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## PLAY AS ANOTHER EXISTENCE: ON THE TRAIL OF BAKHTIN'S CREATIVITY JOGO COMO UMA EXISTÊNCIA DIFERENTE: SEGUINDO OS PASSOS DA OBRA DE M. BAKHTIN

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**Abstract:** Consideration is being given to the phenomenon of play, through which another, different from the existing, ontological layer is created, revealing the little-known facets of culture and aesthetic activity in the heritage of Mikhail Bakhtin, the famous culturologist. The conducted research makes it possible to state the following: play as a phenomenon is inextricably linked with the main themes of Bakhtin's work, being included in the concepts of dialogism, polylogue, carnival culture, and the theory of aesthetic activity. Play, in the aspect of interconnection with culture through art, stands as another being in which life is played out. In the carnival, the value space of the play is created; the play itself is complex and diverse. The ambivalence of the play is perceived as an attempt to express it in various planes of real life. The binarity of the play in the space of the carnival is revealed through the category of anti-structure. Play, in the space of the carnival, is defined as a play of life, is another being, declared by the author to be an extraterritorial space.

**Keywords:** Play. Culture. Carnival. Ontology. Aesthetics.

**Resumo:** Analisa-se o fenômeno do jogo, com cuja ajuda cria-se outra camada ontológica que é distinta da existente, que descobre os lados pouco conhecidos da cultura e das atividades estéticas de herança do conhecido teórico cultural Mikhail Bakhtin. O estudo conclui que o jogo no aspecto de interligação com cultura através de arte atua como uma existência diferente onde representar-se-á a vida. Durante o carnaval cria-se o espaço de valor do jogo, o próprio jogo mostra-se como complicado e diferente. A ambivalência do jogo é percebida como a tentativa de sua expressão em diferentes planos de vida real. O caráter binário do jogo no espaço do carnaval abre-se através da categoria de anti-estrutura. O jogo no espaço do carnaval é determinado como jogo de vida, sendo uma existência diferente declarada pelo autor como espaço extraterritorial.

**Palavras-chave:** Jogo. Cultura. Carnaval. Ontologia. Estética.

### INTRODUCTION

As one of the phenomena of human existence, play is characterized by a fairly wide range of its own manifestations, being in the paradigm field of many disciplines and the sphere of interests of scientists and philosophers. Thus, in the subject area of culture, social philosophy, literature, and aesthetics, various areas of study of play as a

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phenomenon have taken shape, among which, in the context of the analysis, it is interesting to consider play as an ontological category. Among the most significant works in this area, it is necessary to dwell on the following studies, which have become classics in this topic. In his famous work, J. Huizinga was one of the first to propose the understanding of play as a diverse category, acting as a kind of cultural universal, endowing play with a special space of culture being. The ontology of play in the work of “Homo Ludens” is revealed through various spheres of human life, such as poetry, philosophy, science, war, everyday life, customs, which demonstrates its diversity and the complex process of establishing boundaries between play and its absence (HUIZINGA, 2008). For the German writer and intellectual G. Hesse, play is a peculiar way to overcome the crisis of spirituality of our time (HESSE, 2000).

For F. Schiller, play is part of his concept of aesthetic education, as it belongs to beauty, which is the ultimate goal of human existence. F. Schiller’s concept of play is closely intertwined with the concept of art and culture in general. The solutions to the problems prevailing at that time in the field of culture and morality just found their embodiment in the idea of aesthetic education and art as a play (SCHILLER, 1957). E. Fink considers play as one of the phenomena of human existence, placing it on a par with labor, death, domination, and love, considering that elements of play are present in almost all areas of culture (FINK, 1988). For E. Bern, play is part of the processes of communication and socialization (BERN, 1988). The play in the philosophical heritage of José Ortega y Gasset can be considered a kind of framework that combines many private ideas and concepts. So, in particular, José Ortega y Gasset offers to look at contemporary art as a play (ORTEGA Y GASSET, 2003). Of course, the above ideas do not exhaust the methodological plane of developments, concepts and ideas devoted to the consideration of play as a category of analysis. This is not surprising since the aspects of reflection and being are certainly associated with elements of self-knowledge, an integral part of which is, in fact, play in the widest palette of its interpretations. Philologist and culturologist M. Bakhtin joined the development of this problem. The presented analysis only emphasizes the significance and scale of the study of play in the cultural space.

