

Horror Stories in Urban Legends in Czech and Bulgarian Contexts

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(Summary)

The article offers a study of horror stories in urban legends from Bulgaria and the Czech Republic in comparative aspect. It proposes a specific classification, which groups horror stories as follows: 1) mysterious events and encounters with supernatural beings, which neither harm, nor help the participants; 2) omens or encounters with supernatural beings, which cause death or other harm to the participants; 3) mysterious signs or encounters with supernatural beings, which help people; 4) evocation of spirits; 5) crime stories: murders or harm – with or without deliberate intention; 6) rumours; 7) parodic horror stories. Parallels drawn between particular stories from the two countries point to the existence of a common folkloric substratum that manifests their universal character and international distribution. Largely, the motifs in those stories result from social life and specific social practices of modern times, but some also have deeply archaic origins.

Keywords: urban legend; horror story; folklore

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