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American Policy, Korean War, and the Lessons of Munich

Petr Mareš

The speed and determination with which the Truman administration reacted to North Korea's attack against its southern neighbour in the summer of 1950 were remarkable, although it was obvious that Washington was taken by surprise by the opponent's action. The first information about the North Korean attack was sent by US Ambassador to Seoul John J. Muccio on Sunday, 25 June, in the morning hours of current local time, and arrived to the State Department at 9:26 PM.¹ At that time, tops of the US administration were enjoying their weekend rest. President Harry S Truman was finishing a late Southern dinner at his home in Independence (MO.), Secretary of State Dean Acheson was preparing to go to bed with a book in his favourite country house in Maryland. The top representatives of the Department of Defense were difficult to reach; Defense Secretary Louis Johnson, Secretary of the Army Frank Pace, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Omar Bradley were visiting Tokyo. Warren Austin, the US Ambassador to the United Nations, who planned to spend a peaceful weekend with his family in Burlington, Vermont, was also out of reach of the centre.² The analysis prepared

1 *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1950*, Vol. VII: Korea. United States Department of State. Washington, D.C., US Government Printing Office 1976, pp. 125–126 – *The Ambassador in Korea (Mucio) to the Secretary of State*, Soul, 25 June 1950. There is a 13 hour time difference and the International Date Line between the capitals of the two nations.

2 See ACHESON, Dean: *Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department*. New York, W. W. Norton 1987, pp. 402–404.

for the President by the National Security Council two weeks later noted in this respect: “The invasion of South Korea came as a surprise and shock, not only to the people of the United States and the world, but also to the people around this table, whose job it is to keep the President correctly advised.”³

The surprise and communication difficulties notwithstanding, teams of experts and top-ranking officials of the State Department met in Washington as early as on Sunday⁴ to prepare first analyses of the conflict.⁵ At the instigation of the United States, the UN Security Council was convened. The Soviet representative had not been attending its meetings for some time, officially in protest against the permanent member seat reserved for China being held, even after the triumph of the Communists in the mainland China, by the government of the defeated President Chiang Kai-Shek.⁶ The Security Council indeed adopted a fast-track and fairly explicit resolution stating that an armed attack from the north occurred and calling for an immediate cessation of hostilities and a withdrawal of North Korean units beyond the 38th parallel. It also urged all UN member states to render every assistance to the United Nations in the execution of the resolution.⁷ The hectic Sunday was concluded by a collective dinner of key members of the administration and supreme commanders of the armed forces in the President’s temporary residence, Blair House, where all the guests unequivocally agreed that the United States had to respond to the North Korean aggression quickly and decisively.⁸

3 *Harry S. Truman Library*, Independence (Missouri) (*HSTL*), President’s Secretary’s Files, 60th meeting of NSC, Suggested Action by the NSC for Consideration of the President in the Light of the Korean Situation, 7 June 1950.

4 *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. VII, p. 143, editorial note.

5 *Ibid.*, pp. 148–154 – *Intelligence estimate prepared by the Estimates Group, Office of Intelligence Research, Department of State*, Washington, 25 June 1950.

6 However, documents found in Soviet archives indicate that Stalin might not send Soviet Ambassador Yakov Malik to key meetings of the UN Security Council intentionally – in order to enable it to pass a resolution that would draw the United States into a protracted war in which it was expected to lose its military prestige and moral respect. According to Stalin’s letter to the leader of Czechoslovak Communists Party Klement Gottwald dated 27 August 1950, the Soviet leader relied on the Chinese promise to join the war if and when North Korea starts losing it. The subsequent lengthy war was hoped to be favourable for the Soviet Union, as it would give it time needed to strengthen its power and, at the same time, divert attention of the United States from Europe. According to Stalin, a third world war would thus be postponed indefinitely, while socialism in Europe could be consolidated. See ZUBOK, Vladislav M.: *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev*. Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press 2007, pp. 80–81.

7 *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. VII, pp. 155–156 – *Resolution Adopted by the United Nations Security Council*, 25 June 1950.

8 The meeting was attended by Dean Acheson (State), Louis A. Johnson (Defence), Francis P. Matthews (Navy), and Thomas K. Finletter (Air Force) on behalf of the administration, and General Omar N. Bradley (CJCS), Admiral Forrest P. Sherman (CNO), General Hoyt S. Vandenberg (COS, US Air Force), General J. Lawton Collins (COS, US Army). *Ibid.*, pp. 157–161 – memorandum of conversation, by the Ambassador-at-Large Philip C. Jessup, Washington, 25 June 1950.

The decision on the form of the US reaction was taken just a day later, on Monday, 26 June, at what later became known as the “second Blair House meeting.” In the course of the meeting, President Truman voiced his consent with a proposal of State Secretary Dean Acheson that the US armed forces be issued an order cancelling all restrictions hitherto applying to their operations in the Korean Peninsula. The objective was to provide maximum possible assistance to South Korean units, particularly in the areas where the United States had hitherto refused to supply armament to South Korea, which concerned mainly combat against armoured units of the communist aggressor. The meeting also approved a draft text of the second UN Security Council resolution, which was supposed to specify the support which the UN urged its members to render – so that there would not be any doubt left that it would also include military assistance.⁹ The Security Council voted on the US proposal on Wednesday, 28 June.¹⁰ In the morning hours of Friday, 30 June, the President, referring to the new resolution and again after a meeting with high-ranking officials of the State Department, Pentagon, and the commanders of the various services, announced that US Army units would join in the fighting in Korea. At the same time, the Air Force was given green light to attack military targets north of the 38th parallel and the Navy was allowed to set up a blockade around the entire Korean Peninsula.¹¹

The consensus regarding the vigorous measures that resulted in the Americans being involved in an armed conflict in a faraway country, which they knew nothing about and which they had so far assigned little strategic importance to, was not limited to associates of President Truman. Since the very beginning, the Democratic administration was receiving full support on the part of leading Republicans. As early as on Sunday, 25 June, a telegram from John Foster Dulles, then in Tokyo, arrived to Washington; at that time, he had already become the chief Republican spokesman on foreign policy issues. Together with John M. Allison, another Republican foreign policy expert, Dulles called for an active and resolute reaction to the North Korean attack.¹² It is true that Dulles’ predecessor in the role of the key partner of the administration with respect to decisions concerning international problems, Senator Arthur Vandenberg, who was seriously ill at that time, had many critical comments on the Far East strategy of the Democrats, but he welcomed and resolutely

9 UN member states were recommended “[to] furnish such assistance to the Republic of Korea as may be necessary to repel the armed attack and to restore international peace and security in the area.” *Ibid.*, pp. 178–183 – *Memorandum of conversation, by the Ambassador at Large (Jessup)*, Washington, 26 June 1950

10 *Ibid.*, p. 211 – *Resolution adopted by the United Nations Security Council, 27 June 1950* (UN Document No. S/1511). The resolution was adopted on 27 June at 11:50. It was voted for by seven members of the Security Council, including the United States, one member was against it (Yugoslavia), two abstained (Egypt and India), one was not present (USSR).

11 *Ibid.*, p. 255, Editorial Note; see also ACHESON, D.: *Present at the Creation*, p. 412 (see Footnote 2); TRUMAN, Harry S.: *Memoirs*, Vol. 2: *Years of Trial and Hope, 1946–1952*. New York, Doubleday & Comp. 1956, p. 343.

12 *FRUS, 1950*, Vol. VII, p. 140 – *The Acting Political Adviser in Japan (Sebald) to the Secretary of State, 25 June 1950*.

supported Truman's decision to counter the aggression in Korea with force.¹³ The best-known veteran of duels with the Democrats, Senator Robert A. Taft, reacted in a similar way.¹⁴ Thomas Dewey, the Governor of the State of New York and Truman's Republican opponent in the previous elections, called the President as early as at the very beginning of the dramatic week when decisions concerning Korea were adopted. He promised that he would support him, and immediately made it publicly known during his speech at the University of Syracuse.¹⁵

The attitude of the Republican leaders heralded the support which Truman's decisions were at this stage receiving from the Congress. Needless to say, the situation was, from the legislative viewpoint, far from simple. US military involvement in the Korean conflict opened a number of serious questions concerning the relationship between the executive and the legislators and the President's powers in general. As was his custom, Truman nevertheless tried to keep the Capitol posted on developments in the region of the crisis in a detailed and timely fashion. On Monday, 26 June, he and Acheson immediately met with representatives of the Senate and the House, and Truman explicitly told them that he intended to provide every possible assistance to South Korean forces. None of the senators and congressmen present voiced any disagreement.¹⁶ Acting in a non-partisan way, both Democratic and Republican members of the Congress supported the President also on Friday, when he notified them of his decision to send army units to Korea.¹⁷ Considering that the next elections to the Congress were to take place in November, the reaction was very remarkable indeed.

13 See VANDENBERG, Arthur H., Jr. – MORRIS, Joe Alex (ed.): *The Private Papers of Senator Vandenberg*. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co. 1952, p. 543.

14 WUNDERLIN, Clarence E., Jr. (ed.): *The Papers of Robert A. Taft*, Vol. 4: 1949–1953. Kent (OH), Kent State University 2006, p. 294; cf. also Taft Says Truman Bypasses Congress: But He Supports President's Decision on Korea. In: *The New York Times* (29 June 1950), p. 4.

15 See ACHESON, D.: *Present at the Creation*, p. 410; cf. also Dewey Puts Hope in Backing of UN: World Fate Rests on Effective Action on Korea, He Says at Syracuse University Rite. In: *The New York Times* (27 June 1950), p. 7.

16 HSTL, President's Secretary's Files, Papers of George M. Elsey, *Notes, dated 27 June 1950, by George M. Elsey regarding a 26 June 1950 meeting at which President Truman and Secretary of State Dean Acheson briefed key Senators and Congressmen on events in Korea, 27 June 1950*; cf. also FRUS, 1950, Vol. VII, pp. 200–203 – *Memorandum of conversation, by the Ambassador at Large (Jessup)*, Washington, 26 June 1950.

17 The decision was made public at 11 AM, with an explicit reference to the fact that it was taken after a consultation with representatives of the Congress. Rather than referring to standard publications containing public appearances/speeches of US presidents, namely *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States* (US Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.), I am referring to an excellent electronic edition which also offers access to speeches delivered during election campaigns of key TV pre-election debates: PETERS, Gerhard – WOOLLEY, John T. (ed.): *The American Presidency Project: Harry S. Truman* [online], Document No. 184 – White House statement following a meeting between the President and top congressional and military leaders to review the situation in Korea, 30 June 1950 [cit. 2015-04-30.]: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=13550>.

To be able to fully appreciate the significance of the situation described above, it is necessary to emphasize that the consent was achieved without any of the parties concerned underrating the risk the forceful US reaction was posing. From the very start of their discussions on the nature of the conflict, the Americans at many levels concluded that actions of the North Korean regime were being approved in Moscow.¹⁸ This conclusion soon became the generally accepted starting point of all other discussions, the starting point that was never questioned or doubted at the relevant level. Naturally, it also produced the same and universally shared awareness of the seriousness of the situation which the United States had to face. From the very start, a war with the Soviets was one of the options considered in analyses of potential further developments both at the level of experts and in debates of legislators.¹⁹ It is true that most military experts and politicians agreed at the very beginning that the option was not inevitable, or even too likely,²⁰ but the threat of another global war was looming over every decision by which the President was assuming the responsibility for the defence and preservation of independence of South Korea. Still, both his own party and the Republican opposition – including veterans, whose isolationist past had not yet been fully forgotten – felt it was necessary to support him.

What was the cause of this remarkable political unity? It has been quite some time since some historians claimed that President Truman and his closest associates had been drawing lessons from the developments before the Second World War when making decisions on how to react to the North Korean aggression. In his perhaps most cited work on the role of historical lessons in the formulation of the US foreign policy, Ernest R. May even opines that Truman's Korean decision was based more on his assessment of modern history than on his evaluation of the situation he was confronted with.²¹ However, he provides only very superficial evidence to support his statement. Even authors pointing to the same circumstances after May have not conducted any detailed analysis of the role played by lessons learned from the policy of *appeasement* in decisions of American politicians at the

18 See *FRUS, 1950*, Vol. VII, p. 148 – *Intelligence estimate prepared by the Estimates Group, Office of Intelligence Research, Department of State, Washington, 25 June 1950.*

19 This option was also considered in the first document produced by the NSC after the outbreak of the conflict (see *HSTL*, President's Secretary's Files, Harry S. Truman Papers, *National Security Council Report 76/1*, "US Courses of action in the event Soviet forces enter Korean hostilities," 25 June 1950). The Capitol too discussed the possibility of a war with the Soviet Union in the first debates dedicated to the North Korean aggression. See ALBRIGHT, Robert C.: *Congress Eyes Chance of War: Keep Calm, Its Leaders Urge "Hill."* In: *The Washington Post* (27 June 1950), p. 1.

20 During the first meeting in the Blair House, General Bradley, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, stated "that Russia is not yet ready for war," and his opinion was supported by the other supreme commanders of armed forces. *FRUS, 1950*, Vol. VII, p. 157 – *Memorandum of conversation, by the Ambassador at Large (Jessup)*, Washington, 25 June 1950.

21 MAY, Ernest R.: *Lessons of the Past: The Use and Misuse of History in American Foreign Policy.* New York, Oxford University Press 1973, pp. 81–82.

time of the Korean War.²² I believe it would be worth attempting to examine the phenomenon more thoroughly; to verify whether it existed; and if it indeed did, to map its role within the US discourse on the Korean conflict in a more detailed way. Needless to say, the discourse cannot be limited only to processes within decision-making institutions, but needs to be approached in a broader context in which the processes were taking place, i.e. to include the public discourse as well. This will, however, require starting more than a decade before Kim Il-sung's tanks crossed the 38th parallel.

Roosevelt, Munich, and the World War

Arguments referring to results of the policy of *appeasement* started appearing in political debates in the United States in the autumn of 1938, in connection with the Munich Conference taking place at the time, where four superpowers, namely Germany, Italy, France, and the United Kingdom decided to cede strategically important parts of the territory of democratic Czechoslovakia to Nazi Germany. Ever since the terms *appeasement* and *Munich* have been linked forever. From time to time, other examples of concessions to aggressive powers during the 1930s may be mentioned, but *Munich* will always be included on this list. In the context of studies on the development of US foreign policy, we may even regard the terms “*lessons of Munich*” and “*lessons of (results or consequences of the policy) appeasement*” as synonyms. Between 30 September 1938, when the Munich Conference was taking place, and the beginning of the Korean War, the content of these lessons underwent a very interesting development which definitely merits closer attention. For the purpose of this text, we will do with just a short summary of its main moments.

The scope and intensity of information about the Czechoslovak September 1938 crisis which US media presented to American citizens were extraordinary and an overwhelming majority of it was in favour of Czechoslovakia. The satisfaction over the non-war solution of the crisis was very short-lived in the United States, and accompanied by considerable embarrassment over the price that had to be paid to avoid war.²³ The motif of ethical doubts about the agreement made at the expense of the state which was generally viewed as very close to American ideals and values was increasingly asserting itself in the post-Munich weeks. There was also an ever-stronger feeling that the whole immoral deal was in vain. As early as in mid-November 1938, Czechoslovak Minister to Washington Vladimír Hurban could report to Prague: “The American public and American media, the latter almost without an exception, condemned [*sic*] the Munich arrangements

22 See, for example, a later evaluation by Leffler, according to which Truman, Acheson, and their advisor were strongly influenced by lessons of the 1930s. LEFFLER, Melvyn P.: *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War*. Stanford, Stanford University Press 1992, p. 361.

23 See Four Chiefs, One Peace [online]. In: *Time* (10 October 1938) [cit. 2015-04-30]. Available at: <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,883706,00.html>.

and voiced a conviction that Germany would not be stopped, but that its lust for other territories and power would be increased. Although some magazines have opined that the Munich Agreement is better than war, the prevailing opinion now is that the concerns about the Sudeten Germans were only a pretext for eliminating Czechoslovakia which stood in the way of Germany.”²⁴

The German occupation of Czechoslovakia in March 1939 put a stop to any contemplations of benefits of the *appeasement* policy in most US media. Hitler occupied his weakened neighbour regardless of all promises and assurances he had given to the French and British negotiators. Pursuing the story, the isolationist *Chicago Daily Tribune* informed its readership that even British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain had already “thrown overboard the *appeasement* policy he began with the *Munich Agreement*,”²⁵ while *The Washington Post* noted: “[t]he *Munich policy of appeasement* suffered a common death with the Republic of Czecho-Slovakia.”²⁶ US policy was lagging behind the media in this respect. Insofar as the Munich Conference and the potential of the *appeasement* policy were concerned, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt was long treating it according to a role assigned to him by one of his critical biographers – as a skillful “juggler” trying to keep all his balls in the air.²⁷ As late as in March 1940, he sent his foreign policy *alter ego* Sumner Welles to Europe to examine the possibilities of a peaceful solution to the ongoing conflict. It is very likely that the proposal which the State Undersecretary was bringing with him to Berlin, London, Paris, and Rome was a review of the Versailles arrangements, which was very forthcoming toward German requirements.²⁸ When Welles had returned from Europe empty-handed and Hitler had responded to peace-seeking probes by a lightning attack of France, even Roosevelt did not have any more room to maneuver. In the course of the presidential election campaign, he proclaimed himself a guarantee that the United States would never be lured to the road of *appeasement*. In his speech in Dayton, Ohio, which was dedicated to “continental” security issues, he renounced it once and for all on behalf of the entire western hemisphere, stating: “The people of the United States, the people of all the Americas, reject the doctrine of appeasement. They recognize it for what it is – a major weapon

24 *Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic*, Prague (hereinafter *AMFA CR*), f. Washington, Secret dispatches, 1081/dův/38, Dispatch of Vladimír Hurban dated 18 November 1938.

25 England Will Fight, Premier Warns Berlin: Chamberlain Fears Nazis Peril World. In: *The Chicago Daily Tribune* (18 March 1939), p. 1.

26 The End Of Appeasement. In: *The Washington Post* (18 March 1939), p. 9; cf. also The Week in Focus: Hitler Shatters Munich. Democracies Roused Czechs One Too Many? Appeasement Ending. In: *The Christian Science Monitor* (18 March 1939), p. 2; Appeasement Abandoned. In: *The Los Angeles Times* (18 March 1939), p. A4.

27 See KIMBALL, Warren F.: *The Juggler: Franklin Roosevelt As Wartime Statesman*. Princeton, Princeton University Press 1991.

28 Cf., for example, O’SULLIVAN, Christopher D.: *Sumner Welles, Postwar Planning, and the Quest for a New World Order, 1937–1943*. New York, Columbia University Press 2007, pp. 36–37.

of the aggressor nations.”²⁹ In one of his most famous “Fireside Chats” from late December 1940, he announced his intention to make the United States “the arsenal of democracy,” and then he formulated, with a typical Rooseveltian rhetorical virtuosity, his alternative of the “lesson of Munich,” opening the door for direct involvement of the Americans in the war: “The experience of the past two years has proven beyond doubt that no nation can *appease* the Nazis. No man can tame a tiger into a kitten by stroking it. There can be no *appeasement* with ruthlessness. There can be no reasoning with an incendiary bomb. We know now that a nation can have peace with the Nazis only at the price of total surrender.”³⁰

The President’s speech was broadcast live on the radio and attracted some 50 to 80 million listeners in the United States; still more could see it in a newsreel a few days later.³¹ Their reactions were generally positive; only a shrinking group of orthodox isolationists, represented mainly by old hands in the Senate with media support of *The Chicago Daily Tribune* and *The New York Daily News*.³² The attack on Pearl Harbor less than a year later relegated the isolationism among political oddities, while Roosevelt’s lessons from Munich became an indisputable chapter of US political catechism. They fitted into the picture of the war as a grand conflict between freedom and oppression, sometimes as Act I, more frequently as one of the preludes. Roosevelt, who basically held an unrivalled dominating position on the US media stage until the end of the war, also made a significant contribution to the content of the lessons, namely a requirement for a complete and unquestionable victory as a guarantee against a repetition of the tragic road to the war. This was where the lessons of Munich were linked to those learned from the Great War. To avoid any future repetition of the situation in which the United States would face enemies as menacing as Germany and Japan, it was necessary to crush them militarily, but also to liquidate the foundation of the system which might result in questioning the outcome of the previous war and in preparing a new one.

Even the extended version of the lessons outlined above was generally accepted by American politicians. It was extremely important that Roosevelt’s direct opponents, Republican presidential candidates, Wendell Wilkie (1940) and Thomas Dewey (1944), identified with it as well.³³ Fed from two fundamental sources of the entire US policy – an idealistic one, which viewed the policy of *appeasement* as

29 PETERS, G. – WOOLLEY, J. T. (ed.): *The American Presidency Project: Franklin D. Roosevelt* [online], Document No. 111 – *Address on hemisphere defense*, Dayton, Ohio, 12 October 1940 [cit. 2015-04-15]. Available at: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=15870>.

30 *Ibid.*, Document No. 154 – *Fireside chat* dated 29 December 1940 [cit. 2015-04-30]. Available at: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=15917>.

31 See President’s Radio Audience in America Alone Is Estimated to Run as High as 80,000,000. In: *The New York Times* (29 December 1940), p. 12; General Reaction Is Good To President’s Radio Speech: 50,000,000 Hear It. In: *The Christian Science Monitor* (30 December 1940), p. 3.

32 See, for example, Speech Is Most Warlike So Far, Senators’ View. In: *The Chicago Daily Tribune* (30 December 1940), p. 1; Mr Roosevelt Peace. In: *Ibid.* (31 December 1940), p. 9.

33 Cf. RYSTAD, Göran: *Prisoners of the Past? The Munich Syndrome and Makers of American Foreign Policy in the Cold War Era*. Lund, CWK Gleerup 1982, p. 21.

unethical, and a pragmatic one, proving that the policy of *appeasement* cannot be successful – a basically simple set of rules comprising the lessons from Munich at the end of the war put down firm roots in both purely political and public discourses: The *appeasement* means an attempt to placate an aggressive dictator no matter what it costs. The *appeasement* leads to *Munich*, *Munich* leads to war. Promoting the policy of *appeasement* is tantamount to demonstrating one's own incompetence. *Appeasement* only makes the aggressor stronger. It is impossible to placate dictators; it is in contradiction with the very substance of dictatorships. The United States will never resort to *appeasement*. Any conflict with a dictatorial regime must be brought to a complete destruction of the latter.

Truman, the Experience of Appeasement, and the Road to the Cold War

When the Second World War was drawing to its victorious end, it seemed that, insofar as the relation to Germany and Japan was concerned, everything was proceeding in accordance with the concept based on Roosevelt's interpretation of the lessons learned from Munich. However, the President completely omitted references to these lessons, which had a potential of convincingly illustrating his statesmanship and farsightedness, from the arsenal he used in his public appearances. The explanation of this seemingly illogical attitude is simple. As a matter of fact, the lessons were, at the end of the war, confronted with the behaviour of a great ally and one of the pillars of Roosevelt's project of the postwar arrangement of the world. In the previous years, Roosevelt had invested all his authority into persuading Americans that the Soviet Union was a reliable ally and fits into the picture of the war presented as a conflict between powers of the good and those of the evil, powers of freedom and those of oppression. However, the behaviour of the Soviets in territories of neighbouring states one by one conquered by the Red Army produced consternation in the United States. When the President returned from the Yalta Conference and it became obvious that he had probably done nothing to make Stalin stop the repression, violence, and looting in the conquered territories, he was harshly criticized. At first, criticism came only from Roosevelt's traditional opponents from the ranks of conservative Republicans and politicians representing constituencies with a high percentage of voters of Polish descent. However, the criticism was very vigorous and its key word was *appeasement*.³⁴

In the spring of 1945, doubts about the hitherto accommodating attitude of US policy toward the Soviet Union were ceasing to be the exclusive domain of

34 In the House of Representatives, Alvin O'Konski (Rep., WI) labelled Yalta a second Munich, this time with Poland as its victim, and warned: "Just as *appeasement at Munich* led to the present ghastly world war, so will this latest meeting have disastrous results for all time." SEARS, Arthur Henning: Assail FDR's "Surrender" to Stalin's Plans: Yielding on Poland. Partition Hit. In: *The Chicago Daily Tribune* (14 February 1945), p. 1; cf. also History Repeats. In: *Ibid.* (19 February 1945), p. 10; Yalta Another Munich, Poles Tell Senators: Warn of Disaster in Appeasement. In: *Ibid.* (9 April 1945), p. 1.

Roosevelt's traditional opponents. The Polish exile in London and its consternation over the Yalta (in fact Tehran-Yalta) solution of the Polish issue were given adequate space in the major dailies.³⁵ The Balkans continued to produce concerns among commentators.³⁶ When preparations for the UN founding conference in San Francisco began and the Americans learned about Roosevelt's promise to give the Soviet Union three votes in the new organization, the surprised US media asked themselves a question what other secret deals the President had assented to during his negotiations with Stalin.³⁷ By the spring of 1945, the suspicion that Franklin Roosevelt had made inexcusable, or even treasonous concessions to the Soviet dictator in Crimea, which were confirmed by secret deals, had set firm roots not only in the American awareness of war diplomacy. Although all other secret parts of the final documents of the Yalta Conference, in particular the "Far East Agreements," were published in 1946, the myth of secret deals dividing the world survived until much later. The "Yalta = Munich" connection subsequently became an important part of the ideological arsenal of Republican candidates at all levels of US policy. Their requirement demanding "declassification of the Yalta Agreements" was cornering their Democratic rivals until 1953, when a new Republican president moved into the White House after two decades of Democratic administrations; he ordered to open safe deposit boxes and examine archival documents only to find out there were no other secret agreements.³⁸

Roosevelt himself did not live long enough to experience the main wave of the criticism of the "Munichism of Yalta." It was up to his successor Harry Truman to deal with it. When confronted with the above outlined problem, the new President's position was much better than his predecessor's. He basically had no previous contact with foreign policy matters, and it would have been very difficult to ascribe any part of the blame for the "sins of Yalta" to him. Being a Midwestern politician,

35 The Case of Poland. In: *The New York Times* (14 February 1945), p. 18.

36 See McCORMACK, John: Big 3 Balkan Rift Seen in Soviet Act. In: *Ibid.* (13 March 1945), p. 8.

37 See KROCK, Arthur: In the Nation; What Stalin Has Revealed "in Due Course" Comes the Revelation; Think People Will Approve. In: *Ibid.* (6 April 1945), p. 14.

38 As he had promised during his election campaign, Dwight Eisenhower presented to the Senate, as early as on 20 February 1953, i.e. one month after taking his office, a draft of a "resolution of Yalta," which Republicans hoped to deal with the "Rooseveltian appeasement" for good. However, the President's draft was a great disappointment for them. Based on a meticulous examination of documents of the State Department and the White House, Eisenhower actually did not propose to condemn the outcome of the Yalta Conference and top renounce it for good, which was what he had been expected to do. On the contrary, the resolution criticized the Soviet Union for a gross violation of the "clear intention" of the conference. According to it, the conclusions of the conference were "perverted to bring about the subjugation of free peoples" by the Soviets. It was Stalin's death that averted a looming conflict between the President and his frustrated fellow party members in the Senate. The endeavour not to complicate the President's attempt to establish constructive relations with the new Soviet leadership was subsequently used as a pretext to remove the draft resolution from the agenda. Cf. CARO, Robert A.: *The Years of Lyndon Johnson*, Vol. 3: *Master of the Senate*. London, Pimlico 2003, pp. 524–526.

he was perceived as closer to the conservative faction of the Democratic Party, and his straightforward reactions during the first press conference dealing with foreign policy issues created an impression that he would not tolerate any of Stalin's excesses. Just a few days into his stint in the White House, anti-Roosevelt media started bringing information about the twilight of "New Deal appeasement."³⁹

As a matter of fact, Truman never intended to change the orientation of US foreign policy set by Roosevelt when assuming his office. During the summer, and particularly in connection with the forthcoming conference of the Big Three in Potsdam, he was under pressure to reject the most criticized commitments from Yalta, which step was in many cases formulated as a parting with the *appeasement* toward Moscow.⁴⁰ Truman, who had only begun to get his bearings in the complex maze of hints, promises, and commitments made by Roosevelt, was prepared to negotiate with Stalin without further ado, but not to start a conflict with him. He wanted to clearly demonstrate his preparedness to thoroughly fulfill his commitments, and thus make the Soviets to fulfill theirs. He believed in a vision of postwar cooperation with the wartime ally and his ability to make a reasonable deal with it. He regarded, first and foremost, the criticism of Roosevelt's policy toward the Soviet Union as a part of party clashes with the Republicans, and he did not find any stimuli for his further steps in this field in it. We can find a lot of relevant supporting evidence in his diary. A month before he sailed to Europe, he noted, for example: "Every time we get things going halfway right with the Soviets, some smart aleck has to attack them. If it isn't Willie Hearst, Bertie McCormick or Burt Wheeler it is some other bird who wanted to *appease* Germany but just can't see any good in Russia. I'm not afraid of Russia."⁴¹

It did not take the new US president long to find out that a fair deal with Stalin was not possible. His notes from the beginning of 1946 indicate that at that time he no longer considered the Soviet dictator a partner for cooperation, but viewed him as a dangerous and aggressive opponent. For example, in an unsent letter to State Secretary James A. Byrnes dated 6 January 1946, he wrote: "There isn't a doubt in my mind that Russia intends an invasion of Turkey and the seizure of the Black Sea Straits to the Mediterranean. Unless Russia is faced with an iron fist and strong language another war is in making." The letter ended with the famous statement: "I'm tired of babying the Soviets."⁴² By that time, the lessons of Munich had already begun to be applied also to relations with the Soviet Union among Truman's closest

39 TROHAN, Walter: War Chiefs Back Truman Firm Policy on Reds: New Deal "Appeasement" Backers Fade Away. In: *The Chicago Daily Tribune* (29 April 1945), p. 15.

40 See Notables Urge Truman Not to "Appease" Reds: See Grave US Peril in Polish Problem. In: *Ibid.* (19 June 1945), p. 1; Plea to Aid Poland Is Sent to Truman. In: *The New York Times* (19 June 1945), p. 13.

41 FERREL, Robert H. (ed.): *Off the Record: The Private Papers Of Harry S. Truman*. New York, Harper & Collins 1980, p. 44, Diary, 7 June 1945.

42 *Ibid.*, p. 80, Diary, 6 January 1946.

collaborators,⁴³ but such argumentation cannot be found in the President's public or non-public speeches delivered at that time. The situation did not change even two months later, when British ex-Prime Minister Winston Churchill made his own contribution to the discussion on the behaviour of the Eastern war ally. His countless times quoted speech in Fulton (MO) contained a number of references to historical context, including a reference to the experience with *appeasement*.⁴⁴ Truman liked the address very much, but he refused to own up to the ideas it contained publicly.⁴⁵ His attitude was also certainly influenced by a very mixed reception of Churchill's speech among the US public⁴⁶; it seems, however, that the President, just like the entire American liberal left community, had long found it difficult to give up hope for a global order designed by his predecessor and to put up with the fact that a recent ally had assumed the role of the enemies it had helped the Americans defeat on the international stage.

Thus, a strange situation developed in 1946. US foreign policy assumed a clearly more forceful position in negotiations with Moscow, with the change routinely explained by the *lessons of Munich* and perceived as a departure from the *appeasement* of the previous period. Even those US media which were close to liberals were pointing out quite openly to analogies between the current behaviour of the Soviet Union and the pre-war policy of Germany.⁴⁷ Republican Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg and State Secretary James F. Byrnes informed the Senate on principles of the US policy for peace negotiations in Paris and both the senators and the press perceived their briefing as a demonstration of the birth of a new bipartisan foreign policy based on the rejection of the *appeasement* approach toward the Soviet Union.⁴⁸ However, the President continued to stick to the concept presenting his administration's policy as a continuation of that of Franklin Roosevelt.

43 During a cabinet debate, James Forrestal, who was the Secretary of the Navy in the US administration, refused to share information on nuclear research with the Soviets, arguing: "It seems doubtful that we should endeavor to buy their understanding and sympathy. We tried that once with Hitler. There are no returns on *appeasement*." Cited according to: WELCH LARSON, Deborah: *Origins of Containment: A Psychological Explanation*. Princeton, Princeton University Press 1985, p. 217.

44 All major US media published lengthy excerpts from of a full text of Churchill's speech. See, for example, Mr. Churchill's Address Calling for United Effort for World Peace: Truman and Churchill in Missouri. In: *The New York Times* (6 March 1946), p. 4. It was also published in Congressional Records. CHURCHILL, Winston: *Sinews of Peace*. Congressional Records, 79th Congress, 2nd Session, A1145-7. Washington, D.C., US Congress 1946.

45 See CLIFFORD, Clark – HOLBROOK, Richard: *Counsel to the President: A Memoir*. New York, Anchor Books 1992, pp. 102 and 106.

46 See ADDISON, Paul: *Churchill: The Unexpected Hero*. Oxford, Oxford University Press 2005, p. 222.

47 Cf., for example: "There are very dark days ahead. The crisis produced by the Soviet Union's warlike preparations in Iran hardly differs in atmosphere from the successive crisis which convulsed Europe with anticipations of disaster in 1938 and 1939." ALSOP, Joseph – ALSOP, Stewart: Matter of Fact: On the Eve of Crisis. In: *The Washington Post* (15 March 1946), p. 9.

48 See Positive... Constructive... Bipartisan [online]. In: *The Time* (3 June 1946) [cit. 2015-04-30]. Available at: <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,797800,00.html>; see also Bipartisan Policy. In: *The Washington Post* (23 May 1946), p. 6.

Truman's attitude was certainly influenced by his extraordinary sense of loyalty which was the backbone of his political and human attitudes throughout his career. Roosevelt had chosen him as his Vice President, and thus also seated him in the White House – and Truman was consistently refusing to make any steps that could have been perceived as having an anti-Rooseveltian character. His waiver of arguments based on the Munich lessons might have stemmed from a cold political calculation that every instance of their use would have played into the hands of the Republican opposition. In any case, he adhered to this principle even at the time when his administration had started preparing the first conceptual projects designed to stop the Soviet expansion. During preparations of the President's speech on the assistance to Greece and Turkey, which were taking place at a feverish pace at the turn of February and March 1947, arguments to the effect that if nations threatened by communism were not given help immediately, the price for their rescue would later be much higher, were often voiced, which could be interpreted as an obvious reflection of the lessons of Munich.⁴⁹ However, these formulations did not find their way into the final wording of the speech immediately labelled as "Truman's doctrine"; the source of the threat which Truman was promising US help against was not explicitly identified neither.⁵⁰

In early postwar years, the specific link to Czechoslovakia and the events taking place there during the late 1930s was gradually disappearing from the criticism of *appeasement* and appeals to apply the lessons of Munich in the US public discourse. *Munich*, just like Canossa or Waterloo before, was no longer tied to specific geographic or time coordinates, becoming a generic term, a generic model of behaviour on the international scene. Yet a real breakthrough in a majority acceptance of this axiom occurred only when the source of international tension returned to Central Europe 10 years after Munich. For some time, the February 1948 Communist Party coup in Czechoslovakia was occupying pages of US newspapers and offered an analogy which was hard to resist, creating a here-we-go-again impression – small Czechoslovakia, the last bastion of democracy in the East, becoming a victim of an act of aggression, and all that the unprepared West can do is helplessly watch. An analogy between the behaviour of Nazi Germany and that of the Soviet Union, between Hitler and Stalin, was used by just about anybody at that time. Even the otherwise sober *New York Times* concluded its commentary on the Prague coup by the following words. "When Hitler seized the Sudetenland he announced that this was his last territorial claim in Europe. It was a lie to lull the West to sleep. Moscow has disdained to disguise its own intentions. There is no reason to expect that Czechoslovakia will be the last target of Russo-Communist expansion."⁵¹

49 See, for example, *HSTL*, President's Secretary's Files, Joseph M. Jones Papers, *Draft suggestions for President's message to Congress on Greek situation*, 3 March 1947.

50 Cf. PETERS, G. – WOOLLEY, J. T. (ed.): *The American Presidency Project: Harry S. Truman* [online], Document No. 56 – *Special message to the Congress on Greece and Turkey: The Truman Doctrine*, 12 March 1947 [cit. 2015-04-30]. Available at: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=12846>.

51 Red Triumph in Prague. In: *The New York Times* (26 February 1948), p. 22.

President Truman reacted to the situation resulting from the February success of the Czechoslovak Communist Party by a forceful increase of pressure on speeding up legislative measures connected to implementing the Marshall Plan, an introduction of general military training and partial conscription, and, first and foremost, on steps opening up a possibility of establishing a defence alliance of democratic nations.⁵² Under the circumstances, using the lessons of Munich as an argument in the campaign seemed to be an obvious option. However, Truman kept sticking to his old tactics and carefully avoided any use of the word *appeasement*. The paradoxical feature of his speeches delivered the previous year had thus grown even deeper. The President, who loved historical analogies and valued his ability to learn from lessons of the past more than anything else, was delivering speeches in which he was erasing the last vestiges of *appeasement* from the American policy, or even declaring putting an end to *appeasement* – without actually using the word *appeasement*. This paradox was emphasized by the fact that the President's communication tactics had no effect whatsoever on how the public discourse looked like. As a matter of fact, his speeches were broadly interpreted using the two key words, *appeasement* and *Munich*.