Play itself as a phenomenon turns out to be either built into the space of culture, or researchers associate it with the ontology of culture as such. Therefore, it is not surprising that M. Bakhtin, as a culturologist, literary critic, linguist, in general, as a unique person who made a significant contribution to the development of socio-humanitarian knowledge, unfolds his “play” that has passed through his work in a certain thread, then significantly represented, then barely perceptible. For M. Bakhtin, as a philosopher and culturologist, the play, perhaps, is a certain niche, into which he “places” whole reflexive spheres or planes. “For Bakhtin, play is an” other “being, where life plays, acting out” (DUBROVSKAYA, 2014).

However, it should be noted that most of the studies devoted directly to the analysis of the work of the famous Russian culturologist, or studies indirectly concerning Bakhtin, insufficiently consider the topic of the role of play. So, if we are talking about direct studies of Bakhtin’s legacy, which will be discussed in more detail later, it should be noted that among the most popular areas of analysis are the themes of dialogism, polyglossia, metalinguistics, the concept of carnival, which undoubtedly deserve to be

duly appreciated by contemporaries. If we talk about indirect research, then the most widespread, at least in the space of cultural studies, is the use of the principle of “Bakhtin’s lens” to study other phenomena of sociality (KHOLQVIST, 2004). While not underestimating the importance and relevance of such developments, let us only note that the phenomenon of play in the work of M. Bakhtin did not find the proper analysis, it simply remained dissolved among other ideas. Although modern researchers indisputably admit that Bakhtin’s complex multi-line concepts abolish the idea of straightforward interpretations. His “evolving method of deployment” establishes a dialogue between literature and cultural history. (THUNE et al., 2019, p. 20) thus emphasizing some of the limitations of single-line studies in the work of the Russian thinker. This explains the relevance of this work.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Analyzing the essence of the play, like most other concepts, in the creative heritage of M. Bakhtin, researchers will certainly face two urgent questions: “Who was Bakhtin: a culturologist, philosopher or linguist?” and “What methodological principles should we start from when analyzing his work?” The authors of this work also faced these questions and were able to find answers to them only using the principle of a multifaceted study of his creative heritage. In our opinion, as a thinker of a special – borderline sense, M. Bakhtin requires interdisciplinary reflection on his work. So, for the Saransk thinker, linguistics, as well as literature, culture, and anthropology, is just a material and a suitable way to rethink the current philosophical and worldview problems of the early and mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. And in this sense, M. Bakhtin is rather a multifaceted person who studies culture, literature, linguistics through the prism of his own concepts. We are consonant with the understanding of the figure and creativity of M. Bakhtin by the literary critic I. Popova, one of the compilers and scientific commentators of the works of his seven-volume collected works: “Bakhtin is not a philosopher in the usual sense of the word and not a traditional philologist, but a thinker of a special borderline sense” (POPOVA, 2004, p. 112). It is difficult to disagree with this statement for those who consider M. Bakhtin’s work as extremely existential, carried out on the border of many humanities. We would also call it so – the experience of borderline philosophizing. There is no strict scientificness in it in the positivist calculating spirit, there are bold guesses, hypotheses, and permanent fluidity and incompleteness.

When offering a review of the literature on the work of Mikhail Bakhtin, it should be noted that over the past few decades, a tremendous amount of work has been done in Bakhtin studies, and today a kind of boom in the study of various aspects of his work continues. So, for example, it is necessary to mention the names of the authors of extensive Russian-language works that have been published recently (POPOV (2009), AVTONOMOVA (2009), TAMARCHENKO (2011), VASILIEV (2014). But these works by no means exhaust all the publications on Bakhtin studies recently published all over the world. But these detailed works mainly investigate the philosophical and literary problems of M. Bakhtin’s work. Of course, the study of Bakhtin’s work cannot occur without thorough methodologically fundamental works on linguistics and philosophy of

language, since all, without exception, his concepts pass through the principle of dialogism. Suffice it to mention here the role that the thinker assigns dialogism in language as the basis of human verbal communication: “Language is by its nature dialogical (“a means of communication”). An absolute monologue, which was a linguistic monologue, is excluded by the very nature of language” (BAKHTIN, 1997a, p. 212). This universalism of dialogism constantly “attracted” the research interest of the Russian thinker: “The very being of a person (external and internal) is the deepest communication. To be means to communicate”, - the thinker sums up in his later work. (BAKHTIN, 1997 b, p. 345). The key principle of dialogism, which the thinker outlined back in 1929 in his work “Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics” was the idea that dialogue

is not a means of discovering, revealing, as it were, a ready-made character of a person, no, here a person not only manifests himself outside but for the first time becomes by what it is. To be means to communicate dialogically. When the dialogue ends, everything ends. Therefore, the dialogue, in essence, cannot and should not end (BAKHTIN, 2000, p.156).

