

University of Pardubice  
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"WHEN THE STARS SHINE, WHEN THE STARS FALL"

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Transformation of Female Movie Stars in modern Czech Society

Theses of Doctoral Dissertation

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## **Annotation**

This dissertation describes the transformation of female film stars in modern Czech society in the first half of the twentieth century, using the phenomenon of the star construct as an element of the method of film theory for the study of the history of cinema, socio-cultural history and women's history. It shows how post-war retribution contributed to the controlled demise of the star construct. It deals with political history, socio-cultural history, the history of everyday life, women's history and film history. Based on the heuristics of contemporary periodicals, specialist literature and archival materials, the transformations of female film stars in modern Czech society are outlined. Case studies devoted to film stars Zdena Kavková, Nataša Gollová, Adina Mandlová and Věra Ferbasová reveal not only their life stories but also portray the development of their stars. They trace their origins, the period of their greatest fame and their fall from stardom.

## **Keywords**

Film stars, actresses, women, history, film, first republic, protectorate, collaboration, third republic, retributions

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## Topics and aims of the dissertation

These theses sum up the most crucial findings presented in my doctoral dissertation entitled "WHEN THE STARS SHINE, WHEN THE STARS FALL" – Transformation of Female Movie Stars in modern Czech Society.

The aim of this dissertation is to present a picture of the transformation of female film stars in modern Czech society in the first half of the twentieth century, using the phenomenon of the star construct as an element of the method of film theory for the study of the history of cinema, socio-cultural history and women's history.

Film stars<sup>1</sup> and stardom<sup>2</sup> as elements used to investigate the transformation of society are a new approach in the discourse of historical socio-cultural research, although in film studies it is a familiar and used concept.

I originally came to the topic with the idea of focusing on the development of the careers of Czech female film stars in the period from the advent of sound film to the beginning of television broadcasting, i.e. from the early 1930s to 1953.<sup>3</sup> The launch of trial television broadcasting in 1953 influenced film production itself and "educated" a new type of viewer – the television viewer. I intended to place special emphasis on the period of the Third Republic (1945–1948) and to try to examine the transformation of post-war society through the approach to film stars, whose position underwent fundamental changes during this period. I started from the thesis that the discourse of acting fame did not actually disappear after 1945 or 1948, but was transformed into other forms of stardom. However, as I got to know the topic more and more, it became more and more apparent to me that the research on the transformation of female film stars in modern Czech society could not be limited to the years 1930–1953, but that it would be necessary to go back to the first manifestations of stardom in our cultural circle, which were already visible in the silent film era. In the course of the research, the originally established thesis about the transformation of stardom in the immediate post-war period was also modified. I came to the conclusion that for the immediate post-war period, the

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<sup>1</sup> The term "stars" is based on the film theory term "star studies".

<sup>2</sup> We use the term "stardom" in the sense of fame, which is defined by the theory of stars. Stardom is also understood as a significant factor in film and cultural production.

<sup>3</sup> ŠTOLL, Martin. *1.5.1953 – zahájení televizního vysílání: zrození televizního národa*. Vyd. 1. Praha: Havran, 2011. ISBN 978-80-87341-06-3.

topic of stardom was completely taboo in Czech cinema. Stardom and stars were purposely liquidated after the war, immediately after the liberation in 1945. They were displaced by the emerging influences of nationalisation, collectivism and a general change in rhetoric and thinking. During the Third Republic (or even until 1953), there was no sign of stars being used in any way by the regime: if they were, it was only as an indicator of something bourgeois and outdated, which had no place in nationalised cinema and the post-war social order.

The present work covers the history of the first half of the 20th century and describes the development of stars and stardom from their first manifestations through their greatest fame to their demise (of stars and often of the actors themselves at the moment of the loss of their acting career and profession). It shows how, through post-war retribution, the very construct of stardom itself came to an entirely orchestrated demise. At the same time, however, it points to the possibilities of its "rebirth", which can also be described as the "second life of the stars".