An example of the situation described above is Truman's 17 March 1948 address to the Congress. It was the hitherto sharpest criticism of the Soviet approach to Europe, in which he no longer considered necessary to tiptoe around causes of the critical international situation. He described the latest developments in Europe and stated that the United States had to assume a clear and intransigent attitude to it, which would be based not just on economic power. The Americans would have to be prepared to pay for their military readiness in order to be prepared for a war. If they did not do it, they would pay a much higher price later, said Truman.⁵³ It should be noted that he did not explicitly mention *Munich*, but State Secretary George C. Marshall did so instead of Truman just a few hours later, when explaining the content of the President's speech to the Senate's Committee on Armed Forces. If the United States planned to react to the Soviet Union's aggressive steps only by diplomatic means, it would be *appeasement*, he stated.⁵⁴ The American media

52 In a *Washington Post* editorial published in the beginning of March, the Alsop brothers, Joseph and Stewart Alsop divided the "conflict between the Soviets and the West" into three stages, labelling the first "the period of American self-delusion – a phase of *appeasement* toward the Soviet Union." The second phase was, in their opinion, characterized by attempts to stop the Soviet imperialism by political and economic methods, and culminated in the Marshall Plan. They saw the third stage, which the world had just entered, as one of the formation of military defence alliances and of "coordination of war plans throughout the non-Soviet world." ALSOP, Joseph – ALSOP, Stewart: Matter of Fact: The Military Phase Begins. In: *The Washington Post* (5 March 1948), p. 25.

53 See PETERS, G. – WOOLLEY, J. T. (ed.): *The American Presidency Project: Harry S. Truman* [online], Document No. 52 – *Special message to the Congress on the threat to the freedom of Europe*, 17 March 1948 [cit. 2015-04-30]. Available at: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=13130>.

54 See TRUSSELL, C. P.: Secretary Is Firm: Diplomatic Action Alone Means Appeasement, He Tells Senators. In: *The New York Times* (18 March 1948), p. 1.

interpreted the President's speech in pretty much the same way. According to the *New York Times*, the President used a broad range of historical arguments to support an indisputable fact that "appeasement leads to war rather than to peace."⁵⁵

Truman managed to refrain from using the terms *Munich* and *appeasement* in his speeches throughout 1948, including the presidential campaign, in which he scored such a remarkable victory. Yet the elections brought about another significant shift in the position of these terms in the US internal and public political discourse. The dispute about them was not the main issue of the election duel between the Republicans and the Democrats, but both parties had to indicate their position with respect to these terms, thanks to the participation of a third important candidate, Roosevelt's ex-Vice President Henry A. Wallace, who was running as the candidate of the Progressive Party. He proclaimed himself to be the only true successor of Franklin Roosevelt and attempted to convince voters to support an international cooperation program based on principles of openness toward the Soviet Union and understanding of its needs and concerns.⁵⁶ Both major parties and most mainstream media vigorously opposed the concept.⁵⁷ Even more importantly, it was rejected by the most significant representatives of the left-wing alternative to Truman's Democrats. Wallace's campaign was criticized by Eleanor Roosevelt,⁵⁸ an icon of the liberals, and even Norman Thomas, a veteran of US socialism, a lifelong pacifist and a conscientious objector, who was at that time preparing for his sixth hopeless attempt in a row to win the keys to the White House, had no sympathy for it.⁵⁹ Wallace got just a whisker over a million votes,⁶⁰ which put an end to his personal political career. As to Truman, it was important that, in the eyes of the US public, the defeated candidate of the Progressives took a substantial part of the burden of the heritage of Roosevelt's policy *vis-à-vis* Stalin with him on his way to political oblivion.

In parallel with the election campaign, Truman's team was involved in another fight, no less dramatic and potentially much more dangerous. Starting in June 1948,

55 The Call to Action. In: *Ibid.* (18 March 1948), p. 26.

56 For the latest work on this topic see DEVINE, Thomas W.: *Henry Wallace's 1948 Presidential Campaign and the Future of Postwar Liberalism*. Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press 2013.

57 See, for example, Wallace Assailed as an "Appeaser." In: *The New York Times* (3 March 1948), p. 14. The *Time* weekly was referring to Wallace as a "champion of peace, *appeasement*, and the 'common man'." The Voice of the Locust [online]. In: *The Time* (19 April 1948) [cit. 2015-04-30]. Available at: <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,798370,00.html>.

58 Cf. SCHLESINGER, Arthur, Jr.: Who Was Henry A. Wallace? The Story of a Perplexing and Indomitably Naive Public Servant. In: *The Los Angeles Times* (12 March 2000), p. 3.

59 Speaking about Wallace's foreign policy opinions, Thomas stated: "Wallace type of *appeasement of Russia* would only postpone, not avert, war and in the process impair all the standards of public morality in a democracy." Thomas Condemns Wallace on Russia. In: *The New York Times* (16 September 1948), p. 26.

60 Wallace received 1,156,103 votes, Dewey 21,969,170 votes, and Truman 24,105,695 votes. *Statistical Abstracts of the United States, 1950*. Washington, D.C., Bureau of the Census, US Department of Commerce 1950, p. 297.

the United States, together with the United Kingdom and France, had to face the hitherto most serious postwar crisis, the Berlin Blockade. For the first time ever, the US administration had an opportunity to apply the principles which its major project of containment of communism, at that time still in a pre-natal stage, was built on in practice. The military presence of the three Western powers in Berlin did not have the slightest military significance. It was a forward position, offering no advantages and completely indefensible. However, it had a high symbolical value in the eyes of the Western allies. The Brits, French, and Americans held their occupation sectors pursuant to valid agreements which were a part of the postwar arrangements in Europe, and if they had waived their rights in Berlin, their step would have, in all probability, cast doubt on other agreements.⁶¹

The Truman administration passed the first major test of its resolution to defy the Soviet expansion with honours. Its steps might not be as straightforward, conceptual, and consistent as people around Truman had attempted to present after the crisis, and as US historiography claimed until recently. Even the role of the President himself was not as significant as it was long believed, but the outcome was, from the US point of view, unquestionably positive.⁶² Stalin's pressure in Berlin accelerated the formation of the North Atlantic Alliance and the process of establishing an independent German state in the territory of the Western occupation zones of Germany and its integration into the nascent economic and security structures in Western Europe. The Western allies stayed in Berlin and convincingly demonstrated their resolution to insist on compliance with agreements on postwar arrangements in Europe. The Americans were setting the tone and direction of the steps of the Western allies, the latter accepted it, and US media registered this fact.⁶³ On the domestic scene, the ongoing presidential campaign notwithstanding, no significant voice criticizing the steps of the US administration during the Berlin crisis could be heard.⁶⁴ It is hardly surprising that the President himself and people around him

61 According to Robert D. Murphy, political advisor to Military Governor of Germany General Lucius D. Clay, the withdrawal of Americans from Berlin would have critically weakened the US position in Europe. The Germans and other Europeans would have concluded that a withdrawal from the whole territory of Germany would follow: "US position in Europe would be gravely weakened, and like a cat on a sloping tin roof." *FRUS, 1948*, Vol. II: *Germany and Austria*. Ed. William Slany and Charles S. Sampson. Washington, D.C., US Government Printing Office 1973, pp. 919–920, Document No. 559 – Political Advisor (Murphy) to the Secretary of State, Berlin, 26 June 1948.

62 Cf. HARRINGTON, Daniel F.: *Berlin on the Brink: The Blockade, the Airlift, and the Early Cold War*. Lexington, University Press of Kentucky 2012.

63 See, for example, the speech of British Foreign Minister Ernest Bevin in the House of Commons in September 1948, in which he characterized the position of the Western powers with respect to Berlin as "one of absolute firmness and refusal to countenance any *appeasement*." MATTHEWS, Herbert L.: Bevin Says the West Is Firm in Intention to Stay in Berlin. In: *The New York Times* (23 September 1948), p. 1.

64 While the Republican presidential nominee Thomas Dewey understandably avoided direct support of the steps taken by the White House, he rejected, at the peak of the campaign, any compromises with Soviets on issues of principle in connection with the Berlin crisis. "Peace

were satisfied with the outcome of their steps during the crisis and regarded them, as we will see later, as an extraordinarily convincing argument in favour of their foreign policy concept.

Arguments based on the lessons of Munich were used very sparsely in both internal and public discussions concerning the Berlin Blockade. Even the media were using them moderately, in spite of the fact that many such arguments could be found in comments on the presidential campaign. Truman's reluctance to use the term *appeasement* and the fact that the US reaction to the blockade was never an issue in the fight for the White House certainly contributed to the above outlined situation. Yet the lessons of Munich were significantly present in blockade-related discussions and debates of Truman's collaborators, albeit in a form reflecting the transformations they had undergone since the late 1930s, when they appeared in the US political discourse for the first time. Sometimes at the end of 1948, the President's advisors collected minutes of key meetings and used them to collate a document summarizing the course of the Berlin crisis. It shows that the principal objective of US efforts was to prevent war. Truman's administration was looking for a way toward a compromise, trying to gain time, and even did not rule out the possibility of a withdrawal of the Western allies from Berlin. However, the President and his closest collaborators repeatedly emphasized that a forced withdrawal was out of the question. A compromise would have been welcomed, but "without paying for it by *appeasement*."⁶⁵

Such was thus the form of the lessons from Munich formulated by Truman and his collaborators, taking into account relations with the Soviet Union, which Washington saw as the main and at that time only serious opponent threatening global peace. The objective was not to destroy the opponent, but rather to deter it from further aggression. It was therefore necessary to avoid steps which could be perceived as *appeasement* – as a matter of fact, US policy-makers took it for granted that *appeasement* would only encourage the aggressor. (The fact that steps which could be interpreted as *appeasement* were unacceptable for most US citizens, and thus were a considerable political risk, must also have played a role in this respect.) Negotiations with the opponent were desirable, but only from the position of power. In the opinion of people around Truman, the course and outcome of the crisis resulting from the Berlin Blockade were a clear confirmation that the chosen strategy was correct and should be used as a standard pattern of actions should a similar situation develop. When a chance of a possibility of an agreement with Stalin on lifting the blockade appeared in August 1948, the President's advisors drafted a speech in which the success was to be announced to the US public. Truman was expected to assure the Americans that his administration has succeeded

could not be attained through *appeasement*," he stated, adding that he was sure the Americans were united on this issue. EGAN, Leo: Dewey Bars Any Compromise of Our Principles on Berlin. In: *Ibid.* (29 September 1948), p. 1.

65 *HSTL*, President's Secretary's Files, Harry S. Truman Papers, *The Berlin crisis, research project No. 17*, Rough Draft, Washington, D.C., Department of State (approx. 1948).

to avert a war conflict without sliding toward the dangerous path of *appeasement*. At the same time, the President was to state that the agreement about Berlin did not mean the end of confrontations with the former ally and that the United States still had a long road ahead at the end of which was to be “not peace in our time but peace for all time.”⁶⁶

The experience of the first Berlin crisis together with a new interpretation of the Munich lessons became a natural part of the last stage of the formulation of the US foreign policy strategy of “containment.” In the spring of 1950, the discussions that had taken place so far resulted in a voluminous document – National Security Council Report 68, known as NSC-68.⁶⁷ It followed on previous similar documents prepared by this key body, but it included a new aspect in addition to experience from confrontations with the Soviets that had occurred so far.

On 23 September 1949, Truman informed his cabinet and immediately afterwards also his fellow citizens that he had information indicating that the Soviet Union had performed a successful test of a nuclear weapon.⁶⁸ He thus heralded the beginning of a brand new chapter in the history of international relations, a chapter in which risks of international conflicts assumed an apocalyptic dimension of a nuclear war, with a spectre of a thermonuclear innovation looming closely behind. This fact was naturally reflected in the text of the NSC-68 directive. The Munich lessons are explicitly mentioned only very sporadically in it. Yet the document as a whole can be labelled, without much exaggeration, a program antithesis of *appeasement*.

Being classified as “Top Secret,” the NSC-68 was made available to the public as late as in the mid-1970s, but its text was intentionally formulated in a manner allowing it to be used for public addresses of representatives of the US administration.⁶⁹

66 *Ibid.*, Papers of George M. Elsey, Box 33, Folder Campaign – Reference Material – Foreign Affairs, Draft of Speech on Berlin, approx.1948; see also HARRINGTON, D. F.: *Berlin on the Brink*, p. 163. It is interesting to note that the same phrase was used by J. F. Kennedy in his well-known speech at the American University in June 1963, in which he formulated principles of peaceful cooperation with the Soviet Union: “I am talking about genuine peace, the kind of peace that makes life on earth worth living, the kind that enables men and nations to grow and to hope and to build a better life for their children – not merely peace for Americans but peace for all men and women – not merely peace in our time but peace for all time.” Commencement Address at American University in Washington, 10 June 1963. The American Presidency Project, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=9266>.

67 *HSTL*, President’s Secretary’s Files, Harry S. Truman Papers, A Report to the National Security Council – NSC 68 [online]. Available at: http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/coldwar/documents/pdf/10-1.pdf [cit. 2015-04-30].

68 On the information presented to the cabinet see *HSTL*, President’s Secretary’s Files, Matthew J. Connelly Papers, Cabinet, *Cabinet meeting, Friday, 23 September 1949*; on the publication of this information see PETERS, G. – WOOLLEY, J. T. (ed.): *The American Presidency Project: Harry S. Truman* [online], Document No. 216 – Statement by the President on announcing the first atomic explosion in the USSR, 23 September 1949 [cit. 2015-04-30]. Available at: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=13312>.

69 The authors of the document led by Paul Nitze were explicitly tasked to write “simply, clearly and in almost telegraphic style,” or, other words, to use “Hemingway sentences.” *FRUS, 1950*, Vol. I: *National Security Affairs; Foreign Economic Policy*. Ed. Neal H. Petersen,

In the spring of 1950, the task of presenting principles of the new strategy to the US public was entrusted to State Secretary Dean Acheson, who had succeeded George Marshall after the 1948 presidential elections. A series of speeches to various audiences was concluded by an address in Dallas. The chief executive of the US diplomacy emphasized two fundamental principles of the US strategy on the international stage – to prevent war and to make it clear that the United States was prepared for one. He ruled out the possibility of the United States resorting to a pre-emptive war, but knowing the audiences he was directly addressing, he also stated: “We should not pull down the blinds and sit in the parlor with a loaded shotgun, waiting. Isolation is not a realistic course of action. It does not work and it is not cheap. *Appeasement of Soviet ambitions* is, in fact, only an alternative form of isolation. It would lead to a final struggle for survival with both our moral and military positions weakened.”⁷⁰ Two weeks later, North Korean units crossed the 38th parallel and their massive onslaught started crushing the resistance of the southern neighbour.

The Appeasement Card in the Congress Elections

There is no doubt that the discussions on *appeasement*, which had been part of the process of formulating foreign policy strategy of the Truman administration, affected the behaviour and actions of the US President at the time he learned about communist aggression on the Korean Peninsula. His personal experience with the policy of *appeasement* must have played a role as well. It was an experience of a spectator, a witness of unsuccessful attempts to save global peace by *appeasement*, an experience of a perceptive reader of analyses of the causes of its failure, as well as an experience of a direct participant in political discussions which the crash of *appeasement* had produced. Seen from this perspective, his reaction was predictable. There is a well-known and authentic section in his *Memoirs*, in which he describes his state of mind during a flight from his home in Independence to Washington on Sunday, 25 June 1950. He writes that he let examples of concessions made by democratic powers to their totalitarian opponents in the 1930s pass through his head and came to a clear conclusion: if Moscow decided to follow the same route as the Axis powers in those days, there would be no other option but to forcefully oppose it.⁷¹ The President subsequently used the same or similar

John P. Glennon, David P. Mabon, Ralph R. Goodwin and William Z. Slany. Washington, D.C., US Government Printing Office 1977, pp. 196–200, Document No. 70 – *Record of the meeting of the State-Defense Policy Review Group*, Washington, 16 March 1950.

70 Acheson Rules Out “Preventive” War. In: *The New York Times* (14 June 1950), p. 2; Acheson Warns of Red’s Aim to Terrify Weak: Still Hopes Russia May Be “Good Neighbour.” In: *The Chicago Daily Tribune* (14 June 1950), p. 10; see also BEISNER, Robert L.: *Dean Acheson: A Life in the Cold War*. Oxford, Oxford University Press 2006, pp. 249–250.

71 TRUMAN, Harry S.: *Memoirs*, Vol. 2: *Years of Trial and Hope, 1946–1952*. New York, Doubleday & Co. 1956, pp. 332–333.

arguments during first meetings and sessions with his collaborators, or in his speech during the first meeting with representatives of the Congress. He left no doubt among his audiences that he assigned historical importance to the conflict and that the entity he wanted to stop was the Soviet Union rather than North Korea. When notifying leading representatives of the Congress of the emerged crisis on 26 June, he stated emphatically: “The communist invasion of South Korea could not be let pass unnoticed [...] this act was very obviously inspired by the Soviet Union. If we let Korea down, the Soviets will keep on going and swallow up one piece of Asia after another. We had to make a stand some time or else let all of Asia go by the board. If we were to let Asia go, the Near East would collapse and no telling what would happen in Europe.”⁷²

The atmosphere of general consent with the President’s decision shows that the lessons learned from errors of the *appeasement* policy were one of the determinants of the view of global developments, which was at that time shared regardless of political affiliations or party membership in the United States. Dulles’ message to the President on Sunday, 25 June, which was cited above, contained arguments in favour of an active approach against the aggression, which could have been just as easily used by State Secretary Acheson or even Truman himself.⁷³ The conviction that peace cannot be saved by appeasing the aggressor became a rule which not only justified taking great risks, but whose breach was considered the highest possible risk in itself. When even Henry A. Wallace, the greatest opponent of the policy of containment on the left side of the political spectrum and the unsuccessful candidate for the President’s office in the 1948 elections, publicly supported Truman’s actions in mid-July, the US media took almost no notice. It was not because the ex-star of the liberals had long been past his prime, but mainly because even the support by the liberal left was considered natural.⁷⁴

The reaction of the UN Security Council, which promptly voted for both resolutions proposed by the United States during the early days of the Korean conflict, and the broad domestic support were, for Truman, proof positive that the approach he had chosen was right and also a significant source of confidence. His mood was fully reflected in his first two major public addresses following the beginning of the war,

72 *Harry S. Truman Library*, Independence (Missouri) (hereinafter *HSTL*), Papers of George M. Elsey, *Notes, dated 27 June 1950, by George M. Elsey regarding a 26 June 1950 meeting at which President Truman and Secretary of State Dean Acheson briefed key senators and congressmen on events in Korea.*

73 “To sit by while Korea is overrun by unprovoked armed attack would start disastrous chain of events leading most probably to world war.” *FRUS, 1950*, Vol. VII: *Korea*. Washington, D.C., US Government Printing Office 1976, p. 140 – *The acting political adviser in Japan (Sebald) to the Secretary of State, 25 June 1950.*

74 Wallace Sides with US and UN on Korea, Splitting with Progressive Party Leadership. In: *Washington Post* (16 June 1950), p. 10. By that time, there were just a few solitary characters of the American political scene opposing Truman’s actions, for example Vito Marcantio, a congressman from New York for the American Labor Party, Arthur V. Watkins, a Republican senator from Utah and an elder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, or James P. Kem, a Republican senator and Truman’s staunch opponent from Missouri.

on 19 July, in which he first informed the Congress and later the US public about the situation in Korea. Although General Douglas MacArthur, who had recently been appointed the Commander-in-Chief of the United Nations Command,⁷⁵ assured the President that the chance of North Korean troops to occupy the entire peninsula had passed, the military situation continued to be critical. What was most important for Truman at that time, however, was that the United States and its allies, i.e. an overwhelming majority of UN member nations, were able to stand against the aggression. The UN reaction clearly showed that the world had learned from fatal mistakes of *appeasement*, and this was the message the President delivered to congressmen and senators at noon on 19 July.⁷⁶ In an evening address to the nation, which was broadcast by all major radio and TV networks in the United States and also by the Voice of America and the BBC in 23 languages, Truman repeated the message, and appreciated the resolution of Americans to make a stand against the ongoing communist aggression as well.⁷⁷

The Republican support of the policy of the Democratic administration understandably had its limits. With the elections to the Congress approaching, the Republicans started accusing the Democrats with an ever-increasing frequency that the communist aggression in Korea was an outcome of foreign policy errors and mistakes of the Democratic government, all of which had arisen from – *appeasement* to communism.⁷⁸ Just like before the elections in 1948, a fight broke out between the two major political parties the substance of which was which of them would take possession of the lessons of mistakes of *appeasement* as its own, and no one else's, weapon. By the end of that summer, the frequency of arguments referring to pre-war events was so high on both sides that the *New York Times* deemed appropriate to publish a series of articles describing key moments of the vain effort to *appease* Nazism. The newspaper informed its readers about the focus of the series in an editorial titled "Lesson in Appeasement"⁷⁹; the series itself was called – to

75 In addition to South Korean troops, the dominant component of the UN forces in terms of manpower was the US Army, the number of whose troops in South Korea gradually increased from 300,000 to almost half a million. Troops from the United Kingdom, Canada, Turkey, the Phillipines and an additional ten nations also engaged in combat operations under the UN flag, albeit in substantially smaller numbers.

76 WOOLLEY, John T. – PETERS, Gerhard (ed.): *The American Presidency Project: Harry S. Truman. XXXIII President of the United States, 1945–1953* [online]. Document No. 193 – *Special message to the Congress reporting on the situation in Korea*, 19 July 1950 [cit. 2015-04-30]. Available at: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=13560>.

77 *Ibid.*, Document No. 194 – *Radio and television address to the American people on the situation in Korea*, 19 July 1950 [cit. 2015-04-30]. Available at: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=13561>; cf. also TROHAN, Walter: Truman Warns Nation of "Hard Fight" Ahead: Assails Hoarding, Cites Need for Tax Rise. In: *Chicago Daily Tribune* (20 July 1950), p. 1.

78 Chairman of the Young Republican National Federation John Tope formulated these accusations in reaction to Truman's address to the nation and used the term "Truman's War." Asserts Korea War Results of Appeasing Reds. In: *Chicago Daily Tribune* (21 July 1950), p. 4.

79 Lesson in Appeasement. In: *New York Times* (22 August 1950), p. 25.

avoid any doubts concerning the relevance and topicality of the historical essays on the part of the reader – “Behind the Brown Curtain.”⁸⁰

From the very beginning of the campaign, the Republican critics were provided with valuable ammunition by the Commander-in-Chief of the United Nations Command in Korea, General Douglas MacArthur, when he initiated the first of a series of his publicized disputes with the President soon after assuming his command duties. The General had been criticizing for some time Washington’s insufficient support of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek in Taiwan, particularly in matters connected to the island’s defence. At the end of August, he prepared a text on this issue, which was to be delivered as a lecture during the convention of US war veterans in Chicago. Without mincing words, MacArthur referred to the policy of Truman’s administration as *appeasement* and defeatism. The President, who had learned about the General’s intention, forbade MacArthur to publicize the dispute, which he rightly believed was an internal problem of the administration. Yet the text appeared in the media just one day after the planned date of the lecture.⁸¹ It caused considerable furor and a wave of Republican attacks which were literally teeming with accusations of *appeasement*.⁸²

The Republican strategy was simple – let us not talk about how the United States reacted when the war broke out, but let us ask why the war had to happen. Congressman Richard Nixon, mercilessly fighting for the seat of California’s senator, insistently kept asking this question in his speeches⁸³; veteran Senator Robert A. Taft, running for his third mandate in Ohio against an unprecedentedly funded and nationwide-supported campaign, in which the Democrats, Liberals and powerful trade union organizations had joined forces, refused to give any credit for the parting with *appeasement* to the Democrats in his addresses.⁸⁴ Korea

80 SCHMIDT, Paul: Behind the Brown Curtain: Chief Interpreter of the Wilhelmstrasse. In: *Ibid.* (21 August 1950), p. 1; IDEM: Behind the Brown Curtain, 2: Chamberlain Visits Hitler. In: *Ibid.* (22 August 1950), p. 28; IDEM: Behind the Brown Curtain, 3: Munich Is Arranged. In: *Ibid.* (23 August 1950), p. 31; IDEM: Behind the Brown Curtain, 4: The Outbreak of War. In: *Ibid.* (24 August 1950), p. 28; IDEM: Behind the Brown Curtain, 5: France Surrenders. In: *Ibid.* (25 August 1950), p. 23; IDEM: Behind the Brown Curtain, 6: Leopold and Other Prisoners. In: *Ibid.* (16 August 1950), p. 15. The articles were taken over from Schmidt’s half-finished book which was ultimately published a year later. SCHMIDT, Paul: *Hitler’s Interpreter*. Ed. R. H. C. Steed. New York, The Macmillan Co. 1951.

81 Text of Gen. M’Arthur’s Statement on Formosa. In: *Washington Post* (29 August 1950), p. 6.

82 FISHER, John: Hall M’Arthur In Capital: Truman Formosa Policy Branded Appeasement. Ban on Message Creates Furor in Washington. In: *Chicago Daily Tribune* (29 August 1950), p. 1.

83 “How can anyone dare to call successful an Asia foreign policy which led us to war in Korea.” KORMAN, Seymour: Nixon Assails Policy Leading to Korean War. In: *Ibid.* (31 October 1950), p. 22.

84 In a letter to Senator Arthur Vandenberg, Taft described his approach as follows: “Throughout the campaign, I contended that the policies at Yalta and Potsdam built Russia up unnecessarily to a position of power in Central Europe and in China which was wholly unnecessary. I pointed out repeatedly that the *policy of appeasement* was checked in Europe only when you came into the picture at San Francisco and then in Germany, but the same pro-communist policy continued in Asia and led to the communist victory in China and to

became one of the main topics of the elections and the manner in which the topic was treated was unquestionably determined by the Republicans.⁸⁵ Even the favourable developments on the battlefield, where UN troops had successfully landed at Inchon and decisively taken over the initiative, did not change that. The *appeasement* in a single package with an accusation that the Democrats were generally “soft on communism” became a platform of the defeat of key allies of the Truman administration in the Senate, Scott Lucas from Illinois and Millard E. Tydings from Maryland. On the other hand, the platform served as a springboard to the Senate for Nixon, a brutal critic of the alleged *appeasement* of the Democrats toward communism; it was with its help that the indestructible Taft defended his seat. The Democrats, deeply divided on issues of domestic policy, retained a tight majority in both chambers of the Congress, but the President’s influence on events taking place on Capitol Hill had dramatically diminished. Commentators agreed that the outcome of the elections, in which a record number of voters took part, strengthened the Republicans and the anti-Truman faction within the Democratic Party. Some of them even voiced serious doubts whether the government would be able to find any *modus vivendi* with the new Senate in the field of foreign policy.⁸⁶

Appeasement according to MacArthur and the Reaction to Chinese Intervention in Korea

Election clashes around the Korean conflict were taking place at the time when both the political scene and the media were markedly optimistic about the developments on the real battlefield. Since the successful Inchon landing in mid-September 1950, the competent authorities in Washington had been busy mainly with preparing the occupation, economic restoration, and political reconstruction of reunited Korea. The nation was supposed to become a showcase example of how effectively Western democracies can help their friends in the Third World.⁸⁷ The confident plans were not affected even by multiplying reports on UN troops encountering units consisting of the Chinese in Korea. The threat of a Chinese intervention was not perceived as acute, strategic, or unmanageable, mainly due to assessments submitted by General

the Korean War.” WUNDERLIN, Clarence E., Jr. (ed.): *The Papers of Robert A. Taft*, Vol. 4: 1949–1953. Kent (Ohio), Kent State University 2006, p. 208.

85 See PHILLIPS, Cabel: Four National Issues Play Role in Election: Korea, Communism, Fair Deal and Efficiency Are the Major Topics. In: *New York Times* (29 October 1950), p. 139.

86 See KROCK, Arthur: Voting Record Set: 40 Million Go to Polls in Off-Year – Party Labels Are Ignored. Labor Also Set Back. Some Prominent Backers of Truman Defeated – His Influence Cut. In: *New York Times* (8 November 1950), p. 1.

87 Cf. the information of Dean Acheson on the formation of a special team which was to help start Korea’s postwar reconstruction delivered during a Cabinet meeting on Friday, 29 September 1950. *HSTL*, President’s Secretary’s Files, Matthew J. Connelly Papers, Cabinet, 29 September 1950.

MacArthur, unquestioned (and after the Inchon landing unquestionable) military authority on the Far East. MacArthur was purposefully radiating confidence not just in relation to his military environment, but also toward the US public. During a personal meeting with the President on Wake Island in mid-October, he made no secret of his conviction that the enemy's resistance all over the peninsula would cease by the end of November.⁸⁸ And although he started falling behind his promised timetable only a few weeks later, he never showed any doubt about a quick end of the war.

Contrary to the attitudes of the Commander-in-Chief of the United Nations Command in Korea, alarming reports warning about a growing threat of a Chinese invasion had been coming to Washington from September onwards. They became more frequent especially after UN troops had closed on the 38th parallel. Early in October, the Americans received a very emphatic warning from the Brits, according to whom the entry of Chinese units into the conflict – whether in the form of a regular army or volunteers – in the event the 38th parallel were crossed “can by no means be excluded since the Chinese might well regard the crossing of the 38th parallel by United Nations forces and the prospect of the elimination of the North Korean buffer state as constituting a serious threat to China's own security.”⁸⁹ On 3 October, just a day after the arrival of the British warning to the State Department, the seriousness of the message was confirmed by a source more authoritative than any other. Zhou Enlai, Foreign Minister of the Chinese government, summoned Indian Ambassador Kavalam Madhava Panikkar and told him that the Communists would send their units to the peninsula if MacArthur's troops crossed the border between South Korea and North Korea.⁹⁰ In the days and weeks that followed, the US State Department received many reports from allied diplomatic services, which confirmed that Beijing was serious about its threats.⁹¹

However, the unshakeable confidence of the Commander-in-Chief of the United Nations Command continued to set the standard of risks for strategic discussions in Washington. Combined with the general atmosphere of pre-election discussions, this fact gave the supporters of a restoration of the *status quo ante bellum*, i.e. of stopping the allied advance at the 38th parallel, practically no chance to assert their opinion. It is true that the State Department's Policy Planning Staff had prepared, as early as the end of July, a document warning against a potential Soviet or Chinese intervention and requiring that the theatre of military operations be strictly

88 *FRUS, 1950*, Vol. VII, p. 949 – *Substance of statements made at the Wake Island Conference*, 15 October 1950.

89 *Ibid.*, p. 813–816, *The British Embassy to the Department of State*, undated (delivered to Dean Rusk by a courier on 2 October 1950, at 10 AM).

90 *Ibid.*, p. 839 – *The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Holmes) to the Secretary of State*, London, 3 October 1950.

91 The Americans were repeatedly warned, for example, by the Dutch diplomatic service, which was recognized and respected for its Far Eastern expertise. Cf., for example, *Ibid.*, pp. 858–859 – *The Ambassador in the Netherlands (Chapin) to the Secretary of State*, The Hague, 3 October 1950.

limited by the 38th parallel,⁹² but it was politically very short-lived. Having read it, Director of the Department for Far Eastern Affairs John M. Allison considered necessary to immediately contact Director of the Policy Planning Staff Paul Nitze and express his forceful and official disagreement with the document's philosophy and conclusions. If the United States acted according to the document, aggressors would have nothing to worry about – in the worst possible case, they would only have to start again, claimed Allison.⁹³

It seems that the above forceful interpretation of the *lessons of Munich* in relation to the Korean conflict enjoyed support of an overwhelming majority of relevant officials and politicians in Washington. It is obvious that its supplement which President Roosevelt had added during the war, namely that an efficient response to an aggression had to include an utter defeat of the aggressor which would render the latter unable to repeat its actions, continued to constitute a part of the *lessons of Munich*. Under Nitze's supervision, the Policy Planning Staff quickly prepared an amended version of the text which, while containing a warning about risks of advancing beyond the 38th parallel, no longer insisted on this option to be ruled out entirely. The final decision was to be postponed until more military and political information was available.⁹⁴ The door for a campaign to the north was open. On 28 September Truman approved MacArthur's plan of operations, and the General received the consent of the Joint Chiefs of Staff the next day.⁹⁵ MacArthur issued his final order instructing all his units to advance in full strength to the northern border of Korea on 24 October.⁹⁶ On 28 October the Joint Chiefs of Staff, State Department, and President approved instructions for the occupation of North Korea.⁹⁷

The State Department nevertheless started approaching the General's plans with some caution. One of the reasons was also the attitude of the British allies. Unlike the Americans, the United Kingdom had officially recognized the Chinese communist government as early as in January 1950, and the Brits made no secret of being seriously worried about the campaign in the north. It was also obvious that they did not have full confidence in the judgment of the Commander-in-Chief, although they too believed that the supremacy of UN troops on the Korean battlefield was unquestionable and that even a potential Chinese intervention would not break their offensive power. What they thus demanded of the Americans was

92 *Ibid.*, pp. 449–454 – *Draft memorandum by the Policy Planning Staff*, 22 July 1950. The document is cited and the episode described by Wilson D. Miscamble in his book *George F. Kenan and the Making of American Foreign Policy, 1947–1950* (Princeton, Princeton University Press 1992, pp. 323–324).

93 *FRUS, 1950*, Vol. VII, pp. 458–461 – *Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Northeast Asian Affairs (Allison) to the Director of the Policy Planning Staff*, 24 July 1950.

94 *Ibid.*, pp. 469–473 – *Draft memorandum prepared by the Policy Planning Staff*.

95 *Ibid.*, p. 826 – *Draft memorandum prepared by the Policy Planning Staff*, Washington, 29 September 1950.

96 *Ibid.*, p. 995, Editorial Note.

97 *Ibid.*, pp. 1007–1010 – *The Secretary of State to the Embassy in Korea*, Washington, 28 October 1950.

that MacArthur not be allowed to take retaliatory actions outside the territory of Korea without an explicit consent of the President, should such a situation arise.⁹⁸

In this respect, the Brits were finding full support in Washington. It is true that both the State Department and the White House believed that the General was able to swiftly crush the opposing forces all over the Korean territory, and thus end the war on the peninsula, but they did not have the slightest intention to let the General drag the United States into an open conflict with China. When the State Department learned on 6 November that MacArthur planned to bomb bridges across the Yalu River forming the border between Korea and China on the same day, it forcefully rejected the idea, the reason being, *inter alia*, that there was a commitment not to undertake any actions against the Manchurian bank of the river without a consultation with British allies.⁹⁹ State Secretary Acheson immediately contacted the President, obtained his consent,¹⁰⁰ whereupon the General immediately received an order from the Joint Chiefs of Staff to refrain from any such attacks until and unless ordered to do so.¹⁰¹

MacArthur's reaction to the decision of his superiors was symptomatic. In a cable sent to Washington two days later, he emphatically warned against the weakening of the will to achieve the declared objectives of the United Nations in Korea which, in his opinion, included the establishment of a unified and free state. In his eyes, the British attempt to subject his decisions in strategic matters to political control was *appeasement*; he accused London of efforts to bribe Chinese Communists with a part of the Korean territory, and directly compared the British intention to the Munich Agreement: "The widely reported British desire to *appease* the Chinese Communists by giving them a strip of Northern Korea finds its historic precedent in the action taken at Munich on 29 Sept 1938 by Great Britain, France and Italy wherein the Sudeten Lands, the strategically important Bohemian mountain bastion, were ceded to Germany without the participation of Czechoslovakia and indeed against the protest of that govt." MacArthur then felt appropriate to add a relatively extensive summary of tangible consequences of the historical Munich Agreement. In the General's opinion, the lesson learned from this example of the policy of *appeasement* was universal: "I am unaware of a single exception which would cast doubt upon validity of this concept," he concluded his excursion into recent history.¹⁰²

Unlike in the dispute concerning the crossing of the 38th parallel, the arguments based on the *lessons of Munich* did not make Truman's administration change its attitude this time. General MacArthur did not obtain the permission to attack targets on

98 *Ibid.*, pp. 931–932 – *Memorandum of conversation, by the Ambassador at Large (Jessup)*, Washington, 12 October 1950.

99 *Ibid.*, pp. 1055–1057 – *Memorandum of conversations, by the Secretary of State*, 6 November 1950.

100 *Ibid.*, p. 1057 – *Memorandum by the Secretary of State*, 6 November 1950.

101 *Ibid.*, p. 1057 – *The Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Commander in Chief, Far East*, Washington, 6 November 1950.

