zároveň jeho vývoj. Pozornost je věnována i modernismu, z něhož samotný postmodernismu sice vychází, ale je všeobecně vnímán jako jeho odpůrce. Kapitola obsahuje dataci počátku postmodernismu a představení jeho prvků, jako jsou pastiš, metafikce či narušení časové linie. Postmoderní umělci tyto metody využívají k vyjádření ztráty zakotvenosti v uměleckém středu či přesvědčení diváka nebo čtenáře, že fikce, kterou má před sebou, je skutečně fikcí. V kapitole je také zmíněn zvětšující se význam televizní a filmové tvorby ke konci 90. let minulého století, která se díky své variabilitě a volnosti stala nedílnou součástí uměleckých projevů postmoderních umělců.

Druhá kapitola je věnována stručnému představení samotné skupiny Monty Python a jejich členů, zejména však její tvorbě. Je zde zmíněn vývoj skupiny od raných počátků při univerzitních studiích až po její formaci v roce 1969. Druhá část kapitoly je vyhrazena představení jejich sketchové tvorby v podobě seriálu *Monty Pythonův Létající Cirkus*. I když tento seriál není hlavním předmětem práce, je také zmíněn, jelikož představuje nedílnou součást celé tvorby této komediální skupiny. Dále tato kapitola popisuje pythonovskou filmovou tvorbu zastoupenou třemi celovečerními filmy - *Monty Python a Svatý grál*, *Život Briana* a *Monty Python a smysl života*. Závěr kapitoly je stručné shrnutí přínosu Monty Pythonů a jejich děl. To je podpořeno názory vycházejícími ze sekundární literatury, která se touto komediální skupinou zabývá.

Třetí kapitola je zaměřena na první zkoumaný postmoderní prvek - ironii. Úvod kapitoly je věnován teoretickým definicím, které byly stanoveny již v antických dobách a jejichž formace pokračuje dodnes v režii součastných literárních a uměleckých teoretiků, jako je například Linda Hutcheon či Glenn Ward. Kapitola pokračuje rozbory jednotlivých filmů a ironie v nich. První je analyzován film *Monty Python a svatý grál*. Dále je pozornost stočena k druhému filmu *Život Briana*. Kapitola končí rozborem snímku *Monty Python a Smysl života*.

Na základě provedené analýzy tohoto filmu může být stanoveno, že ve všech třech dílech se autoři pokoušejí, a to s velkým úspěchem, skrze ironii vysmívat, zesměšňovat, tím

i částečně kritizovat. Díky tomuto jedinečnému literárnímu prvku je skupina Monty Python schopna se otevřeně vysmát lidskému pokrytectví, neupřímnosti a mnoha dalším nešvarům. Aby diváci vše jasněji pochopili, používá skupina k názornější demonstraci evropskou historii. Nesnaží se ovšem zesměšňovat historii samotnou či její skutečné postavy, ale skrze tato fakta a historické osobnosti předvést nedostatky lidské společnosti. Autoři se velmi často vysmívají britským hodnotám či zvykům, možná právě proto, že jsou Britové. V jejich díle jsou rozneseny na kopytech stereotypy a hodnoty, kterých si většina Britů váží a zakládá si na nich. Právě proto se Monty Pythoni ve své době stali miláčky mladé generace a trnem v oku starší a stále konzervativní části populace. Ve snímku *Monty Python a Svatý grál* se skupina uchýlila k ironizaci ideálu rytířství, který je zmiňován zejména v historických románech či romancích. K tomu autorům ideálně posloužila postava krále Artuše a jeho rytířů kulatého stolu. Ti jsou v tomto filmu znázorněni jako přihlouplí chlapíci, kteří nejsou vůbec stateční, moudří, natož ctihodní.

Čtvrtá kapitola je celá věnována dalšímu zkoumanému postmodernímu prvku – parodii. Definici parodie jako takové nejdříve předchází definice jiného prvku – satiry. Ač tento prvek není přímým předmětem zkoumání této práce, je mu v této kapitole věnována pozornost, jelikož parodie a satira jsou navzájem velmi úzce spjaty. Kapitola dále pokračuje přímou analýzou parodie ve filmových dílech skupiny Monty Python. Teoretické definice určují parodii jako imitující prvek, který právě napodobením dosahuje zesměšňujícího výsledku určité situace čí díla. *Svatý Grál* a *Smysl života* převypravují dva historické, velmi dobře známé, příběhy. Jak již bylo několikrát zmíněno, první snímek použil jako předlohu legendárního krále Artuše, druhý film zase životní osudy Ježíše Krista. Autoři se v těchto filmech nesnaží parodovat tyto dva slavné muže, ale spíše převypravují alternativní příběhy těch historicky známých. V těchto alternativních příbězích divák nalezne mnoho příkladů, kdy se Pythoni díky parodii vysmívají církvi, vládnímu zřízení či monarchii samotné. Avšak ne pouze autority těchto rozměrů jsou autory vysmívány. Zmíněn je třeba hrdinský epos, který je jako klasický žánr Pythony také zparodován, potažmo vysmíván.

I třetí a poslední film skrývá charakteristické prvky parodie. V něm se ovšem autoři již neinspirovali tak známými historickými tématy jako v předchozích dvou dílech. Tento film je spíše složeninou skečů, které jsou propojeny tématem lidského života. Tvůrci v tomto případě používají parodii spíše k výsměchu zatvrzelých britských zvyků a stereotypů, které se po staletí v povaze tohoto hrdého národa formovaly.

Pátá část se věnuje poslednímu ze zkoumaných postmoderních prvků - koláži. V úvodu kapitoly je teoretický rozbor tohoto uměleckého prvku, který je podpořen názory

autorů zabývajících se tímto tématem. Na tuto teoretickou pasáž opět navazuje samotná analýza koláže ve filmech skupiny Monty Python. Je zde uvedeno několik praktických ukázek z výše jmenovaných filmů. U všech analyzovaných filmů lze stanovit, že koláž je autory použita převážně k nabourání celistvosti vyprávění. V těchto dílech koláž slouží mimo jiné i k narušení historické linie. Tím postmoderní umělci sabotovali klasické žánry, které byly na celistvosti vypravěčské linie založeny. Tento výjimečný parodující prvek, který vzniká výhradně v režii Pythona Terryho Gilliama, je neoddělitelnou a neodmyslitelnou součástí všech děl této legendární komediální skupiny.

Celá práce je zakončena shrnující kapitolou, která sumarizuje veškerá zjištění, která byla na základě analýzy provedena.

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