This work touches on several areas: political history, socio-cultural history, history of everyday life, women's history and film history. This deliberately interdisciplinary approach allows us to present a plastic picture of the transformation of society in the period under study. I have also drawn inspiration from theories of memory studies, which provide additional possibilities for researching the second lives of stars that occurred after 1989 and, unfortunately, usually after the death of the actors under study. For the study of stellar discourse, the most valuable and unforgettable source of research is information from period press (articles, reviews, commentaries) that illustrate how the star was written about at different times in her career and how stellar discourse changed in the period press. Another important source is the memoir literature: we also look at whether, for example, actors had the will or opportunity to create their own autobiographies. On this basis, based primarily on specific case studies, the thesis shows how the actor's "star" was perceived by the public and society at its birth, and on what basis, despite the fact that the construct itself was suppressed for many years, the label has carried over to the present day for many star personalities.

This dissertation is divided into five chapters and each chapter relies on a different type of material and sources. The first chapter introduces the development of

"star studies" in the first half of the 20th century, anchoring the thesis in terms of methodological and theoretical concepts and outlining the heuristic starting points. The second chapter is concerned with anchoring the studied problem of stardom and the star as a new phenomenon developed within an emancipated society. The third chapter outlines the development of stardom against the background of the history of Czech cinema, from the period of the emergence of the cinematograph, silent cinema, through the advent of sound film, pre-war and wartime cinema to the period of nationalised cinema. In this chapter, I describe both the star issue and the classical account of the development of Czech cinema, trying to link the two frameworks as much as possible. At the same time, I also present, in the form of biographical medallions, significant personalities of the pre-star or early star period of interwar cinema, such as Anna Sedláčková, Suzanne Marwille or Anny Ondráková. I focus on the interwar development of cinema, which was also most influenced by the very adoption of sound in film, as well as the position of cinema during the Protectorate. The chapter also reflects on the post-war development of Czech cinema in terms of organisation and production (genres and themes), which was fundamentally influenced by Decree No. 50/1945 Coll., on measures in the field of film, which transferred not only film production, but also distribution and import into state hands,<sup>4</sup> signed by President Edvard Beneš on 11 August 1945. On the one hand, we find in the Third Republic period a number of continuities with the previous period – for example, in the leadership of the nationalised cinema in the period 1945–1948 there were a number of people who had worked in the film structures already during the First and Second Republics and during the Protectorate. On the other hand, two and a half years before February 1948, all private business entities had already been excluded from the film industry. The restoration of film production after the liberation was not at all easy. Many formerly active filmmakers, directors, actors and actresses did not get the opportunity to work. Some stars of pre-war and wartime cinema disappeared from the screen for a while (Nataša Gollová, Jiřina Štěpničková, Hana Vítová) or completely (Adina Mandlová, Lída Baarová). On the contrary, the film environment was quickly populated with new

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<sup>4</sup> KAPLAN, Karel, ed. a JECH, Karel, ed. *Dekrety prezidenta republiky 1940–1945: dokumenty*. 1. vyd. Brno: Doplněk, 1995. ISBN 80-85270-41-2. p. 389–395.

faces (e.g. Marie Vášová, Dana Medřická, Marie Tomášová), but without building a star cult.<sup>5</sup> The fourth chapter outlines the post-war socio-historical changes in Czechoslovakia, which to a large extent contributed to the suppression or even the disappearance of the star construct. The stellar fall or denial of stardom is contextualised within an examination of the transformation of post-war society based on the nature of Protectorate society and the theme of the star in relation to post-war retribution. The post-war trials of cultural figures played a significant role. The pressure, or perhaps better said, the need for society to 'settle accounts' with those who collaborated with the Germans in any way and those who had prospered during the Protectorate was very strong. There did not have to be – and in most cases there were not – any major trials,<sup>6</sup> but, for example, the management of revolutionary cleansing commissions in enterprises and trade unions, or the complications of obtaining certificates of national reliability issued by the national committees (this was another extra-judicial possibility of removing some inconvenient persons from the cultural sphere as well).<sup>7</sup> The period press of the time paid sufficient attention to these cases and described the course and results of the individual proceedings, thus contributing to the creation of the distinctive atmosphere of the Third Republic.