102 *Ibid.*, pp. 1107–1110 – *The Commander in Chief, United Nations Command, to the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, Tokyo, 9 November 1950.

the Sino-Korean border. Needless to say, one cannot help thinking that the President and his collaborators were grateful for the chance to transfer at least some of the responsibility to the British ally. This time, their situation was made easier by the fact that the General did not manage to rally his political fan club to his support. As usual in his disputes with the President and the Washington establishment, even this one did not remain a secret for long – the *Chicago Tribune* informed about it on front-page articles with a relatively highly explosive political potential¹⁰³ – but before the whole affair could develop, it came under a completely different kind of light. MacArthur had planned a major final offensive that was to be launched at the end of November and which was expected to put a definitive end to the war and hand over the rule over the reunified country to the “people of Korea.”¹⁰⁴ On D-Day, 24 November 1950, the General personally joined his troops. Customarily surrounded by a numerous retinue of war correspondents in this historical moment, he, conversing with his officers, uttered a sentence that was repeated by the media all over the United States on the very same day: “I hope to keep my promise to the G.I.’s to have them home by Christmas.”¹⁰⁵

The situation was utterly different on the next day. Units of Chinese Communists, which had been trained for the deployment for a long time, joined the Korean conflict in full force.¹⁰⁶ MacArthur’s offensive collapsed and his forces faced a disaster which could have eclipsed all the dark experience of US military campaigns so far. The spectre of an armed conflict with the huge Asian opponent was producing the deepest worries. Dispassionate Hanson W. Baldwin working for the *New York Times* wrote: “The United States faces today the greatest danger in our history. Military, economic or political destruction of Western civilization and of our American way of life are definite possibilities if the danger from the East is not met boldly, imaginatively and with united effort.”¹⁰⁷ Foreign policy and security concepts prepared and accepted in the previous years were subjected to an essential trial. Principles of the US policy were tested during intensive public and cabinet discussions, and the *lessons of Munich* once again became an important part of the argumentation arsenal of these discussions. However, conditionals disappeared from considerations of their application.

103 MANLY, Chesly: Britain Seeks a Munich With Chinese Reds: Plan Deal to Save Hong Kong. In: *Chicago Daily Tribune* (22 November 1950), p. 1; IDEM: US, Britain Clash on Red Appeasement: Dulles Backs UN Probe in China. In: *Ibid.* (23 November 1950), p. 1.

104 PARROT, Lindsay: 7 Divisions Strike; Americans Crossing a Frozen Stream in North Korea. In: *New York Times* (24 November 1950), p. 1.

105 MacArthur’s statement was released to the world by *The Associated Press*. Cf. DONOVAN, Robert J.: *Tumultuous Years: The Presidency of Harry S. Truman, 1949–1953*. New York, W. W. Norton 1982, p. 303.

106 Regarding the issue of the engagement of communist China in the Korean War, the most detailed account is provided in JIAN, Chen: *China’s Road to the Korean War: The Making of the Sino-American Confrontation*. New York, Columbia University Press 1994.

107 BALDWIN, Hanson W.: Greatest Peril for US; Western Civilization Faces Destruction if Threat from East Is Not Met Boldly. In: *New York Times* (1 December 1950), p. 4.

Harry Truman was acting up to his standards in the trial. During a press conference on 30 November 1950, he once again claimed allegiance to the principles he had declared in connection with the outbreak of the Korean conflict. He refused the possibility that UN troops might retreat from the region, repeating that if the aggression was not stopped in Korea, it would spread across Asia and Europe, and hit the western hemisphere as well. In the ensuing part of the press conference, he made it unambiguously clear how seriously he meant his statement: "We will take whatever steps are necessary to meet the military situation, just as we always have," he said, and when asked whether this included the use of the atomic bomb, he replied: "That includes every weapon that we have."¹⁰⁸ It is true that the White House press service issued a statement that was expected to blunt the impact of the President's words shortly after the conference,¹⁰⁹ but there is no reason to doubt that the President meant them literally, and this was also how the US media interpreted them. "President Truman declared today that the United Nations forces in Korea were determined to fight to the bitter end for justice and world peace and warned we would use the atomic bomb, if necessary, to assure victory," was how the *New York Times* informed about the conference.¹¹⁰

However, the fact that Truman was prepared to use the atomic bomb if necessary does not mean he saw it as a desirable tool to resolve the Korean crisis. The President and his closest associates were thinking along different lines. In early December, specialists of the State Department prepared a document for Dean Acheson, which formulated US objectives in Korea in a clearly defensive manner. Stopping aggression from the north was still the main goal, but the document also emphasized the necessity to localize the existing conflict and to avoid war with China and the Soviet Union.¹¹¹ The State Secretary and his top officers then presented the approach during a strategic conference to their colleagues from the Department of Defense and supreme military commanders held in the Pentagon on 3 December. They made it quite clear that they did not have the slightest intention to make any steps that could lead to a war with communist China, and that they still wished to uphold the principle determining the US global strategy since the beginning of the Second World War, namely that the United States' priority battlefield was Europe. However, the representatives of the State Department also stressed continuing validity of the principle that it was unacceptable to allow anyone to extort the international community by an act of aggression to gain anything anywhere. During the discussions, Dean Rusk, Acheson's right-hand man in Far

108 WOOLLEY, J. T. – PETERS, G. (ed.): *The American Presidency Project: Harry S. Truman* [online]. Document No. 295 – *The President's news conference*, 30 November 1950 [cit. 2015-04-30]. Available at: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=13673>.

109 *Ibid.*

110 LEVIERO, Antony: Truman Gives Aim. In: *New York Times* (1 December 1950), p. 1.

111 *HSTL*, President's Secretary's Files, Dean Acheson Papers, Secretary of State, Memoranda of conversations, 1 December 1950.

Eastern matters, accurately defined the State Department's position as "a middle way between *appeasement* and full war."¹¹²

Even the hosts of the strategic conference in the Pentagon did not have the slightest intention to start a war with communist China. Speeches of representatives of armed services during the discussion were even less belligerent than those of politicians. The generals and admirals were aware of the low level of international support for such a confrontation. While they accepted this fact bitterly – the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, freshly promoted five-star General Omar Bradley even accused European allies of succumbing to *appeasement*¹¹³ – they did not lean on the State Department to try to change the attitude of the Europeans. The main source of concerns of the US military was the evaluation of consequences of a potential conflict with China. A war with the Asian behemoth threatened to quickly deplete all American reserves which would then have been missing in a potential clash with the principal opponent, the Soviet Union. The soldiers therefore accepted the position of the State Department without any problems. In a document prepared by the Joint Chiefs of Staff for the National Security Council less than a week after the Pentagon conference, the immediate objective was defined as "[to] establish and maintain a defensive position on a line short of the Korean border." As to the overall solution to the situation that had arisen in Korea, the Joint Chiefs of Staff were strongly recommending to deal with the Chinese intervention by political means. Priority was to be given to an approach through the United Nations, which was to include "reassurances to the Chinese Communists with respect to our intent."¹¹⁴

In the beginning of December 1950, Washington's European allies were even more afraid of a potential conflict with mainland China than Washington itself. Capitals in Western Europe were unaware of the course of discussions within Truman's administration, but they did notice the President's statements during a press conference on 30 November, and their impression was that the Americans were planning a dangerous game which could result in a nuclear war.¹¹⁵ Due to the seriousness of the situation, the Brits, as the closest allies of the United States, even decided not to rely only on diplomatic channels. Prime Minister Clement Attlee set out for the United States to discuss American plans with President Truman personally. Their

112 *FRUS, 1950*, Vol. VII, pp. 1326–1327 – *Memorandum of conversation, by the Ambassador at Large (Jessup)*, Washington, 3 December 1950. It is interesting to note that a well-informed commentator of the *New York Times* with connections in government circles used almost identical formulations in his article published on the same day: RESTON, James: *Diplomats Face Grim Fact of Military Defeat: Task Is to Find Middle Way between Appeasement and General War*. In: *New York Times* (3 December 1950), p. E3.

113 *FRUS, 1950*, Vol. VII, pp. 1325–1327 – *Memorandum of conversation, by the Ambassador at Large (Jessup)*, Washington, 3 December 1950.

114 *HSTL*, President's Secretary's Files, Harry S. Truman Papers, NSC; Meeting No 72, 11/22/50, *Views of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, 9 November 1950.

115 Calling for prudence were, for example, the Dutch. In their opinion, the very existence of the European civilization was at stake, and "even some loss of face at this time in Orient may be necessary" to save it. *FRUS, 1950*, Vol. VII, p. 1307 – *The Ambassador in the Netherlands (Chapin) to the Secretary of State*, The Hague, 2 December 1950.

five-day negotiations in many respects resembled the famous Second World War meetings of the leaders of the two nations. The agenda covered a broad range of international security issues, including their economic aspects, but the number-one priority was naturally the situation on the Korean Peninsula.¹¹⁶

The talks, which started in an atmosphere of great pessimism regarding the further developments on the battlefield, confirmed that the Americans and the Brits might not be of the same opinion insofar as some evaluations of the situation in the Far East were concerned, but that they agreed on strategic principles. They showed that the defence of Europe was number-one priority for both London and Washington and that both governments wished to avoid a conflict with China.¹¹⁷ Just like during the previous meeting on the premises of the Pentagon, politicians on the US side were in a more fighting mood than soldiers. It was particularly Truman who repeatedly stressed that the decision to avoid an all-out war with the Chinese Communists did not mean that the Americans were preparing to leave Korea without putting up a fight.¹¹⁸

A profound disagreement between the Anglo-Saxon allies came when they started discussing the course of specific actions. Their ideas of how to force the Chinese Communists into negotiations and ultimately to a compromise providing a way out of the situation which threatened to become a strategic trap for the West were substantially different. The Brits refused all American considerations on a possibility of waging a “limited war” against China, which represented a fairly broad range of potential actions – from economic measures to a blockade or “limited air raids.” On the other hand, the Americans did not even want to start thinking about whether the compromise could be achieved by conceding to some Mao Zhe-dong’s requirements. At this stage of the talks, it was once again obvious how strongly the thinking and decision-making of Truman and his closest collaborators were influenced by the *lessons of Munich*. The US reaction to the British proposal to consider support to mainland China’s efforts to gain a seat in the UN Security Council was formulated by State Secretary Dean Acheson. He labelled such a step an attempt to buy time needed to consolidate one’s own forces from the aggressor, and flatly refused it, not hesitating to hint to the British allies that they should have learned from history: “These attempts in the past had not often been successful, and if we tried them now it would be very hard to get the heart in our people to see a rough

116 For details on the course of the negotiations see DINGMAN, Roger: Truman, Attlee, and the Korean War Crisis: In: NISH, Ian (ed.): *The East Asian Crisis, 1945–1951: The Problem of China, Korea and Japan*. London, London School of Economics 1982, pp. 1–42; IDEM: Atomic Diplomacy during the Korean War. In: *International Security*, Vol. 13, No. 3 (Winter 1988–1989), pp. 50–91.

117 *FRUS, 1950*, Vol. VII, pp. 1361–1374 – *United States delegation minutes of the first meeting of the President Truman and Prime Minister Attlee*, Washington, 4 December 1950.

118 According to US minutes of the meetings, the President “wanted to make it perfectly plain here that we do not desert our friends when the going is rough.” *Ibid.*, p. 1395 – *United States delegation minutes of the second meeting of President Truman and Prime Minister Attlee*, Washington, 5 December 1950.

job through. In fact, such a plan would not work. One could buy some time but it would not be enough. It would only divide our own people and make them feel that we had betrayed our principles and we would have no moral position left if war came.”¹¹⁹

The Brits ultimately resigned to the American stubbornness over this issue. They accepted the assurance of their partners that they would refrain from all steps that might lead to an expansion of the conflict with China beyond the Korean Peninsula, and gave up all efforts to blunt the edges of the US policy *vis-à-vis* Chinese Communists. The outcome of a short private meeting between the President and the Prime Minister, during which Attlee was assured that the United States would not use the nuclear weapon without consulting it first with the British ally, must have also been important for them.¹²⁰ However, it was a changed situation on the Korean battlefield which played the major role. As a matter of fact, expectations of US commanders with respect to future developments had radically changed during the five days of the US-British consultations. While the generals basically ruled out the possibility of maintaining a coherent frontline across the peninsula at the first meeting on 4 December focusing mainly on arranging the evacuation of UN troops, four days later, before the last round of the talks, they assured both statesmen that MacArthur would be able to hold the Pusan Perimeter indefinitely and estimated he would probably be able to establish a line of defence south of Seoul. In the discussion that followed, General Bradley summarized the assessment of the new situation in a single succinct sentence – the allies were no longer acting under pressure.¹²¹

Supported by the regained confidence of soldiers, the politicians achieved an agreement on further steps fairly quickly; it was based on the principle of “yes to negotiations with China, but absolutely no prior concessions.” The American approach to the whole matter was expressed in the final communiqué of the US-British talks. Attlee and Truman explicitly and unambiguously rejected any hint of *appeasement* in it, declaring that the only guarantee of peace is the ability to oppose, together with the United Nations, the aggression in the Far East or anywhere else.¹²² The trans-Atlantic allies as the key pillars of the postwar international security system thus explicitly identified themselves with the *lessons of Munich* and declared them a generally valid principle. Although there is no reason to doubt that the above was an honest declaration of mutually shared opinions, particularly on the American side, it should be noted that the two leaders could have hardly afforded to distance

119 *Ibid.*, pp. 1452–1453.

120 *Ibid.*, p. 1462 – *Memorandum for the record by the Ambassador at Large Jessup*, Washington, 7 December 1950.

121 *Ibid.*, p. 1472 – *United States delegation minutes of the sixth meeting of President Truman and Prime Minister Attlee*, 8 December 1950.

122 *Ibid.*, p. 1477; see also WOOLLEY, J. T. – PETERS, G. (ed.): *The American Presidency Project: Harry S. Truman* [online]. Document No. 301 – *Joint statement following discussion with the Prime Minister of Great Britain*, 8 December 1950 [cit. 2015-04-30]. Available at: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=13681>

themselves from the “Munich” alternative of solution of international issues in the atmosphere created by the US media within a week after the spectacular entry of the Chinese “volunteers” into the conflict.

As a matter of fact, the arrival of the British Prime Minister to Washington at the time of the biggest international crisis since the end of the Second World War produced a wave of speculations in which traditional American prejudices toward the policy of the United Kingdom were playing a major role. Commentators of leading American newspapers were collectively suspecting (and not without a reason) that Attlee would, because of British holdings in the Far East, particularly Hong Kong, insist on an agreement with Chinese Communists at any cost. They were also collectively rejecting such an option. “[N]either Asia nor Europe can be saved by any sort of *Munich*, no matter if called by sweeter name. An enforced ‘concession’ or ‘compromise’ now will lead to greater communist grabs later,” wrote Hanson Baldwin in the *New York Times*.¹²³ It was symptomatic that the rejection of *appeasement* had been shared by many and often very differing opinions were offered as to how the situation should have been dealt with, from the withdrawal from Korea and concentration on the defence of Europe to nuclear bombing of China.¹²⁴ The frequency of references to the *lessons of Munich* and to the general failure of the *appeasement* policy went up again in those days. It is interesting to note that, although the value content of the terms *Munich* and *appeasement* was uniformly unequivocal, the specific historical consequences were probably escaping the readers. The *Chicago Daily Tribune* thus felt obliged to print an article summarizing basic data on the setting and consequences of *Munich*¹²⁵; an editor’s note in the *Washington Post* reminded the readers that the word *appeasement* was, once upon a time, “of respectable coinage.”¹²⁶

The British delegation decided to counter the spreading rumors as early as during the talks. At a meeting with journalists in Washington’s Press Club, Prime Minister Attlee waived any efforts for *appeasement* in the Far East, assuring the Americans that Britain would always stand on their side, in good times or bad. US media accepted his assurance positively, although they did not print it on their front pages.¹²⁷ It was only the information about the final communiqué of the Attlee-Truman talks, which made it there, and in a very eye-catching form at that. The words about the rejection of *appeasement* were invariably a part of the headlines.¹²⁸ The fact that

123 BALDWIN, Hanson W.: Crossroads in Korea: Appeasement Opposed as Offering No Solution of the Present Allied Crisis. In: *New York Times* (6 December 1950), p. 4.

124 Report from the Nation: Facing the Crisis. Views on the National Emergency, Foreign Policy, Controls and Unity. In: *Ibid.* (17 December 1950), p. E3.

125 “Dunkerque and Munich” – What the Words Mean. In: *Chicago Daily Tribune* (7 December 1950), p. 3.

126 Appeasement. In: *The Washington Post* (8 December 1950), p. 26.

127 Washington and Korea. In: *New York Times* (7 December 1950), p. 32; Appeasement Not His Goal, Attlee Says at Press Club. In: *Washington Post* (7 December 1950), p. 17.

128 RESTON, James: Basic Rifts Stand; Accord Lacking on Seat in UN, Recognition Issue and Formosa. In: *New York Times* (9 December 1950), p. 1; Truman, Attlee to Rush Defenses,

the US and British representatives had agreed exactly on this point was generally viewed as significant and positive. Members of the editorial staff of the *New York Times* carefully leafed through newspapers from across the United States, and found out that their comments were identical in two key aspects – that the real enemy of the States was the Soviet Union and that “*appeasement* is out of question.”¹²⁹

The direct link between the *lessons of Munich* and American foreign policy was confirmed by President Truman in his speech delivered a week after the end of the consultations with the Brits, in which he informed the public about his decision to declare a state of national emergency. He applied the *lessons of Munich* to the new situation which the United States had to cope with; on the one hand, to further mobilize its human and economic resources to be able to effectively counter Chinese pressure on the battlefield and, on the other hand, to start looking for a way to resolve the conflict by negotiations. Truman again left no doubt whom he regarded as the principal opponent of the West and the chief culprit responsible for the Korean conflict. He reminded his audiences who were sitting at their radio or TV sets on that December evening that it was the Soviet Union which had systematically kept thwarting efforts of the Americans and their allies for a fair and stable international system guaranteeing the preservation of peace throughout the five postwar years. In spite of the above, however, the President did not view a war with the Soviets as something inevitable. An agreement with the Kremlin rulers was possible, he told his fellow-citizens, formulating for the first time in public an interpretation of the *lessons of Munich* based on the experience of the Berlin Blockade and applicable in a setting which would later be termed as peaceful coexistence with the communist bloc: “There is no conflict between the legitimate interests of the free world and those of the Soviet Union that cannot be settled by peaceful means. We will continue to take every honorable step we can to avoid general war. But we will not engage in *appeasement*. The world learned from *Munich* that security cannot be bought by *appeasement*.”¹³⁰

MacArthur against Truman

The broad support of the explicit rejection of *appeasement* as a potential reaction to the crisis resulting from direct involvement of communist China in the Korean conflict did not automatically mean a majority and bipartisan agreement over the issue of a specific strategy which was to stem from the rejection. On the contrary,

Agree to Bar Korea Appeasement. In: *Washington Post* (9 December 1950), p. 1; TROHAN, Walter: War Crisis Policy: Appeasement Out, Truman, Attlee Vow. Pledge Readiness to Negotiate. In: *Chicago Daily Tribune* (9 December 1950), p. 1.

129 Report from the Nation: Facing the Crisis. In: *The New York Times* (17 December 1950), p. E3.

130 WOOLLEY, J. T. – PETERS, G. (ed.): *The American Presidency Project: Harry S. Truman* [online]. Document No. 303 – *Radio and television report to the American people on the national emergency*, 15 December 1950 [cit. 2015-04-30]. Available at: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=13683>.

the strategy was the subject matter of a fierce dispute, which broke out in the spring of 1951 and was one of the most dramatic conflicts over an international relations issue in US postwar policy. It included an extensive discussion about the content of the term *appeasement* and the use of the *lessons of Munich* for the formulation of the US Cold War strategy. The principal actor of this conflict, which was made even more important by the approaching presidential elections, was General MacArthur.

In mid-March, when the situation on the Korean battlefield had been turning for the better, Truman's experts started weighing a possibility of inviting China to peace negotiations. A draft speech was prepared for the President, which was to open the room for the negotiations. The President was to announce that the aggressor, having sustained heavy losses, was pushed back to where it had launched its criminal attack from, and that the UN Joint Command, acting in the spirit of the UN Charter, was prepared to discuss a cessation of hostilities. However, allied operations against the aggressor were to continue until armistice terms and conditions had been negotiated.¹³¹ On 21 March the Americans notified the governments of the United Nations who had sent units to Korea of their intention.¹³²

MacArthur had long been informed about preparations of peace probes only indirectly, and been harbouring the blackest suspicion toward them. As usual, he did not keep the information just for himself. Information about the dissatisfaction of the Commander-in-Chief of the United Nations Command with conduct of combat restrictions and caveats which the Truman's administration was imposing (or preparing to impose) upon him was appearing continuously in US press.¹³³ Evidence of people surrounding him in those days captures an overt atmosphere of escalated mistrust toward Washington. The General apparently believed that Truman's advisors were dragging the President down a road of *appeasement* toward China and that the road posed a direct threat to security of the United States. Memoirs of his close collaborator and loyal admirer, General Courtney Whitney, are full of references to an alleged conspiracy of dark forces ready to yield to the communist aggression. In his opinion, Washington was prepared to pay for the cessation of hostilities by sacrificing Taiwan and donating Mao a seat on the Security Council. In this respect, Whitney even refers to "one of the most disgraceful plots in American history."¹³⁴

MacArthur received official information about the planned step together with a request for comments at the time when the text of the President's speech had already been completed.¹³⁵ His only reaction was a recommendation that no decisions

131 *FRUS, 1951*, Vol. VII/1: *Korea and China*, pp. 253–254 – *Memorandum by the Secretary of Defense to the Secretary of State*, Annex No. 4, 21 March 1951.

132 *Ibid.*, pp. 256–257 – *Memorandum of conversation*, Washington, 21 March 1951.

133 MacArthur Assails Korean Limitations. In: *Washington Post* (8 March 1951), p. 4; BAILLIE, Hugh: 38th No Barrier, MacArthur Indicates. In: *Ibid.* (16 March 1951), p. 2; Passing the Buck. In: *Ibid.* (17 March 1951), p. 8.

134 WHITNEY, Courtney: *MacArthur: His Rendezvous with History*. New York, Alfred A. Knopf 1956, p. 468.

135 *FRUS, 1951*, Vol. VII/1, p. 251 – *The Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Commander in Chief, Far East*, Washington, 20 March 1951.

restricting combat operations on the Korean Peninsula should be made.¹³⁶ At that time, his objective was not to influence the contents of the President's address, but rather to thwart it completely. In the morning hours of Saturday, 24 March (it was still Friday in Washington), MacArthur issued his own statement for the media, which summarized the current strategic situation on the Korean battlefield. He claimed that communist China, waging an undeclared war against UN forces in Korea, had exhausted its tactical and strategic potential. The tactics of human waves based on wasting human lives ceased to be successful as soon as allied units got accustomed to it and learned how to counter it. The General estimated that China, with its low industrial capacity and generally underdeveloped technological capabilities, would not be able to supply and support its units. The outcome of the conflict in Korea had been decided, and the General proclaimed his readiness to meet his Chinese counterpart on the battlefield and negotiate military aspects of the ceasefire as soon as the Chinese commanders realized the situation. The war could thus be brought to an end without dragging issues such as the future of Taiwan or the Chinese seat on the UN Security Council into it. "The enemy therefore must by now be painfully aware," warned MacArthur, "that a decision of the United Nations to depart from its tolerant effort to contain the war to the area of Korea through expansion of our military operations to his coastal areas and interior bases would doom Red China to the risk of imminent military collapse."¹³⁷

Washington learned about the statement late in the evening on Friday, from teleprinters of press agencies. It naturally caused alarm. The General violated all

136 *Ibid.*, pp. 255–256 – *The Commander in Chief, United Nations Command to Joint Chiefs of Staff*, Tokyo, 21 March 1951.

137 The text of the statement is attached to Acheson's dispatch to US embassies in the countries fighting alongside the United States in Korea (*Ibid.*, pp. 265–266 – *The Secretary of State to certain diplomatic offices*, Washington, 24 March 1951). In this respect, it should be noted that MacArthur was once again fatally wrong in his estimate of the Chinese evaluation of the situation on the battlefield. It is true that Mao re-evaluated his plans after the Chinese offensive had been halted, but he was a long way from accepting an invitation to ceasefire negotiations. While the euphoria produced by early successes had already dissipated in Beijing and Moscow, the initial idea of a swift triumph had only been replaced by plans for a long war the main objective of which was to exhaust particularly human resources of the opponent. Mao believed that the Americans would not find the strength to accept huge losses that a trench war of attrition would have surely brought. See JIAN, Ch.: *China's Road to the Korean War*, p. 213 – see Footnote 37. As far as the Chinese industry capacity and underdevelopment were concerned, the statement did not take into account the alliance with the Soviet Union at all. Correspondence between Stalin, Mao Zhe-dong and Kim Il-sung shows that deliveries of Soviet armament for Chinese and Korean troops had already been running at full swing at the time the General issued his statement. Plans for a future offensive also included a decision that air defence of strategic objects in the Chinese territory would be provided by Soviet units, allowing the Chinese ally to move all its air force assets to Korea. Moreover, the correspondence indicates that Chinese leaders had to have all their strategic decisions approved by Moscow. Cf. New Evidence on the Korean War. In: *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, No. 6–7. Washington, Woodrow Wilson Center, Winter 1995/1996, pp. 53–59.

rules governing relations between the Commander-in-Chief in a theatre and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as well as those between military power and civilian power. In his statement, MacArthur threatened with bombing of the Chinese territory, which he had been explicitly forbidden to do – as a matter of fact, just like issuing any statements without consulting them first with Washington. The State Department in particular was outraged, as it was afraid (and most likely with good reason) that the General attempted to maneuver the administration into dangerous waters from which there would be no way to escape. It was obvious that the meticulous preparation that had gone into the President's speech which would have indicated a possibility of taking a seat at a negotiation table to China was wasted. In the first moments after the news about MacArthur's statement arrived to the US capital, the Foggy Bottom obviously was not sure how to react to it. However, its neutralization could not be postponed. As early as at midnight of 22/23 March, Dean Acheson sent US embassies in countries participating in UN combat operations in Korea a wire alerting them to MacArthur's statement: "This statement was not authorized, expected or representative of the views of this Govt. However, under no circumstances must this be disclosed or intimated in any manner. All inquiries should be referred to Wash."¹³⁸

MacArthur's appeal naturally appeared on front pages of newspapers.¹³⁹ Tops of the administration took 24 hours to agree on damage-control measures and responses. Only then the President's closest collaborators met in the President's office to prepare a plan of further steps. The State Department issued a statement to the effect that General MacArthur had to follow orders of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Korea. The latter subsequently sent an instruction directly to MacArthur, reminding him of previous orders restricting his freedom of public appearances and statements, and containing a new order to pass any indications of the opponent's efforts to negotiate immediately to Washington for a decision.¹⁴⁰ The fact that the General had overstepped his authority and that the administration unequivocally disassociated itself from his action was obvious. However, the above assessment mostly remained hidden inside multi-page issues of major US dailies.¹⁴¹

For Truman, the affair was probably the proverbial last drop that made the cup of his patience with the rebellious General run over. In his memoirs, he characterized MacArthur's statement as an open rejection to obey orders of the President as the supreme commander, and hence as a challenge to his constitutional status.¹⁴² However, the President had to ponder his reaction very carefully. His popularity dropped to the lowest level during his political career, mainly because Americans

138 *FRUS, 1951*, Vol. VII/1, pp. 264–265 – *The Secretary of State to certain diplomatic offices*, Washington, 23 March 1951.

139 MacArthur Invites Korean Peace Talks. In: *Washington Post* (24 March 1951), p. 1.

140 *FRUS, 1951*, Vol. VII/1, pp. 266–268, Editorial Note.

141 MacArthur Warning Given on Own Hook. *Washington Post* (25 March 1951), p. M4.

142 TRUMAN, H. S.: *Memoirs*, Vol. 2, p. 441 (see Footnote 2).

were tired of the war in Korea.¹⁴³ Any attempt to discipline the legendary hero posed tremendous political risks, and the President had been postponing it for quite some time. It was only after the General had provided the Republican opposition with additional ammunition to attack the Democratic government when Truman took action.

In late March, MacArthur wrote a letter to Joseph W. Martin, the leader of the Republican minority in the House of Representatives, in which he expressed consent with an opinion promoted by the Congressman, namely that the United States should have made it possible for Chiang Kai-shek's armies to land in mainland China, and forcefully attacked the policy so far implemented by Truman. He saw the fact that "some people" had difficulties understanding the global importance of the Asian battlefield for the global duel with communism as "strange," adding that it was exactly this region which "the communist conspirators have elected to make their play for global conquest." The letter ended with a sentence which would soon become famous: "There is no substitute for victory." Martin did not hesitate to use the potential of the message of the admired war hero; on 5 April he made a speech in the Congress during which he read the letter.¹⁴⁴

The next day was again Friday and the administration had a whole weekend to decide how to react to the situation. On Monday, 9 April, a definitive decision was made to relieve MacArthur of the position of the Commander-in-Chief of the United Nations Command and to urge him to return to the United States.¹⁴⁵ The dismissal was announced during an extraordinary press conference convened at 1 AM in the night of 11 April. The reason why such an unusual time was selected was to provide the information about the dismissal to the journalists at the same time it was given to MacArthur in Tokyo where the local time was 3 PM. The journalists heard out a statement in which the President announced "with deep regret" that he had come to a conclusion that General Douglas MacArthur was no longer able to support the United States and United Nations policy in the territory placed under his authority with full force, and therefore he had decided to relieve him and replace him with General Matthew B. Ridgway. In addition to the statement, the journalists also received a copy of the President's order addressed to MacArthur, and also copies of several secret documents declassified upon the President's order and showing that the Commander-in-Chief of the United Nations Command had been repeatedly violating rules of subordination and failing to obey orders.¹⁴⁶

143 GALLUP, George H.: *The Gallup Poll: The Public Opinion 1935–1971*. New York, Greenwood Press 1972, p. 970.

144 *HSTL*, Truman Papers, President's Secretary's Files, General File, MacArthur, Douglas – dismissal, *Joint Chiefs of Staff to Douglas MacArthur, attached to copy of letter from Douglas MacArthur to Joe Martin*, 20 and 24 March 1951.

145 See ACHESON, Dean: *Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department*. New York, W. W. Norton & Co. 1969, pp. 521–522.

146 WOOLLEY, J. T. – PETERS, G. (ed.): *The American Presidency Project: Harry S. Truman* [online]. Document No. 77 – *Statement and order by the President on relieving General MacAr-*

News about the President's decision dominated the media on the same day, with most major dailies managing to place the information on the front page.¹⁴⁷ At 10:30 in the evening, the President himself appeared on major TV networks in order to explain his action to his American fellow-citizens. He was obviously nervous, and on one occasion was even confusedly looking for a quotation among papers on the desk in front of him. In terms of its content, however, the speech was built solidly. The President had not been looking for any dramatically new arguments to explain what he had done. He reiterated the reasons which had led him to intervene militarily in Korea, and he again based his argumentation mainly on *lessons* learned from errors of *appeasement*. According to Truman, most Americans understood the lessons. The reactions of the United States to the crises in Greece and Berlin had also been based on these lessons. At those times, the strategies had succeeded, and a similar strategy had so far been likewise working well in Korea, said the President. The enemy had been taught a lesson and a third world war had been avoided. According to the President, however, the actions proposed by General MacArthur would have intolerably increased the risk of a new war. And it would have been an extraordinarily high risk, as the Korean aggression was fully supported not only by China, but also by the Soviet Union. "Make no mistake about it," said the President, "Behind the North Koreans and Chinese Communists in the front lines stand additional millions of Chinese soldiers. And behind the Chinese stand the tanks, the planes, the submarines, the soldiers, and the scheming rules of the Soviet Union."¹⁴⁸

Truman's defence of the policy hitherto implemented by the United States was logical and comprehensible. It was based on the *lessons of Munich* and assumed that these lessons were universally accepted. However, the big question was whether the arguments presented by the visibly nervous and uncertain President would stand up to the critic who was not only not rejecting the lessons, but was instead using them himself with sky-high confidence and accusing the government of not

thur of his commands, 11 April 1951 [cit. 2015-04-30]. Available at: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=14058>.

147 Cf., for example, LAWRENCE, W. H.: Truman Relieves M'Arthur of All His Posts; Finds Him Unable to Back US-UN Policies; Ridgway Named to Far Eastern Commands. In: *The New York Times* (11 April 1951), p. 1.

148 The initial part of Truman's TV speech is available on Youtube: President Harry S. Truman fires General Douglas MacArthur. In: Youtube [online]. 23 January 2013 [cit. 2014-01-16]. Available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xuLHJzDINP8>. Another part is also available on Youtube, together with shots of the meeting of the President and MacArthur on Wake Island in October 1950 and a part of the address of Congressman Joseph W. Martin announcing that the Republicans are considering the initiation of the process of impeachment against the President: Truman dismisses MacArthur 1951. In: Youtube [online]. 10 May 2011 [cit. 2014-01-19]. Available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PURiLqWLe_Y. For the text of the entire speech see WOOLLEY, J. T. – PETERS, G. (ed.): *The American Presidency Project: Harry S. Truman* [online]. Document No. 78 – *Radio report to the American people on Korea and on US policy in the Far East*, 11 April 1951 [cit. 2015-04-30]. Available at: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=14059>.

adhering to them. All of the above took place in a situation which opened a door to emotions and allowed them to enter politics in quite a unique manner.

The General's dismissal could not be a great surprise for those who had been following the development of the long dispute between Truman and MacArthur at least with some attention. The media had been publishing information on the deepening of the conflict for quite some time. Public appeals calling for the dismissal of the headstrong General were heard from ranks of Democratic politicians¹⁴⁹; media loaded in favour of the government were writing that the principle of superiority of civilian power over military power was at stake.¹⁵⁰ Yet the announcement produced a shock and a reaction which historians Richard Rovere and Arthur Schlesinger described as the greatest eruption of political passions in the United States since the Civil War.¹⁵¹ According to the *Washington Post* daily, the votes for and against the General's dismissal were distributed evenly, but the latter were unquestionably seen and heard more.¹⁵² The following week the wave of emotions grew even higher. The great warrior was returning to his home country which he had left 16 years ago, aged, but still full of piss and vinegar, for many already a character belonging to the American Pantheon while still alive. He was travelling across the country from the West Coast to Washington in the east, and the whole territory of the United States became a stage for demonstrations of disagreement with Truman and admiration for the General on this occasion.¹⁵³

As customary with legendary heroes, MacArthur was not coming back to rest, but rather to go on fighting. The Congress offered him an opportunity to speak to both of its chambers on the Capitol, and the General accepted. No one doubted that he would attempt to present his dispute with the President directly to the Americans for a decision. It was also obvious that if he did so, he would have to formulate what the dispute was about in a much clearer and more concrete manner. Until then, only snippets or vague generalizations of his arguments had made their way to the public, and the public opinion was not consistent at all on the issue of the General's dismissal and its potential consequences. George Gallup reported that most Americans criticized the General's relief, but were against a war with China as well.¹⁵⁴ One day before the date of the General's speech, Truman's State Secretary Dean Acheson confidently stated that Americans would certainly support

149 Sen. Kerr Advocates Removal of MacArthur. In: *Washington Post* (8 April 1951), p. M1.

150 The MacArthur Problem. In: *Ibid.* (10 April 1951), p. 14.

151 ROVERE, Richard H. – SCHLESSINGER, Arthur M.: *The General and the President, and the Future of American Foreign Policy*. New York, Farrar, Straus & Young 1951, p. 5.

152 US Press Almost Evenly Divided, Pro and Con. In: *Washington Post* (12 April 1951), p. 4; Man in the Street Warmly Pro Or Torridly Con on MacArthur. In: *Ibid.*, p. 11.

153 For colourful detailed examples of the atmosphere see Tattoo for a Warrior. In: *Life* (24 April 1951), pp. 36–37. Cf. also, for example, SHERMAN, Gene: MacArthur Gets Wind S. F. Ovation. In: *Los Angeles Times* (18 April 1951), p. 1; MacArthur on Way to Capital; Addresses Congress Thursday; Million Expected to Greet Him. In: *Washington Post* (16 April 1951), p. 1; Truman, Texas, May Change Name to MacArthur. In: *Ibid.*, p. 1.

154 GALLUP, George: Majority Criticizes Ouster but Opposes War with China. In: *Ibid.*, p. 11.

the President's policy in Korea.¹⁵⁵ The prevailing atmosphere in the White House was one of ironic detachment from the triumphant successes that MacArthur's public appearances had scored so far.¹⁵⁶ However, no one had a clue as to what specifically the General wanted to submit to the Americans for a decision.