These positions of Bakhtin are important in the aspect of this research since they reflect the most complex representation of ontology in the work of the Russian thinker. This is where the deep understanding of being as something else represented through play, proposed in this work, comes out.

If we turn to the history of the formation of M. Bakhtin’s linguo-philosophical ideas, then it took place in the circle of his associates or in the so-called “Bakhtin’s circle”. It should be mentioned that the circle of his associates consisted of philologists Voloshinov, Medvedev, Pumpyansky, Yudina, Kanaev, the poet Vaginov, the orientalist Tubyansky, and others. Bakhtin’s circle is associated with books and articles by Voloshinov and Medvedev, written at least under the ideological influence of the thinker. Among them, a special place is occupied by the work “Marxism and the Philosophy of Language”, published under the name of V. Voloshinov (1930).

The presented analysis only underlines the versatility of Bakhtin’s ideas, the versatility of research approaches to their analysis, and the realization that Bakhtin’s concepts and ideas are closely interconnected.

Also, in the context of our research, it is necessary to pay attention to studies devoted to the direct analysis of the phenomenon of culture in Bakhtin. In the study “Postmodernism and popular culture” the author, through the prism of the analysis of modern culture, denotes a certain limitation of Bakhtin’s ideas:

Bakhtin was not only ‘surely mistaken’ in seeing the fair simply as the popular festival of rural life, he also ignored the way fairs could disrupt local and provincial habits and traditions by introducing a certain cosmopolitanism into Renaissance life, arousing desires in ordinary people of the time for exciting, exotic and strange commodities” (DOCKER, 1994, p. 187).

In turn, in the study “The cultural turn”, the author, on the contrary, notes a certain universalism in Bakhtin’s understanding of culture, arguing that

Bakhtin has been particularly influential in deepening concepts of culture as a form of life, so that we can go beyond patterns of lived experience to explore the structures of interdependence of individual and community, order and chaos, the sacred and the profane” (CHANEY, 2002, p. 38).

The concept of carnival, proposed by M. Bakhtin, caused heated debate, it played a large role in the development of cultural studies, expanding the horizons of scientific thought. With these works, we would like to draw attention to the current ambiguity of positions in the research of Mikhail Bakhtin’s works.

Separately, it is also necessary to highlight the works of recent years, in which an attempt was made to investigate play in Bakhtin’s work both indirectly, through other concepts, and directly. Play as a phenomenon is most often analyzed by researchers through the prism of carnival culture, as evidenced, for example, by the developments (LOZOVSKY (2018), KORNEEV (2010), FEDOROVA (2014). The importance of play as a sphere of the other being was also emphasized by such researchers as Remizov and Movchan (2016) stating that the carnival was a kind of action that stood on the verge of play and real life. Hu (2012) examines the culture of imitation through the prism of Bakhtin’s carnival culture in order to determine the characteristics of the culture of imitation as part of folk culture. Cohen (2011) attempts to represent the play of preschool children through the concept of Bakhtin’s carnival, stating: “When we apply Bakhtin’s concepts to play analysis, a deeper, more useful view emerges.” (COHEN, 2011, p. 199). Pandya & Mills (2019) using the lens of Bakhtin’s carnival, analyze video clips created by primary school students. Researchers Cooper & Condie (2016) argue that “Bakhtinian concepts are drawn upon to understand how new forms of digital scholarship, particularly blogging and self-publishing, facilitate and constrain research dialogues” (COOPER & CONDIE, 2016, p. 27). Thus, it can be assumed that research concepts in which play or its individual manifestations are analyzed unfold in the context of the carnival culture presented by Mikhail Bakhtin. Darensky (2008), in turn, analyzing Rabelaisian laughter in Bakhtin’s carnival, emphasizes that the researchers of Bakhtin’s work in a certain sense proceed from their own understanding of the essence of the carnival, imputing to Bakhtin that his understanding for some reason turns out to be otherwise (DARENSKIY, 2008, p. 137). This idea is important for this study since in this work an attempt is made to present a “different” ontological plane, through the concept of play, in the work of a famous Russian thinker, which is not popular (promoted) in the studies of contemporaries. The sources of this study are the works of M. Bakhtin directly, we strive to present play in the understanding of Bakhtin himself and to expand the methodological boundaries of play as a phenomenon, and not use the principles he proposed to deepen understanding of other concepts.

