

Annotation

In the following essay, I focus on the representations of bodily „difference“ in the Prague's *freakshow* culture, particularly on the displays of the so called „Lilliputians“, which were popular among the public from the beginning of the 19th Century to the 40's of the 20th Century. Firstly, I introduce the Prague's curiosity exhibitions as a specific social praxis and I compare them with similar displays in Europe and the United States.

In the second part of this essay, I try to analyse those exhibitions critically, using the concepts from the present disability studies discourse. I deal with the bodily „otherness“ as a category of difference, which arises from the intersection of different ideologies. According to the point of view, this category shaped the individual and collective identities and fostered the social hierarchies of the time. Throughout the essay, I focus on the dis/continuities in the imagination of bodily „difference“ and I try to describe the specificity of the Czech freakshow tradition.

Key words:

19th Century, body, representations, bodily difference, abnormality, ideology