The address delivered by the General shortly after noon of 19 April in the conference hall of the House of Representatives now belongs to the golden fund of American rhetoric. No members of the government, Supreme Court, or Joint Chiefs of Staff were present in the hall. However, MacArthur's speech was eagerly awaited by 30 million TV spectators; other Americans mostly listened to its live radio broadcast.¹⁵⁷

As expected, the General's speech revolved around criticism of the strategy which Washington had hitherto been implementing in the Korean War. Stemming from it was a very forceful rejection of Truman's administration foreign policy as such, including its assessment of the strategic distribution of forces around the world, the tools it had been using, and the objectives it had set. According to MacArthur, the decision to mount a military intervention in Korea was right, but the incumbent administration did not have enough courage and resolve to bring the war to a victorious end. Truman and his collaborators refused to admit that, with the North Korean aggressor defeated, a new war began when Chinese units joined the fighting. Of course, no one in his right mind can propose that the United States send its ground forces to China, said the General; the new situation demands a modification of the existing strategy. He proposed such a modification. It was to include more intensive economic sanctions against communist China, a navy blockade of the Chinese coastline, lifting of all restrictions applying to reconnaissance flights over Chinese territory, and logistic support of the invasion of General Chiang Kai-shek's

155 KUHN, Ferdinand: US Supports Truman against Spread of War, Acheson Says. In: *Washington Post* (19 April 1951), p. 1.

156 The following "Schedule for Welcoming General MacArthur" was circulating among the President's advisors:

- 12:30 Wades ashore from Snorkel submarine.
- 12:31 Navy Band plays "Sparrow in the treetop" and "I'll be glad when you're dead you rascal you."
- 12:40 Parade to the Capitol with General MacArthur riding an elephant.
- 12:47 Beheading of General Vaughan [Truman's military aide] at the rotunda.
- 13:00 General MacArthur addresses members of the Congress.
- 13:30–13:49 Applause for General MacArthur.
- 13:50 Burning of the Constitution.
- 13:55 Lynching of Secretary Acheson.
- 14:00 21-atomic bomb salute.
- 14:30 Nude D.A.R.s leap from Washington Monument.
- 15:00 Basket lunch, Monument Grounds.

Cited according to: BEISNER, Robert L.: *Dean Acheson: A Life in the Cold War*. New York, Oxford University Press 2006, p. 449.

157 TV speech recording: General Douglas MacArthur: Farewell Address to Congress. In: *American Rhetoric: Top 100 Speeches* [online]. 1 July 2008 [2014-02-09]. Available at: <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/douglasmacarthurfarewelladdress.htm>.

units to mainland China. According to MacArthur, these requirements were fully in compliance with all the needs of the US units in Korea, and “practically every military leader concerned with the Korean campaign, including our own Joint Chiefs of Staff” allegedly agreed with them. However, they were not heeded and he himself was accused of being a warmonger. The General rejected the allegation as utter nonsense, repeating once again his creed applying to the conduct of any war: “[O]nce war is forced upon us, there is no other alternative than to apply every available means to bring it to a swift end. War’s very object is victory, not prolonged indecision. In war there can be no substitute for victory.” He called any references to the threat of a new world war lame and misleading excuses. Just like in his written polemic with the US administration, he referred to the *lesson of Munich* as an indisputable argument, adding a dark hint to the effect that the President had become a subject of manipulation. In his opinion, there was no doubt that the President and his collaborators found themselves under the influence of people who “for varying reasons would appease Red China.” According to the General, these people were “blind to history’s clear lesson, for history teaches with unmistakable emphasis that appeasement but begets new and bloodier wars.”¹⁵⁸

The arguments which President Truman had used in his televised speech a week earlier were now used in an almost identical form against him. MacArthur made the Americans face a fundamental question – is the rejection of any compromise with the opponent not only consistent and thorough application of the *lessons of Munich*? Is Acheson’s balancing between an all-out war and *appeasement* not just *appeasement* in disguise? The dismissed General had also added urgency to his question by consistently speaking, throughout his address, as a person standing high above party disputes and political skirmishes, as a man who had devoted his whole life to fighting for interests of his country, as someone who publicly criticized politics only at the time when no one could suspect him of pursuing his own interests.

MacArthur’s criticism of the US strategy in the Korean War was challenging the foundations of the foreign policy concept of *containment*. The policy of merely holding off communism and keeping it at bay provided a lot of room for the argument that, being what it was, could not lead to the defeat of communism. In the General’s perspective, *containment* seemed to be just a form of *appeasement*. However, his specific recommendations aiming to change this policy would have, if implemented, had far-reaching consequences and posed very serious risks. Yet it seemed that MacArthur’s authority was unquestionable and his judgment irrefutable. Combined with the dark hints at the motivation of the authors of the containment policy, which perfectly matched the atmosphere of suspicion and even paranoia of the period characterized by the rise of Senator Joseph McCarthy, they produced a political explosive threatening to blow the existing majority consensus over foreign policy issues into pieces. George Gallup was certainly right when claiming that most Americans did not wish a war with Red China; however, that did not prevent them

158 *HSTL*, Truman Papers, President’s Secretary’s Files, *Transcript of General Douglas MacArthur’s address to Congress*, 19 April 1951.

from demonstrating enthusiastic admiration toward the relieved General. When MacArthur, having finished his speech in the Congress, arrived for a ceremonial reception in New York, he was greeted by 750,000 people – the hitherto largest convention of people in the United States.¹⁵⁹ Under these circumstances, there were just a few politicians prepared to openly stand against the General willing to assume the risk of war upon himself.¹⁶⁰

The Great Political Game in the Senate

Republican leaders in the Congress were determined to make the most of the situation. A delegation of their senators, led by veterans Robert Taft and Kenneth Wherry, met with MacArthur immediately after his New York triumph and made an agreement with him that they would propose and support full-fledged Senate hearings on the circumstances of his dismissal. They succeeded in implementing the plan without any major problems. A Special Senate Committee consisting of members of the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Foreign Relations was established. Because of the distribution of power in the Senate, both were chaired by Democrats, but Republican strategists succeeded in having the control of the entire process entrusted to the Chairman of the former, Richard B. Russel, Jr., from Georgia, the recognized leader of the block of Southern Democrats and a man with extraordinary authority. Contrary to Tom Connally from Texas, Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations, Russel's position and influence in the Senate was based on a reputation of strict impartiality over national security issues. Although many supporters of Truman tended to view the impartiality rather as insufficient loyalty toward the Democratic President, the Senate approved the proposal to give the chairmanship to Russel by a clear majority, which also included votes of many Democrats.¹⁶¹ Such an opening of this great political game was an indisputable success of Truman's policy critics, keeping all future options, including the President's impeachment, open.

The beginning of the hearings the subject matter of which was to be an inquiry into the military situation in the Far East and the facts surrounding the relief of General of the Army Douglas MacArthur from his assignments in that area was scheduled on 3 May 1951. However, even before the hearings commenced, George Russel had had to manage an excited duel arising from a requirement of Republican senators for the hearings to be public. The motivation of the Republicans was obvious

159 750,000 Pay Tribute to M'Arthur In New York. In: *Washington Post* (21 April 1951), p. 1.

160 Only Democratic Senator from Oklahoma Robert Kerr, at that time belonging to the lowermost tiers of the Senate's totem pole, had the courage to loosen off several open attacks at the legendary hero – and the reaction these attacks produced was unequivocal. "Boy, you could just feel the hostility in the gallery. They hated Kerr at the moment," was how the situation was described by one of the present journalists. CARO, Robert A.: *The Years of Lyndon Johnson*, Vol. 3: *Master of the Senate*. London, Pimlico 2003, p. 371.

161 *Ibid.*, p. 372.

and based on public reactions to MacArthur's appearances so far. The script they prepared was expected to transform the hearings into a public accusation of the Truman's administration foreign policy. However, Russel apparently had no intention to direct the eagerly anticipated performance according to that script. At the same time, he did not allow the discussion to evolve into a purely partisan dispute. He leaned – and a majority of the special committee ultimately followed him – to a rational argument; if the hearings were public, the senators would often hear only evasive and vague answers to their questions. As they were expected to get into the heart of issues constituting the subject mater of the hearings, they would have to study and familiarize themselves with top secret documents, which was possible only at closed-door sessions. The adopted procedure was nevertheless a compromise. It was decided that minutes of the hearings would be released every day, but that they would be first carefully vetted so that they would not contain any classified information.¹⁶²

As soon as the procedural issues were sorted out, the main character could appear on the stage. MacArthur arrived half an hour late, earning the following comment from one of the present Democratic senators: "Couldn't get him down from the Cross."¹⁶³ This was, however, the end of jokes. The General started his presentation before the senators by an extensive introduction in which he further elaborated the essential ideas and concepts of his speech in the Congress. It was another all-out attack against the foreign policy of the United States, against the Democratic administration, and against the President himself. *Appeasement* was again among key words of his address, a bolt holding together a set of accusations leaving no doubt that *containment* was, in MacArthur's eyes, a synonym of *appeasement*.

When the General finished his introduction, with this phase of the anticipated drama taking the first three days of the hearings' agenda, the Committee proceeded with questions of the senators. MacArthur was for quite some time answering

162 The released minutes were published one by one by major American dailies and in a comprehensive format as a standard Senate document (*Hearings before the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, Eighty-second Congress, First Session to Conduct an Inquiry into the Military Situation in the Far East and the Facts Surrounding the Relief of General of the Army Douglas MacArthur from His Assignments in that Area*. Printed for the use of the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Foreign Relations. Washington, Government Printing Office 1951). This is the edition that quotations in the text below will refer to (quoted as *Hearings*). The vetted-out parts were de-classified in 1973 as a result of an initiative of J. William Fulbright, then the Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate, and are available in the US National Archives as *Hearings held by the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Foreign Relations: Inquiry into the Military Situation in the Far East and the Facts Surrounding the Relief of General of the Army Douglas MacArthur from His Assignments in that Area (Declassified Hearings-Transcripts)* (National Archives (Washington), Records of the United States Senate, RF 46, Records of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee). Cf. WILTZ, John Edward: *The MacArthur Hearings of 1951: The Secret Testimony*. In: *Military Affairs*, Vol. 39, Issue No. 4 (December 1975), pp. 167–173.

163 CARO, R. A.: *The Years of Lyndon Johnson*, Vol. 3, p. 374.

with his customary confidence, confirming his serious accusations. When asked by Lleveret Saltonstall (Rep., MA) whether he insisted that the conflict in Korea had to be ended using all means available, the General stated that the policy of the current administration had introduced an element of *appeasement* into military operations, namely an intentional restriction of the force of strikes against the enemy. He was even more forceful when answering similar questions of Brian McMahon (Dem., CT), warning that consequences of the approach of the White House might result in a global war: "I believe if you let it go on indefinitely in Korea, you invite a third world war. I believe the chances of the terrible conflict that you so rightly dread – and all the rest of us dread with you – would be much more probable if we practice appeasement in one area even though we resist to our capacity all along the line."¹⁶⁴

However, it was here that the construction of the General's accusation started developing cracks. Experienced McMahon was trying to push the General toward a more detailed specification of his own vision of the approach to Korea, to answering where the limits of his concept were, and where *appeasement* began – if a full victory was indispensable, who would have to be defeated? However, MacArthur avoided a direct answer.¹⁶⁵

J. William Fulbright (Dem., AR), who was just finishing his first stint in the Senate and apparently ascending to the position of one of the most influential Democratic speakers in the field of international relations, was somewhat more successful in finding out what MacArthur perceived as *appeasement*. He asked the General directly whether he regarded any approach, save for implementing the full potential of armed forces to achieve a total victory, as *appeasement*. When the General tried to repeat his previous statements about the objectives of the American intervention in Korea, Fulbright reminded him that he had offered himself for armistice negotiations not so long ago. Was that not a clear concession from the requirement for the total victory? MacArthur then assumed a significantly more moderate attitude toward what he had been hinting at earlier, refusing to admit that the only objective acceptable for him would have been the unconditional surrender of the enemy.¹⁶⁶

However, even this was not the General's last line of defence he was willing to retreat to under the pressure of questions of some of the senators who were assertively demanding that he provide a more detailed outline of his vision of how to proceed in the Far East and a clear definition of what he perceived as *appeasement*. Wayne Morse (Rep., OR), a prominent liberal dissident in his own party, made MacArthur narrow down his definition of *appeasement* to a level not particularly different from the official position of the White House and the State Department. MacArthur claimed he would have regarded issues such as the Chinese seat in the UN Security Council or a hand-over of Taiwan as *appeasement* if these had been

¹⁶⁴ *Hearings*, p. 81.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 138–140.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 146–147.

dragged into negotiations about putting an end to the Korean conflict.¹⁶⁷ However, even President Truman would probably have termed such steps as manifestations of *appeasement*.

The General obviously was not a grand master of discussions with opponents he had to deal with on a peer-to-peer basis. He sometimes seemed surprised that his judgments and evaluations were not automatically accepted as statements of a supreme authority. However, what was even worse for the overall outcome of his appearance before the senators were clear indications that while he might be an indisputable expert on the Far East, he had problems with setting the local crisis there into the strategic context of relations between the East and the West. The General either evaded questions aiming at this area, or provided very general answers. He often contradicted himself, and his answers sometimes expressed strange fatalism in this respect. For example, when asked by Claude Pepper (Dem., FL), a pugnacious representative of the liberal left faction among the Democrats and a dyed-in-the-wool anti-communist, whether he was not afraid that the course of action he was proposing might lead to a war with the Soviet Union, and hence much higher casualties than the present one, he answered: "My own belief is that what will happen in Korea and Asia will not be the deciding factor in whether the Soviet attacks us or not. If he is determined to attack us, sooner or later he will, and there is nothing that I can see that would prevent it [...]."¹⁶⁸

If Republican leaders were expecting MacArthur's appearance before the Special Committee to blow the ideological foundations of the Truman government's foreign and security policy to pieces, its embarrassing outcome must have really disappointed them. The first three days of the hearings did not bring any new arguments in their favour. On the contrary – they cast doubt on many of those which had been used at the start of the Republican offensive. And all this when the process had only begun.

In the next round of the hearings, another five-star general appeared before the senators – George C. Marshall, the only US soldier senior to MacArthur, ex-State Secretary and current Secretary of Defence. His testimony took five meeting days and its core was defence of the fundamental concepts of Truman's TV address after MacArthur's dismissal. George C. Marshall concentrated mainly on the international policy context of the Korean conflict and, apart from the challenging statements of the dismissed General, he was also presenting positive formulations characterizing the policy of the current administration. Marshall explained to the senators that the United States had reacted to communist aggression in Korea in accordance with its global long-term strategy, and would continue to do so.¹⁶⁹ The administration had already proved that this strategy was successful, he stated, and pointed out

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 268.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 366.

to results of its implementation in Greece or during the Berlin Blockade, just like Truman had done earlier.¹⁷⁰

By the time the senators released Marshall from his witness's chair, it was clear that the construction of accusations presented by MacArthur was collapsing. The Secretary had come well prepared, and was presenting arguments without emotions and very convincingly. MacArthur kept trying to publicly disprove some of Marshall's arguments through his loyal sidekick Courtney Whitney, but the latter's statements never made it to the front page, even in those dailies which were siding with MacArthur.¹⁷¹ On the other hand, information on Marshall's testimony had a reserved place on the front pages of nationwide dailies every day, and his clear rejections of some accusations of the Truman administration made the headlines.¹⁷² In my opinion, it was this moment of Marshall's spectacular career – together with his postwar inspection trip to China after which he spoke against continuing massive support of Chiang kai-shek – which contributed to Marshall becoming a target of a rabid attack of Joe McCarthy and his allies a few months later.

Other representatives of the administration and supreme command of the armed forces, who appeared before Russel's committee in the following days, were also defending the existing policy very convincingly and with obvious competence. The witness following Marshall before the senators was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Omar Bradley, the last five-star general appearing before the committee during the hearings.

Of all the witnesses summoned before the Committee, Bradley spent most time dealing with the accusation of *appeasement*, both in his opening speech and when answering questions of the senators. His statements on this topic are the straightest confirmation of the role of the *lessons of Munich* in decision-making processes of political and military elites in the United States. Walter F. George (Dem., GA), a veteran, Conservative, and Russel's close ally from the group of Southern Democrats, asked why the United States had actually decided to intervene in Korea, and Bradley answered without any hesitation that all who had taken part in the decision-making were convinced there was no other way, as the only other option was *appeasement*, which would ultimately have led to a war as well.¹⁷³ A while later, when asked a direct and more specific question by Senator McMahon, he confirmed that decisions of key players at the beginning of the Korean crisis had been influenced by lessons learned from tragic consequences of the *appeasement* policy in the late 1930s: "All of those things I think were in our minds. Whether or not they were mentioned I don't remember, but certainly they were in the back of our minds."¹⁷⁴

170 *Ibid.*, p. 367.

171 M'Arthur Stand Boosts Morale, Aide Asserts. In: *Chicago Daily Tribune* (10 May 1951), p. 3; Another Lapse in Memory Laid to Marshall. In: *Ibid.* (12 May 1951), p. 5.

172 WHITE, William S.: Marshall Says US Must Never Yield on Entry of Communist China to UN. In: *New York Times* (11 May 1951), p. 1.

173 *Hearings*, p. 890.

174 *Ibid.*, p. 958.

General Bradley also commented on MacArthur's criticism to the effect that methods of *appeasement* had been applied in purely military decisions on how to proceed in Korea. On this occasion, he explained to his audience how supreme US military commanders perceived the term. "People who criticize us claim that if we do not bomb airfields and troop assembly areas in the Chinese territory, it is *appeasement*," stated Bradley. "Similarly, they will cry *appeasement* if we do not establish a full blockade of China and do not allow Chiang Kai-shek's units to mount a campaign against mainland China. However, the supreme command rejects this opinion. It believes *appeasement* is retreating without putting up a fight and unnecessarily, while not letting itself to be dragged into a conflict that would dramatically limit US global capacities is a sensible decision rather than *appeasement*." When presenting his arguments, the highest-ranking US soldier in active duty attacked MacArthur in the latter's most sensitive spot. He actually said that the Korean strategy proposed by MacArthur was incompetent, in a laconic sentence which was the most quoted statement of the entire hearings: "Frankly, in the opinion of the Joint Chiefs of Staffs, this strategy would involve us in the wrong war, at the wrong place, at the wrong time, and with the wrong enemy."¹⁷⁵

Omar Bradley also fundamentally disturbed the construction of MacArthur's accusations in another part of his testimony, when talking about the strategic context of the decision to intervene in Korea militarily. Conservative Republican Bourke B. Hickenlooper (IA) asked the general three successive questions: Were US representatives aware, when deciding how to react to the North Korean aggression, that sending ground forces to Korea might result in Chinese Communists joining the conflict? Did they know at that time that Red China had signed a military alliance agreement with the Soviet Union? Was there the possibility that the Soviet Union might enter the war if operations of the ground units defeated the North Koreans or pushed them back? Bradley's answer to all of them was positive. "But we, nevertheless, took the risk?" was the Senator's next question. "Yes," replied the General again, "and I believe it received the approval of all the United Nations, except Russia and her satellites, and I think it received the approval of the majority of the United Nations, because they realize that one *appeasement* leads to another, which eventually makes war necessary."¹⁷⁶ It is difficult to estimate to what extent the information was a surprise for the senators or whether they were actually aware of all threats that the beginning of the Korean War had brought. In any case, with the above statement uttered, it was very difficult to seriously accuse those responsible for the decisions then made of taking them with *appeasement* in their minds.

Arguments vetted out from public minutes of the hearings and presented by Marshall, Bradley and other high-ranked commanders of armed forces spoke even more in disfavour of MacArthur. As a matter of fact, they showed that, according to the US commanders, the Soviet Union had at that time sufficient assets to be able to reverse the strategic situation in Korea to the United States' disadvantage.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 732–733.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 939.

In this context, the argument that the restrictions which Washington had imposed upon MacArthur, particularly the boundary of air operations, had been tacitly accepted and implemented by the opponent, was perceived very strongly. Moreover, unpublished testimonies of US command representatives showed that the restrictions had been subject to a condition that the situation in the Korean Peninsula could be managed by limited assets. If there had been a risk that the Americans could have been routed from Korea, an attack against mainland China was a part of the planned reaction of the United States. Similarly, the command had been prepared to use all means in case of Moscow's direct intervention in the conflict.¹⁷⁷ The criticism of MacArthur's requirement to make it possible for Chiang Kai-shek to land in mainland China must have been a hard blow to MacArthur's supporters a large proportion of whom belonged to the pro-Chiang Kai-shek "Chinese lobby" in the Congress. According to Marshall and other speakers before the Special Senate Committee, the quality of Chiang Kai-shek's forces was very low and practically rendered the amphibious operation impossible. They supported their statements by findings of a December 1950 inspection of US experts during which 37 US officers visited army, navy and air force units of the Republic of China.¹⁷⁸

The atmosphere of the hearings gradually changed during the testimonies of the military commanders, and the media noticed it, although they did not have access to some information that transpired there. Commentaries in major dailies started analyzing risks which a change of the US strategy according to MacArthur's proposals would have brought.¹⁷⁹ The critical attitude of military leaders was reflected on front pages and the authority of the hero of Corregidor and Inchon as a great strategist dropped significantly. As it was becoming increasingly obvious that the Senate hearings would not result in any dramatic change at the top of the US political scene, they ceased to be viewed as a star-studded performance. The interest of the media dropped and meetings of the Special Committee were transferred from the great hall of the Senate building on the third floor to a much more modest room downstairs.¹⁸⁰

The attention of the media refocused on the work of Russel's committee only at the very end of the hearings, when State Secretary Dean Acheson was summoned to the witness stand.¹⁸¹ The intention of the authors of the original script was clear. The performance was to be opened by an indictment delivered by the number-one star and principal hero of the drama and concluded by a public execution of the chief villain, as Dean Acheson was a true incarnation of everything that the conservative opposition could not stand about the Eastern establishment which in their eyes ruled Washington. A meticulous historian calculated that Republican

177 See WILTZ, J. E.: The MacArthur Hearings of 1951, pp. 168–169. (See Footnote 94.)

178 *Ibid.*, pp. 170–171.

179 See BALDWIN, Hanson W.: Pros and Cons Weighed. In: *New York Times* (13 May 1951), p. B5.

180 The Week in Review: Chiefs on M'Arthur. In: *Ibid.* (27 May 1951), p. 1.

181 TROHAN, Walter: Acheson Quiz Opens Today. In: *Chicago Daily Tribune* (1 June 1951), p. 1.

senators had made altogether 1,275 comments addressed to Acheson between 1949 and 1953; only seven of them were positive.¹⁸²

At the beginning of June, however, when the State Secretary had been testifying before Russel's committee for eight days, the atmosphere among the senators was significantly different from the expectations of Republican leaders at the turn of April and May. The anticipated united front of Republicans and Southern Democrats had collapsed during testimonies of military leaders, and attacks against Acheson had acquired an obviously partisan character.¹⁸³ Moreover, Acheson was dealing with them brilliantly. As early as at the beginning of his opening address, he clearly stated that he was taking the clash with General MacArthur and his allies in the Senate extremely seriously: "Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, the real issue in the discussion before us are peace or war, and the survival of human freedom. It is not just a difference as to the method which is now under examination. What is challenged is the bedrock purpose of our foreign policy."¹⁸⁴ Then he submitted a very meticulous and also very cautiously formulated characterization of the evolution of US foreign policy, which apparently reflected not only the course of the hearings so far, but also reactions of the media and public opinion developments. His opening speech did not use the terms *appeasement* and *containment* at all. On the other hand, the word "peace" was very frequent. When clarifying the reasons which had led the Truman administration to the decision to send US troops to Korea, he basically laid out his arguments in line with Rusk's statement on a careful balancing between *appeasement* and war, but he used a more cautious formulation: "It has been our purpose to turn back this communist thrust, and to do it in such a way as to prevent a third world war if we can," said Acheson. On the other hand, he claimed the course of action proposed by MacArthur would have had an opposite outcome, expanding the area of military operations and increasing the risk of a global conflict.¹⁸⁵

Republican senators were trying to force Acheson into defensive using quotations excerpted from statements of his subordinates and their interpretations in the media – they were obviously having difficulties finding impressive enough arguments against specific actions of the State Department. However, Acheson rejected to play their game with the confidence of a seasoned lawyer, his replies consistently sticking to facts. He also rejected the accusation that the threat of a global conflict was just a made-up argument the administration used when finding itself under the opposition's pressure. Harry P. Cain (Rep., WA) asked him directly: Why such concerns about the preservation of global peace? When you were sending troops to Korea, they went there to crush the aggression. And, all of a sudden, since the President's speech on 11 April, we have been hearing that they went there to prevent

182 KISSINGER, Henry A.: Cold Warrior. In: *New York Times* (15 October 2006).

183 WHITE, William S.: Senators Divided; Acheson Calmly Awaits Questioning. In: *Ibid.* (2 June 1951), p. 1.

184 *Hearings*, p. 1714.

185 *Ibid.*, pp. 1716 and 1718.

another world war. These were the words used by the extreme conservative and McCarthy's ally to attack Acheson. However, the State Secretary saw things from a different perspective: "I think your memory is wrong about that, Senator. This has been the constant preoccupation of our foreign policy ever since the danger became quite acute, and that certainly covers the period that I have been back in the Government."¹⁸⁶

The testimony of the State Secretary before the Russel Committee put a final stop to the Republican opposition's attempt to make use of Douglas MacArthur's dismissal to utterly discredit the foreign policy the Democrats had been implementing so far. Representatives of the Truman administration succeeded not only in defending their actions in the Far East, but even in mounting a counteroffensive. James Reston, one of the most experienced and influential foreign policy journalists of those days, who was covering the Senate hearings for the *New York Times*, formulated it quite clearly: "MacArthur started as the prosecutor and is now the defendant."¹⁸⁷ The dismissed general with his requirement for a total defeat of the enemy as an indispensable condition for ending the war found himself alone in this respect. According to Reston, the Americans wished the war in Korea to end, but not at the cost of a war with China.¹⁸⁸ The success of the Democrats and Acheson's share in it was recognized even by the *Life* magazine, whose readers constituted a vast pool of both potential and actual supporters of MacArthur. According to the magazine, Acheson's performance was outstanding: "The immense research facilities of the State Department had never been more effectively marshaled to brief one man. It was a masterful brief and it was masterfully presented by one of the world's ablest lawyers. [...] He discreetly omitted all references to the now dead doctrine of 'containment.' There was no word or phrase that could be used to rebuke the man or the Truman administration with appeasement of communism – now."¹⁸⁹

As regards the immediate reaction of US politicians and public to the dismissal of MacArthur, President Truman and his collaborators could be satisfied with the outcome of the hearings. At the same time, however, the fact that the success also had its weak points could not be overlooked. During the hearings, Russel's committee was split almost exactly according to party affiliation of the senators. The committee was thus unable to adopt any resolution condemning the policy of the Democrats; as a matter of fact, the hearings did not produce any fundamental arguments for such a resolution. Chairman Richard Russel, however, did not attempt to exploit the situation and pull through a resolution which would have flatly rejected the criticism of the administration and/or criticized the dismissed general's actions and concepts. As was his custom, the powerful senator from Georgia preferred a silent compromise. Combined with the cautiousness of Acheson's otherwise impressive

186 *Ibid.*, p. 2288.

187 RESTON, James: Issue Now Is Truce in Korea, Not Bombs in China. In: *New York Times* (10 June 1951), p. B3.

188 IDEM: Discrepancies Dot Major Testimony in M'Arthur Study. In: *Ibid.* (11 June 1951), p. 1.

189 And Now, Mr. Acheson? He pleaded well; now is his chance to restore real unity. In: *Life* (18 June 1951), p. 32.

testimony, this enabled the *Life* weekly both to praise the State Secretary and, on the other hand, to label *containment* “the now dead doctrine.”

The Korean War did not cease to be an extraordinarily dynamic political topic and the Republicans did not have any intention whatsoever to give it up in the forthcoming duel for the White House. However, their election offensive was no longer to be commanded by MacArthur, as the conservative wing of the party had been initially planning, but by another war hero, Dwight Eisenhower. In his rendition, the content of the key question asked in connection with the Korean conflict underwent a fundamental change. It was no longer “how to win the war,” but “how to end the war.” The hearings before Russel’s committee made a significant contribution to the change. It is true that the senators could not agree on what *appeasement* actually was,¹⁹⁰ but they agreed by a large majority what it was not. They refused to accept MacArthur’s radical interpretation of the *lessons of Munich*, according to which any restraint in the selection of means deployed in defence against the aggressor and any other objective except for the aggressor’s utter defeat could be viewed as *appeasement*. As evident from the previous text, even the General himself was having difficulties when defending this opinion in an open discussion. The defence of the above outlined interpretation, which had been clearly heard in the General’s speeches immediately after his return to the United States, and had also seemed to resonate among the public, was difficult to find in major American media after the Senate hearings were concluded. Douglas MacArthur stepped from the political limelight to a shadow on the right side of the US political scene, and his doctrine about a victory for which there is no substitute accompanied him there.

Truman’s Political Legacy – the Lasting Lessons of Munich

The 1952 election campaign was very rough and foreign policy issues were playing a much greater role in it than usual. Leading offensive topics of the Republicans included corruption, communism, and Korea, and their presidential candidate was focusing mainly on the last of them in his speeches. Eisenhower had been concentrating on foreign policy and international security issues since his very first speech during the Republican primaries, and he usually did so with a certain level of gracefulness.¹⁹¹ The person handling the rough side of the campaign was mainly Richard Nixon, the vice-presidential candidate,¹⁹² who was ably assisted by pro-Republican media who regular repertoire included accusations of the Democrats

190 Their helplessness in this respect is illustrated by a statement of J. William Fulbright, who simply decided not to use this word at all during the hearings. (*Hearings*, p. 644.)

191 His first public appearance during the campaign took place in his hometown of Abilene on 4 June 1951, and he designated “real peace and security in the world” as principal topics of the elections. Voters See Close-Up of Eisenhower. In: *Life* (16 June 1951), p. 17.

192 ABEL, Elie: Stevenson Called Appeaser by Nixon. In: *New York Times* (10 October 1952), p. 19.

of *appeasement* toward communism. The accusations were largely too vague and they targeted mainly the allegedly too soft course of action against Communists at home, but even foreign policy of the Democrats was not spared. They were often quite a long way from reality. For example, the influential *Life* weekly did not hesitate to publish the following words on the occasion of the launch of Eisenhower's campaign: "Appeasement, in various disguises, has proved almost as popular in the postwar US as it was in prewar England."¹⁹³

The Republicans incorporated specific criticism of the Democrats' foreign policy into their election programme, and they did not hesitate to use the accusation of *appeasement* even there. However, they had once again an obvious problem to identify concrete examples of the Truman administration's actions that could be labelled as such. Most of the parts criticizing foreign policy (unusually found at the beginning of the election programme) were thus ultimately devoted to the foreign policy of Truman's predecessor. Nevertheless, the lack of tangible arguments did not prevent the Republicans from proclaiming a full departure from the containment policy as their principal objective. It was particularly under the pressure of the "old guard" of Republican conservatives, most of them with an isolationist past, that the containment policy was designated as a continuation of the Yalta treason, as an immoral concept cynically leaving Central and Eastern European nations under Soviet control. The Republican programme was designed as an indictment: "We charge that the leaders of the Administration in power lost the peace so dearly earned by World War II. The moral incentives and hopes for a better world which sustained us through World War II were betrayed, and this has given Communist Russia a military and propaganda initiative which, if unstayed, will destroy us. They abandoned friendly nations such as Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Poland and Czechoslovakia to fend for themselves against the Communist aggression which soon swallowed them. [...] Those in control of the Party in power have, in reality, no foreign policy. They swing erratically from timid appeasement to reckless bluster."¹⁹⁴

Instead of the "containment," the Republicans had devised a "Liberation Policy" project the principal architect of which was John Foster Dulles, the next State Secretary. In his own words, it was to be "a new foreign policy designed to cope effectively with Soviet aggression."¹⁹⁵ However, neither Dulles nor anyone else ever explained just what means were to be used to achieve the liberation of nations which had become victims of aggression during and immediately after the Second World War. Nevertheless, presidential candidate Dwight Eisenhower, who claimed

193 A Republican Foreign Policy. In: *Life* (16 June 1953), p. 22.

194 Republican Party Platform of 1952, 7 July 1952. In: PETERS, Gerhard – WOOLLEY, John T. (ed.): *The American Presidency Project: Political Party Platforms. Parties Receiving Electoral Votes 1840–2012* [online]. [Cit. 2015-04-30.] Available at: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=25837>.

195 See CONCLIN, William R.: General Will Map His Foreign Policy. In: *New York Times* (27 August 1952), p. 1.

allegiance to the policy in late August, specified it as an effort to find “the peaceful instruments of liberation.”¹⁹⁶

As to the Democrats, and particularly for President Truman nearing the end of his term of office, the area of foreign policy was the most acceptable battlefield of those on which the pre-election duel was taking place. Domestic policy topics related mainly to the problem of corruption unquestionably proliferating throughout federal institutions swollen during the *New Deal* period did not provide many chances to win voters’ sympathies to the Democratic Party. Its presidential candidate Adlai Stevenson did not see any other option but to publicly disassociate himself from his predecessor.¹⁹⁷ Insofar as international security issues were concerned, Truman was nevertheless prepared to pick up the gauntlet thrown to him by Republican leaders, and he obviously did not have any doubt that he could use the topic to contribute to the Democratic Party’s success. He actively joined the campaign, delivering a number of speeches in which he recalled successes of his administration and warned against risks brought by new Republican projects.

The Democrats’ election programme enriched the US political vocabulary by the term “atomic age,”¹⁹⁸ and the dangers characterizing this era became the central topic of Truman’s numerous pre-election appearances. He was repeatedly accusing the Republicans that their proposals of a new strategy in the Korean conflict were bringing the world to the brink of a nuclear war (in this respect, he was arguing against the already defeated concept of MacArthur rather than against the approach of “Eisenhower the peacemaker”),¹⁹⁹ and, in particular, was interpreting his foreign policy concept in the context of the nuclear threat. According to the President, the main rule which said that yielding to an aggressive enemy was the greatest sin continued to hold true even in the atomic age. The danger of a nuclear Armageddon was no excuse for *appeasement*, but it required extraordinary caution

196 EGAN, Leo: Eisenhower Urges Helping Nations Escape Red Yoke. In: *Ibid.* (26 August 1952), p. 1; cf. also TUDA, Chris: *The Truth Is Our Weapon: The Rhetorical Diplomacy of Dwight D. Eisenhower and John Foster Dulles*. Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press 2006, p. 77.

197 “Trouble is, they are running against me, not against Ike,” was Truman’s comment on the campaign of his successor in the position of the Democratic Party leader in a conversation with his Press Secretary Roger Tubby. DONOVAN, R. J.: *Tumultuous Years*, p. 398 – see Footnote 36.

198 Cf. Democratic Party Platform of 1952, July 21, 1952. In: PETERS, G. – WOOLLEY, J. T. (ed.): *The American Presidency Project: Political Party Platforms* [online]. [Cit. 2015-04-30.] Available online: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=29600>. The emphasis placed on this issue was not accidental. The US head start in the field of nuclear armament began running out. At the beginning of October 1952, the President’s speaker informed American citizens about another successful test of a Soviet nuclear bomb. IDEM (ed.): *The American Presidency Project: Harry S. Truman* [online]. Document No. 246 – *Statement by the direction of the President announcing an atomic explosion in the USSR*, 3 October 1951 [cit. 2015-04-30]. Available at: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=13939>.

199 He brought up this accusation as early as in the beginning of the campaign, in a traditional March speech on the occasion of the Jefferson-Jackson Day. *Ibid.* [online]. Document No. 69 – *Address at the Jefferson-Jackson Day Dinner*, 29 March 1952 [cit. 2015-04-30]. Available at: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=14439>.

when selecting retaliatory steps. Truman believed he had found an effective model of such a balanced policy during the Korean War. In a TV address he delivered on the eve of the presidential elections in November 1952, he was referring to this model as the principal proof of the success of his foreign policy: "In the past two years, we have faced the danger of Communist imperialism and a third world war. We have not retreated in the face of this threat. Neither have we lost our heads and plunged the world into an all-out atomic war."²⁰⁰

Toward the end of his term, the President did not deny that his approach had brought the United States into the Cold War. However, he claimed that the only other option was a "hot" war, from a certain moment even a nuclear one. The containment policy required taking considerable risks; in some cases, it was real teetering on the brink of war, but it always was, according to Truman, a smaller risk than that represented by a suicidal toboggan of *appeasement*, which could not have led anywhere but to war. These were the maxims which had survived the onset of the nuclear age and whose validity had been confirmed to the President throughout his term of office by the intense and continuously present experience of years preceding the Second World War. Truman's farewell address also contained an extensive reference to it. Truman reminded the audiences of examples of previous failures of democratic powers: "Think back for a moment to the 1930s and you will see the difference. The Japanese moved into Manchuria, and free men did not act. The Fascists moved into Ethiopia, and we did not act. The Nazis marched into Rhineland, into Austria, into Czechoslovakia, and free men were paralyzed for lack of strength and unity and will. Think about those years of weakness and indecision, and the World War II which was their evil result. Then think about the speed and courage and decisiveness with which we have moved against the communist threat since World War II," he urged the Americans.²⁰¹ He then presented the audiences with a catalog of the crises in which the democratic world under the leadership of the United States had managed to oppose communist threat. His list of hot spots included Iran, Greece, Turkey, and Berlin, and the principal tools of containing communist threat were, in his opinion, the Marshall Plan and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. "The supreme test, up to this point, of the will and determination of the free nations came in Korea," was how the President concluded his address.²⁰²

200 *Ibid.* [online]. Document No. 324 – *Radio and television remarks on election eve*, 3 November 1952 [cit. 2015-04-30]. Available at: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=14333>.

