

In societies of state socialism the image of West was usually characterized by high degree of ambivalence. On the one hand the West was a space where negative social and politic phenomena could be displaced – as negative film should the official image of evil West full of social insecurity, criminality and poverty, reassured Czechoslovakian citizens of rightness of building socialism. On the other hand entirely opposite scenes were part of the public meaning- unconcealed admiration of fashion trends inspired by western mass culture (films, music). There was not only the fascination with consumer commodities of the western World, but also an admiration of lot of nonmaterial aspects (freedom of press, traveling, ecologic, feministic, pacifistic movements etc.). The West became gradually something mystical- it was at the same time “familiar and inaccessible, real and abstract, mundane and exotic”. This ambivalence and inaccessibility was transforming the West in some mysterious and dreamlike place where instead of evil, the promise of happiness could be projected. Despite the official ideology and censoring attempts that limited the information about life behind the Iron Curtain, citizens in Czechoslovakia had an opportunity to create their own, quite clear image of West. At the same time I am trying to present specific forms of behavior in normalization society resulting from penetration of western elements into Czechoslovakia.