

Name: Simona Matejickova

Title: Film in the 1940s-1960s In the USA and Czechoslovakia

Ms. Matejickova focuses her study on the history of Czech and American films from the 1940s-1960s and how the historical events of the time influenced its content and style. Her theoretical chapter is divided into two sections. Her introduction states the aims of the thesis which is to examine the genres of this period. The second section introduces the political situation during the period of 1940-1960 and introduces the genres of the period and attempts to determine whether the films characterized the period. In the theoretical section she gives a brief history of the beginnings of films and introduces the political events and popular genres and lists some popular films but she doesn't offer any analysis of the films beyond a few brief sentences and now and then describes the plot or mentions the actors(who may be unfamiliar to non-Czech readers or those with minimal knowledge of Czech films)or sometimes only mentioning the title and the year of the film. The pattern continues in the section of the 1950s and 1960s briefly describing the political atmosphere, mentioning actors and genres but lacking any deep discussion or analysis. Throughout the theoretical chapter there is not enough explanation of the influence of the political atmosphere surrounding the film. For example on P. 9 it is not explained the importance of who Vladimir Smeral was only that he was being hid. On P.8 the films listed are not explained as to how they raised awareness of national history. On P. 10 there is no analysis of the films of the period so it was difficult to understand how these films were influenced by the political circumstances.

The second part of the theoretical chapter discusses film in the USA during the same period. It follows the same limited style of narration as the first half in the theoretical section. On P.15, I question the correctness of the statement regarding Americans avoiding entertainment during this time in the USA. The people used entertainment as an escape from the economic depression. Actually the period of the Great Depression in the USA is the golden age of Hollywood Musicals and Screwball comedies. The main problem with the theoretical chapter is it tries to do too much and ends up not doing enough. It may have been better to offer one or two films of the period representative of the period and offer a deeper analysis rather than in many cases simply listing the films. In its present state there is not enough explanation which leaves the material vague and seemingly incomplete. The practical section claims it is an example of quantitative research. The practical section uses a questionnaire given to 249 students at private and state-owned universities were asked questions about their knowledge of American and Czech films. It is not stated how many actually responded to the questionnaire. It is therefore difficult to determine how this number was reached. There is no respondent breakdown of the answers to the questions. I would be interested to read how the final number was arrived at but neither the questions nor the questionnaire are listed anywhere. The conclusion is simply a repeat of the theoretical section. What should be done with this conclusion? As one of the aims it is difficult to consider "briefly introducing the most significant films" as an aim of the thesis. The research aim seems incomplete with no appendix materials(questionnaire) needed to determine that 45% are familiar with Czech and American cinematography. Overall I consider the limited scope of the present work lacking in potential and recommend for it the mark of 3(three)

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