201 *Ibid.* [online]. Document No. 378 – *The President's Farewell Address to the American People*, 15 January 1953 [cit. 2015-04-30]. Available at: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=14392>.

202 *Ibid.* The same list of situations in which the post-war democratic world managed to avoid errors of *appeasement* was also contained in Truman's last Message on the State of the Union, delivered a week earlier: *Ibid.* [online]. Document No. 366 – *Annual message to the Congress on the State of the Union*, 7 January 1953 [cit. 2015-04-30]. Available at: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=14379>.

Truman's Democrats lost the 1952 elections. After 20 years of their rule, a Republican president moved into the White House. The last direct ties to the *New Deal* period had disappeared, the legacy of Franklin Roosevelt had faded, and the new administration was demonstratively parting company with almost everything that the framework of political maturing, rise, and presidential term of Harry Truman was composed of. The United States was entering the "quiet" 1950s. Still, Truman was not leaving the presidential office without a chance of bequeathing to the US political scene a legacy which his successors could identify themselves with, and a model approach they could follow. In the last weeks before the change in the position of the Chief Executive, the atmosphere around the leaving President cleared. The reason was not just traditional politeness. When the tumultuous campaign was over, the time for a more peaceful reflection of postwar developments came. The fact that the Soviet threat – compared to the situation immediately after the war – had lost its dynamics was apparent, and it was also confirmed by analyses of experts. At the end of 1952, the National Security Council's analysis concluded: "For the time being the worldwide communist expansion has apparently been checked."²⁰³

Truman, and a substantial part of the American public and experts on international relations, defence and security with him, were convinced the success was due to the policy based on a thorough application of *lessons* learned from the errors of *appeasement*. Immediate reactions of the media to the President's *Farewell Address*, generally viewed as one of Truman's best public appearances,²⁰⁴ confirmed that. It was becoming obvious that the way Truman had been handling the helm of US policy in troubled waters of the starting Cold War stood a fair chance to be adequately appreciated. In articles published during his last days in office, an image started appearing, which ultimately prevailed in US historiography of the 1980s and which has also become a standard of US textbooks of history; an inconspicuous politician, who unexpectedly – both for himself and for the world – was placed in the centre of global events and confronted with a crisis of unprecedented dimensions. He passed the test thanks to his courage, fairness, and unswerving belief in values of American democracy – and also thanks to the fact that he never allowed himself to be lured onto treacherous ways of *appeasement*.²⁰⁵

The victorious Republicans naturally could not participate in lavishing praise on the leaving President. Their road to recognition of Truman's merits was yet to be long and complicated. It was to begin with the abovementioned collapse of the

203 *HSTL*, President's Secretary's Files, National Security Council, Subject File, Current policies of the Government of the United States of America relating to the National Security, 1 November 1952.

204 Even the doggedly hostile *Chicago Daily Tribune* labelled the speech "warm and mellow." TROHAN, Walter: Truman Calls Korea War His Major Decision. In: *Chicago Daily Tribune* (16 January 1953), p. A12.

205 Cf., for example, DRUMOND, Roscoe: State of the Nation: President Truman Says "Good-By." In: *Christian Science Monitor* (16 January 1953), p. 1; Truman's Farewell. In: *Washington Post* (17 January 1953), p. 8.

myth of secret agreements made in Yalta; furthermore, it was to be fundamentally affected by the failure of the liberation policy in 1956, and its last stages were to be tainted by dubious results of the policy of consistent realism of Nixon and Kissinger. All of those are essential and complex moments, strongly affected by the scope of presence or absence of the *lessons of Munich* in them, and they certainly deserve a separate study. For the purpose of the presented work, let us be satisfied with a simplifying conclusion that Truman's interpretation of the lessons dating to the time of the Korean War survived complicated peripeteias of international relations until the end of the Cold War, and has remained in US policy as an example of a successful application of historical experience on a specific crisis long after the latter was over. Republican Ronald Reagan was full of praise for Truman, and even hosted a luncheon in the White House on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of Truman's birthday. He used the opportunity to basically reiterate the list of merits his Democratic predecessor had proudly claimed: "He led the fight to save Greece, which was threatened by a vicious communist takeover attempt. He saved Berlin, which Stalin threatened to starve, encircle, and squeeze to death. He saved South Korea when it was threatened by communist expansionism. He tried to protect the West. He protected it wherever he had to."²⁰⁶

Reagan's successor George Bush, naturally also a Republican, even explicitly referred to Truman and the lessons the latter had learned from the errors made by democratic nations, including the United States, at the end of the 1930s in one of the most difficult moments of his presidency. In October 1990, when addressing soldiers at the Hickam Air Base in Hawaii, he recalled Truman's speech to the nation after the communist invasion of South Korea, in which the then US president termed the unprovoked aggression a direct challenge to free nations, the fact that it occurred in a small and faraway country notwithstanding. "[H]e could almost have been talking about Kuwait," said Bush.²⁰⁷

Bill Clinton was often referring to Truman, repeatedly naming him as his great example and occasionally also the architect of the postwar global arrangement. In his speech on the occasion of the christening ceremony of the aircraft carrier Harry S. Truman in 1998, Clinton described the situation in the world after the Cold War in the spirit of Fukuyama's optimism: "The Cold War is over; Europe is thriving; Berlin is united; Greece and Turkey are vital NATO allies working with us to promote peace in the Balkans; Israel, Japan, South Korea are among our strong, democratic partners; international organizations like NATO, the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund are essential components of the architecture of

206 PETERS, Gerhard – WOOLLEY, John T. (ed.): *The American Presidency Project: Ronald Reagan. XL President of the United States, 1981–1989* [online]. Remarks at a White House Luncheon Commemorating the Centennial of the Birth of Harry S. Truman, 8 May 1984 [cit. 2015-04-30]. Available at: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=39886>.

207 DEM (ed.): *The American Presidency Project: George Bush. XLI President of the United States, 1989–1993* [online]. Remarks to Officers and Troops at Hickam Air Force Base in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, 28 October 1990 [cit. 2015-04-30]. Available at: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=18972>.

peace and prosperity.” According to Clinton, all the examples mentioned above, which illustrate remarkable transformations of the world, are related to the period of Truman’s presidency: “These are not accidents of history. They reflect the vision of the leader we celebrate here today.”²⁰⁸

The optimism of the 1990s has been long gone, and the celebration of the end of history turned into a hangover in the early years of the new millennium. However, the *lessons of Munich* have not disappeared from the American political discourse. It is certainly no accident that they were not used as an argument by President Barack Obama, just like Harry Truman did not receive any praise from him. Nevertheless, when the Obama administration decided to take active steps in response to the Syrian crisis, Obama’s State Secretary John Kerry chose to use it: “This is our Munich moment,” he said on 7 September 2013, continuing: “This is not the time to be silent spectators to slaughter. This is not the time to send a message where doing nothing is far more risky than responding.”²⁰⁹

As a matter of fact, opponents of the President refer to the *lessons of Munich* more frequently than the President’s collaborators. His foreign policy tends to be labelled as a departure not only from the policy of his Republican predecessor George W. Bush, as Obama himself stated, but also from the legacy of the policy which brought victory in the Cold War to the United States and which is often equated to Truman’s presidency.²¹⁰ Obama was accused of *Munichism* particularly in connection with his reaction to the Russian aggression against Ukraine and the occupation of Crimea. In this respect, journalist Michael Goodwin formulated a statement that every US president was confronted with a *Munich moment* while in the office, in most cases even more than once: “It is a test of courage and wisdom over hope and rationalizations. More often than not, it involves Russia. From Stalin and Khrushchev in Soviet days to Putin now, the Bear is either asleep or ravenously hungry.”²¹¹

It seems that *Munich* is a permanent component of the American political discourse, both at the level of political elites and at that of the general public. If nothing else, the intensity of its presence is an interesting characteristic of different periods of development of US policy and its actors.

208 IDEM (ed.): *The American Presidency Project: William J. Clinton. XLII President of the United States, 1993–2001* [online]. Remarks at the Commissioning of the U.S.S. *Harry S. Truman* in Norfolk, Virginia, 25 July 1998 [cit. 2015-04-30]. Available at: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=56367>.

209 A part of Kerry’s speech can be seen on the BBC website: Syria: “This is our Munich moment,” says John Kerry. In: *BBC News* [online]. 7 September 2013 [cit. 2015-04-30]. Available at: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-24004687>.

210 See THIESSEN, Marc A.: Obama’s Not the Anti-Bush, He’s the Anti-Truman. In: *Washington Post* [online]. 30 June 2014 [cit. 2015-04-30]. Available at: http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/obamas-not-the-anti-bush-hes-the-anti-truman/2014/06/30/fe5ed276-004b-11e4-8fd0-3a663dfa68ac_story.html.

211 GOODWIN, Michael: Obama Has His Munich Moment with Putin and Crimea. In: *New York Post* [online]. 15 March 2014 [cit. 2015-04-30]. Available at: <http://nypost.com/2014/03/15/obama-has-his-munich-moment-with-putin-and-crimea/>.

We can find related references even in texts which are not intended for those interested in politics at all. As indicated by their diverse nature, their authors obviously presume that the content of the lessons is generally well-known. Clemenza, one of the gang bosses in Puzo's *The Godfather*, elaborates his concept of strategy of gang wars with an explicit reference to the *lessons of Munich*: "You gotta stop them at the beginning. Like they shoulda stopped Hitler at Munich, they should never let him get away with that, they were just asking for big trouble when they let him get away with that."²¹² A reference to the lessons has found its way even to a song composed by the Rolling Stones, although in this case the text "Sometimes dictators need a slap on the wrist/Another Munich we just can't afford" should be interpreted as an ironical comment on their overuse during the presidency of George Bush, Sr.²¹³

The influence of the experience with the pre-war *appeasement* on decisions of American politicians during the Cold War was noted by several authors as early as in the 1960s and 1980s; they, however, did not examine the evolution and specific forms of the influence in depth.²¹⁴ A deeper look at the issue permits the simple statement on the influence of the *lessons of Munich* to be complemented and made more accurate. The long life of the lessons was made possible by their modification in the early 1950s, the purpose of the modification being to make them applicable for the "nuclear era," and also by the fact the modified lessons were recognized as successful when looking back. This means that the original version of the lessons, which can be condensed into a statement "it is necessary to avoid *appeasement*, as it does not lead to success, as proved by *Munich*," was transformed into "avoiding *appeasement* leads to success, as proved by Truman." American politicians, including the President, naturally need not necessarily heed the *lessons of Munich*, but if they ignore them, they must be prepared that their opponents will emphatically remind them of the lessons.

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Translated by Jiří Mareš

212 Mario Puzo, *The Godfather*. London, Arrow Books 1998, p. 184.

213 "Our lives are threatened, our jobs at risk / Sometimes dictators need a slap on the wrist / Another Munich we just can't afford / We're gonna send in the 82nd Airborne." JAGGER, Michael Phillip – RICHARDS, Keith: *Highwire*, 1991. This reference to the *lessons of Munich* was brought to my attention by Vít Smetana, whom I hereby thank.

214 See, for example, LOEWENHEIM, Francis L. – FEIS, Herbert (ed.): *The Historian and the Diplomat: The Role of History and Historians in American Foreign Policy*. New York, Harper & Row 1967; RYSTAD, Göran: *Prisoners of the Past? The Munich Syndrome and Makers of American Foreign Policy in the Cold War Era*. Lund, CWK Gleerup 1982; NEUSTADT, Richard E. – MAY, Ernest R.: *Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision Makers*. New York, Free Press 1986.

Terror, Failure, Resistance

Conflicting Memory of Armed Acts of Anti-Communist Resistance in Czechoslovakia

Markéta Devátá

The study sheds light on the phenomenon of armed violence by civic resistance groups against the communist regime in Czechoslovakia. It also points out the means of its commemoration. It draws from a documentary project concerning memorial sites of the communist regime. By the same token, it offers an interpretation of the process of constructing collective memory through the foundation of the sites concerned and its reception and/or rejection within society. Memory culture is one of the approaches to study society and the means to understand the reproducing, updating, recycling of memory. The same possibly holds true for comprehending politicization and the exploitation of memory today.¹ It delves into the question of what is the opposite

1 Of the voluminous literature on the subject, see, e.g., ČINÁTL, Kamil: *Naše české minulosti, aneb Jak vzpomínáme* [Our Czech pasts or how we commemorate]. Praha, Lidové noviny 2014; HALBWACHS, Maurice: *Kolektivní paměť* [Collective memory]. Praha, SLON 2009; HLAVAČKA, Milan – MARÈS, Antoine – POKORNÁ, Magdaléna et al.: *Paměť míst, událostí a osobností: Historie jako identita a manipulace* [Memory of sites, events and people: History as identity and manipulation]. Praha, Historický ústav AV ČR 2011; KRATOCHVIL, Alexander (ed.): *Paměť a trauma pohledem humanitních věd: Komentovaná antologie teoretických textů* [Memory and trauma through the prism of humanities: A commended anthology of theoretical texts]. Praha, Akropolis 2015; MAYER, Françoise: *Češi a jejich komunismus: Paměť a politická identita* [The Czechs and their communism: Memory and political identity]. Praha, Argo 2009; NORA, Pierre: *Mezi pamětí a historií: Problematika míst* [In between memory and history: The issue of sites]. In: *Antologie*

to the commonplace phenomenon with regard to communism, i.e. violence exerted on the part of the regime on its opponents largely portraying them as victims. The study focuses on commemorating the agents of anti-communist violence, at points mediated through the victims of the violence. It attempts to identify the circumstances of such commemoration and their place within the overall constitution of Czech public memory of the communist regime.

The text explores three main areas of memory of violence during the founding period of the communist regime. It first focuses on developments related to armed crossing of the national borders, the memory of the Iron Curtain and the activities of the Border Guard.² The second area addresses politically-motivated murders that were often an unplanned and tragic culmination of cases of armed deterrence on the part of communist figures. Common memory largely associates them with the Babice affair.³ The third and final part of the study is dedicated to the commemoration of the Mašín brothers as a specifically seen means of political violence.⁴ In a number of aspects the uncharacteristic Mašín brothers affair negatively affects the straightforward reception of the narrative that is publicly promoted especially by the Confederation of Political Prisoners (*Konfederace politických vězňů*). The argument identifies resistance to the communist regime with that of the “third resistance.”⁵ The definition is linked to a number of points. It enables to trace the

francouzských společenských věd: Město [The anthology of French social sciences: The city] (Cahiers du CEFRES, No. 10.) Praha, CEFRES 1996, pp. 39–64; ŠUSTROVÁ, Radka – HÉDLOVÁ, Luba (eds.): *Česká paměť: Národ, dějiny a místa paměti* [Czech memory: Nation, history and sites of remembrance]. Praha, Academia 2014; VAŠÍČEK, Zdeněk – MAYER, Françoise: *Minulost a současnost, paměť a dějiny* [The past and present, memory and history]. Brno, Centrum pro studium demokracie a kultury 2008.

- 2 The Border Guards were founded in 1951 as the basic component of the new army system of border protection. Soldiers serving their compulsory military service were being assigned *en masse* to the border guard units. At the same time border lines were constructed along the border with engineering and technical security placed directly along the border itself that turned the “green line” (hitherto safeguarded by border units of the National Security Corps, in Czech *Sbor národní bezpečnosti* or SNB) into the Iron Curtain.
- 3 In the village of Babice on the Bohemian–Moravian border, three Communist Party officials of the local national committee were shot dead on 3 July 1951. Killing a Communist Party official or a member of the national committee (the national committees were public administration authorities organized hierarchically from the level of municipalities to regional units) was classified as political murder (even though the motives of the perpetrator did not always necessarily bear a political feature) and were tried according to political legal clauses (most often as high treason). The Babice case was used by the regime for the purposes of propaganda to portray “class terrorism in the countryside.” The exemplary sentences reflected the regime intentions (11 people were executed).
- 4 Ctirad (1930–2011) and Josef (*1932) Mašín, sons of the hero of anti-Nazi resistance, the Lieutenant Colonel Josef Mašín (†1942), carried out acts of sabotage and armed raids, during which they killed two police officers and one civilian. In October 1953, they managed to make their way to West Berlin; in shootouts with the East German police they killed three police officers.
- 5 The third resistance, as understood by the Confederation of Political Prisoners (an association of individuals jailed mainly in the 1950s) was to epitomize historical succession of the

developments in memory over a longer period of time. Events related to violence in the communist regime are commemorated prior to and after 1989, i.e. from the 1950s until today (including most of the pre-November 1989 memorial sites captured in the currently constructed documentation).⁶ Essentially, though, such a means of commemorating these events continues to penetrate current discourse: they prove to be a conflicting and polarizing point of reflection where controversies over the memory of communism are publicly manifested, and are accompanied by quite a degree of politicization and instrumentalization of the past. If taking collective memory as an expression of the relationship of some social groups to the past, as their identification with the values linked to the past, and understanding commemoration as an act of presentation of such memory in public space,⁷ the following material outlines the dominant forms of making the past in connection to violence within civic resistance against the communist regime topical. Civic and/or anti-communist resistance are understood here as synonymous labels for diverse anti-regime activities used by individuals or groups trying to resist the inception and implementation of communist power, including the right to leave the country.⁸

Iron Curtain Memory

The officially constructed post-1948 memory identified the Western border of Czechoslovakia with the image of the “main battleground of the Cold War” where the Czechoslovak border guards “stood in the defence of peace.” The untouchability of the national border had to be defended not merely against the outer enemy – be it enemy armies or agents “serving the interests of imperialism,” but also against their own compatriots who saw the border as a barrier separating them from the

first – anti-Habsburg – resistance during the First World War, the second resistance (anti-Nazi) during the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia and during the Second World War and the third (anti-communist) resistance between 1948 and 1989.

- 6 The documents include memorial sites related to the period of the communist regime that are identified by some of the artefacts (memorial plaques, statues, memorial, crosses, etc.) or which use a museum means or those of public education (museums, information trails, etc.). See: Pamětní místa na komunistický režim: Jak poznáváme a reflektujeme dobu nesvobody 1948–1989 a jak si toto období připomínáme na veřejných prostranstvích? [Memorial sites of the communist regime: How do we learn about and reflect the period of lack of freedom in the period of 1948–1989 and how we commemorate the period in public spaces]. Ústav pro soudobé dějiny AV ČR 2015 [online]. Accessed at: www.pametnimista.usd.cas.cz.
- 7 See for example: HLAVAČKA, Milan: Místa paměti [Memory sites]. In: ČECHUROVÁ, Jana – RANDÁK, Jan et al.: *Základní problémy studia moderních a soudobých dějin* [Fundamental issues in the study of modern and contemporary history]. Praha, Lidové noviny 2014, pp. 602–609.
- 8 The term “anti-communist resistance” used in this study therefore does not follow its definition endorsed in the Act on the Participants in the Struggle and Resistance against Communism (No. 262/2011 Coll.), commonly referred to as the law on anti-communist or the third resistance.

free world. The question to “why do we not let them go” therefore became the fundamental argument used by political officers of the Border Guard in defence of dropping the Iron Curtain and the need to point arms against their own nationals: they were running towards the Nazis and imperialists, taking along national wealth and state secrets. They were being arrested because it was clear they would join the enemies of their own country and would openly fight against their own country. The presumption was largely proved by the practice which thus also reaffirmed the validity of the post-February 1948 measures. Moreover, the Czechoslovak communist regime, in guarding the national border, bore a wider responsibility for the entire communist bloc.⁹ In much of family memory or that of closer circles, however, the national border epitomized the loss of relatives and loved ones, either directly or, in most cases, metaphorically as a result of a failed attempt to leave for exile. Here is where the dividing line emerges between the two basic narratives and the process of constructing two different memories. In connection with the East and the West they reflect a number of aspects, not merely that of an armed clash on the border. Yet even such reflections are an integral part of the discourse about the Iron Curtain and/or counter-discourse about protecting the national border.¹⁰ For this reason, the text takes all of them into account.

One of the first acts that established the modern tradition of protecting national borders is linked to raising a statue of a border guard to mark the fourth anniversary of the foundation of the Border Guard on 11 July 1955 in the Municipal Gardens of the city of Cheb.¹¹ The Border Guard Day was launched the subsequent year: the date refers to the adoption of law on the protection of the national border in 1951.¹² The memorial was an initiative of members of the Border Guard. They fundraised for the construction of the site that bears a number of symbolic messages. The memorial was installed on the site of an earlier memorial that stood there between 1947 and 1951 and was dedicated to the memory of those US soldiers who fell while liberating the city. The initiative was part of an intentional process of isolating the memory of participation of Western troops in liberating the country in the spring of 1945. Similarly, though, in this respect not quite intentionally, the “conquest” of the borderlands by the Border Guard put local memory of the period of peaceful Czech–German coexistence *ad acta*. Quite on the contrary, the title of the memorial, *Guarding Peace*, carved in a two-metre tall base, and its artistic interpretation embodied new symbolism – the superhuman size that gave robustness of the border

9 See KRATOCHVIL, Miloslav: *Dvacet let ochrany čs. hranic* [Twenty years of protecting Czechoslovak borders]. Praha, Naše vojsko 1965, pp. 13–14.

10 See ŠMIDRKAL, Václav: “Železná opona” jako české místo paměti [The Iron Curtain as the Czech memory site]. In: *Střed*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (2012), pp. 56–79.

11 It was a provisional plaster sculpture that was later replaced (by a slightly altered) stone statue. See: Interaktivní encyklopedie města Chebu [The interactive encyclopaedia of the city of Cheb] [online]. Accessed at: <http://encyklopedie.cheb.cz/cz/encyklopedie/mestsky-park-pomnik-3>.

12 See ŠEFRANÝ, Stanislav (ed.): *Sborník dokumentů k dějinám Pohraniční stráže* [A collection of documents on the history of the Border Guard]. Praha, Naše vojsko 1989, p. 96.

guard (popularly nicknamed the Golem) armed with a machine gun, demonstrated the might of the new armed protection of the national borders. The emblematic dog by his feet was a reference to the Chod tradition adopted by the Border Guard.¹³

As early as in the late 1950s a decision was made to found a Museum of the Border Guard in the Prague quarter of Karlov. Its exposition opened in 1962 and was entrusted with (self)presentation of the history of the Guard and its tradition. The most attractive item on display, particularly for school groups, was a preserved Alsatian dog of the name Brek. The children were allowed to caress it, whilst learning about border “perpetrators” and their fate: the legendary dog allegedly caught 62 of them.¹⁴ The museum, the visual publications, documentary films and other historical artefacts helped to develop and maintain the main propaganda images related to the phenomenon of border protection. They depicted the threats arising in the West (“revanchism” of the “Sudetists” – the Sudetenland Germans“), countered Western “ideological diversion” bearing the narrative of the Czech borderland as a dead land and portraying the idyll of the demanding, yet honest life of the border guards (notions of collective life, brothers in arms, honest commanders, faithful dogs by their side), as well as the residents along the border line (images of vigilance among the aides to the Border Guard, enjoying the benefits of communist lifestyle by families of the soldiers that settled here).¹⁵ The officially commemorated traditions of the Border Guard were complemented, during the period of the so-called “normalization” by a sequence of activities of members of the Border Guard side-by-side with other armed forces of the regime during the historical political crossroads: at the time of the communist takeover in February 1948, in June 1953

13 See HOJDA, Zdeněk: Pomníky železné opony aneb Proč (ne)saht psovi na čenich? [Iron Curtain memorials or why (not to) touch the dog’s nose]. In: *Dějiny a současnost*, Vol. 34, No. 10 (2012), p. 12. Until 1946 it was a site of a monumental memorial unveiled in 1912 as commemoration of the fallen soldiers of the Cheb Infantry Regiment that took part in the last Prussian–Austrian war; after it was dismantled, another foundation stone was laid in the place, this time for an “American” memorial. The memorial dedicated to a border guard was removed in 1990 (the statue is now placed in the lapidarium of the local museum in Cheb) to be replaced by a new “American” memorial. (For more information see: Interaktivní encyklopedie města Chebu.)

14 See RUTAR, Václav: Reflexe historického vývoje Pohraniční stráže v expozici Muzea Pohraniční stráže: Praha, 1965–1973 [A reflection of the historical development of the Border Guard in the exposition of the Border Guard Museum: Prague, 1965–1973]. In: VANĚK, Pavel (ed.): *Ochrana státní hranice 1948–1955* [The protection of the national border 1948–1955]. Brno, Technické muzeum 2013, pp. 130–134. In 1973 the Border Guard Museum was transformed into the Museum of the National Security Corps and Troops of the Ministry of the Interior. The new exposition also included the “case of the Mašín brothers.” See MAŠÍN, Ctirad – MAŠÍN, Josef – PAUMER, Milan: *Cesta na severozápad* [Heading north-west]. Eds. Petr Blažek and Olga Bezděková. Praha, Academia 2010, visual appendix, p. cix.

15 See, e.g., a film by Karel Forst *Služba na hranici* [Serving on the borders] of 1984.

after the announcement of the monetary reform, and in August 1969 on the first anniversary of the occupation of Czechoslovakia by the Warsaw Pact troops.¹⁶

“Death by the Iron Curtain”

Constructing the memory of one’s history of individual border guard units was concentrated in stories of successful actions against the trespassers. A reference to members of the Border Guard killed in action and commemorated by small-scale memorials on sites where the events took a wrong turn served as a contract for combat deployment. These tiny memorials also bear a characteristic image (a five-pointed star and the Chod dog), along with an appellative rhetoric (“They shall not pass!”).¹⁷ These sites remain the destination of borderland tourism on the part of the Border Guard veterans and are looked after as “combat memorabilia.”¹⁸ Nonetheless, the central motive of contemporary propaganda images of the fallen guardians of the country in the armed struggle against the “alien enemy,” “servants of imperialism” and “traitors,” i.e. traffickers and couriers, is, altogether unsustainable when confronted with the findings at the Office for the Documentation and Investigation of the Crimes of Communism (*Úřad pro dokumentaci a vyšetřování zločinů komunismu*; hereinafter ÚDV) or of military historians. Of the total number of the deceased border guards, a mere statistical fraction was shot dead by border “trespassers.” Even more remarkably, six out of 18 such cases were attributed to the deserting men, serving compulsory military service as attached to the Border Guard units, i.e. those who were members of the subject of the heroization. Even the additional two cases were caused by deserters (from the Czechoslovak and East German armies) and mere 10 cases (some sources suggest that 11 border guard members became victims of refugees or couriers).¹⁹ Memorials unveiled prior to 1989 that were dedicated to the killed members of the Border Guard, including the site that is currently the most known from the media, the reinstated memorial

16 See WEIS, František (ed.): *Stručný přehled dějin Pohraniční stráže* [A brief overview of the history of the Border Guard]. Praha, Naše vojsko 1986, p. 95. The clash between members of the Border Guard and the “remnants of the counter-revolution forces” in August 1969 are discussed in the testimonies by some of their members in: ŠEFRANÝ, Stanislav (ed.): *Na stráží hranic socialismu a komunismu, sv. 3: Jsme v prvním sledu* [Safeguarding the borders of socialism and communism, Vol. 3: We are in the first line]. Praha, Naše vojsko 1982 (2nd revised edition), pp. 23–24.

17 Though these memorials tend to be portrayed in virtually every visual publication, the dates of their unveiling are not listed anywhere. It is, however, possible to presume that they emerged on the site soon after of the commemorated event.

18 It has been possible to find and document 20 memorials dedicated to clashes on the borders with “trespassers.” Yet it is most unlikely that the figure is exhaustive. See www.pametnista.usd.cas.cz.

19 See PEJČOCH, Ivo: *Vojáci na železné oponě* [Soldiers on the Iron Curtain]. Cheb, Svět křídél 2012, pp. 88–167. The figure also includes members of border units of the National Security Corps. See TOMEK, Prokop: *Ochrana státní hranice a Pohraniční stráž* [Protecting the national border and the Border Guard]. In: *Historie a vojenství*, Vol. 60, No. 3 (2011), p. 39.

in Březník in the region of Šumava bear no notice of the fact that the commemorated members of the Border Guard were shot dead by their fellow Border Guards.

The national borders are essentially the main memory site of the Czechoslovak–Czechoslovak conflict in which, by and large, there was only one side to be armed. The toll of 280 deaths (estimated by the ÚDV), or according to the Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes (Ústav pro studium totalitních režimů, hereafter ÚSTR) 276 deaths represent a balance of the Iron Curtain on the part of refugees.²⁰ This is, admittedly, a surprisingly low number, when compared with the losses among the armed border guard forces. Some figures on losses among the border guard service suggest a number of 650 (and/or 654) lives. Of those nearly 90 percent concerned men serving their compulsory military service and being posted in the border regions.²¹ “Death by the Iron Curtain” – be it directly on the border (by electric current, being shot by another patrol, etc.) or by manipulation with explosive devices used in connection with the Iron Curtain or with armaments, alternatively as a result of diverse accidents and a high suicide rate, thus offers quite a different picture to that which was presented to the public by communist regime propaganda. Desertions across the Iron Curtain similarly distort the official image of ideological unity among the border guards, which used to be kept secret in the past.²²

Club of the Czech Borderlands and the Březník Affair

The following part explores the transition of the memory of “the border of the world of communism” within the past 25 years. Is the post-November 1989 commemoration exclusively dedicated to the traffickers and agent-walkers? Who initiates new memorial sites and what is their symbolic content?

20 See PULEC, Martin: *Organizace a činnost ozbrojených pohraničních složek: Seznamy osob usmrčených na státních hranicích 1945–1989* [Organization and operations of armed border units: Lists of people killed on the national border between 1945 and 1989]. Praha, ÚDV 2006 (Sešity Úřadu dokumentace a vyšetřování zločinů komunismu [Notebooks of the ÚDV], Vol. 13); MAŠKOVÁ, Tereza – RIPKA, Vojtěch: *Železná opona v Československu: Usmrcení na československých státních hranicích v letech 1948–1989* [Iron Curtain in Czechoslovakia: Killings on the national border between 1948 and 1989]. Praha, ÚSTR – Sociologický ústav AV ČR 2015. ÚDV suggests that 192 Czechoslovak nationals and 88 alien refugees were killed between 1948 and 1989 (PULEC, M.: *Organizace a činnost ozbrojených pohraničních složek*, p. 173), ÚSTR 146 Czechoslovak nationals, 58 alien nationals and 62 unidentified cases and/or nationalities impossible to verify (MAŠKOVÁ, T. – RIPKA, V.: *Železná opona v Československu*, p. 96).

21 See PULEC, M.: *Organizace a činnost ozbrojených pohraničních složek*, p. 109; PEJČOCH, I.: *Vojáci na železném oponě*, p. 88. At least 584 involved soldiers serving their compulsory military service. See: TOMEK, P.: *Ochrana státní hranice a Pohraniční stráž*, p. 39. The figure concerning the number of dead draws from ÚDV internal materials. All the mentioned documents include cases of killings on the “green line” before the Iron Curtain was installed.

22 According to new research conducted by Libor Svoboda, over 380 members of the Border Guard deserted their units between 1951 and 1989 (presented at a ÚSTR seminar on 30 May 2017). See: PEJČOCH, I.: *Vojáci na železném oponě*, p. 168.

Undoubtedly the chief impulse behind the post-November power public debates concerning the interpretation of activities of the Border Gard comes from the very members, veteran guards associated in different more or less formal groups, usually copying the structure of the abolished military units, drawn together by different online projects and, last but not least, also within the Club of the Czech Borderlands (*Klub českého pohraničí*) that is seen as an umbrella organization of border guard veterans. The common denominator of the public input that comes from this group is quite an unreflected account of the meaning and purpose of the foundation of the Border Guard which it served for decades. A typical example of such selective memory is the memorial in Stálky in the Znojmo region that dates back to 2008. It was built by the Border Guard veterans and dedicated to themselves to commemorate the “friendships that were forged here.” They are to distance themselves from all sorts of ideology. Meanwhile the history of the unit contains a number of morally most controversial backgrounds when the officers in command of the intelligence service, the local commander of the Border Guard and his deputy, with the consent of a number of oversight authorities (including the future investigating officer of the affair), decided to execute a military intelligence agent suspected of being a double agent on the border, and to cover up the deed as a “standard” obliteration of an “intruder.”²³

Memorials installed by the post-communist, nationalistic and anti-German Czech Borderlands Club, the activities of which are monitored by the Czech Ministry of the Interior because of potential manifestations of political extremism, have also triggered public criticism. Civic criticism, however, tends to focus on manifestations that accompany ceremonies, rather than on the memorial *per se* (the town of Cínovec in 2008 and the village Krásná near Aš in 2011), which are, after all installed in a non-confrontational manner. That was the case until the re-installment of the pre-November border memorial by the former Schwarzenberg gamekeeper house in Březník in the very heart of the region of Šumava that stirred public debates. Coincidentally, this is a unique or perhaps the only case when an officer of the Border Guard was shot dead by a deserter directly on the border.²⁴

The memorial bears an inscription informing that in 1959, a lieutenant of the Border Guard of the name Václav Horváth was shot dead on the site by an enemy. Without any contextualization, the memorial was unveiled in 2010 by the Club of

23 The person executed was Karel Dufek, an agent of the Military Intelligence Service. See PEJČOCH, I.: *Vojáci na železné oponě*, pp. 25–29; PULEC, Martin: *Operace československých zpravodajských služeb na státních hranicích po roce 1948* [Operations of the Czechoslovak intelligence services on the national border after 1948]. In: *Sborník Archivu bezpečnostních složek* [Proceedings of the Archive of the Security Services], No. 6. Praha, Archiv bezpečnostních složek – Ústav pro studium totalitních režimů 2009, pp. 126–139; KARNER, Stefan: *Halt! Tragödien am Eisernen Vorhang: Die Verschlussakten*. Salzburg, Ecowin 2013, pp. 151–161 (in Slovak translation as *Stoj! Tragédie pri železnej oponě. Tajné spisy*. Bratislava, National Memory Institute 2015, pp. 143–155).

24 See PEJČOCH, Ivo: *Poručík Václav Horváth* [Lieutenant Václav Horváth]. In: *Historie a vojenství*, Vol. 60, No. 3 (2011), p. 108.

the Czech Borderlands. The mayor of the village of Modrava which is the municipal administrative unit for the memorial (the municipality co-financed the restoration of the memorial) replied to questions raised by the media that he was unaware of the activities of the Club of the Czech Borderlands.²⁵ He further argued that the controversy surrounding the dedication of the memorial from 1960 “might be good,” as the public tends to forget the work of the Border Guard and “it is not about the history of the Border Guard but that of the Iron Curtain.”²⁶ Over time two explanatory plaques appeared by the memorial (it is characteristic that no author is mentioned on either). Only the second (dated 2014) informs that the memorial is an initiative of the Club of the Czech Borderlands. Nonetheless, even that refrains from any specific description of the commemorated event.²⁷ The subject matter of the site is a fact documented in the archives (this was not the first case of the kind) indicating that member of the Border Guard Václav Horváth crossed the border with West Germany whilst pursuing a trespasser. That, naturally, was in conflict with the laws even at the time. The dying lieutenant was aware of it: as his last instruction, he requested his fellow members of the guard who, inspired by him, followed him in the pursuit, to immediately retract behind the line thus not to leave any evidence of having crossed the line to alien territory.²⁸

Whilst the public debate about the unveiling of the memorial develops a theme of a question (raised among the first ones by Czech theatre theorist Vladimír Just) of who actually was the enemy, the former border guards, claim online at vojensko.cz that the original re-installment is “no distortion of history” (without further explanation). They criticize the second information plaque for allegedly “distorting the border guards.” Their rejection of any alternative view of the event is further exacerbated by the fact that the second protagonist of the conflict remained alive and, moreover, the “murderer Řanda was pardoned by former President Václav Havel for his treacherous and murderous act!” That is quite a tendentious statement. Its actual significance lays in the criticism of the post-November developments (as personified by Havel) and related “enemy attacks” on the Border Guard.²⁹ The

25 ŠRÁMKOVÁ, Jitka: Pomník na Šumavě opět uctívá mrtvého pohraničníka a “boj s nepřitelem” [Memorial in Šumava again worships a dead soldier and the “struggle against the enemy”]. In: *iDnes* [online]. 2011-07-14 [quoted 2017-06-09]. Accessed at: http://zpravy.idnes.cz/pomnik-na-sumave-opet-uctiva-mrtveho-pohranicnika-a-boj-s-nepritelem-1ir-/domaci.aspx?c=A110714_124911_plzen-zpravy_alt.

