

## **Abstract**

This thesis describes and explains rumours as sociological phenomenon. It deals with circumstances under which rumour arises, how it spreads and how it persists in society. It also deals with the prerequisites for understanding the transmission and any believing in rumour. Emphasis is placed on understanding the rumours without negative connotations which is mostly attributed to it. The theory of fictional worlds brings idea that rumour should not be always fictional, fictitious and a priori negative, but rather should be considered as possibly true, especially in terms of the phenomenon, which it refers.

It does not matter how many different variations of the rumour story exist, since all create a frame of reference through which is better spread the rumour; adoption of the rumours is not a sign of fiction, but rather a prerequisite to embed among people.

The thesis promotes the view that a rumour is spread mainly due to its content and message, which is mainly a warning. The aim is not to pass the exact story, but to warn about a phenomenon that occurs in society. It is not important whether the rumour is true in each detail, because the only important aspect is truth of phenomenon which the rumour refers to.

## **Keywords**

Rumour, theory of possible worlds, conspiracy theories, contemporary legend, moral panics