

Jaroslav Hašek (1883 - 1923) is the first and most popular Czech satirist of international significance. His Prague dog dealer Joseph Svejek (Schweik), a man of simple heart and anarchist mind, is a universal model of civil disobedience, comparable to the immortal fools Simplicius Simplicissimus and Till Eulenspiegel. Hasek, a bohemian who knew how to hold his liquor, was the editor of several magazines, and after the war, as a regular in Prague's bars, cabarets and cafés, he presented his humoresques and anecdotes in cabarets including Montmartre and Cervená Sedma. A "Franz Kafka of comedy," as Max Brod called him, Hasek did not live to see the success of his picaresque novel, which was published in 1921 and only won international recognition with the 1926 German translation.

Jaroslav Hašek

"Humor that is a pleasant mixture of bottled beer and schnapps. The most mocking satire of imperial Austria I've ever seen, half a millimeter from immortality. ... Call Schweik over, get the bottle of walnut schnapps, and let's toast to you both, Hasek. To a great poet and to the good soldier Schweik." (Kurt Tucholsky, 1926)