26 VRÁNA, Karel: Spor o pomník [A dispute over a memorial]. In: *ČT24* [online]. Reportéři ČT, 2014-10-19 [quoted 2017-06-09]. Accessed at: <http://www.ceskatelesee.cz/ivysilani/1142743803-reporteri-ct/214452801240040/obsah/356697-spor-o-pomnik>.

27 Transcriptions of the inscriptions are available online at: <http://www.pametnimista.usd.cas.cz/modrava-breznik-pomnik-vaclavu-horvathovi/>.

28 See PEJČOCH, I.: *Vojáci na železné oponě*, pp. 98–99. There were earlier cases when a deserter was shot dead and his body brought back. See for example “Případ vojína Čepka” [Soldier Čepka’s case] (*Ibid.*, pp. 20–24) and the subsequently executed Sergeant Jeřábek (*Ibid.*, pp. 189–193). The surname of Lieutenant Horváth is not spelled uniformly.

29 Příběhy ze státní hranice: 06. příběh. Poručík Václav Horvát [Stories from the national border: Story 06. Lieutenant Václav Horvát]. In: Klub českého pohraničí, z.s. [online] [quoted 2017-06-09].

amnesty did not merely concern the penalty of expulsion to which the deserter was sentenced in 1980 by the military tribunal in the city of Příbram after he had served 13 years in jail in the most severe correctional category.³⁰

The second line of criticism that passes through the publications issued by the Club of the Czech Borderlands leads to Havel's apology for the expulsion of ethnic Germans from Czechoslovakia (yet the Club is by no means isolated in this position). All acts of commemoration of the Czech–German or rather German–Czech reconciliation, as well as private initiatives among the former Germans residents in the borderlands who wish, through the memorial sites, to rekindle the memory of the German (defunct villages, cemeteries, churches).³¹ Such initiatives are received most adversely by Border Guard veterans and their circles.³²

The burden borne by the “Border Guard veterans” of their own past (whilst any attempt to quantify the extent of the burden would prove mere speculation)³³ prevents them from reflecting at least partially the role they played in safeguarding the communist regime. At the same time, it prevents them or makes it altogether impossible for them to grasp the memory of the Iron Curtain that is being constructed within the society outside their circles. The memory also includes the awareness that the victims of the Iron Curtain on both sides were first and foremost the victims of the then ruling regime. Former border guards are naturally critical about the post-November commemoration of the Iron Curtain victims, as such memory is (bound to be) an indictment of the Border Guard at the same time.³⁴ With determination and mental root in the times when the profession of border guards was lauded as one of the most honourable services to the homeland, they adhere to the former narrative. It argues that their fellow citizens who tried to cross

Accessed at: <http://www.klub-pohraniči.cz/news/a06-pribeh-porucik-vaclav-horvat/>.

30 Vladislav Řanda arrived in Czechoslovakia as a US national in 1979 and was arrested there. For more information see: PEJČOCH, I.: *Vojáci na železně oponě*, pp. 99–102.

31 For instance, in České Žleby, Knižecí Pláně, Kvilda, Prášíly and elsewhere. See www.pametnimista.usd.cas.cz.

32 See, e.g., *Z letopisů odvážných: Hranice byla jejich osudem* [From the chronicles of the brave: The border was their fate]. Praha, Národní rada Klubu českého pohraničí – Nella 2013; *Ve šlépějích Chodů: Fragmenty z historie ochrany státních hranic ČSR–ČSSR očima přímých účastníků. Politicko-historická sonda do dějin ochrany a obrany československých státních hranic 1918–1989. Sborník příspěvků* [In the footsteps of the Chods: Fragments from the history of the protection of the national border of CSR–CSSR through the lenses of direct participants. Political and historical probe into the history of the protection and defence of Czechoslovak state borders from 1918 to 1989. A collected volume]. Praha, Klub českého pohraničí 2010; *Sloužili jsme v Pohraniční stráží* [We served in the Border Guard]. Divišov, Orego 2007; *Stalo se na hranicích: Příběhy ochránců státních hranic v období studené války 1945–1990* [It happened on the border: Stories of the protectors of national border during the Cold War 1945–1990]. Praha, Klub českého pohraničí – Nella 2005.

33 The membership base of the Club of the Czech Borderlands consists of ca. 6,000 people. See ŠMIDRKA, V.: “Železná opona” jako české místo paměti, p. 73.

34 In a chronological sequence, the memorials were built in Všeruby in the region of Domažlice (1996), in Hůrka by Prášíly (2004), in Svätý Kříž by Cheb (2006) and in Mikulov (2014). See www.pametnimista.usd.cas.cz.

the border to the free world were the “internal enemies” of society; therefore, as border “trespassers” they should not be commemorated.³⁵ The dual line of memory on the border is also manifested at a semantic level: memory of the former border guards relates to safeguarding “the borders of the world of communism,” while the majority collective memory reflects the Iron Curtain as a physical and metaphorical barrier keeping Czechoslovak society away from the Western free world.³⁶ Quite a significant number of memorial sites that operate with the Iron Curtain artefacts, its topography (“the freedom paths”) and with the acts of its dismantling bear such a symbolic content.³⁷

A new initiative in 2016 overshadowed the hitherto most familiar case of re-installing the former border memorials in the public space. The Club of the Czech Borderlands raised the aforementioned statue of the border guard from 1955 on the hilltop of Dyleň by the border with Bavaria where the current private owner opened a monitoring and eavesdropping museum and “radio-electronic war.” The statue was loaned by the city of Cheb for the ceremony that marked the anniversary of the foundation of the Border Guard. This event met with major media interest. Following the successful civic protest petition, the statue was returned to the lapidarium of the museum in Cheb.³⁸

Issues of Post-November Commemoration: The Lanžhot Case

In 2009 a memorial cross was raised by Lanžhot in the region of Břeclav. It commemorates two Austrian nationals shot dead in 1956 by the Border Guard on the local river border line. The site, however, essentially bears a story of the shameful conduct of the regime which for decades kept the fate of the killed men secret from their relatives. The memory of the case not only evokes the place of death of the two Austrians which is since 2011 also one of the stops along the Freedom Path that is dedicated to the event. It also includes the cemetery in Břeclav, the last repose of their remains that were secretly buried in a mass grave of German soldiers. Both memorial initiatives on the border that are linked to the civic group Memory (in Czech *Paměť*; Milan Vojta, Miroslav Kasáček, Luděk Navara), and were received with sharp criticism by documentarists Antonín Kratochvíl and Lukáš Klučka, the curator of

35 They undoubtedly sensitively reflect also the court hearings of the cases that involve suspicion of breaching contemporary legislation on the part of the members of the Border Guard. The number of cases the investigation of which ended in front of the court is, however, very limited. They include the mentioned actions on the territory of a foreign country. See PEJČOCH, I.: *Vojáci na železné oponě*, pp. 24 and 193.

36 See ŠMIDRKA, V.: “Železná opona” jako české místo paměti, pp. 60–61.

37 For example, in Čížov in the region of Znojmo, Kadolec by Slavonice, Kvilda, Mikulov, Nové Hrady, Nové Domky by Rozvadov, Rozvadov, Stožec in Šumava. See www.pametnimista.usd.cas.cz.

38 Vrcholek Českého lesa opět “hlídá” pohraničník se samopalem. Lidi to pobouřilo [The hilltop of Český les is again “watched” by a border guard with a machine gun. People were outraged]. In: *ČT24* [online]. 2016-07-22 [quoted 2017-06-09]. Accessed at: <http://www.ceskatelesee.cz/ct24/regiony/1854332-vrcholek-ceskeho-lesa-opet-hlida-pohranicnik-se-samopalem-lidi-pobourilo>.

the Iron Curtain Museum in Valtice. Referring to the sources in the Archive of the Security Services, they pointed out the issue of the problematic wartime as well as postwar past of Walter Wawra, one of the two Austrians. They considered the commemoration of an agent of the State Security to be a scandal.³⁹ The public was able to follow the quest to learn more about the fate of the two Austrians virtually made alive in a televised documentary *Ztracení otcové* [Lost Fathers]. The “story that took everyone’s heart” acquired different contours altogether.⁴⁰ Public criticism showed that acts of vandalism at the Břeclav cemetery where the son of Mr Wawra placed a provisional memorial of his father, the same as the destruction of the aforementioned cross might have had a different connotation.

A report by the Austrian public radio also addressed the story of the investigated facts preceding the deaths of the Austrians. The Czech televised documentary ends at the point when the researchers and documentarists hand the son of Walter Wawra results of their archival research after they had presented him their interpretation of the tragic event. They did so while they were on the authentic site. The documentary does not provide any context to the rumours that Wawra was an agent. Walter Wawra Jr. visited the Slovak National Memory Institute together with Austrian journalists where he was given documents about his father’s cooperation with the State Security. His activities were most likely to be motivated by a financial reward. Wawra’s assignment was to keep uncovering identities of specific members of the traffickers’ network operating between South Moravia and Austria. He was allegedly passing through the river Dyje by using an agreed signal for the Czechoslovak patrol. The report further mentions the case of a kidnapped Czechoslovak agent of the US Central Intelligence Council (CIC). Wawra got him drunk, drugged him and then, with minor difficulties brought him across the Dyje back to Czechoslovakia.⁴¹

39 Pomník pro agenta StB [A memorial dedicated to an agent of the State Security]. In: *Informační institut* [online]. 2012-08-06 [quoted 2017-06-09]. Accessed at: http://www.informacniinstitut.cz/informacniinstitut/Informacni_Institut/Aktuality/Entries/2012/8/6_Pomnik_pro_agenta_STB.html.

40 It was filmed by director Aleš Koudela based on a screenplay by Luděk Navara and was broadcasted by *Czech Television* on 22 November 2009; it was re-broadcasted on 19 April 2014: *Ztracení otcové* [Lost fathers]. In: *ČT2* [online]. 2014-04-19 [quoted 2017-06-09]. Accessed at: <http://www.ceskatelesee.cz/ivysilani/10258908743-ztraceni-otcove/>.

41 The report by Ernst Weber *Tod an der Grenze* was broadcasted by *Österreichisches Rundfunk 1* on 26 March 2011. The report is available in Czech transcription and translation by Petr Žaloudek as *Smrt na hranici*. In *OŘÍK: Farníci z Ostrovačic, Říčan a Veverských Knínic* [online]. 2001-05-11 [quoted 2017-06-09]. Accessed at: <http://www.orik.cz/content/smrt-na-hranici>. The State Security hoped for cooperation with Wawra in order to receive information about the Austrian border security (they took into consideration his nearby residence and job), as well as to uncover the network among Czech postwar emigrants (in 1952 Wawra espoused a Czech wife) whom the Czechoslovak authorities suspected of helping the traffickers. Yet even Wawra was suspected of cooperating with US counter-intelligence. The kidnapping of the CIC agent was to be his first assignment commissioned by the Czechoslovak intelligence service in 1951. The sources do not provide any timing of the kidnapping, the identity of the agent and his further fate. See KARNER, Stefan: “Skrátka,

Though it is understandable that Milan Vojta and the Memory group did not wish to confront Mr Wawra Jr. on camera with the darker site of his father's past, a question remains unanswered – what kind of memory they constructed in the public space no matter how unrelated was the commemorated event with the collaboration of Walter Wawra Sr. He and Karl Benedikt were passionate fishermen and fell victim to an “ordinary” action against the border “perpetrators,” an action that was kept secret until the fall of communism.

Commemorating Traffickers

A closer look into the acts of post-communist commemoration reveals that traffickers and couriers do not dominate the memory of the Iron Curtain. One of the not yet implemented commemorations is expected to be unveiled also in Lanžhot and is to be dedicated to the local trafficking legend, the “king of the southern woods” František Gajda. He was disclosed and died after a shootout with border guards in 1950.⁴² His son who lives in the United States (his mother with him along with three other siblings were taken by traffickers across the border in 1950, a few months prior to his father's death) tried to have a memorial site installed. After he passed away in 2011 it is the Memory group that is trying to bring the plan to fruition. Within the context of the earlier memory initiative it reflects the paradox nature of past events on the Czechoslovak–Austrian border.

On the western border a memorial launched in 2004 commemorates both German and Czech traffickers. The memorial was unveiled by the Friends of Czech–German Understanding. It is located by the border crossing over Teplá Vltava in Františkov on the route of the so-called Canal 54 from Vimperk to Finsterau that was used by Franz Kilian Nowotny, one of the “kings of Šumava.” The image of the legendary trafficker and smuggler is most probably forever carved in public memory as he was portrayed by the iconic film *Král Šumavy* [The King of Šumava] from 1959 based on a book by Rudolf Kalčík about border guards from the unit in Kvilda.⁴³ Contrary

zmlátte ho do bezvedomia a dopravte cez hranice!": Smrt agenta "Alberta" na rybačke v rieke Dyje [Just beat him till he is unconscious and transfer him across the border!: The death of agent "Albert" while fishing by the river Dyje]. In: IDEM: *Halt! Tragödien am Eisernen Vorhang*, pp. 143–155.

42 See TOMEK, Prokop: František Gajda (*30 November 1913, †6 October 1950). In: Ústav pro studium totalitních režimů [online]. Dokumentace usmrčených na československých státních hranicích 1948–1989: Portréty usmrčených [Documents concerning those killed on the Czechoslovak national border between 1948 and 1989: Portraits of the killed] [quoted 2017-06-09]. Accessed at: <http://www.ustrcr.cz/cs/frantisek-gajda>. See: Documentary by director Marcel Petrov based on the screenplay by Luděk Navara *Smrt převaděče* [The death of a trafficker] made for the series *Přísně tajné vraždy* [Top secret murders]. *Czech Television* first broadcasted the film on 18 May 2010 (in: *ČT* [online]. 2015-11-24 [quoted 2017-06-09]. Accessed at: <http://www.ceskatelesee.cz/porady/10267422798-prisne-tajne-vrazdy/410235100221020-smrt-prevadece/>).

43 For more information, see e.g.: KOPAL, Petr: Film *Král Šumavy ve světle* (a v temnotě) symboliky zla [The film *King of Šumava* in the light (and darkness) of the symbolism of evil]. In: IDEM (ed.): *Film a dějiny, sv. 2: Adolf Hitler a ti druzí. Filmové obrazy zla* [Film and

to the culmination of the film narrative, Nowotny lived until his death (1977) on the Bavarian side of the border after he managed to escape injured after a shootout with border guards in 1950 from the site where the current memorial was erected.⁴⁴

A bit on the margins of interest lays a private initiative that commemorates the traffickers and agent-walker, Josef Zíka, in the heart of Český les. Rather than from specialist literature he is better known through the fiction account by Zdeněk Šaroch. The book *Výstřely z hranice* [*Shots from the Border*, 1972] dedicates to Josef Zíka the opening short story *Jezdec Černé Máry* [The rider of black Máry].⁴⁵ A cross with a memorial plaque was erected in 2000 in the cemetery in Pleš: as part of the reconstruction of German graves, a body without a coffin was found buried in a shallow hole in the early 1990s. The discovery instantly led to the belief that it was the body of agent Zíka shot dead by border guards along this part of the Bavarian–Czech border in 1951. His dead body was brought to the unit in Pleš, its further fate remains unknown.⁴⁶

The most recent memorial site that was unveiled at the cemetery in České Žleby is dedicated to agent-walker Bohumil Hasil, shot dead in September 1950 during one of his crossings that he undertook with his brother Josef (he managed to escape from the site of the clash).⁴⁷ The memorial site is indirectly related to the (as yet unsuccessful) endeavour to identify the authentic site of the last repose of his remains.⁴⁸ It is, however, essentially connected to family memory – it reminds of his brother who still lives in Canada, who was yet another “king of Šumava” (the memorial plaque was unveiled to mark his 90th birthday in February 2014). It also

history, Vol. 2: Adolf Hitler and the others. Film images of evil]. Praha, Casablanca 2009, pp. 214–240. See also TICHÝ, Martin: Rudolf Kalčík: Životopisná črta [Rudolf Kalčík: A biographical feature]. In: SVOBODA, Libor – TICHÝ, Martin (ed.): *Cesty za svobodou: Kuryři a převaděči v padesátých letech 20. století* [Paths to freedom: Couriers and traffickers in the 1950s]. Praha, ÚSTR 2014, pp. 205–225. A plan was to develop an Iron Curtain museum on the premises of the Border Guard in Kvilda; the project fell apart in 2008.

44 See FENCL, Pavel: *Králové Šumavy – Die Könige des Böhmerwaldes: Katalog výstavy* [The kings of Šumava: The exhibition catalogue]. Praha, ÚSTR 2012, pp. 45–46.

45 Six short stories of which one was dedicated to the border guard dog (here the directly mentioned Brek); the book includes an ideological introduction and epilogue so that the reader, immersed in the “adventure” stories, does not identify with the undesired character. As part of psychologizing the “negative” characters, the author hints at points to empathize with their conduct (as in the case of “The rider of the black Máry” where he empathizes with illegal trespasses of German expelees who kept returning across the border to collect possessions they had left behind). ŠAROCH, Zdeněk: *Výstřely z hranice* [Shots from the border]. Praha, Naše vojsko 1972.

46 His fate is briefly summarized by Zdeněk Procházka in *Putování po zaniklých místech Českého lesa, sv. 1: Domažlicko* [Wandering through the defunct places of Český les, Vol. 1: The region of Domažlice]. Domažlice, Nakladatelství Českého lesa 2007, pp. 210–211.

47 Zdeněk Šaroch also puts in fiction the story of the Hasil brothers in the short story entitled “O Hasilech bez legend” [About the Hasils without legend]. ŠAROCH, Z.: *Výstřely z hranice*, pp. 83–125.

48 The identification work draws from the initiative of the former ÚSTR Director Daniel Herman.

commemorates his mother (as a symbolic donor of the plaque)⁴⁹ and of the fact that she had been unable to bury her son and tend his grave. Nonetheless, the site is equally a memorial to a family divided by the Iron Curtain and of the harsh persecution of relatives who remained on its Eastern side.

Some historians consider the established martyrological discourse after November 1989 about the Iron Curtain to be stuck in a totalitarian manner in the simplistic (and over-polarized) “paradigm of the Iron Curtain.” Its unifying role in the post-November society remains controversial.⁵⁰ As much as the story of the Lanžhot cross supports such a perspective, it might be appropriate to raise a question asking whether such a discourse could be in any way different (and, through it, also the commemoration of the Iron Curtain). The difficulty of finding common points with the bearer and keeper of the border guard memory can be illustrated by a report issued by the Czech Borderland Club in the spring of 2015. It was published on the occasion of a commemorative act by the memorial to three members of the border guard units of the National Security Corps by the building of the former unit in České Žleby in order to commemorate victims of two different cases from 1949: in March 1949 Miloslav Mutinský and Josef Pekař, constables of the National Security Corps, died in a shootout.⁵¹ The narrative suggests that the opponent in the armed clash was “former lieutenant of the army of the clerical-Fascist Slovak State” and “Nazi offspring” Jaroslav Gajdoš.⁵² Nonetheless, Mr Gajdoš was actually a member (First Lieutenant) of the 1st Czechoslovak Army Corps in the Soviet Union.⁵³ Perhaps more importantly, the narrative informs that participants at the commemorative gathering were shocked to learn that “someone” was planning to re-install the original memorial plaque at the authentic site of the event. The president of the local branch of the Club considered it a “scandalous and blatant act,” for he “hesitated to believe” that the organized members “would so blatantly breach both the principles of the operation of the Club of the Czech

49 Rosálie Hasilová died in 1972. The church ceremony and memorial mass were served by Miroslav Vlk (under the oversight by the State Security); the event turned into “a protest march of Šumava” and contributed to the decision by the regime to withdraw the state licence to Vlk’s pastoral work in Lažiště and Záblatí. See VODIČKOVÁ, Stanislava: Čím větší tlak, tím kvalitnější, co odolá: Kardinál Miloslav Vlk ve střetu s komunistickou diktaturou [The greater the pressure, the finer the quality of all that resists: Cardinal Miroslav Vlk in confrontation with the communist dictatorship]. In: *Paměť a dějiny*, Vol. 5, No. 4 (2012), p. 93.

50 See ŠMIDRKAL, V.: “Železná opona” jako české místo paměti, pp. 76–77.

51 Members of the SNB border unit.

52 See ZACH, František: Pietní vzpomínka u pomníčku zavražděných příslušníků Pohraničního útvaru SNB České Žleby [Commemoration by the tiny memorial dedicated to the murdered members of the SNB border unit České Žleby], 26 March 2015. In: Klub českého pohraničí, z.s. [online] [quoted 2017-06-09]. Accessed at: <http://www.klub-pohranici.cz/news/pietni-vzpominka-u-pomnicku-zavrazdenych-prislusniku-pohranicniho-utvaru-snb-ceske-zleby/>.

53 See PEJČOCH, I.: *Vojáci na železné oponě*, p. 133. After escaping to the West, Gajdoš, as a technical Sergeant of the US Air Force, took part in the Korean and Vietnam wars. He is buried in the National Cemetery Riverside in California (having died in 2005).

Borderlands, and the overall principles of decency and ethics.” Arguing that the site of the original memorial was located on pastures above the town where “imported cattle” graze year round, which thus makes the site inappropriate for the re-installment of the memorial plaque, he concluded his report by appealing to the unknown originator to abandon “such a barbarian, poor and inhuman conduct” that represents “unprecedented interference in the activities of the local Club.”⁵⁴ The horror of the possibility that some independent civic initiative would participate in the re-installment of a memorial shows the degree of appropriation of border guard memory and its interpretation. That happens despite the fact that this is one of the original border guard mini-memorials which in no way distorts the narrative of the veteran border guards. Quite on the contrary, it is being confronted through a new commemoration of the Hasil brothers. It concerns the commemoration of the second incident in 1949: during a shootout by Soumarský Most, Josef Hasil killed a constable of the National Security Corps of the name Rudolf Kočí. Thus, České Žleby becomes yet a new place of encounter of two memories of armed clashes on the green line.

The story of the old and new commemoration in České Žleby has currently reached an unexpected climax. It transpired that the memorial plaque to Miloslav Mutinský and Josef Pekař was unveiled again in May 2015 by members of the Club of the Czech Borderlands (though from a different branch). The initiative proved quite timely. In November, the Club lost the central memorial in České Žleby that was constructed in the 1980s in connection with the completion of a new building for the Border Guard unit. The current owner of the building decided to close it to public.

The commemoration of the Iron Curtain after 1989 is indeed dominated by the martyrological perspective. That, however, comes as no surprise given the fact that victims of the Iron Curtain could not have been commemorated prior to November 1989. Together with the commemoration of the German past on the borderlands, the sites dedicated to the memory of the Iron Curtain through its artefacts represent a substantial portion of such commemoration. Carriers and/or traffickers receive just minor commemoration, none of which puts, as yet, their activities explicitly in connection with armed anti-communist struggle. That also applies to memorial sites installed outside the borderlands, except for the perhaps best-known case that received major media attention – the long rejected public comments by executed agent-walker Rudolf Fuksa that were initiated by his great-nephew and supported by public petition in the north Bohemian town of Chrástava. The memorial sites dedicated to the “traffickers” bear two characteristic features: they either address the circumstances of their violent death when crossing the border, or are contextualized by references to judicial repression on the part of

54 ZACH, František: Pietní vzpomínka u pomníčku zavražděných příslušníků Pohraničního útvaru SNB České Žleby, 26 March 2015 (<http://www.klub-pohranici.cz/news/pietni-vzpominka-u-pomnicku-zavrazdenych-prislusniku-pohranicniho-utvaru-snb-ceske-zleby/>)

the communist regime.⁵⁵ In this respect, the memorial in Kvilda–Františkov is the only one to bear a “positive” symbolic content of revolt against the regime. This highlights the longing for freedom by those leaving for exile and the bravery of their traffickers.

Memory of Political Murders

“How Much Does a Life Cost”

In 1960 the writers Karel Šiktanc and Jiří Šotola published in the journal *Kultura* a series of reports dedicated to the cases of recent political violence in Czechoslovakia.⁵⁶ They explored the circumstances of murders of communist figures in the 1950s and their commemoration against the background of the description of contemporary life in towns and regions affected by the events and their new contextualized reflection. They offered a factually quite faithful reconstruction of the cases, placed within the framework of an ideological image of communist transformation of villages that proved successful despite the numerous barriers. This was one of the first forms of fiction literature to interpret such events where the authors worked with otherwise inaccessible archival sources. One can suggest that the public commission responsible for the reports was related to the officially declared completion of collectivization of village life and economy.⁵⁷ This argument is supported by the choice of cases and by the final reflection that freely follows the form of the report series *Kolik stojí život* [How much does a life cost]. It was written by Jiří Šotola only. In his piece entitled *Odkud jsme přišli* [Where we came from], Šotola summarizes some of the leitmotifs of the reports about the “old” lifestyle in the countryside (religious sentiments and traditions, the gradually disappearing identification with economic life in the courts of former nobility, etc.). Its roots, he argued, “must be cut” to enable the people to mentally part with them.⁵⁸ At the same time it would allow them, the argument went on, to identify with the “new” postwar life and its cooperative agenda, hence also with the memory of the Communists who fell victims to the enemies of communist transformation.

55 See SVOBODA, Libor: Kurýři a převaděči jako jedna z forem protikomunistického odboje [Couriers and traffickers as one of the forms of anti-communist resistance]. In: SVOBODA, L. – TICHÝ, M. (ed.): *Cesty za svobodou*, pp. 9–15.

56 The weekly published under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Culture lasted from 1957 to 1962 when it merged with *Tvorba* and continued to be published under the title *Kulturní tvorba*.

57 The question about the existence of the commission and its issuer is also raised by literary historian Milan Blahynka in his review of the book *Řeč neřeč: Rozhovor Jaromíra Slomka s Karlem Šiktancem* [Speech non-speech: A conversation of Jaromír Slomek with Karel Šiktanc]. Praha, Univerzita Karlova – Karolinum 2007. BLAHYNKA, Milan: Karla Šiktance tance. In: *Obrys-Kmen*, insert to *Haló noviny*, Vol. 14, No. 36 (13 September 2008), p. 3. It is also accessible online at: www.obrys-kmen.cz/archivok/?rok=2008&cis=36&tisk=03.

58 ŠOTOLA, Jiří: *Odkud jsme přišli* [Where we came from]. In: *Kultura*, Vol. 5, No. 17 (1961), p. 10.

The first report, which can be translated as “A murder in Rataj Park” was dedicated to a case called by historian and journalist Petr Zídek a shadow of anti-communist resistance.⁵⁹ It portrays the murder of Anna Kvášová (1908–1952), local deputy chairwoman of the local communist organization and official of the national committee in the village of Chrastná by Uhlířské Janovice. Those involved in the case were discovered only five years later. In March 1958, they were subjected to a public hearing in the Tyl Theatre in Kutná Hora. Three of them were sentenced to capital punishment – Antonín Landstoff, Josef Pták and Josef Kubelka (they were executed on 9 July 1958). As late as at the end of the 1950s murdering a communist leader was qualified also as high treason. The authors of the report portray it as a planned execution (“dismissing it as a Bolshevik”). Zídek (who seems to have worked with the same archival sources) reconstructs the event by suggesting that the protagonists had agreed to punish the keen official by humiliating her (tying her to a tree and cutting her hair off). Yet, when on site the development followed a different course that proved far more fatal.⁶⁰ Similarly to other cases, even here the central figure is someone with quite a complicated psychological profile (Zídek even speaks of a psychopathic personality). He assumed the leading role in a group which he had joined *de facto* by chance without having had any closer social ties with its members. Moreover, he used a legend that he was a member of the resistance linked to abroad. Antonín Landstoff did not even have any reason to take revenge on Anna Kvášová. Yet he adopted the idea that occurred to Josef Pták who, on the contrary, had a concrete motive because as a result of Kvášová’s impulse, he had been repeatedly questioned concerning his trade activities. Landstoff then unexpectedly completed the plan, altogether spontaneously, with no link to anti-communist resistance. A memorial dedicated to Anna Kvášová was located on the site of the murder 30 years after the event.

Another report explores the fate of the proponents of a murder of Jan Benada (1910–1949), the chairman of the local communist organization and member of the national committee in a small village of Javorník in the district of Veselí nad Moravou where he worked as teacher. What characterizes the case is that Benada as a dedicated Communist Party member was quite unpopular in the town. That is also hinted at in the report (“no matter what your mentality was, you

59 ŠIKTANC, Karel – ŠOTOLA, Jiří: Vražda v Ratajské oboře [A murder in Rataj Park]. In: *Ibid.*, Vol. 4, Nos. 10 and 11 (1960), pp. 10 and 10. See ZÍDEK, Petr: Stín protikomunistického odboje [The shadow of anti-communist resistance]. In: *Lidové noviny*, insert *Orientace* (7–8 June 2008), pp. 19–20.

60 The frustration arising from the fact that the planned action led to murder became the cause of indiscretion that ultimately helped to clarify the event. It ought to be added that the literary account of the event from the 1980s depicts the act of cutting the hair and an idea that occurs to Kvášová. However, she is shot dead as one of the actors skips his tongue and says out loud the name of his accomplice. Through him the group is uncovered. This is quite an exaggerated *cliché* of crime stories. VRBECKÝ, František [ŠAROCH, Zdeněk]: *Mrtví nemluví* [The dead do not talk]. Praha, Naše vojsko 1985, pp. 161–163.

were not killed for that”).⁶¹ Similarly to other comparable cases, a number of local residents were suspected of the murder carried out in March 1949. Benada’s activities presented an existential threat to each of them (“he squeezed black traders and loafers by pliers”). The investigation brought result only after the appointment of an agent provocateur that led to Tomáš Rumíšek (1923–1953), who confessed to the murder to members of the State Security. Hence, after a staged escape abroad in July 1952 he was arrested, sentenced and executed on 6 May 1953.⁶² The story *Javorník není Amerika* [Javorník is no America] is constructed on the contrast of the undocumented “director” of the drama Josef Švardala (*1908), who, in August 1950 emigrated by having hijacked an airplane⁶³ and the hand of the murderer who had been “lured” by Švardala. He is portrayed as an unscrupulous capitalist (owner of a distillery) and Rumíšek as a simple blacksmith for whom one can find minor signs of compassion (“vagrant, drunkard and fighter” who took a “nasty end”). In fact, considering the local economic and social standards, Rumíšek was also a relatively well-off tradesman who owned modern equipment. The report further fails to mention that Benada moved to the town in the late 1930s. It was in part also because of his tarnished personal life that the locals did not accept him as one of their own. His memory, the authors argued, is embodied by the burning candles on his grave at the local cemetery

From the current perspective, the aforementioned events illustrate the memory that is ambiguous (court sentence of 1969 about procedural flaws and lacking evidence presented to the court of 1953 heightened the doubts about the guilt of the executed; these doubts last until today). They also exemplify the rejected memorial sites the mayor of Javorník did not accept an offer to install a memorial to the executed Tomáš Rumíšek in the town. His name is merely carved on the memorial dedicated to political prisoners in Uherské Hradiště that was installed in the early 1990s.

Different memories are also connected to the case of a political murder which took place in Koubalova Lhota in the region of Přeboram. Its consequences are briefly mentioned by Karel Kaplan in his monograph *Nekrvavá revoluce* [A bloodless revolution] as an example of the so-called economic trials. Orchestrated by the State Security, the trials became the “instrument of collectivization” (in this sense Kaplan draws a connection between these events and the far more widely known Babice events). In the trials that were unveiling the “face of wealthy village residents” the accused appeared as alleged members of anti-state groups, agents of imperialism

61 ŠIKTANC, Karel – ŠOTOLA, Jiří: Javorník není Amerika [Javorník is no America]. In: *Kultura*, Vol. 4, Nos. 28 and 29 (1960), pp. 10 and 10.

62 See MALLOTA, Petr: Zapomenutý příběh o několika dějstvích: Kovář Tomáš Rumíšek a „javornická“ vražda z března roku 1949 [A forgotten story in several acts: Blacksmith Tomáš Rumíšek and the murder committed in Javorník in March 1949]. In: *Sborník Národního muzea v Praze* [Proceedings of the National Museum in Prague]. Řada A – Historie, Nos. 3–4 (2016), pp. 59–64.

63 See PEJČOCH, Ivo: *Přechody přes železnou oponu* [Crossing the Iron Curtain]. Cheb, Svět křídél 2011, p. 37.

or their helpers, possibly terrorists and arsonists. Thus portrayed, they were to help break the resistance in the countryside to forced collectivization and imposition of communist cooperatives.⁶⁴ The events in Koubalova Lhota bear some features similar to the previously mentioned case. Here, too, the murdered Communist Party official was an “intruder” (a Czech originally from the region of Volyn in North-Western Ukraine who married to the village). Here, too, under the impression of the liberating rehabilitation proceedings (due to a lack of evidence) that took place in 1965, a belief gradually arose that those sentenced were innocent victims of a game of high politics. In reality though, as is evidenced by the conclusions of the review by the ÚDV in the 1990s, it was a power struggle between four members of the local Communist Party cell and, at the same time, officials of the local national committee. It ended with four deaths: the murdered Vladimír Mandík (1892–1951) and the executed Václav Junek (1906–1951), Alois Lacina (1904–1951) and Karel Máša (1905–1951).⁶⁵ Even though the National Court in Prague sentenced the latter to capital punishment in an appropriately used propagandist public trial in Milevsko, the events are still linked to more and less common myths. They speak of a departing black car right after the murder, of a gun wound behind his ear (Mandík died of rod hits on his head) and of a mysterious death of the pathologist who carried out the autopsy, as well as of the imprisonment of the arrested in the nearby concrete bunker and of dropping their corpses in the nearby fishpond in Kosobody where the locals found them with legs partly eaten by rats.

The report entitled *Ulice Vladimíra Mandíka* [Vladimír Mandík street] written by Šiktanc and Šotola is dedicated to the case. It ends with an image of the near future, when, in 1970 in an unnamed town by the Orlická dam on the river Vltava, one of the new streets is named after Mandík following a proposal by the officials of the local national committee. The dedication was to serve as symbolic climax of the trial dating back to 1945 that represents the end of the “stale, poor, bear-footed and bigoted Koubalova Lhota.”⁶⁶ In reality though, the first mention of the event from the turn of the 1960s and 1970s is, quite on the contrary, a common grave of the executed at the cemetery in the nearby Lašovice that bears an inscription expressing a belief: “The Lord shall reward the innocents.” Only then, in the mid 1970s Vladimír Mandík was commemorated by a memorial that his son had built on the site of the event.

The last thought that concludes the report series published in the early 1960s in the journal *Kultura* mentions (the not yet reconstructed) case of a political murder that took place in the then Zlaté Hory in the region of Podblanicko in 1951.

64 KAPLAN, Karel: *Nekrvavá revoluce* [A bloodless revolution]. Praha, Mladá fronta 1993, p. 341.

65 See BURSÍK, Tomáš: *Vražda předsedy MNV v Koubalově Lhotě* [A murder of the national committee chairman in Koubalova Lhota]. In: PERNES, Jiří – FOITZIK, Jan (eds): *Politické procesy v Československu po roce 1945 a “případ Slánský”* [Political trials in Czechoslovakia after 1945 and the “Slánský case”]. Brno, Prius 2005, pp. 257–270.

66 ŠIKTANC, Karel – ŠOTOLA, Jiří: *Ulice Vladimíra Mandíka* [Vladimír Mandík street]. In: *Kultura*, Vol. 4, Nos. 16 and 17 (1960), pp. 10 and 10.

It is connected to several years of wandering of František Slepíčka (1929–1955), a deserter from the Auxiliary Technical Battalions.⁶⁷ Between 1951 and 1955 he repeatedly threatened, being armed, communist officials in the regions of Votice and Sedlčany. The very first case turned into (political) murder. As a deserter he was naturally dependent on help given him by local residents. His legend of being a member of foreign anti-communist resistance made the circumstances quite aggravating to anyone who had lent him material aid. These people were then arrested and tried in connection with his activities. In the case of the murder of Václav Burda (1900–1951), chairman of the local national committee in Zlatá Hora, Slepíčka’s alleged mission of an agent proved fatal to the second protagonist in the event, Alois Jaroš (1923–1952). The latter was identified by the National Court in Prague as the leader of a “terrorist gang” and “large scale farmer.” Even though testimonies offered by the Burda family suggested that the gun was fired by accident and Alois Jaroš did not own any gun and allegedly did not deliberately help Slepíčka to kill Václav Burda, Jaroš was together with the absent Slepíčka sentenced to death and was executed on 17 May 1952. Slepíčka escaped the fate and died in May 1955 in the town of Dubno in a shootout with František Brabec, the official of the district national committee of Příbram.⁶⁸ Václav Burda is commemorated by a memorial plaque on his native house in the town of Kamberk that was installed there in 1971.⁶⁹ Memorial plaques in nearby Křekovice and Zvěstov (both dating to 2001) are dedicated to the victims of the investigation of his death and of the trial.⁷⁰

Commemorating Babice and the “Normalization” Interpretation of “Class Struggle in the Countryside”

The sad role of the exemplary case of terrorist deterrence of the leading “builders of communism in the countryside” with a nation-wide remit ended up being attached to political murders in the village of Babice in the region of Třebíč. The interpretation of the Babice case was promptly published and included in the exhibition entitled “30 Years of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia” that was at the time already open at the Liberation Memorial in Vítkov as part of constructing the memory of the revolution.⁷¹ As suggested by Karel Kaplan, the “lesson learned” from Babice

67 The Auxiliary Technical Battalions were army units to which “politically unreliable” soldiers were assigned to complete their compulsory military service.

