

## Abstrakt

This thesis describes how Americans perceived the Soviet Union at the beginning of the Cold War, between 1947 and 1956. The aim of the thesis is to provide a comprehensive image of what opinions the American public held and to try to show what factors influenced the opinions. Three main topics that dominated the perceived image of the Soviet union are identified: espionage and ideological subversion, nuclear warfare, and the totalitarian nature of Communism i.e., its likeness with Nazism.

The first chapter focuses on the espionage and the subversion: the era now called McCarthyism. Rather than analyzing the processes, it aims at finding connections between the so called witch hunt and the public opinion. The second chapter is concerned with civil defense campaign, which started after the successful Soviet atomic test. The main target is to determine what information the people responsible for the campaign had and to compare it with what they told the public. The third chapter, then, deals with how private media cooperated with the governmental agencies on said campaign and how they tried to show the Soviet Union and Communism as different forms of the Third Reich and Nazism.