The fifth chapter is devoted to four specific actresses – film stars Zdena Kavková, Nataša Gollová, Adina Mandlová and Věra Ferbasová, who experienced a steep fall – stars, professional and personal – at certain times in their careers.<sup>8</sup> The basic criterion for the selection was the fate of their "Star", all of them experienced a fall, sometimes even repeated falls. In the course of our studies, we investigate when and under what

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<sup>5</sup> SZCZEPANIK, Petr. „Machři“ a „diletanti“. Základní jednotky filmové praxe v době reorganizací a politických zvratů 1945 až 1962. In SKOPAL, Pavel, ed. *Naplánovaná kinematografie: český filmový průmysl 1945 až 1960*. Vyd. 1. Praha: Academia, 2012. p. 27–101. ISBN 978-80-200-2096-3.

<sup>6</sup> The issue of post-war retributive justice is dealt with in a separate chapter in the thesis, and in general terms the topic of extraordinary people's courts, e.g., NĚMEČKOVÁ, Daniela a kol. *Lidová spravedlnost: mimořádné lidové soudy v letech 1945-1948*. Praha: Auditorium, 2017. ISBN 978-80-87284-68-1; ŠLOUF, Jakub – NĚMEČKOVÁ, Daniela. *Mimořádný lidový soud v Praze (1945-1948): retribuční úkol na hraně možnosti i profesní cti zaměstnanců justice*. 1. vyd. Praha: Academia, 2020. ISBN:978-80-200-3070-2; 978-80-88148-38-8; BORÁK, Mečislav. *Spravedlnost podle dekretu: retribuční soudnictví v ČSR a Mimořádný lidový soud v Ostravě (1945-1948)*. 1. vyd. 1. Ostrava: Tilia, 1998. ISBN 80-86101-07-X; JARKOVSKÁ, Lucie. *Odplata, či spravedlnost?: mimořádné lidové soudy 1945-1948 na Královéhradecku*. 1. vyd. Praha: Prostor, 2008. ISBN 978-80-7260-206-3.

<sup>7</sup> In general terms, e.g. KMOCH, Pavel. *Provinění proti národní cti: "malá retribuce" v českých zemích a Trestní nalézací komise v Benešově u Prahy*. 1. vyd. Praha: Academia, 2015. ISBN 978-80-200-2475-6.

<sup>8</sup> The biographical medallions function as case studies that, taken as a whole, form the basic comparative platform.

circumstances this happened: what role did the real and perceived collaboration during the Protectorate play, and what effect did giving up a film career have on post-war stardom? The work has given space to point to the life stories of several film stars whose more or less well-known life stories help us to glimpse different aspects of the changing social climate and times.

## **Methodological basis**

For my research I decided to use the methodology of star systems – star studies – as one of the approaches. Star studies research methodology has been developing since the late 1970s. It is a method of Anglo-American film theory and history that explores the genesis, existence and reception of film stars. The foundations were laid by British film historian and critic Richard Dyer, who introduced the concept of "stardom" in his book *Stars*<sup>9</sup> in 1979. Dyer sees the *star image* as a structured polysemy – an assemblage of photographs, likenesses, and stylizations in film and theatre roles, further augmented by an awareness of the star as we know him or her from biographies, articles, interviews, general actions and appearances, and self-declarations. The original concept has subsequently been developed by other Anglo-American theorists and historians who have sought to redefine the terms "star" and "stardom." What is also very interesting for my work is Dyer's reasoning and scholarly approach linked to the concept of ideology,<sup>10</sup> where stars both represent typical behavior and thinking in the society in which they live, but also occupy a privileged position in that same society.<sup>11</sup>

This work was later responded to by Paul McDonald, who wrote an afterword to the second edition of Dyer's monograph *Stars*, modifying Dyer's ideas and approaches, which he applied to later forms of fame. In 2000, Paul McDonald self-published *The Star System. The Hollywood Production of Popular Identities*,<sup>12</sup> a historical survey of Hollywood stardom from the silent film era to the present. This basic paradigm has

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<sup>9</sup> We work with the 2nd edition available in the Czech Republic: DYER, Richard. *Stars*. New edition. London: BFI Publishing, 1998.

<sup>10</sup> The set of ideas and representations by which people collectively think about the world and society in which they live.