68 See BURSÍK, Tomáš: Některé aspekty násilné kolektivizace venkova ve světle archivních dokumentů na příkladu okresu Sedlčany [Some aspects of forced collectivization of the countryside in the light of archival sources, the case of Sedlčany]. In: BLAŽEK, Petr – KUBÁLEK Michal (eds): *Kolektivizace venkova v Československu 1948–1960 a středoevropské souvislosti* [The collectivization of the countryside in Czechoslovakia in the period 1948–1960 and the Central European context]. Praha, Dokořán 2008, pp. 224–234.

69 In 1949–1990 the official name of Kamberk was Zlaté Hory.

70 See TICHÝ, Martin: Náhlá úmrtí ve vězeňských zařízeních [Sudden deaths in prison facilities]. In: *Paměť a dějiny*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (2010), pp. 93–107.

71 OPAVSKÝ, Jaroslav: *Babice*. Praha, Svoboda 1951. For the exhibition entitled “30 Years of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia,” see SOMMER, Vítězslav: *Angažované dějepiscectví:*

contained also a methodological aspect that concerned the need to whitewash “theories” of the developments related to the rural wealthy strata, to differentiate them between good and bad and to identify and/or uncover the “shameful roles of the Vatican.” Waves of repression of wealthy farmers accompanied collectivization endeavour on the part of the communist regime in Czechoslovakia throughout the 1950s. Temporary periods of relief were criticized by its proponents: “There are still wealthy rural strata as a class. Let us not be mistaken by believing that no shooting and murdering takes place in the countryside. In other words, we also note the fingers of the class enemy that changes face and tactics, whilst its nature remains the same,” warned, for instance, the then Prime Minister Antonín Novotný.⁷² Karel Kaplan also speaks of the strength with which “political circles” even during the rehabilitations in the 1960s were annoyed by any attempts to shed light also on the Babice affair. Along with additional doubts it supported a conclusion that the entire case had been a provocation prepared by the State Security.⁷³ After years of failed attempts to find evidence in the archives that would support such view widely held by researchers, opposing opinions start to prevail.⁷⁴ The latter makes the Babice case seem similar to the aforementioned events in Chrástná and Zlaté Hory (Kamberk) in that they all had been fundamentally affected by an involvement of an alleged member of foreign resistance on “assignment,” whilst local residents had been willing to assist him in executing the assignment.⁷⁵

In any case, researchers and publications that opened these old cases at the time of the Prague Spring the same as their review and re-interpretation, mean major questioning of the pre-reform interpretation suggesting that the enemies of communism had been recruited from among “wealthy rural residents,” former tradesmen or altogether “former people” and that “class” justice was fair when it dealt with the murder cases that were inspired by a whole range of motives, treating the murders as political that simultaneously met the defining criteria of high treason. The onset of the so-called “normalization” in the early 1970s thus brought along pressure to review or altogether abolish the rehabilitations of the reform period. The most effective and often used methods involved questioning

Stranická historiografie mezi stalinismem a reformním komunismem (1950–1970) [Committed historiography: Party historiography between Stalinism and reform communism (1950–1970)]. Praha, Nakladatelství Lidové noviny – Filozofická fakulta Univerzity Karlovy 2011, pp. 72–88.

72 Quoted according to: KAPLAN, K.: *Nekrvavá revoluce*, p. 345.

73 *Ibid.*, pp. 341–344.

74 For the most recent research results see: STEHLÍK, Michal: *Babické vraždy 1951* [The Babice murders 1951]. Praha, Academia 2016.

75 The couriers arriving from the West were not assigned to organize any domestic resistance. Ladislav Malý, member of the US intelligence service special group led by General František Moravec, left for Czechoslovakia without having informed his superiors and the events in Babice were his “single-handed action.” See TOMEK, Prokop: *Na frontě studené války: Československo 1948–1956* [On the frontline of the Cold War: Czechoslovakia 1948–1956]. Praha, ÚSTR 2009, p. 51.

the very protagonists, their motivations and moral credibility.⁷⁶ In connection with reporting the unveiling of the memorial plaque dedicated to Václav Burda in 1971, the daily *Rudé právo* raised a rhetorical question: “What to make of the people from among the ‘ex’ in the region of Benešov who, in 1969, attempted to rehabilitate members of the Jaroš gang and to swiftly turn them into national heroes?”⁷⁷ The commentary on the 20th anniversary of the event in Babice lent a welcome opportunity to remember how the modern “reaction” attempted to “publicly taint the very 1950s (even trying to rehabilitate the murderers of Babice), how it attempted to use some of the mistakes, shortfalls and fallacies of the time to depict the period as the ‘age of darkness.’”⁷⁸ Another material published on the occasion of the anniversary informed about laying the foundations stone for the Babice memorial. It contains the author’s personal confession: “I have repeatedly thought of the Babice events, particularly over the recent years when all kinds of people called for ‘communism with a human face.’ Such a cheap term was also frequently used by those who had inspired the murderers. Everyday their transmitters were busy communicating on the western border of our country. They also called for the human face for the murderers and those who had been helping them.”⁷⁹ Even in Babice and the neighbouring Šebkovice, during the period of political meltdown, the whole matter kept tragically affecting their lives. In 1968, local parishioners arranged for the churches in both towns the so-called “reconciliation bells” that were to serve both as a token of gratitude for the preservation of faith, as well as “satisfaction over ‘Babice’ 1951” as is stated on the dedications.

Critical identification *vis-à-vis* the rehabilitations (judicial as well as societal) of the reform period is an integral part of the equally novel approach to the recount of a number of political cases of the postwar period in fiction as had been published by Zdeněk Šaroč (having published them under the pen name of František Vrbecký).⁸⁰ In the final chapter, entitled *Takoví byli a zůstali* [The way they were and remained] he even used the documentation work by Ota Rambousek in K 231 to be at the heart of his “enemy” activity. By “uncovering” his past of a courier and political prisoner, as well as of a post-August 1968 émigré, he highlighted the morally questionable motivation behind his public involvement in the Prague Spring.

76 See, e.g., the media campaign against the Klub 231. HOPPE, Jiří: *Opozice ‘68: Sociální demokracie, KAN a K 231 v období Pražského jara* [Opposition ‘68: Social Democracy, KAN and K 231 in the period of the Prague Spring]. Praha, Prostor 2009, pp. 256–264.

77 HEČKO, Jiří: Cennější zlata: Dvacáté výročí zavraždění komunistického funkcionáře Václava Burdy z Kamberku [More valuable than gold: The 20th anniversary of the murder of Václav Burda, the Communist Party official from Kamberk]. In: *Rudé právo* (18 September 1971), p. 4. It is also accessible online at: www.ceskasibir.cz/dok/d495.php.

78 HOŘENÍ, Zdeněk: Komentujeme Babice [Commenting on Babice]. In: *Ibid.* (1 July 1971), p. 2.

79 MALÍK, Josef: Vraždili za dolary: Před dvaceti lety vkročila smrt do babické školy [They killed for dollars: Twenty years ago death walked into a school in Babice]. In: *Ibid.*, insert *Haló sobota* (3 July 1971), p. 3.

80 VRBECKÝ, F.: *Mrtví nemluví*. Similarly to the case of the *Výstřely na hranici*, the author worked with archival sources. The book contains “seven true stories of the fight against the enemy of communism in our country,” as is stated on the cover.

In the story *Vražda na pokyn* [Commissioned murder], dedicated to Babice, Šaroch subjects to criticism the interest of reporter Sláva Volný (also a post-August 1968 émigré) who in 1968 prepared a radio programme about the case. Šarich argues that the recorded material proves that Volný intended to use his questions about the role of Ladislav Malý in the events to convince the public that “Babice were actually masterminded by the Communists themselves.” He further argued that the report on “Anti-Babice” fell apart when none of the locals “realized what Volný wanted to hear: that the person concerned was a member of the State Security.” Šaroch suggests that (unlike him), Volný had no moral right to travel to Babice asking around. The fact that he even called on the widow of the murdered Tomáš Kuchtík, “whom he intended to use for the provocation” (meaning report) was a sign of his “utmost arrogance” Šaroch learns this from the chairman of the district national committee of Moravské Budějovice.⁸¹

Covering the reform narrative with the updated reflection of the old memorials was a method that Šaroch used in additional chapters, including the new interpretation of the murder of Anna Kvášová (*Výstřel v Ratajské oboře*), that had previously been described in the report series by Šiktanc and Šotola. By quoting from an interview with the then chairman of the local national committee in Chrastná, he offers an “authentic” interpretation of “the political murder as an attack against the Communist Party that was to discourage the farmers from the cooperative spirit.” The outcome, however, was quite the opposite: “The authority of the Communist Party had further risen here. As early as in the autumn of that year we founded the cooperative [...]. Lively discussions often took place in *U Chromasů* [the local pub], for instance when the question arose whether to include also larger-scale farmers in the cooperative. It was ultimately decided that we would all farm together. [...] The people thus gradually came to believe that Anna Kvášová once promoted the right thing.”⁸² Petr Zídek (in 2008), however, offers a testimony, claiming that the foundation of the local agricultural cooperative was carried out differently: “When they murdered her, everyone joined the cooperative out of fear.”⁸³ Even the cooperative in Babice was founded within a year after the local events.⁸⁴

In 1971 a manifestation was held in Babice of laying the foundation stone for a memorial that was unveiled four years later. Twenty years later it recounted the Babice events. Whilst the memorial plaque installed in 1951 bore an inscription reminding that “in this school fell, in a middle of their endeavour for a happier life of our peoples, by the hand of agents of Western imperialists, comrades Tomáš Kuchtík, Josef Roupec and Bohumír Netolička” (along with providing information about their civic professions and posts in the local national committee), the inscription on the stone placed the narrative in a historical context without altering the overall

81 *Vražda na pokyn*, pp. 130–132.

82 *Výstřel v Ratajské oboře*, pp. 166–168.

83 ZÍDEK, P.: *Stín protikomunistického odboje*, p. 19.

84 In 1952, 20 farming cooperatives were founded in the district of Moravské Budějovice whilst only one came into being the previous year. See HOLUB, Ota: *Vlčí komando* [The wolf commando]. Praha, Práce – Naše vojsko 1981, pp. 138–139.

message of the text: “they fell by the insidious hand of the class enemy whilst implementing the general line of constructing communism.” Along with the unveiling of the memorial in 1975 a hall of revolutionary traditions opened in the local school. Both new memorial sites served the commonplace “normalization” rituals (mass visits by work groups, passing oath by adepts to join the Pioneers – the communist youth organization, etc.). That it was primarily to fulfil its ideological and educational purpose is highlighted also by the fact that their establishment was secured by the central committee of the union teachers and academicians and researchers. The ceremony of laying the foundation stone brought together about 200 teachers who participated in the so-called Comenius Days in Uherský Brod. Teachers and pupils had to volunteer to renovate the road in connection with the construction of the memorial in the village, and the hall of revolutionary traditions was opened by Minister of Education Josef Havlín.⁸⁵

From the current perspective, the cases of so-called political murders after February 1948 present forgotten stories that are merely commemorated by the sites from the period of the “normalization” that itself fell into the abyss of memory.⁸⁶ The public is not keen to revisit the cases, as is shown by the aforementioned rejection of the initiative in Javorník. The handful of post-November 1989 commemorations (Uherské Hradiště, Křekovice, Zvěstov) present their protagonists as victims of political trials within the context of the general commemoration of the victims of repression conducted by representatives of the communist regime. The fact that they are connected to concrete cases of political murders remains a side issue here.

Babice represents yet a different case. As much as it epitomized, prior to 1989, the interpretation of class struggle in the countryside, today it symbolizes a conflict over that memory. Even though the post-November 1989 representatives of the town would have liked to “draw a thick line” behind the events of the 1950s,⁸⁷ it became clear that such an approach proved *de facto* impossible in practice. Pressure exerted by anti-communist activists and organizations (Confederation of Political Prisoners) to remove the pre-November 1989 memorials dates back to 1990. It is

85 See KÁBELE, Stanislav: *Babice 1951–2011: Dokumenty a polemiky o babické tragédii* [Babice 1951–2011: Documents and polemics over the Babice tragedy]. Praha, Futura 2011, p. 80; HOLUB, O.: *Vlčí komando*, pp. 145–146; [ČTK]: Památník obětem v Babicích [A memorial to the victims of Babice]. In: *Rudé právo* (22 September 1975), p. 1.

86 These cases include the murder of Major Augustin Schramm on 27 May 1948. A memorial plaque was unveiled in his memory (to be later removed) in Prague 3. This study does not focus on this commemoration as it is altogether outside the context of the presented other cases. See TOMEK, Prokop: Mýty a pravda o atentátu na majora Augustina Schramma [Myths and the truth about the assassination of Major Augustin Schramm]. In: *Historie a vojenství*, Vol. 60, No. 1 (2011), pp. 54–68.

87 A statement by the mayor of Babice: “As early as in 1991 we agreed at the town council that we would close it. We drew a thick line and I have no mandate to speak about it.” See KONTRA, Martin: Rozrušená země: Co všechno nám zbylo z teroru padesátých let [An upset land: All that we are left with of the terror of the 1950s]. In: *Respekt*, Vol. 9, No. 52 (1998), pp. 9–11. (See also BRABEC, Jan: *Nemilosrdné příběhy českých dějin* [Merciless stories of Czech history]. Praha, Národní divadlo – R-Press 2006, pp. 154–159.)

obvious that such initiatives are seen in the town as a new ideological dictate.⁸⁸ In response to the first public appeals, the municipal council held a local poll in August 1990 in which the majority of the Babice residents preferred to retain the central memorial (less than 40 percent of respondents voted for the removal of the communist symbol). The town council also consulted the issue of the pre-November commemoration with lawyers, trying to clarify whether the look of such memorial sites might be deemed meritorious of a crime of promoting intolerant ideologies. The town council had eventually removed the memorial plaque of 1951 from the Babice school in the latter half of the 1990s and in connection with the new face of the village it also removed the 1971 foundation stone for the memorial in about 2010. An “alternative” memory of the events in Babice emerged and stayed in place until 2013 when the bust of Fr. Václav Drbola was installed in front of the local parish house. Fr. Drbola was sentenced for high treason and instructions for the (Babice) murders. He was executed on 3 August 1951 in the city of Jihlava.⁸⁹ Yet the regional structures of the Roman Catholic Church of the early 1990s generate a few initiatives that called for at least some symbolic reconciliation with the consequences of the Babice tragedy. Memorial services in 1990 and 1991 to mark its 40th anniversary were to climax by raising a memorial cross dedicated to all of its victims. The bells, hidden in the church spires, became virtually forgotten. Whilst elsewhere in the region memorial sites emerged and are dedicated to lay victims of the Babice trials as well as to the priests affected (in Jihlava in 1993, Starovičky in 1994, Lukov in 1995, Třebíč in 1996, Rokytnice nad Rokytinou in 1998),⁹⁰ in Babice itself the presentation of a new perspective did not grow root. A new initiative presented by the local Roman Catholic parish, Day of Truth and Reconciliation in 2011 (referring to the ceremony in 1991) and the unveiling of the Drbola bust two years later presents no doubt also a reaction to the fact that the “normalization” memorial in Babice was adopted by supporters of communist ideology.⁹¹ The reconciliation of memory and/or memories has not, as yet, taken place even among the residents of Babice. It is them who have been confronted with the tragic events

88 As early as in December 1989 the West Moravian Museum in Třebíč (today the Museum of Vysočina) closed the local memorial (hall of traditions).

89 It is a copy of an identical reminder discovered in 2012 in Starovičky, the native town of Václav Drbola, on the centenary of his birth.

90 After the year 2000 additional ones emerged – in Brno and Letonice in 2002, in Kuřimská Nová Ves in 2004, in Bučovice in 2005 and 2011, in Heřmanov in 2011. See www.pametnismista.usd.cas.cz.

91 See BARTŮŇKOVÁ, Andrea: Desítky lidí si připomněly Babický případ, šedesát let starou tragédii [Dozens of people commemorated the Babice case, the 60-year old tragedy]. In: *iDnes* [online]. 2011-07-06 [quoted 2017-06-09]. Accessed at: www.zpravy.idnes.cz/desitky-lidi-si-pripomnely-babicky-pripad-sedesat-let-starou-tragedii-1eb-/domaci.aspx?c=A110706_110629_jihlava_zpravy_mav. A similar gathering convened in 2011 in Čelákovice (see below). Both events marking the 60th anniversary of the Babice events and the raid on the SNB offices by the Mašín brothers' group were convened by the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia and the Club of the Czech Borderlands.

and their consequences for over 60 years. Reconciliation has not occurred within the wider Czech society either.

Mašín Brothers' Commemoration

It is quite symptomatic that the symbol of anti-communist resistance and, at the same time, the core of controversies in the public debate is the “Mašín brothers case,” even though the operation of the group is not characteristic for the context of anti-communist activities in Czechoslovakia at the turn of the 1940s and 1950s. Sabotage and raids carried out by the group led by the Mašín brothers bore military features not merely in terms of their technicality, but also because of the mindset behind them. That was underpinned by the contemporary and the then widespread idea of the possibility of a new military conflict between the West and East for which they wanted to be prepared (i.e. armed). The group aimed to leave for the West by autumn 1951 at the latest to face the anticipated clash. The Mašíns considered the people against whom they had planned their actions to be protagonists of the communist regime that declared war against a portion of the population (i.e. the non-Communists).⁹² They drew from a somewhat simplistic construct (that was being defended for decades) that armed individuals (members of the National Security Corps in the first place) had been entrusted by the Communist Party and their killing, in the case of difficulties with the original plan, were not in conflict with ethical principles. Yet even the trafficking legend Josef Hasil was a constable with the National Security Corps when he had started to assist the people who were in danger or persecuted by the communist regime. He, along with other police officers worked, later as a courier and participated in anti-regime activities. Historians have documents three dozens of cases of executed police officers or members of the Penal Guard Corps who had fallen victim to “the other shore.”⁹³ Their fate is commemorated by a few memorial sites.⁹⁴ Yet another, a more challenging link leads to the Communists. Their ranks included both eager promoters of the new regime,

92 See Mašín: České občanství ani za miliony. Rozhovor Luďka Navara se Ctíradem Mašínem [Mašín: Czech citizenship? Not even for millions. Luďek Navara's interview with Ctírad Mašín]. In: *iDnes* [online]. 2004-07-28 [quoted 2017-06-09]. Accessed at: www.zpravy.idnes.cz/masin-ceske-obcanstvi-ani-za-miliony-d7y-/domaci.aspx?c=A040727_224811_domaci_pol; Jsou tři kategorie – odboj, odpor a disent (Rozhovor Martina Vadase s Josefem Mašínem) [There are three categories – struggle, resistance and dissent (Martin Vadaš' interview with Josef Mašín)]. In: *Totalita.cz* [online]. 2011-03-17 [quoted 2017-06-09]. Accessed at: http://www.totalita.cz/odbsk/odbsk_masin_rozh_mj_01_01.pdf.

93 See PEJČOCH, Ivo – TOMEK, Prokop: *Policisté na popravišti: Příslušníci SNB popravení v Československu z politických nebo kriminálních důvodů v letech 1949–1962* [Policemen on the gallows: SNB members executed in Czechoslovakia on political or criminal grounds in 1949–1962]. Cheb, Svět křídel 2013, p. 5.

94 For instance, in Frýdek-Místek (Ladislav Céé), Klatovy (František Havlíček, Václav Šnajdr), Chrastava (Rudolf Fuksa), Horní Bříza (Josef Sporka) and elsewhere. The executed SNB members are collectively commemorated by a memorial plaque originally unveiled on the building of the Czech Police Presidium in Prague, which was recently handed over to the Museum of Czech Police in Prague – Karlov.

as well as those who joined the resistance stream against communism. Ultimately, the cracks in fundamental anti-communism can be noted also in the Mašín family history: Communist Party membership of Zdena Mašínová and Ctibor Novák, the interest on the part of both of the brothers in enrolling in the military academy. Their orientation – as could be expected – began to change fundamentally after February 1948.⁹⁵ In connection with the emotionally charged debates surrounding the Mašíns and the commemoration of the protagonists in the first phase of anti-communist resistance, a general question arises whether the public desires any other heroes than those who ended up in the gallows or had spent years in prison. The uncharacteristic nature of the Mašín brothers' case, apart from the captivating emigration story, lays in the fact that they managed to stay alive.

Commemoration after 1989 and the launch of public debates concerning the Mašíns was preceded to some extent by the publication of a book by Ota Rambousek *Jenom ne strach* [Everything but fear]. An argument that it was Rambousek to discover the story of the Mašíns for the public is not entirely accurate, as the story had been used in fiction of “communist detective stories.” Yet it does correspond with a fact that, unlike Rambousek's book, those interpretations were not as reflected by the public. Ultimately, the impulse for Ota Rambousek who worked for Radio Free Europe to approach Ctirad Mašín in 1986, was the fact that they both had appeared in one of the books of the above provenience. Their stories (with adequate ideological message) have been processed by the aforementioned Zdeněk Šaroch in his chapters *Mrtví nemluví* [The dead do not talk] and *Takoví byli a zůstali* [The way they were and remained].⁹⁶ The interview led by Ota Rambousek with Ctibor Mašín for Radio Free Europe marked the beginning of their cooperation on their own book. It was intended to be a “true” story of the group led by the Mašín brothers. Discussions among those who had been familiar with the manuscript that Ota Rambousek handed to Josef Škvorecký in 1987, signals in many respects the essential line of the post-November 1989 discourse concerning the Mašíns (in addition to the no longer current hypotheses about how could the book be used by the communist regime for propaganda purposes).⁹⁷ It points out the degree of surprise by the story as it might be presumed to be quite known in the context of exile. Additionally, it showed that the brutality of description met with proposals for smoothing the edges – on the one hand through family and contextualization by linking it to the second resistance and, on the other hand, by contemporary reflection of the earlier conduct on the part of the protagonists themselves.

95 See NĚMEČEK, Jan: *Mašínové: Zpráva o dvou generacích* [The Mašíns: A report on two generations]. Praha, Torst 1998, p. 167. For the means of interpreting the conflict in the Mašín narratives, see ŠVĚDA, Josef: *Mašínovský mýtus: Ideologie v české literatuře a kultuře* [The Mašín myth: Ideology in Czech literature and culture]. Příbram, Pistorius 2012, pp. 119–127.

96 VRBECKÝ, F.: *Mrtví nemluví*, pp. 73–107, 205–226.

97 Correspondence about the preparation of the interview and the publication of the book is published in: MAŠÍN, Ctirad – MAŠÍN, Josef – PAUMER, Milan: *Cesta na severozápad*, pp. cxi–cxviii.

Ota Rambousek was a former courier, political prisoner and one of the founders of K 231. He felt a connection with the positions of the Mašins.⁹⁸ He considered the editors' notes to be personnel reviews, called "cadre material" in communist jargon. He refused to "dwell about what was or was not to happen," as the core of the debates was not *how* it was written, but *what* was written. Škvorecký did not want to publish the manuscript in the current shape. He was one of those who kept suggesting that memoirs written with a distance of time also contained current statements by the Mašins ("a reflection of whether they should have done it and some confession that it perhaps was not that easy"). In this respect, he was in line with Václav Havel who expressed at least an amazement over the unreflected shape of the "narrative of the Cold War veterans" (in 1987).⁹⁹ The two shapes (of which one represents intentional refusal to reflect the past) have become major components of the perspective on the activities of the Mašín group. The debate reached Czechoslovakia after 1989 where the narrative of Ctibor Mašín edited by Ota Rambousek appeared in the edition *Revolver revue*.¹⁰⁰

It might, however, also be argued that criticism of the Mašins for their use of ruthless violence is influenced by the current perspective that does not accept the use of violence (in civilized Europe). The same might also apply to their attitude of "no mercy with the enemies to the very death" which is in conflict with the culture of reconciliation. It is worth asking whether the supporters of the Mašins are right when stating that we have no other heroes and we should leave those whom we have. The fact that the Mašins opted for violence because the same was done by the Communists in power and, as long as they do not feel any urge to (intellectually) dissect every aspect of their motives and conduct, it is their legitimate view to be respected (instead of forever questioning the "conscience of the heroes").¹⁰¹ Yet another point worth considering is that though the Mašins had dirtied their hands, the hands of those in power then had been far more covered with blood, and that it was impossible to fight the latter effectively with the mere power of a thought or ethical principles (for we know how this type of struggle ended).

98 See, e.g., BEZDĚKOVÁ, Olga: Odchod za úsvitu: Statečný kurýr a pěšák protikomunistického odboje Otakar Rambousek odešel na věčnost [Leaving at dawn: The brave courier and infantryman of the anti-communist resistance Otakar Rambousek passed away]. In: *Paměť a dějiny*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (2010), p. 67.

99 A letter to Josef Škvorecký dated December 1987, in which Václav Havel responds to the interview of Ota Rambousek with Ctirad Mašín published under the title *Vyprávění veteránů studené války* [The stories of Cold War veterans] in April 1987 in the exile journal *Západ*, was reprinted in *Cesta na severozápad*, p. cxiv.

100 RAMBOUSEK, Ota: *Jenom ne strach* [Just not fear]. Praha, Nezávislé tiskové středisko 1990. Rambousek and, later additional authors (e.g., NOVÁK, Jan: *Zatím dobrý: Mašínovi a největší příběh studené války* [So far so good: The Mašins and the biggest story of the Cold War]. Brno, Petrov 2004) drew from the manuscript completed by Ctirad Mašín in the late 1950s and later edited by Petr Blažek and Olga Bezděková.

101 See KAČOR, Miroslav: *Svědomí hrdinů: Jiná tvář odbojové skupiny bratří Mašínů* [The conscience of heroes: The other face of the resistance group of the Mašín brothers]. Praha, Rybka Publishers 2009.

Additionally, one might suggest that “you cannot write poetry against the regime that wants to sentence you to death.”¹⁰² In sum, would it be right to question them because they “did not fight with steam buns?”¹⁰³ Or that one should not question everything, including who in their case is the perpetrator and who should bear the guilt for their victims.

Let us now explore the current state of the Mašíns commemoration and that of their victims. In the early 1970s memorial plaques were unveiled dedicated to members of the National Security Corps – to Oldřich Kašík in the town of Chlumec nad Cidlinou and to Jaroslav Honzátko in Čelákovice. The plaque dedicated to the latter was removed following the decision of the town council in 1994. It was deposited in the town’s museum. The local communist organization keeps borrowing the plaque for annual commemorative acts.¹⁰⁴ In the late 1990s the municipal culture council in Chlumec nad Cidlinou also recommended to remove the memorial plaque there on ideological grounds. Yet the town council did not support the proposal. The supporters of the preservation of the plaque include the owners of the house that used to serve as an office of the National Security Corps. It is worth mentioning that the communist regime somehow forgot to install a memorial to the third, civilian victim (Josef Rošický) and that also in the case of both murdered men the piety to them and their relatives most probably was not the primary motive for the construction of the memorial sites.¹⁰⁵ The omission was picked up from the ashes by members of the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia in 2011 when they publicly asked the Czech President to pay respect to the victims of the Mašín group raids in Czechoslovakia as part of the annual medal awards ceremony. They supported their proposal by arguing that their memory had been tainted, that in August 2011, the then Minister of Defence Alexandr Vondra awarded the Mašín

102 The quotation comes from an interview with Petr Skála, a councillor in the town of Sadská, who in 1997 awarded the Mašín brothers and Milan Paumer with so-called honourable residence (*Ibid.*, p. 110).

103 CHALUPOVÁ, Markéta: *Nebojovali švestkovými knedlíky: Odbojová skupina bratří Mašíků v zrcadle dobového tisku* [They did not fight with steam buns: The resistance group of the Mašín brothers as reflected in contemporary press]. Brno, Computer Press 2011.

104 It happened again – with greater media coverage – during the 60th anniversary of the tragic incident in 2011. See: *Stovka lidí uctila památku strážmistra, kterého zabili Mašíni* [A hundred people paid respect to the memory of the constable killed by the Mašíns]. In: *Novinky.cz* [online]. 2011-09-28 [quoted 2017-06-09]. Accessed at: www.novinky.cz/domaci/245871-stovka-lidi-uctila-pamatku-strazmistra-ktereho-zabili-masini.html; DASTAN, Josef: *Komsomolci v Čelákovících jasně vyjádřili, že teroristická vražda nevinného je zločin* [Members of the Komsomol in Čelákovice clearly stated that terrorist murder of an innocent person is a crime]. In: *Svaz mladých komunistů Československa, Východní Čechy* [Union of Young Communists of Czechoslovakia, East Bohemia] [online]. 2011-10-08 [quoted 2017-06-09]. Accessed at: www.smkc-vychodnicechy.webnode.cz/news/komsomolci-v-celakovicich-jasne-vyjadrili-ze-teroristicka-vrazda-nevinneho-je-zlocin-/.

105 In an interview with Miroslav Kačor, the daughter of Oldřich Kašík describes the undignified treatment of the family that accompanied the planning and unveiling of the memorial plaque in June 1970. KAČOR, M.: *Svědění hrdinů*, pp. 45–46.

brothers a military medal of the Golden Linden Tree (the ceremony was held in Cleveland on the occasion of the funeral of Ctirad Mašíň).¹⁰⁶

At the same time, on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the tragic event in Chlumec nad Cidlinou a local Civic Group of Those Culturally Minded put forward a new initiative – to construct a memorial site in the vicinity of the remaining memorial plaque from the 1970s. An inscription on the memorial plaque would offer an objective interpretation consulted with historians. It was to describe the raids on the police station as a “failed attempt to acquire machine guns for the purposes of organized anti-communist resistance,” which resulted in the “regrettable killing of Oldřich Kašík, the younger officer.” The memorial was designed by sculptor Aleš John as triangular pyramid with initials of names of the protagonists of the raid inscribed, the base of which would carry a plaque with the text. The Group won support on the part of the municipal culture council, whilst the town council in Chlumec nad Cidlinou did not recommend further deliberations of the matter. About 20 people came to the public presentation of the model of the monument.¹⁰⁷

The same year saw an installation of children’s zodiac clocks on the colonnade in the city of Poděbrady. Lucie Seifertová, artist and co-author of the popular comics *Dějiny udatného českého národa* [The history of the brave Czech nation] placed on the tube of the clocks’ posters depicting the history of the country, including the mention of the Mašíň brothers which was an invitation to a cross-country run Poděbrady–Berlin. The artefact encountered a rejection similarly to the memorial plaque to Milan Paumer that was unveiled a year later. The plaque was paid by financial contributions made by anonymous donors. The location of the plaque was adopted by a tight majority at the Poděbrady city council despite the widespread concern that the plaque would become a target of vandals. A memorial plaque dedicated to the third member of the group who managed to escape to the West in 1953 was unveiled. It clearly refers to the activities of the entire group, as had been affirmed by Jiří Cihlář who had initiated the memorial site and is the President of the Milan Paumer Charitable Fund.¹⁰⁸

106 WIRNITZER, Jan: Pohraničník, členové KSČ i milicí: Filip navrhl oběti Mašíňů na metál [The border guard, members of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia as well as the militias: Filip proposed a medal for the victims of the Mašíňs]. In: *iDnes.cz* [online]. 2011-09-11 [quoted 2017-06-09]. Accessed at: http://zpravy.idnes.cz/pohranicnik-clenove-ksc-i-milici-filip-navrhl-obeti-masinu-na-metal-1d7-/domaci.aspx?c=A110910_182754_domaci_jw. The Cleveland ceremony was preceded by an award-giving in 2008 when, during his visit in Washington, Prime Minister Miroslav Topolánek awarded Josef Mašíň “a private” prime ministerial plaque. Both acts triggered a wave of protests.

107 See CATULUS: Prezentace pamětní desky [A presentation of memorial plaque]. In: *Chlumecké listy*, No. 10 (2011), pp. 24–25. See VÍTKOVÁ, Kateřina: Lidí přišlo pár, o pomníku Mašíňů rozhodne vedení Chlumce [A handful of people came, the Chlumec council to decide on the fate of the Mašíňs memorial]. In: *iDnes* [online]. 2011-09-15 [quoted 2017-06-09]. Accessed at: www.hradec.idnes.cz/lidi-prislo-par-o-pomniku-masinu-rozhodne-vedeni-chlumce-p3Z/hradec-zpravy.aspx?c=A110915_1651955_hradec_zpravy_klu.

108 ČTK: Protikomunistický odbojář Paumer má pamětní desku v Poděbradech [Member of the anti-communist resistance Paumer has a memorial plaque in Poděbrady]. In: *deník.cz*

Milan Paumer himself initiated the commemoration of Zdena Mašínová – who was arrested after her son emigrated; she was tried and died in prison – and to her husband, General Josef Mašín, the hero of the so-called second resistance. The memorial plaque from 2003 complements an earlier memorial to the victims of Nazism and is located in the first court of the castle in Poděbrady. The member of the Mašín group, Ctibor Novák, is listed among professional soldiers executed in political trials in the 1950s. The list is on a memorial plaque placed on the building of the General Staff of the Czech army in Prague – Dejvice. Nonetheless, the definition is quite formal in respect to his postwar professional path and in connection with his trial in which he was sentenced.¹⁰⁹ Zdena Mašínová, Ctibor Novák, Zbyněk Janata, as well as Václav Švéda are also commemorated within the framework of the memorial arrangement of the burial site in Ďáblice.

The memory of the Mašíns continues to divide the public into those for whom they embody anti-communist rebels and heroes, and those who consider them to be plain murderers who have nothing to do with the ideals of the resistance. In between the two extreme points a third view stands (supported, for instance, by Petr Zídek and Tomáš Zahradníček): it reflects the activities of the Mašín group within the context of anti-communist resistance as “failure.”¹¹⁰ The proponents of this view argue that the Mašíns were led by pure intentions, yet, with their deeds, they committed evil that in no way weakened the regime. They had killed innocent people, destroyed their own family and they themselves survived.¹¹¹ “It is one of the duties of a warrior who takes justice into his own hands, to properly assess the situation, choose the enemy and the fighting means. In all of this they failed entirely,” historian Tomáš Zahradníček comments the Mašín actions.¹¹²

Josef Švéda, the author of the monograph *Mašínovský mýtus* [The Mašín Myth] argues that the three positions correspond with the anti-communist myth and/or the communist anti-myth (in negative, though by no means dismissive sense) in respect to the so called consensual positions (which does not label the Mašíns as murderers and thus stands more on the side of the myth). The Mašín myth, along with the “consensual positions” are, within the framework of the “struggle for collective memory in Czech post-communism” part of the liberal ideological structure. The entire “struggle for the Mašíns” is an expression of an attempt to “conquer the

[online]. 2012-10-06 [quoted 2017-06-09]. Accessed at: http://www.denik.cz/z_domova/protikomunisticky-odbojar-paumer-ma-pametni-desku-v-podebradech-20121006.html.

109 See the chapter dedicated to Ctibor Novák in the monograph by Jan Němeček entitled *Mašínové*, pp. 193–212.

110 See TICHÝ, Martin: Česká společnost ve světle mašínovské diskuse: Co zaznělo po smrti Milana Paumera o skupině bratří Mašínů [Czech society against the backdrop of the Mašín debate: What was said after the death of Milan Paumer about the group of the Mašín brothers]. In: *Paměť a dějiny*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (2010), pp. 120–124.

111 See: Historik Zídek k Mašínům: Třetí odboj není odboj [Historian Zídek on the Mašíns: The third resistance is no resistance]. In: *ČT24* [online]. Před půlnocí, 2011-08-18 [quoted 2017-06-09]. Accessed at: www.ceskatelevize.cz/ct24/domaci/1247191-historik-zidek-k-masinum-treti-odboj-neni-odboj.