Based on the above, the research strategy of this work unfolds in the direction of presenting M. Bakhtin’s views on the essence of play in the work “Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity” to the absolutization of the significance of play in the carnival as an anti-structure, when the folk culture itself becomes a certain play criterion. The output positions of the work, which determine the purpose of the study, are the conviction that the phenomenon of play in the above-mentioned works of M. Bakhtin will allow presenting these works from different positions than those that exist in modern scientific

discourse and demonstrate that play in the space of the carnival allows entering a completely different layer of representation of the phenomenon of play and the meanings reproduced by it in the modern world.

### ANOTHER “AUTHOR” AND “HERO” THROUGH THE PRISM OF THE PLAY PHENOMENON

In his work “Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity” M. Bakhtin refers to play as a phenomenon, with the help of which there is a deepening into the concept of aesthetic activity and understanding of art as a phenomenon. M. Bakhtin uses the concept of another being to reveal the deep essence of the author’s place in the work and the role of the hero in it. Perhaps the different being of M. Bakhtin itself should be called “another author and hero”, as that is how they appear before the readers through the prism of analyzing the phenomenon of play. Thus, play as a different being can be viewed as a deepening or penetration into the image of the hero and the author, as an attempt to present the “Author” and “Hero” to the reader in a different, unusual context. Also, interest is aroused by the practical impossibility of separating the author’s being from the hero’s being and vice versa, since their “playful other being” is merged by the author into a single “aesthetic event”. On the other hand, play as a phenomenon of human existence expands the very understanding of the social event of life as something that allows the author not to merge with his hero.

The very attitude of the author to his hero is playful because the hero is already playing, being a toy in the hands of the author. The existence of the hero’s image, in fact, is the result of the author’s reflection. M. Bakhtin, indirectly means this, pointing out the unproductiveness and futility of the identification or unprincipled comparison of the life of the author and the hero, insisting on the creative attitude of the author to the hero. Of course, M. Bakhtin did not rule out the possible coincidence of the life of the hero and the author, this is evidenced by his three typical cases of deviation from the direct relationship of the author to the hero (the hero takes possession of the author, the author takes possession of the hero, the hero is his own author). About the third case of relationship, M. Bakhtin writes the following: “the hero is his own author, comprehends his own life aesthetically, as if playing a role” (BAKHTIN, 1986, p. 23). The attitude of the player to what is happening is characterized by M. Bakhtin as subjective, since the player involved in the process does not see the whole play, he only wants to participate in the action. M. Bakhtin writes about this as follows: “His attitude to life as a desire to experience it oneself is not an aesthetic attitude to life; in this sense, play is like a dream of oneself and non-fiction reading of a novel” (BAKHTIN, 1986, p. 72). So, the player plays his own special play, under the guidance of the author, existing in a different being, different from art as such. M. Bakhtin believed that the play itself is completely devoid of an aesthetic moment. However, everything changes when the figure of the spectator appears, whose presence leads to a change in the role of the player, he becomes a hero, and the play itself approaches art, presenting itself as a whole event. So, we see that M. Bakhtin represents before us a fine line of transition from play as free activity to play as art.

M. Bakhtin ponders what unites play with art. It is precisely that neither play nor art is real, real life, when life is depicted in art and imagined in play. Thus, play and art are also a different being, different from real life. Both of these moments are associated by M. Bakhtin with a substitute for life. “Only by unconsciously thinking the position of the contemplative author, especially in association with the theater, is it possible to give some credibility to the theory of play in aesthetics” (BAKHTIN, 1986, p. 73). It should be noted that the very process of the image, according to M. Bakhtin, is also a kind of play, the play of an actor. M. Bakhtin calls it a “concrete aesthetic event”; “The actor imagines life and depicts it in his play” (BAKHTIN, 1986, p. 75). However, the actor's play only at the moment of presentation becomes an aesthetic action, and in general, according to M. Bakhtin, in the play the actor's inner experiences are transferred into the extra-aesthetic sphere of activity. The processes of imagination and images alternately replace each other in the work of the author and the hero, moving from play to art and from art to play.

