

The subject of this thesis is a semiotically inspired analysis of Michael Phelps photos from Beijing Summer Olympics (2008). The theoretical part deals with semiotic concepts of Roland Barthes referring to Ferdinand de Saussure theory and Barthes original concept of modern myths. The aim of this work is to provide an insight into the reading and interpretation of photographic images. It focuses on the issue of mechanisms of photographic meanings and their description. Beside the critical view of Roland Barthes semiotics of photographs and concepts the thesis presents the works of Vilém Flusser and Umberto Eco as well. The main intention of the diploma paper is to show the photograph as an area of utterances. The emphasis on interpretive role is there put into opposition to the understanding of photography only as a mechanical representation of reality. Along with Barthes the work explains the construction of myths as an ideological representation of meanings and intentions that are not obvious at first sight. The practical part offers semiotic-based analysis of several photos of Michael Phelps from the Beijing Olympics games. The analysis focuses on the discovery of the main concepts that are carriers of latent meanings. They show how the meanings involved in the production of mythology, which uses the narrative form of heroic epos.