<sup>11</sup> DYER, Richard. *Stars*, op. cit., p. 2.

<sup>12</sup> MCDONALD, Paul. *The star system: Hollywood's production of popular identities*. London: Wallflower, 2000. ISBN 978-1-903364-02-4.



subsequently been built upon by various authors who have not focused exclusively on the Hollywood milieu, but have looked at local specificities, for example. This helped to extend the possibilities of grasping Dyer's original conception of stars beyond Hollywood – to describe other star systems and other cinemas.

Dyer's conclusions cannot simply be applied to different types of star systems. But we can use the basic terminology. Dyer characterizes a **star image** as "*a complex configuration of visual, verbal, and sonic signs forming the general character of a particular star, manifest not only in films but in various media texts.*"<sup>13</sup> He sees star images as a "structured polysemy",<sup>14</sup> which is shaped by four types of texts: the promotion of the star and its films by the film or production studio itself (*promotion*), publicity involving interviews and articles published about the star, at least seemingly independently of the official promotion by the studio (*publicity*), the films themselves, and criticism and commentary assessing the star's performance. He says: "*the image of the star is created from the texts of the media, which are composed of promotion, publicity, advertising, films and commentaries or criticism.*"<sup>15</sup> In the context of the Hollywood star system, the film studios themselves have a significant influence on the formation of the star image, controlling not only their own promotion and the films they produce, but also significantly the press coverage of their stars. It also emphasises the importance of the temporal dimension that influences the star image; the star image changes over time, with different elements dominating at different times, while others may be suppressed.<sup>16</sup> In addition to the term star image,<sup>16</sup> some theorists use the term **star personality**, but as Alan Lovell pointed out in his study, this is a misleading conflation of the categories of star image and star personality.<sup>17</sup>

Dyer's paradigm of the intertextual star image is used in his next book, *Heavenly Bodies*,<sup>18</sup> where he develops another concept he has used before, the **star vehicle, which**

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<sup>13</sup> DYER, Richard. *Stars*, op. cit., p. 34.

<sup>14</sup> We understand the variety of meanings and values that can be read from a given image.

<sup>15</sup> DYER, Richard. *Stars*, op. cit., p. 60.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, p. 60.

<sup>17</sup> LOVELL, Alan. I went in search of Deborah Kerr, Jodie Foster and Julianne Moore but got waylaid.... In AUSTIN, Thomas., BARKER, Martin., eds. *Contemporary Hollywood stardom*. 1st pub. London: Arnold, 2003. ISBN 0-340-80936-1.

<sup>18</sup> Simply put, it conceptualizes the star image as a collection of everything that is publicly available about a particular star – films, film promotion, promotion of the stars themselves, pin-ups, public appearances of the star, interviews, biographies and reports on their private lives. We are working with the 2nd edition available in the

is based on the actual film and production practice of the American film industry in the classical period (1930s–1960s) and describes working with the economic potential of the star. As described by Czech scholars, foremost among them Šárka Gmíterková, there is a problem in finding a Czech equivalent because both etymological and historical origins, and thus signification, are lost. We therefore use it untranslated with its original meaning.<sup>19</sup> Star vehicle refers to a way of preparing, shooting and promoting films with regard to the star and its image. An important element in films described as star vehicles is in the involvement of studios in casting suitable actors and creating roles in order to exploit the potential of their stardom for the success of the film. Another of Dyer's followers who has worked on the emergence of the star system in Hollywood and whose ideas, particularly in the area of describing discursive practices, are worth mentioning is Richard deCordova. In his book *Picture Personalities: The Emergence of the Star System in America*, he discusses three concepts related to the identity of the acting subject – the "actor," the "picture personality," and the "star." DeCordova sees the "actor" primarily as a profession whose main function is to create fiction. "The 'screen persona', according to him, is defined by a discourse that limits the information provided to the professional existence of the actor and the creation of an image, the so-called *image*, which is an intertextual set of elements formed by the films the actor has made, their promotion and his activities outside the film. In contrast, the "star" discourse focuses primarily on the actor's private life (very often his love life), i.e. on his existence unrelated to his film work."<sup>20</sup>

### **The Concept of Star Systems in European and Czech Cinema**

Dyer's methodology, although broadly applicable, encounters its limits in different historical and geopolitical conditions. In our environment, we rely mainly on the research of the Czech scholar Šárka Gmíterková. She argues that acting fame in

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Czech Republic: DYER, Richard. *Heavenly bodies: film stars and society*. London: Routledge, 2004. ISBN 0-415-31027-X.