Play as a phenomenon of human existence is an integral part of life, the scenario of which is not completed. Bakhtin demonstrates the relationship between the concepts of “play – life” by the example of describing an episode of a dramatic work, when: “there is no viewer ... no author ... no director ... there is no complete coincidence of the viewer with the hero and the actor with the depicted face, we have only play into life” (BAKHTIN, 1986, p. 71). The very understanding of the relationship between play and life, in the context of the “Author” and “Hero”, is similar to the relationship between an act as such in life, connected with the ability to look at oneself through the eyes of another, through the prism of another being, when the subject switches from the role of the author to the hero and vice versa.

The analysis of the essence of the phenomenon of play in the work of M. Bakhtin “The author and the hero in aesthetic activity” suggests the following. Play as a phenomenon is in this work in a clear relationship with art. Allocating to the play the place of another being, the author demonstrates to the reader the hidden contexts of the image of the author and the hero, the lines of their relationship. Such acting allows M. Bakhtin to consider the “Author” and “Hero” in the mainstream of aesthetics. For M. Bakhtin, play in the aspect of interconnection with culture through art is like another being in which life is played out. Consequently, the essence of the play is revealed in the work “Author and the Hero in Aesthetic Activity” through the presence of the “Author” and “Hero”. This “presence” itself consists of several layers. It is through internal, contextual designations, through linking to immanent connections that M. Bakhtin reveals the essence of play as a different being.

## PLAY IN THE SPACE OF THE CARNIVAL

In M. Bakhtin’s work “Creativity of François Rabelais and the Folk Culture of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance”, the phenomenon of carnival is important and interesting, as a phenomenon that offers a radically different view of the play in the space of the carnival, which does not fit into its usual definitions. M. Bakhtin, within the framework of the carnival, created a certain value-semantic space in which the play

reproduces completely different, other than utilitarian, meanings. “Carnival play in the collision of the insignificant and the serious, the terrible; notions of infinity and eternity are played out in a carnival manner” (BAKHTIN, 1975, p. 495). M. Bakhtin claims that during the carnival festivities a special world was created, a special space of being, radically different from the usual life of people of that historical period. “In the carnival, life itself plays, and play for a while becomes life itself. This is the specific nature of the carnival, the special kind of its being” (BAKHTIN, 1990, p. 13). M. Bakhtin, in fact, deconstructs the concept of a play in the context of the playing space of the carnival, and in essence, the whole historical era, practically nullifying the classical approaches to defining the play as a sphere of activity, in the course of which one can both “turn on” and “turn off”. They did not play in the carnival, they lived in it as in a parallel world. Here a certain “other” being was created, which coexisted with ordinary life, which was often ridiculed, ignoring the official statutes and the role of people in society. M. Bakhtin himself prefers to call such festivities “the second life” (BAKHTIN, 1990, p.14), which significantly differed from the official festivals of the Middle Ages, both church and secular. It can be assumed that within the framework of officially regulated festivities, their own “official play” was created, which should be called a certain ceremonial, alien to the carnival space.

Of course, the change in historical conditions led to the legalization of some elements of the carnival festivities. Carnival as a playground was a sphere for collecting, processing and filtering certain ideas, views and concepts, which subsequently either died out, were forgotten, or became part of the official dogma, depending on their social efficiency and the pleasing power. Thus, R. Caillois expressed an idea confirming the above assumptions, stating the following: “In every culture there is an implicit, inaccurate, incomplete distribution of values to those for which social efficiency is recognized, and to all others. At the same time, the latter develop in the peripheral areas left by them, among which the area of play occupies an important place” (CAILLOIS, 2007, p. 94). Therefore, according to R. Caillois, it is possible to draw a parallel between the historical period and the plays dominating in this period. This assumption allows us to speculate about why the areal space of the carnival became the most popular niche for the existence and development of the play in the Middle Ages.

