

Univerzita Karlova v Praze

Filozofická fakulta

Ústav anglistiky a amerikanistiky

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Abstrakt bakalářské práce

THE ROAD NOT TAKEN

Analýza reprezentace významných událostí a osobností irských dějin v období 1916-1923 v irském filmu

Abstract of BA Thesis

An analysis of representation of significant events and personalities of Irish history in the period from 1916-1923 in Irish film.

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vedoucí práce: Clare Wallace, Ph.D.

Thesis abstract

This thesis focuses on the period of Irish history from 1916 to 1923, i.e. the period commencing with the Easter Rising and concluding with the end of the Irish Civil War, as it was captured in three feature historical films shot in the last two decades: Jonathan Lewis' *The Treaty* (1992), Neil Jordan's *Michael Collins* (1996) and Ken Loach's *The Wind That Shakes the Barley* (2006). The main interest of the thesis is the way the historical events and the main characters of the films are represented. The implications of such representations are analyzed and possible explanations offered. Selection, misrepresentation, falsification and invention of historical material by the authors of the films is scrutinized and pointed out. The contrast between historical and biographical accounts of the characters and their filmic portrayals is considered and conclusions drawn as to show to what purpose could such representations have been meant to serve in case of each particular film. Specifically, the first chapter is predominantly dedicated to the representations of Michael Collins and Éamon de Valera who appear in both *Michael Collins* and *The Treaty*. Particular aspects of the portrayal of each of the characters are treated in separate subchapters, especially in the case of Michael Collins, who is the chief protagonist in both Jordan's and Lewis' films. Much of the extent of the first chapter is dedicated to an analysis of the contrast between his portrayal in Jordan's biographical film and the accounts of his life provided by his biographers, namely Tim Pat Coogan and Frank O'Connor.

The second chapter is dedicated to the parallels apparent from the juxtaposition of *The Wind That Shakes the Barley* with the two other films. The parallels concern the similarities of the fates of the characters and events described. Structural, narrative and political parallels are highlighted, analyzed and conclusions are drawn as to their meaning in the context of the film, especially in contrast with available historical sources. The chief parallel analyzed in the chapter is the theme of ideological split within a circle of friends or even within family, which was a painful experience for many participants of both Irish Independence War and subsequent Irish Civil War. This theme is visualized in the fates of both Damien and Teddy O'Donnovan, i.e. the characters of Loach's *The Wind That Shakes the Barley*, and Jordan's Harry Boland, Michael Collins and Eamon de Valera.

Two short sections, dealing predominantly with political parallels in the films, close the second chapter. The first is dedicated to the transformation of the post-Independence War establishment into Irish Free State, highlighting and describing the moments, which could be

classified as so-called thermidorian stage of a revolution, i.e. stage when the new regime begins to resemble the old establishment. The second sub-chapter then deals with the influence of socialist and communist ideas of James Connolly, the ideological leader of the Irish Citizen Army, as it surfaces in Loache's *The Wind That Shakes the Barley*. Overall, the thesis strives to show that through the ways the authors of the films deal with the historical material, they are attempting to put forth their own alternative readings of history, which are marked by their subjective agenda.