<sup>19</sup> GMÍTERKOVÁ, Šárka. *Jiřina Štěpničková: česká národní hvězda 1930–1945*. 2011. Master thesis. Charles University, Faculty of Arts, Department of Film Studies. Thesis supervisor Klimeš, Ivan.

<sup>20</sup> CORDOVA, Richard de. *The Emergence of the Star System in America*. Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2001. ISBN-13: 978-0252070167. pp. 20–21.

continental Europe is accompanied by different attributes, especially value and work-organizational, than in Hollywood.<sup>21</sup> She also mentions the influence of media and cultural studies, which have moved away from shaping "stars" into icons of a different type – namely celebrities.<sup>22</sup> Gmitterko argues that "celebrity" introduces a new phenomenon into the theory of stars, the increased visibility of the audience – the creation of fans. At the same time, she, like the historian Garncarz,<sup>23</sup> argues for the need to carefully select appropriate terms with which Czech research on film stars can work. She also leans towards the importance of seeing stars within the Czechoslovak star system as primarily "artists", which she argues stems from the traditionally strong interconnectedness of cinema and theatre. Her approach implies the need for interdisciplinary research that links the theatre and film spheres within the theory of stars.<sup>24</sup>

In her texts, Gmitterková presented a basic framework description of the Czech star system, taking into account the specificities of Czech cinema, which she built, among other things, on the clarification of terminology using the already standardized concepts of the original theory of stardom. It concretizes and enriches them with new meanings applicable and beneficial for the study of the First Republic star environment. It uses **the star image** in the sense of Dyer's theory. He argues that it is not just one particular image, but a cluster of images, snapshots, photographs, likenesses, and stylizations in film roles that ultimately creates the star image. He accepts the claim of a structured polysemy (a group of meanings). He then sees the roots of the image in ideology, in social, historical and political ideas of beauty, success or failure, consumption, exceptionalism, but also, in contrast to Dyer, in the ordinary (an element typical of European systems, where stars are presented and accepted by society as the more successful, yet one of us – typical, for example, in the case of the "star". The

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<sup>21</sup> GMITERKOVÁ, Šárka. České filmové hvězdy. In *Illuminace. Časopis pro teorii, historii a estetiku filmu*. Praha: Národní filmový archiv, 2012, Vol. 24, No. 1., p. 25–30. ISSN 0862-397X.

<sup>22</sup> For a closer look at the concept of celebrity (star-as-celebrity) see e.g. GERAGHTY, Christine. Re-examining stardom. Question of texts, Bodies and Performance. In GLEDHILL, Christine - WILLIAMS, Linda (eds.), *Reinventing Film Studies*. London: Arnold 2000. ISBN 0-340-67722-8. p. 183–201.

<sup>23</sup> GARNCARZ, Joseph. Hvězdný systém ve výmarské kinematografii. In *Illuminace. Časopis pro teorii, historii a estetiku filmu*. Praha: Národní filmový archiv, 2012, Vol. 24, No. 1., p. 31–43. ISSN 0862-397X.

<sup>24</sup> GMITERKOVÁ, Šárka. *Kristian v montérkách. Hvězdná osobnost Oldřicha Nového mezi kulturními průmysly, produkčními systémy a politickými režimy v letech 1936-1969*. Brno, 2018. Dissertation. Masaryk University, Faculty of Arts. Thesis supervisor doc. Mgr. Petr Szczepanik, Ph.D, p. 22–23.