Speaking about the play in the context of the carnival, it is obvious that the play here is endowed, on the one hand, with a utilitarian meaning. Especially when it comes to the opposition of the carnival play to the seriousness of the Middle Ages. However, if we look at the forms of penetration of the play into the sphere of the serious, then this “utilitarianism” is partially removed. Which also happens through the process of legitimization. The process of transition or modification of plays, their legalization at the level of official power can be compared with the phenomenon of liminality of the play, because “genuine festivity was ineradicable, and therefore it was necessary to endure and even partially legalize it outside the official side of the holiday” (BAKHTIN, 1990, p. 15). The process of transformation of carnival elements, when they are transformed into one of the events officially regulated by the power system, M. Bakhtin called “the impoverishment of ritual and spectacular carnival forms of folk culture” (BAKHTIN,



1990, p.41). But, until the moment when the play or its elements were legalized, the play continued to exist in the carnival plane assigned to it, as a space of freedom and liberty.

Carnival opposed the official holiday, being another being, which is closer to the sphere of human nature. Here, to characterize the holiday and, accordingly, the play that was revealed within it, one can use the principle of ambivalence, as the duality of a holiday, official and unofficial, as the attitude of people of that historical period to the phenomenon of play. On the one hand, play was a space for entertainment, on the other, a space in which vices, statutes, and possibly the dogmas of that society were ridiculed. The ambivalence of play in the space of the carnival is revealed through the opposition of play to non-play, play of seriousness. Bakhtin himself calls the process of the binarity and ambivalence of the carnival “the double aspect of the perception of the world” (BAKHTIN, 1990, p. 10). In this context, the play was enriched with completely different meanings, it was actually a play with the norms of life, bordering on sarcasm. Such an ambivalent status of the play in the space of the carnival allows one to create other ontological planes for analyzing the phenomenon of play and to speak of the play as a phenomenon with an indefinite status.

Bakhtin’s carnival can also be represented as a binary phenomenon, or rather a binary opposition. Since the carnival itself, on the one hand, affirms the holiday, forming the value-semantic space of the play, on the other hand, it denies the play only as a sphere of the holiday, creating an area of a different existence, a kind of anti-structure in which social dogma is ridiculed, a different perception of official phenomena and regulations is formed. To convey one of the main meanings of the carnival – the binary opposition, M. Bakhtin uses laughter, ousted in the Middle Ages from the sphere of official culture. Actually, the bias towards the utilitarian as an opposition to the play of seriousness still persists in the concept of the binary nature of life in the Middle Ages: “medieval people were equally involved in two lives – the official and the carnival” (BAKHTIN, 1990, p.109). However, the narrow understanding of play as opposed to seriousness is removed. M. Bakhtin declares the space of the carnival play to be an “extraterritorial” space in which: “that high open-air atmosphere of free and fun play is created in which the high and the low, the sacred and the profane are equal in their rights” (BAKHTIN, 1990, p. 178).

Play as a phenomenon opposed to seriousness or rationality is part of the culture of laughter. Consequently, if we start from the classification of the diverse manifestations and expressions of folk culture of laughter, the play was part of: carnival-type festivities, verbal laughter works, various forms of familiar-areal speech. Moreover, underestimation of the role of these festivities can simply lead to a distortion of the perception of the picture of the entire historical period. It is through laughter that the “inclusion” into the process of play took place; it is through laughter that play is revealed as a different plane of being, with its own rules and laws that are fundamentally different from the official ones. More precisely, the carnival “plays” with some of the official laws, ridiculing them. “Medieval parody is playing a completely unbridled merry play with everything that is most sacred and important from the point of view of official ideology” (BAKHTIN, 1990, p. 98).

It can be assumed that verbal laughter works and forms of familiarly-swearing speech are part of the theory of language plays, but carnival-type festivities are a special world, often opposing the officially represented reality. The very same language plays in the context of carnival culture must be considered as part of the well-established concept of speech genres of the Russian thinker. Thus, in the book about F. Rabelais, Bakhtin finds the basis for language as speech in direct bodily contacts of people, in which speech is primarily determined by the collective action of dialogue and communication. He describes the diversity of bodies and organs, bodily practices, interactions and hierarchies of people. This whole world of bodily interactions is expressed not so much in the content as in the tonality of the language, but at the same time it does not distance itself from extra-linguistic practices at all, and all the problems of the “external”, extra-linguistic are solved as problems of the language due to the variety of tonality in their direct pronunciation – be that requests and orders, oaths and entreaties, questions and answers. Bakhtin’s concept of speech genres is somewhat reminiscent of the theory of performativity, but by linking speech utterances with the depersonalized collective body of the people, he creates a completely original author’s concept. For Mikhail Bakhtin, a person is the starting point for verbal interaction in specific statements, where the experience of the body is irreplaceable. In Bakhtin’s work on Rabelais, language as speech is firmly connected with the collective body, in which the dismemberment and collection of a single language as social, cultural, religious, professional, etc. speech utterances, promotes better self-understanding. It occurs through the comprehension of one’s otherness or otherness through the experience of corporeality in its various speech modifications. Thus, M. Bakhtin insisted on the collective-bodily experience, “dissolving” language in the wider space of the theory of speech genres.

