

Abstract

The objective of this master thesis is image of witches and their most frequent and well-known representation in films of the 20th and 21st centuries, with the research that is specifically focused on Czechoslovak/Czech film productions. Through qualitative image analysis and semiotic analysis, this thesis aims to answer the main research question: how witches are portrayed in modern film/tv/series productions and how are these images received by us, as viewers.

The thesis should form a comprehensive, concise, scholarly overview of the representation of witches (not only) in our local cinematography. The thesis is divided into a theoretical and analytical part. The first part is consisting of a brief definition of the media, followed by witchcraft definition by an anthropological perspective and the depiction of witches in world cinematography. The analytical part is devoted to Czechoslovak/Czech films and is divided into 20th century films and 21st century films. In four pre-selected films, I examine several elements such as the characteristics or abilities of the witches, their appearance, and their relationship to other characters in the film, the state system during the creation of the film and direct signs referring to witchcraft, as well as indirect symbols and finally, audience reception. This analysis allows me to construct stereotypical groups of witches in Czech cinematography. In the end, the following is a summary that can become an inspiration for further study of witchcraft in media communication.