element of disclosure of privacy, which is prevalent in Dyer's work, in the sense of revealing scandals and intimacy is almost absent in the Czech space, but it is replaced by the aforementioned presentation of private life through other professional activities and highlighting the actor as an artist, often with a strong emphasis on national values. He uses **the star persona** in the sense of the resulting image pieced together from various media texts, emphasising that the idea of a star is complex, circulating both at the time of his or her highest impact and a reputation modified in retrospect. As mentioned above, neither Gmitterkova nor any of the local scholars translate the term *star vehicle* and use it in its original meaning. It depicts the work with the economic potential of stars – the way films are prepared, shot and promoted with regard to the star and its image. Although the Czech milieu did not have a similarly elaborate machinery for producing and maintaining a star, we find it here as well, which Gmitterková has successfully demonstrated in the examples of both Jiřina Štěpničková (especially in the years 1935–1940) and Oldřich Nový (in the period 1939–1945), where there were multiple portrayals of roles in films similar in subject matter, setting, costume, type of figure played, and their character traits. In the Czech stellar environment, **the agency of the star** is perceived mainly from the perspective of an extra-filmic context, aside from the gears of official presentation. Specifically, this includes the qualities, experiences and career-enhancing experiences of the actor or actress, family background, thinking and talking about roles, social status, political attitudes, etc. He then sees this concept as particularly relevant to periods of national crisis. In our case, it is mainly concerned with the national and political aspects of the 1930s and 1940s, and especially the period of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. Stars were often cast in films simply because they were expected to be the necessary attraction for the audience and to make money. Here it is important to observe the public and their demands and expectations of stars, which, as it turned out especially in 1945, could change radically and very quickly.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> GMITERKOVÁ, Šárka. *Jiřina Štěpničková: česká národní hvězda 1930–1945*, c. d., s. 10–12. Srov. GMITERKOVÁ, Šárka. *Filmová ctnost je blond: Jiřina Štěpničková (1930–1945)*. In *Illuminace. Časopis pro teorii, historii a estetiku filmu*. Praha: Národní filmový archiv, 2012, Vol. 24, No. 1., s. 45–68. ISSN 0862-397X. s. 47–48.

## **Conclusions of the dissertation**

The aim of this dissertation was to present the transformations of female film stars in modern Czech society, both in general historical and cultural terms and by comparing specific female stars' fates. The main aim was to use an interdisciplinary approach and to grasp the construct of the star studies as a method of film theory for the study of socio-cultural history and the history of women in the first half of the twentieth century. The research was laid in several basic areas – political history, socio-cultural history, history of everyday life, women's history, and film history.

The thesis itself contextualizes the topic within several key frameworks. Firstly, the concept of stardom. The description of the emergence and development of the phenomenon of stardom runs through the thesis as a red thread linking the other frameworks under examination. The use of the concept of stardom in this thesis is also the most important methodological approach we employ. While the description of the phenomenon of film stardom offers the possibility of a better understanding of the history of cinema, we also use and apply it to the research on the society-wide transformations that took place, whether due to the emancipation of society or its transformation after World War II. Secondly, it is a framework for the history of Czech cinema, practically from the first silent films, through the advent of sound film, to the post-war period when Czech cinema was nationalised. Thirdly, the thesis focuses on description of the impact of different types of post-war retribution on society as well as on the film environment. Fourthly, the thesis uses the framework of a kind of micro-narratives of stardom and through them looks at the specific life stories of selected female film stars and, in addition, the fate of their stardom.

Against the backdrop of the transformation of stardom, i.e. its birth, rise and fall, the work shows how not only the film environment but also culture, the position of women in society and society in general have changed. Special emphasis is put on the post-war period. The Nazi occupation affected everyone's everyday life. The desire for revenge swept through society, and this took various forms after liberation. The post-war period is a dynamically developing stage of Czechoslovak history. As film stars were part of the pre-war and Protectorate representation of the social elite, they became targets of retribution in the spirit of often self-proclaimed justice. It was also during this

period that arrests and trials took place, and many film stars were not spared. The thesis depicts the methods of post-war retribution both in general historical terms and through case studies devoted to specific female acting stars.

The thesis shows how the film environment itself changed in the post-war period. Famous actors and actresses ended their careers (often violently) to make room for those who could fulfill the idea of new dramaturgical directions of nationalized cinema. For the Third Republic (1945–1948), as well as for the post-February period, the topic of stardom is completely taboo in Czech cinema and socio-cultural space. The rhetoric of the time despised stars, condemned the construct as such, and purposely liquidated both, throughout the entire period we are looking at, which the thesis frames in 1953.

