

Annotation

Diploma thesis „The collapses of distant worlds“ deals with interpretations of the conquista of Mexico and Peru (i.e. the conquests of Aztec and Inca empires). The basic question, which all the works considering the conquista deal with, is: how could the arrival of small groups of Spanish conquerors disrupt great Indian empires in such a short time? My thesis has two main goals: to define the typology of interpretations of the conquista and offer my own interpretation which places emphasis on the role of mentalities and cultural complexes. I have distinguished four basic types of interpretations of the conquista: 1. the metaphysical ones; 2. the technological ones; 3. the environmental ones; 4. the mentalistic ones. I used the conception of mentalities (derived from the work of Lucien Lévy-Bruhl) and the system conception of cultur, where I worked with the term “cultural complex” especially. After my approach the conquista represented the clash between two different types of mentalities: the archaic one (which Indian societies featured) and the literary one (which was developed in European societies). Differences in mentalities and cultural complexes provided advantages to the Spaniards in their struggles with the Aztecs and the Incas. So finally the Spanish conquest of Indian empires is described and explained by using aforesaid concepts.