

Tanya Silverman
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Abstract

The Czechoslovak New Wave film movement saw directors such as Jiří Menzel, Věra Chytilová, Miloš Forman and Ivan Passer capture the liberalized mood of the 1960s. After the momentous cultural era ended in the aftermath of the 1968 Warsaw Pact invasion, all four figures continued their directorial careers, albeit either by overcoming bans or emigrating to the United States. This thesis aims to put forth a unique methodology of examining how these four auteurs' filmic outputs demonstrated their interactions with social environments from the 1970s to 2006. The research process included systematically surveying films for cues and corroborating observations with interview media or memoir texts. The analytical structure focuses on three significant tropes: car culture, money as power and censorship. Descriptions include particular findings pertaining to all four directors as well as synthesis for the contexts of both locations. The research suggests that Jiří Menzel and Miloš Forman exhibited the most reverence towards Czech and American culture, respectively, while Věra Chytilová and Ivan Passer demonstrated a number of similar societal criticisms throughout their filmographies. This thesis hopes to serve as a model for understanding post-New Wave films by Czech directors that applies innovative angles for examining their works.