The case studies, which take the form of biographical medallions supplemented by star discourse, provide a necessary comparative platform leading to a depiction of the transformation of society. The heroines of each case study are actresses who became true film stars in their own time. Specifically, Zdena Kavková, Nataša Gollová, Adina Mandlová and Věra Ferbasová. Their stories depict the development of their "stars" – from their emergence, through the period of their greatest fame, to their downfall. The studies show how much impact this subsequently had on their acting and life paths.

The story of Zdena Kavková shows how the arrival of sound in film had an impact on the stardom of the first film stars. There were only a few who maintained or expanded their fame. One of those who did was Anny Ondráková. However, Zdena Kavková's career suffered, her fame and popularity began to decline rapidly, and Zdena Kavková's stardom faded. Zdena Kavková's medallion also presents her activities during the Protectorate. After the war, she was accused and convicted as a collaborator by an extraordinary people's court. Thanks to this, her star has never shone again and for many will remain forever forgotten.

A study dedicated to the star personality of Nataša Gollová provides a look at the fate of one of the most popular and brightest film stars of the late 1930s and the Protectorate. However, after the war, she too faced a steep fall. She was prosecuted as a part of a "small decree", and although the proceedings were dropped, she was never

cleared in the eyes of the society of the time. She retreated into seclusion and at least devoted herself to the theatre, which, unlike film, was not forbidden. In 1951 she was given the opportunity to return to filmmaking with her accepted role as Siraël in the hilarious film *Pekařův císař* [The Emperor's Baker] – *Císařův pekař* [The Baker's Emperor] (1951). Although she still played quite a few roles, whether in films or television productions, they were rather small and not very important.

In the story of Adina Mandlová I attempted to reconstruct the career and stardom of the biggest and most popular domestic film star. She was one of the busiest and undoubtedly most provocative stars of her time. That is why her post-war conviction for having relations with the Germans and starring in a single German film was also taken as a classic example of punishment for other actresses as well. Even for those who, unlike her, made more German films and "cultivated" social relations with the Germans to a much greater extent than Adina Mandlová. She was aggravated by the fact that she always liked to provoke and behaved like a real star. The study also looks at her departure abroad in an effort to ensure that her former stardom was not forgotten. This, then, is one of the typical features of the lives of stars in exile, who, perhaps out of a need for justification, approach the writing of their own memoirs, making them different from those who remained in Czechoslovakia. We rarely see such efforts in the latter.

The last case study focuses on the fate and stardom of the actress Věra Ferbasová, who is considered to be the most comedic actress of the second half of the 1930s. Although she had to wait a while for critical acclaim, her popularity with audiences was so great that her name on the poster was already selling out cinemas. Her story is also different in that during the Protectorate period she herself decided to end her acting career rather than compromise with the Germans. Her "Star" did not receive any social pardon after the war, however, and she faced the same steep fall as the others. Her example clearly shows that the post-war social reckoning with the past was not only aimed at moral reprimand of individuals, but did not forgive former fame, fortune or status either. She had to wait many years for some satisfaction, at least in the form of minor film roles. Finally, after the war, she made her greatest acting breakthrough just before her death.

By comparing the personal and stellar stories of the actresses studied, the thesis shows that through a look at the transformations of female film stars in modern Czech society, we can also trace the very changes in the socio-cultural and political environment of Czechoslovakia in the 1930s and 1940s. Research on the star environment has shown that the emergence of stars can take various forms, usually accompanied by the personality of the discoverer, who may be a director or producer, growing with the number of films made and also with the critical acclaim of the time. But most crucial to the acceptance of its star status is the influence of society or the audience. The influence of society is what is crucial in enhancing stardom, but as the present work shows it can equally be what determines their demise.



## Overview of the Sources and Literature

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fond 305 Ústředna Státní bezpečnosti

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*Český filmový zpravodaj* (1921–1942)

*Český kinematograf: časopis věnovaný kinematografu a příbuzným odvětvím*

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