M. Bakhtin’s play of laughter is similar to grotesque, especially in the process of its inclusion in the sphere of the serious. M. Bakhtin even plays with the representation of contrasts in the understanding of play, moving from play as an activity to carnival as a swearing type of play. Play also played its part in the victory over fear, through play people conquered moral fear, which is what they laugh at in the carnival: “the terrible becomes a “funny bogeyman” (BAKHTIN, 1990, p. 105).

In a certain historical period, the carnival was still an anti-structure that resisted the official rules and dogmas. M. Bakhtin claims that the influence of the carnival is transforming and changing, of course, its influence on society decreases over time. However, carnival continues to play a significant role in literature. In the novel “Gargantua and Pantagruel” (RABELAIS, 1973), plays become a source for metaphors, comparisons, transferences and hyperbole. And this was not accidental, because, according to M. Bakhtin: “play has not yet become just an everyday phenomenon, part of even a negative order. It retained its world-contemplative meaning” (BAKHTIN, 1990, p. 260). This position of play in society suggests a possible correlation between cultures and certain flourishing plays in them.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The very approach to understanding play as a different being in the creative heritage of M. Bakhtin is undoubtedly debatable, rather hypothetical, rooted not only in the methodological plane, but also in the ontological context of the interpretation of culture and the person in it. So, for example, within the study “Bakhtin and carnival: Culture as counter-culture” the authors come to the following conclusion. “In a context apart from that of his carnival theory Bakhtin introduces the concept of “being-outside-of-oneself”. This exotopic-ecstasiceccentric state refers to the transgression of boundaries performed by the I as it moves out into the world and towards the other in order to arrive at itself” (LACHMANN, ESHELMAN & DAVIS, 1988, p. 152). Similarly, our proposed form of analysis of play in the creative heritage of a Russian cultural scientist, by demonstrating going beyond the established interpretations, provides a deeper understanding and appreciation of the significance of Bakhtin's activities. The analysis of the phenomenon of play in the specified works of Mikhail Bakhtin allows us to present the research data from earlier undisclosed angles. Thus, in the study “Author and hero in aesthetic activity”, play as a phenomenon is clearly interconnected with art. Allocating to the play the place of another being, the author demonstrates to the reader the hidden contexts of the image of the “Author” and “Hero”. Based on the analysis of the play in the space of the carnival la, we can state the following. Mikhail Bakhtin focused on the carnival as the basis of artistic works of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, but the very concept of carnival goes far beyond the framework of literature, being not just a cultural layer, but also a certain value-semantic space of the play. Play in carnival space is a rather complex and diverse category of analysis. Its diversity is associated with its ambivalent and binary perception, complexity, respectively, with the formation of cultural values and the reproduction of new meanings. The ambivalence of play in the play space of the carnival in the work of M. Bakhtin “Creativity of François Rabelais and the folk culture of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance” can be perceived as an attempt to express play in non-play, a play endowed with a new meaning. The binarity of the play in the space of the carnival is revealed through the category of anti-structure, since, on the one hand, a “fun” play is played out in the carnival, on the other hand, this play, ridiculing the elements of official orders, established dogmas, is a different being, another reality, declared by the author as an extraterritorial space, equalizing opposite poles of play perception. The space of play created by M. Bakhtin makes it possible to reveal the latent meanings of this phenomenon, which can be perceived as a high indicator of the development of the spiritual culture of the described society. Carnival play is a whole life, in which it is impossible to be included only partially. The carnival practically excluded the contemplation of the spectacle, assuming the full involvement of the participants in the process. The play, therefore, was defined as a play of life, all the moments of which were taken seriously.

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