

This diploma thesis is an ethnographic study of a local small-town cinema in Řevnice near Prague. It analyzes social, cultural - or symbolic - meanings of this cinema with respect to a wider social and cultural context. Because the cinema, as a place, is constituted by the social practice of "cinema-going", this thesis is a "thick description" of spectators' lived experience in that space. The author of this thesis employs the interpretative approach of Geertz as well as the approaches of phenomenologically oriented thinkers of Patočka, Berger, Luckmann and Tuan. The author's research reveals that in current times, there is a strong symbolic polarity between small cinemas and multiplexes. Small cinemas are seen to be in opposition to the "popcorn culture" of the multiplexes on the levels of aesthetics, morals, ethics etc. In the case of the cinema in Řevnice, the local character of the facility is very important too. It not only distinguishes this cinema from multiplexes, but it also helps form local identity incorporated by the town and its inhabitants. The author also points out the differences between young and older people's perception of cinemas in general caused by their different previous experiences. In order to capture the wider cultural context of the cinema, the author uses the work of Lubaszewska, Hanzlík and Čada to illustrate images of the cinema that were constructed by the media and the arts.