112 ZAHRADNÍČEK, Tomáš: Tragický omyl třetího odboje [The tragic error of the third resistance]. In: *MF Dnes* (28 July 2010), p. 8. Accessed at: www.ceskasisir.cz/dok/d705.php.

past, to give it some concrete and firm meaning that would advocate and defend [the ideological] *status quo*.” That concerns the communist anti-myth as well as the current Mašín hero legend. Švédá notes an obvious development from anti-myth to myth (judging by the change in discussion from whether they ought to be fully rehabilitated to whether they deserve to be given awards). He predicts two possible directions of further development. The Mašíns are either to be fully included in the post-communist pantheon (where, as Švédá argues, they belong in part) or (in the case of a sudden regime change) they will fall in the abyss of memory.¹¹³ In this respect one can equally interpret the tendency to the Mašín commemoration. It is interesting to note that the Confederation of Political Prisoners did not take part in any commemoration even though its president, Naděžda Kavalířová, stated that “the position of the Confederation on the Mašín brothers is absolutely clear: we faithfully stand by them.”¹¹⁴

The Third Resistance and Memory

When Zdena Mašínová Jr. spoke of Václav Havel as of “just a spoiled mamma’s boy,”¹¹⁵ she identified with the idiosyncratic Mašín straightforwardness the core of the distant attitude that developed shortly after November 1989 between the anti-communist resistance of the 1950s (primarily represented by the Confederation

113 With his semiotic analysis of the Mašín-related texts, Švédá wishes to counter the view about post-ideological literary works after November 1989. He comes to the conclusion that the “representation of the Mašín brothers as warriors for liberal democracy is no ‘less ideological’ than the stories about them from the times of communism.” He argues that the first to significantly contribute to the construction of the Mašín myth is the “‘official’ historical discourse,” whilst the so-called consensual positions (reflecting the attitude of the Mašíns not to reward and “let be” that was upheld by the Presidency of both Václav Havel and Václav Klaus) do not construct any original representations in connection with the discussions surrounding the Mašíns. (ŠVÉDA, J.: *Mašínovský mýtus*, pp. 188–198, 220–241, quoted from p. 235 and 240.) Françoise Mayer points out the controversial identification of narratives about the Mašíns with the Mašíns myth in her review: Doktorát jako nástroj ideologického boje: Nad knihou Josefa Švédy o “mašínovském mýtu” [A doctoral degree as an instrument of ideological struggle: A review of Josef Švédá’s monograph on the “Mašíns myth”]. In: *Babylon*, Vol. 12, No. 4 (2013), p. 6.

114 A record of 16 June 2004 from the public hearing of the Senate Committee for Education, Science, Culture, and Human Rights and petition concerning the resistance activities of the Mašín brothers is available online at: http://www.senat.cz/xqw/xervlet/pssenat/dokumenty?cid=pssenat_dokumenty.pVisitor.f_folders&id=949&event-name=move. Nonetheless, by 2008 at the latest, the relationship suffers as a result of controversy between the Confederation chairwoman Naděžda Kavalířová (1923–2017) and Zdena Mašínová Jr. (*1933). See RAUŠOVÁ, Zuzana: Mašínová odmítla kvůli Kavalířové převzít vyznamenání pro otce [Because of Kavalířová, Mašínová refused to accept the award for her father]. In: *iDNES.cz* [online]. 2008-10-27 [quoted 2017-06-09]. Accessed at: http://zpravy.idnes.cz/masinova-odmitla-kvuli-kavalirove-prevzit-vyznamenani-pro-otce-pxn/domaci.aspx?c=A081027_144517_domaci_if.

115 Charta 77 nebyl pravý odboj: Rozhovor Jana Geberta se Zdenou Mašínovou mladší [Charter 77 was not genuine resistance: Jan Gebert’s interview with Zdena Mašínová Jr.]. In: *Týden*, Vol. 21, No. 47 (18 November 2014), pp. 34–39.

of Political Prisoners) and the “intellectual” dissident resistance after 1968 (personified by Havel). The anti-regime resistance between 1948 and 1989 falls under the umbrella of the “third resistance.” It is to give an impression that homogenous positions of its protagonists are merely an illusion used largely within the political discourse. This desired image of the homogeneity of society that generates “members of the third resistance” gives rise to many misunderstandings: the society of 1950 and (say) 1975 is divided by a quarter of a century, a timespan that brought fundamental societal changes. The reserved attitude between both groups also includes painting a mutually critical image. On the one hand, one can note disregard to dissidents who are portrayed virtually as loafers and promiscuous drug addicts, who had never been confronted with actual repressions by the communist regime and, after the Velvet Revolution, were raised (by Havel) to politics and public posts. The other group shows a condescending attitude to the officials and “deserving” political prisoners allied in the Confederation as those who are mentally stranded in the 1950s and fail to understand that times have changed.

The discourse within the Confederation of Political Prisoners in the early 1990s was on the part of the political prisoners of the 1950s a reaction to the fact that during both of the post-February 1948 milestones, i.e. the Prague Spring and the time after November 1989, they received no social satisfaction. In the first period, they were overshadowed by reform Communists and in the latter by dissidents (including those from among the former reform Communists). Against the “winning” discourse of the dissent (with the fall of communism at its core, along with those who had participated in its dismantlement) the Confederation emphasizes the need to view the communist regime from its inception. From the perspective of its first victims the group appeals for the need to carry out genuine de-communization, the ideas of which have been strongly influenced by the specific prison experience. Political prisoners put the concept of the third resistance against the majority consensus about legal continuity of the post-November constitution and the thick line behind the past. There they represent the first warriors against communism. The constructed image of the third resistance that highlights historical continuity with resistance during both World Wars was a means used by political prisoners to demand its recognition (*inter alia* by referring to Act No. 255/1946 Coll., that recognizes anti-Nazi resistance during the Second World War). It was also related to the legitimization of its armed actions.¹¹⁶

Even though the *de facto* and/or *de iure* recognition of the third resistance remained unheeded in the 1990s, the image of the three resistance waves gradually filled public space. The Confederation of Political Prisoners is without precedent the most active association in promoting and opening memorial sites in the Czech Republic. It is the commemorative activities where its social influence is most powerful. In the cases of memorial sites dedicated to the theme of resistance, traditionally there is still slight prevalence of the connection of the second and third resistance that is identified as commemorations “related to the period of “totalitarianism,” “lack

116 See MAYER, F.: *Češi a jejich komunismus*, pp. 166–187.

of freedom” or “lawlessness.” The dedications are getting notably emancipated: whilst in the 1990s the landscape of memorial sites was dominated by those who saw political prisoners as victims, the more recent commemorations increasingly depict them as acting forces of the resistance. Apart from the new post-November 1989 memorials to the three waves of resistance (for instance in Brno, Olomouc or Opava) most cases involve memorials (usually memorial plaques) placed on earlier memorials – being from interwar Czechoslovakia or from the period that immediately followed the Second World War. That creates a repeated layering of memories that climax in the “third resistance re-dedication”: most hitherto memorials were not related to the resistance, but commemorated wartime victims (in Česká Lípa, Hradec Králové, Suchdol nad Lužnicí and elsewhere). Thus the category of re-commemoration includes a handful of memorials erected during the communist era that were revitalized after 1989 (such as the memorial site in Brandýs nad Labem originally dedicated to anti-Nazi fighters; a memorial to the Red Army in Nový Bydžov).¹¹⁷ As Françoise Mayer points out, the third resistance enables to put different experiences under a single identity, even though most political prisoners of the 1950s were not actual members of the resistance and some resistance activists who managed to leave for exile were not political prisoners.¹¹⁸

A question arises what memory is thus (jointly) created by memorial sites commemorating violent acts that accompanied civic resistance to the communist regime. Additionally, one might ask whether such a memory means anti-communist resistance or struggle or not.

First and foremost, commemoration explored in this study presents merely a part of the overall documentation of memorial sites related to the communist regime.¹¹⁹ The presented material does not cover all the memorial sites related to events connected to armed violence,¹²⁰ that was not characteristic for anti-communist resistance in the 1950s. Yet it was not a unique phenomenon either (i.e. it was not merely about symptomatic “excesses”). In connection with the ever-vibrant discussion surrounding the Mašín brothers a question keeps arising whether members of the resistance had the moral right to kill those who served as power pillars of the regime or not. Yet, further knowledge and understanding would benefit more

117 See www.pametnimista.usd.cas.cz.

118 MAYER, F.: *Češi a jejich komunismus*, p. 187.

119 A significant portion (over 150) of a total of ca. 600 are memorial sites identified in the project as symbolic which, without concrete dedication, represent general commemoration of (virtually without exception) victims of communist repression. The initiative largely comes from the Confederation of Political Prisoners.

120 These should also include the commemorations of the killing of an SNB constable in a bombing attack at the Secretariat of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (Milevsko, Obděnice), shooting of SNB constables during an arrest attempt (Uherské Hradiště, Vsetín), killing of a member of the guardian battalion during a raid (Prague 7), killing of an alleged provocateur of the State Security in Hodonín (Dolní Bojanovice) and of an informer of the State Security (Svatý Hostýn) or the cases of killing persons suspected of acting as provocateurs as part of the anti-regime groups (Tišnov, Ostrava) and some others.

from asking whether one side indeed represented members of the resistance and the other the pillars of the regime.

Petr Zídek replied to the first part of the question quite brusquely: the third resistance never existed.¹²¹ He identified anti-communist resistance in light of historical knowledge as an “unsustainable construct” and its codification to be a component of political proclamations enforced by part of the political establishment as mistaken (Zídek is by no means alone to uphold such an argument).¹²² He argues that the activity of the handful and isolated anti-communist groups does not meet the attributes of resistance as we understand it in connection with the two World Wars. He further points out that critical analyses of documents of the repressive units as *de facto* the only sources available (at the time when virtually no witnesses are still alive) makes it difficult to reliably reconstruct past events and credibly separate authentic anti-regime activities (or their extent) from initiatives that had been provoked. Zídek considers armed resistance to be “an altogether marginal phenomenon that involved a couple of hundred individuals.”¹²³ Such an approach gives rise to additional questions. Is denial of the third resistance necessarily an expression of overall scepticism about anti-communist resistance and struggle after February 1948? Is the authenticity of anti-regime manifestations met by the “unarmed” faction within the anti-communist structures that worked with political or intelligence instruments (such as appeals, leaflets, information channels to the West, etc.)? Alternatively, is it represented by the principal ethical and civic positions upheld in direct confrontation with violence exerted by the regime (General Heliodor Píka, Milada Horáková, Father Josef Toufar)?

Let us return to the other part of the aforementioned question: whether the victims of armed resistance in the 1950s were power pillars of the regime. In this context, a major difference arises between the *de facto* accidental victims of the Mašín group and the victims of other “political murders.” In the latter case the victims came from a clearly identifiable circle of people identified by membership in the power structure of the regime. No matter how insignificant their status was within the power hierarchy, for the residents in small villages the local Communist Party officials serving the national committees were the carriers of actual power. Their pressure on individuals (no matter what were the motives at the individual level) was able to acquire a wholly existential scale. It is thus equally possible to clearly identify members of the Border Guard with the regime and its power structure and, consequently, as enemies of the armed traffickers and couriers.

121 ZÍDEK, Petr: Chiméra třetího odboje [The pipedream of the third resistance]. In: *Lidové noviny*, insert “Orientace” (18–19 September 2010), p. 24.

122 See also Historik Zídek k Mašínům (www.ceskatelevize.cz/ct24/domaci/1247191-historik-zidek-k-masinum-treti-odboj-neni-odboj). See, e.g., ZÁHRADNÍČEK, T.: Tragický omyl třetího odboje (www.ceskasibir.cz/dok/d705.php); IDEM: Žádný zákon o odboji [No law on the resistance]. In: *MF Dnes* (25 August 2010), p. 8. Accessed at: www.ceskasibir.cz/dok/d709.php.

123 Historik Zídek k Mašínům (www.ceskatelevize.cz/ct24/domaci/1247191-historik-zidek-k-masinum-treti-odboj-neni-odboj).

When, in 2010, a group of historians published their critical position on the draft legislation on the third resistance and the Senate withdrew the bill, the Confederation of Political Prisoners did not welcome the initiative with an understanding. It was not indeed an astonishing response, considering how long political prisoners endeavoured to achieve recognition (plus when it seemed that the case was again put *ad acta*). That was despite the fact that the position was not against the meaning of the planned legislation, quite on the contrary.¹²⁴ The tone of the public debate that accompanied political enforcement of the act on the third resistance heightened along with the growing tendency to appropriate the memory of resistance along with the interpretation of the resistance history, along with their political instrumentalization.¹²⁵ Politicians from the Civic Democratic Party (ODS) that were in the Cabinet compared the critical voices raised about the concept of the third resistance to communist propaganda.¹²⁶ They kept excluding the critics from the public debate.¹²⁷ Voices came from the clearly anti-communist ranks of “deniers.”¹²⁸ The adoption of the bill in July 2011 was accompanied by the yet largest (and most media-covered) “protest” commemorative events in Babice and Čelákovice that were jointly organized by the Communist Party and the Club of the Czech Borderlands.

The narrative presented by the Confederation of Political Prisoners to address the public since the 1990s was largely constructed on the testimonies of political prisoners of the 1950s and their documentation (particularly during the period of the Prague Spring and in exile) and continues to be reproduced essentially unchanged through oral transmission by politicians and the media on a whole range

124 The position largely pointed out at the questionable categorization of the resistance, particularly in connection with the future practical challenge of a fair solution to such a distinction. See, e.g., ČT24: Historikové kritizují zákon o třetím odboji, pravice jej hájí [Historians criticize the law on the third resistance; the right advocates it]. In: ČT24 [online]. 2010-12-2 [quoted 2017-06-09]. Accessed at: <http://www.ceskatelesee.cz/ct24/domaci/1300327-historikove-kritizuji-zakon-o-tretim-odboji-pravice-jej-haji>.

125 For the genesis see: TRUSINA, Šimon: *Analýza přijetí zákona o protikomunistickém odboji a odporu pomocí teorie více proudů* [An analysis of the adoption of the law on the anti-communist struggle and resistance using multiple stream theory]. A master's thesis submitted at the Faculty of Social Studies at Masaryk University in Brno in 2013. Accessed at: www.is.muni.cz/th/144210/fss_m/DP_Trusina.pdf.

126 Such a statement came from, for instance, Prime Minister Petr Nečas at a meeting with representatives of the Confederation of Political prisoners. See ZÍDEK, P.: Chiméra třetího odboje.

127 Response by Minister of Defence Alexandr Vondra to the position of historians on the law on the third resistance. See: SPURNÝ, Matěj: Proč se historikům nelíbí zákon o třetím odboji? [Why do historians not like the law on the third resistance?]. In: *Aktuálně.cz* [online]. 2010-12-10 [quoted 2017-06-09]. Accessed at: <http://blog.aktualne.cz/blogy/matej-spurny.php?itemid=11531>.

128 Documentarist Martin Vadas in conversation with Josef Mašín includes Petr Zídek and Tomáš Zahradníček among historians “who make their reputation as the so-called denier of the third resistance.” See: Jsou tři kategorie – odboj, odpor a disent (http://www.totalita.cz/odbsk/odbsk_masin_rozh_mj_01_01.pdf).

of anniversaries and official occasions.¹²⁹ It receives negligible reflection by new research, even though many of the traditional interpretations have been inevitably surpassed by later findings. It is difficult to keep a blind eye to parallels to the manner with which the Club of the Czech Borderlands operates with memory and the narrative of safeguarding the national borders. Whist coming from different positions, they have established themselves in the public space as two normative memories that are characterized by closeness within their own constructed narratives (those of the border guards and those of political prisoners). It is the memory of the experienced past and the non-transferrable experience, “their” memory – of both associations (the Club of the Czech Borderlands and the Confederation of Political Prisoners) – that allows it to be used by political organizations of either a similar or comparable ideology. Yet they find it uneasy to open “everything” – alternative historiographic accounts and societal reflections.¹³⁰ Both narratives (about the “trespassers” of the borders as enemies of communism and/or the agents of anti-communist resistance) endeavour to offer a distinct image of the past and a clear message about who is the victim and who holds the right to historical truth.

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Translated by Lucia Faltinova

129 See, e.g., RAMBOUSEK, Ota – GRUBER, Ladislav: *Zpráva dokumentační komise K 231* [A Report by the Documentation Commission K 231] [Toronto], Členové dokumentační komise K 231 v exilu 1973.

130 The current news of the support by President Miloš Zeman to the Club of the Czech Borderlands also triggered controversial reactions See, e.g., ZELENKA, Jakub: Zeman poděkoval “za vlastenectví” Klubu českého pohraničí. Ten přitom vnitro a tajné služby řadí k extremistům [Zeman thanked the Club of the Czech Borderlands for “patriotism.” Yet the Ministry of Interior and the intelligence services rank the club among extremists]. In: *ihned.cz* [online]. 2017-06-09. Accessed at: <https://domaci.ihned.cz/c1-65761580-zeman-podekoval-za-vlastenectvi-klubu-ceskeho-pohranici-ten-pritom-vnitro-a-tajne-sluzby-radi-k-extremistum>.

How Much Totalitarianism Remained in the “Normalization” Era?

Karel Hrubý

The discussion on the character of the communist dictatorship in Czechoslovakia has not been completed yet.¹ It emerged after a certain delay in parallel to a debate on the character of communist and Nazi dictatorships, which has been going on for more than half a century, mainly in German and American historiography. The differences identified between the fascist, Nazi and communist dictatorships in the political, economic, social and ideological spheres led to a recognition that these regimes cannot be seen as identical.² The comparison of Hitler’s and Stalin’s regimes in particular

1 This text is a continuation of the author’s two previous essays published in *Soudobé dějiny* journal. It brings to a close this loosely structured series of essays on the character of the communist regime (mainly in Czechoslovakia). See HRUBÝ, Karel: Kontinuita nestejného: Sporné závěry z nesporně dobrých analýz Matěje Spurného [Continuity between unlikes: The doubtful conclusions of Matěj Spurný’s undoubtedly good analyses]. In: *Soudobé dějiny*, Vol. 20, No. 4 (2013), pp. 628–640; IDEM: Rozpaky nad výkladem komunistické diktatury: Kritické poznámky k projektu “Socialismus jako myšlenkový svět” [Baffled by an interpretation of the communist dictatorship: Critical remarks on “Socialism as Sinnwelt” Project]. In: *Ibid.*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (2014), pp. 382–404.

2 See CURTIS, Michael: Totalitarismus – eine monolithische Einheit? In: JESSE, Eckhardt (ed.): *Totalitarismus im 20. Jahrhundert: Eine Bilanz der internationalen Forschung*. 2nd expanded edition. Bonn, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung 1999, pp. 77–285; LINZ, Juan José: *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes*. Boulder (Colorado), Lynne Rienner Publishers 2000 (2nd German edition: *Totalitäre und autoritäre Regime*. Berlin, Raimund Krämer 2003); GEYER, Michael – FITZPATRICKOVÁ, Sheila: Úvod: Theorie totalitarismu a její recepcie – srovnávání stalinismu a nacismu [Introduction: After

revealed not only similarities, but also substantial differences in their structures and functioning. Both of them relied on mass movements mobilized by a political party, which wanted to remove “bourgeois” democracy and establish a “new order.” There is no doubt that both regimes used very brutal means to impose their leading power position over those segments of society considered hostile or excluded from society (for racial or class reasons). However, under the Nazis, industry and agriculture never passed from private hands under state control, despite production quotas that were imposed on them both before and during the war. In contrast to the communist system, the state thus never became an exclusive employer of the vast majority of the population. Certain economic pluralism existed, and social stratification did not undergo such a revolutionary change as under the dictatorship of the Communist Party. There were also major differences in the ideologies legitimizing the regimes: while the Nazis justified their policy by a quest for racial purity, national pride and supremacy, and openly aimed at territorial expansion, the Communist Party, drawing on the ideology of Marxism-Leninism, sought a transformation of society on the political, social and economic level, as well as in terms of its beliefs and values, aiming thus at a higher form of justice and equality. In the Nazi regime, as opposed to the communist one, loyalty to the leader rather than party affiliation played a far greater role in achieving positions of power and within the state apparatus.

It is hardly surprising that in our countries, in which Nazi dictatorship was established by a hostile act of another state, it is the study of communist dictatorship that attracts more attention. The communist regime was set up with the active participation of a large part of the Czech and Slovak society, which viewed this as a necessary or as the most direct path towards a new and just social order. However, there were others in society who perceived it as a destructive intervention in the existing democratic order. Three generations lived through the dictatorship, at least for a certain period of their lives. During Stalin’s leadership, the essential features of this dictatorship corresponded, to a great extent, to the theoretical model of totalitarianism. This model was characterized by a total politicization of society by means of a monopoly of the ruling party. The Communist Party concentrated in its power central control of political, economic, cultural and other areas, and also sought the ideological indoctrination of the population. There is general agreement today, even among the majority of the theory’s critics, that the Soviet system under Stalin’s leadership clearly had a totalitarian character. However, what remains in dispute is whether the system established in Czechoslovakia in February 1948 maintained its totalitarian character throughout the entire existence of the communist rule, or whether, at later stages, it became another type of totality,³ or put differently, whether it gradually evolved

totalitarianism – Stalinism and Nazism compared]. In: IDEM (ed.): *Za obzor totalitarismu: Srovnání stalinismu a nacismu* [Beyond totalitarianism: Stalinism and Nazism compared]. Praha, Academia 2002, p. 34. The book was originally published in English and only later it was translated to Czech.

3 Juan J. Linz deals with the plurality of forms of totality in the cited work *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes*, p. 69. On the interpretation of the term “totalitarianism,” see NOVÁK, Miroslav: K aplikaci pojmu totalitarismus na komunistické systémy: Obecné problémy

into a completely different undemocratic or authoritarian regime. A discussion on the issue that appeared in the magazine *Soudobé dějiny*⁴ in 2009 clarified some of the facts, concepts and methods. There are nevertheless still various opinions on *how to interpret the communist dictatorship after Stalin’s death* – not only in the Soviet Union, but also in the Central European and East European satellites, including former Czechoslovakia. Not even the collection of studies within the project *Socialismus jako myšlenkový svět* [Socialism as *Sinnwelt*],⁵ which critically examined the concept of totalitarianism, produced a new concept that would shed more light on the essence and operation of the communist dictatorship.

I would like to mention some of the objections raised by revisionist historiography to the flaws of the totalitarian model, and at the same time show how some of these objections were later challenged and rebutted by the theory, as well as how the theory reflected the changes that followed Stalin’s death. By comparing both the approaches that either declare and defend, or reject the existence of totalitarianism, I want to trace the continuity of phases that the communist dictatorship and society in Czechoslovakia underwent between 1948 and 1989. It is an aim to find out to what extent the structures and functions of the totalitarian rule (dictatorship) from the initial (post-February) period were transformed or, on the contrary, preserved. And similarly, to what degree the pre-existing political ideas and value systems were changed or preserved in the consciousness of the Czechoslovak society. In short, how much of the fundamental essence of the communist dictatorship was preserved in the final stage of the “normalization” era.

The Debate on Totalitarianism

Let Us Start with the Criticism of Totalitarianism

The most discussed model of totalitarian dictatorship, as elaborated by Carl Joachim Friedrich in cooperation with Zbigniew Brzezinski in the mid-1950s, can be also applied to fascist dictatorships, while their distinctive features likewise need to be taken into account. For many researchers, the model was a better description of the situation in the Soviet Union and its communist satellites during the period

a česká specifika [On applying the concept of totalitarianism to communist systems: General problems and Czech specifics]. In: *Securitas imperii*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (2013), pp. 14–27; see also BALÍK, Stanislav – KUBÁT, Michal: *Teorie a praxe totalitárních a autoritativních režimů* [Theory and practice of totalitarian and authoritarian regimes]. Praha, Dokofán 2004.

4 See the thematic series of articles “Existoval v českých dějinách totalitarismus?” [Was there a totalitarian era in contemporary Czech history?]. In *Soudobé dějiny*, Vol. 16, No. 4 (2009), pp. 605–743.

5 See the introductory essay by Michal Kopeček and Pavel Kolář “Projekt ‘Socialistická diktatura jako myšlenkový svět’” [Project “Socialist Dictatorship as *Sinnwelt*”] and the subsequent studies on this issue by Martin Sabrow, Matěj Spurný, Pavel Kolář and Michal Pullmann in *Soudobé dějiny*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (2012), pp. 189–274.

of Stalinism.⁶ At the time of its origin (1956), the model clearly could not have envisaged changes that followed in the communist countries after Stalin's death, or after "the cult of personality was exposed." However, it was precisely this aspect which later became a major source of criticism. According to its critics, the typologically created concepts (such as "totalitarian ideology" or "terror") as well as the static totalitarian model as such did not correspond to the reality of the changing communist dictatorships.⁷ The model was also criticized for perceiving society as an oppressed mass, only passively exposed to the pressure of the regime, whereas according to its critics, society was, on the contrary, to a certain degree autonomous and could therefore act independently. In the revisionist view, the behaviour of society was not determined solely by external causes.⁸

In fact, Friedrich and Brzezinski's concept of totalitarianism does not negate a certain autonomy on the part of family, churches, universities and other social institutions outside the political sphere, where the behaviour of the participants was not always completely defined by a political-economic organization (a state-socialist system of a one-party dictatorial regime, which strives for a uniform indoctrination of society). However, they still perceive society as being *powerless against the regime in terms of the possibility to make fundamental political, economic, social and ideological decisions*.⁹ Despite this, they considered the private sphere to be active, albeit limited,

6 FRIEDRICH, Carl Joachim – BRZEZINSKI, Zbigniew: *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy*. Cambridge (Massachusetts), Harvard University Press 1956. (The edition I refer to here is a German translation: FRIEDRICH, Carl Joachim in cooperation with Zbigniew Brzezinski: *Totalitäre Diktatur*. Stuttgart, Kohlhammer 1957.) This theory outlined six major features of the totalitarian system: 1) creation of a new society in accordance with the binding ideology and utopia, 2) existence of a single mass party consisting of a small part of the population, which however rules the state, 3) use of both physical and psychological terror, 4) near-complete state monopoly of all means of armed combat, 5) near-complete state monopoly of the means of mass communication, 6) central, bureaucratically coordinated control and direction of economy. Throughout the following half-century, this theory was developed on, modified, but also criticized.

7 See, for example, LUDZ, Peter Christian: Entwurf einer soziologischen Theorie totalitär verfasster Gesellschaft. In: SEIDEL, Bruno – JENKNER, Siegfried (ed.): *Wege der Totalitarismus-Forschung*. Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft 1968, pp. 532–599.

8 See BUBEN, Radek – PULLMANN, Michal – SPURNÝ, Matěj – RŮŽIČKA, Jiří: Diktatura a autoritářské režimy [Dictatorship and authoritarian regimes]. In: STORCHOVÁ, Lucie et al.: *Koncepty a dějiny: Proměny pojmů v současné historické vědě* [Concepts and history: Transformation of concepts in contemporary historiography]. Praha, Scriptorium 2014, pp. 281–307.

9 It is important to distinguish between the *system* of political-economic organization and the *regime* as an institutionalized form of government. The beginning of the *state socialism* system in Czechoslovakia dates back to 1945, when all the key sectors of the economy were nationalized. However, after 1945 the regime was still a pluralistic *democracy* in which the separation of powers was guaranteed by the Constitution. In February 1948, the principle of political plurality was replaced by a *dictatorship*, i.e. by a monopoly of rule of the Communist Party, which virtually abolished the separation of the legislative and judicial powers from the executive power, then seized complete control of the state and excluded any opposition. In this essay, the focus is on the *relation between the dictatorship and society*;

in its choices in daily life.¹⁰ According to the totalitarian theory, society was not only passively exposed to the regime’s pressure, but also defied it. It *represented an active obstacle* to absolute indoctrination and disciplining of the population by the regime, which sought a unity of world opinion and values. The theorists of totalitarianism therefore recognized the opposition role of society. However, they failed to explore the activities, motivation and identification of that part of society that supported the communist regime and assisted in its creation. In this aspect, their approach was one-sided and rightfully criticized.

Other critical objections to the totalitarian theory include the following:

1) The ruling party still had a monopoly of power, but it was not monolithic. In the later stages, factions, diverse opinions, and sometimes even disputes, arose within the ruling party and governmental institutions. The operation of the regime also showed clear signs of friction and shortcomings. This led to partial pluralism within the system, or the ruling party, which contradicts the postulation of total concentration of power in the hands of the elite.

2) Mass terror after Stalin’s death lessened and eventually disappeared. The role of law in the process of re-education and repression changed – the decisions were no longer made arbitrarily by the “men in power,” but rather they were based on law, which was still repressive, but formally observed.

3) The regime sought to mobilize and integrate the population in the consolidation and development of the socialist system, not primarily through ideology as in the 1950s, but also through pragmatic measures. These primarily entailed material incentives (decreasing prices, increasing wages, expanding social care, etc.) and creating conditions for a broader range of leisure activities in the non-political sphere.

4) Despite the lasting asymmetry in power, by using the authoritative discourse to their benefit, the citizens could improve their positions to some degree, and have more influence on the behaviour of the ruling party or the state. The party in power felt obliged to meet some of the citizens’ demands, which resulted in greater freedom to establish interest groups as well as in greater autonomy of these groups. This,

the political-economic system here represents a framework within which the dictatorship developed.

10 See, for example, FRIEDRICH, C. J.: *Totalitäre Diktatur*, part 6 “Islands of separateness,” chapters 22–25, pp. 214–249. In these chapters, the author asserts that the family, the church, the academic and scientific community, and to a certain extent also the army, had their own separate existence. With respect to the family, the author maintains that it had resisted atomization and that those enforcing totalitarianism were in the end obliged to make considerable concessions to it (p. 220). Friedrich equally recognizes the capacity of the church in the totalitarian regimes to serve as a defensive barrier against unleashed violence. Despite the pressure the church was under, it probably succeeded better than other groups in keeping an awareness of pan-human values alive, as well as the purpose of man (p. 233). The academic and scientific communities also sought broader intellectual freedom, notwithstanding the fact that their freedom was curtailed by the regime and that they were ideologically tied by it. Consequently, a number of critical revisionist and reform ideas emerged, which resonated not only with intelligentsia, but also with the broader public.

however, increased the citizens' participation and hence contributed to strengthening the legitimacy of the ruling party.

5) The primary concern of the citizens, after all, was to improve their standard of living, pursue their interests and secure the "necessary peace to work." People lost interest in the form of the political and economic system or in the presence of a foreign army after a while. Only dissidents remained interested in these issues. The dissident community was, however, small and isolated from ordinary people, and their activities therefore had only little impact on any changes.

6) Nevertheless, the central objection to the totalitarian theory is that its authors paid very little attention to society – to the way people lived, perceived and interpreted reality, as well as to their ingenuity in seeking ways to endure the new order established by the communist dictatorship. Some important questions were omitted, such as how people's political beliefs and expectations to rise in social status were met by the dictatorship and how they made use of the opportunities, offered to them by regime, to pursue their interests. Or, by contrast, which strategies they learnt in order to avoid the disagreeable aspects of the dictatorship, how they reacted to the top-down measures and which forms of criticism or dissent they chose. And also, how they spontaneously sought all sorts of improvements, whether to the benefit of "all" (the state), or to their own benefit. Critics also highlighted the importance of effects such as intensive industrialization, the social security system and social certainties, rise in material and social status, as well as the increasing self-confidence of formerly suppressed classes, all of which offered the regime new and more effective ways to justify its repressive character.¹¹

The critique of the totalitarian theory was also aimed at its methods. It was criticized for overly emphasizing the importance of power structures and consequently neglecting research into everyday life, motives behind social behaviour in dictatorships, how the attitudes towards the rule of one party were formed, as well as mutual social relations. According to the critics, close attention was paid to mass terror and other forms of violence, but the theory failed to explain the stability of the regime through its reliance on support on the part of the population. The theory was also criticized for not drawing a clear distinction between the goals, ideologies and contents of the dictatorships being compared. This resulted in a distorted classification of both the Nazi and communist dictatorships under one common concept of "totalitarian dictatorship." In like manner, the theory was seen more as a product of ideology against communism, the main enemy and target of criticism of Western democracies during the Cold War, rather than a critical social concept. However, the major criticism of the totalitarian theory involved the fact that it cannot be fully applied

11 See McDERMOTT, Kevin: Stalin and Stalinism. In: SMITH, Stephen A. (ed.): *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Communism*. Oxford, Oxford University Press 2014, pp. 72–89. Many strong objections were already expressed by Peter Christian Ludz in the cited study "Entwurf einer soziologischen Theorie totalitär verfasster Gesellschaft" (see footnote 7). On his interpretation see LINZ, J. J.: *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes* (see footnote 2).

to the post-Stalinist period, which brought about major changes, mainly in regard to how decisions were made and how repressions were applied.

Some Remarks on the Revisionist Critique

1) To a large extent, the critics were clearly right in objecting that the totalitarian concept focused mainly on explaining the structures of power as well as the impact, form and operating of the dictatorship, but failed to pay the same attention to the society that lived under the dictatorship. This led later to a major shift in the focus on society by social sciences. Life under dictatorship was, however, reflected differently by scholars drawing on the totalitarian theory and those opposing it. The “revisionists” turned their attention mainly to daily life (*Alltag*) and explored the *subjective dimension of life under dictatorship* – i.e. how people interpreted it, behaved in it, helped to shape or transform it, how they conformed their behaviour and which strategies they adopted to organize their lives as successfully as possible, or at least with minimal discomfort. “Totalitarianists,” on the other hand, sought to explain how *the regime and its ideology* intervened in the life of society, in which, apart from the constants of everyday life, a certain cultural tradition was preserved from the past and passed on from generation to generation. Their aim was to clarify how, against this historical background, the regime and ideology in their search for “a new man” or “a new society” *shaped the identity* of individuals and society, and how the society, in its diversity, responded. Whereas some people participated spontaneously or changed gradually, others were reluctant to do so, or were indifferent to it all. Both schools thus sought to *explore mutual interaction* between the regime and society, or *vice versa*.

2) In their endeavour to overcome “the unsustainable dichotomy” of totalitarianism, which contrasted the all-powerful “regime” and the oppressed “society,” some of the revisionists (mainly among Czech historians) created *the impression that society was monolithic*. But the idea that there was a fundamental harmony of interests between the ruling party, the state and society proved to be fiction that did not correspond to reality.¹² In contrast to the revisionists’ view, totalitarianism distinguished between the builders of the state-socialist system, along with other pillars of the communist regime (encompassing all those who helped to build the regime, consolidate and defend it, or without any inconveniences accepted it) and those who were unable to identify with it (people who had other interests, beliefs, preserved other traditions or felt aggrieved by the regime). The revisionists perceived society as a homogeneous group and treated it as a whole as a “participating” (participating in the operation of the regime) and “obedient mass” (which by its, albeit imposed, subordination legitimized the regime). The responsibility for the creation, stability and longevity of the regime therefore rested not only with those who intentionally and with

12 See GÜTTLER, Markus: Die Grenzen der Kontrolle: Das statistische Informationssystem und das Versagen zentralistischer Planwirtschaft in der DDR. In: BESSEL, Richard – JESSEN, Ralph (ed.): *Die Grenzen der Diktatur: Staat und Gesellschaft in der DDR*. Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1996, pp. 253–273.

enthusiasm *actively* created it and supported it, or with those who readily adapted to it, but also with those who – deprived of legitimate opportunities to express their disapproval – felt powerless to defy it and therefore *passively* conformed to it.¹³

3) According to the revisionists, the society's "uniform" approach contributed to the remarkable *stability and legitimacy of not only the state-socialist system, but also of the political regime of a one-party dictatorship*, both of which endured in Czechoslovakia for four decades. They argue that the regime would not have survived without the participation of society; that there is no domination without obedience. Max Weber's assertion that no regime can exist without the support of at least *part of the population* (which, Weber says, does not even have to be a majority) and without *staff* to carry out or enforce its policies, applies also to the interpretation of dictatorship.¹⁴ However, obedience has manifold forms: it can be either spontaneous or coerced (enforced). The type of obedience is crucial for assessing the population's attitude. Therefore, it is important to identify *which part* of the population provided such support and what their motivation was for doing so. Undoubtedly the attitude of the supporters of the ruling party's politics and ideology or of those who profited from the opportunities offered by the regime was mostly positive; and hence the level of their identification with the regime and participation in it was also high. But the situation was different for those who viewed the domination as an unwelcome *guardianship*.

4) Different segments of society had *unequal opportunities*: members of the ruling party, in contrast to other citizens, were able to make proposals within Communist Party organizations and expressed their opinions on various top-down measures, and in that way influenced their implementation on the local level.¹⁵ However, those who did not have such opportunities and who had little or no influence on the ruling party's politics were reluctant to yield to the indoctrination of beliefs and values.¹⁶

13 See HRUBÝ, K.: Rozpaky nad výkladem komunistické diktatury (see footnote 1).

14 WEBER, Max: *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*. Tübingen, J. C. Mohr 1922, pp. 122–123.

15 The members of the Communist Party settled disputes between rulers and ruled on regional and local levels – that is in the activities of regional, district, factory and local organizations. It was within these organizations that a consensus was daily negotiated and renegotiated between Party members and non-members, between Party functionaries and the rank-and-file members, between the Party apparatus and state administration or company managers." KOLÁŘ, Pavel: Strana jako utopie: Komunistická identita po pádu stalinismu [The Party as utopia: Communist identity after Stalinism]. In: *Soudobé dějiny*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (2012), p. 234.

16 The defensive fight against the ideology of Marxism-Leninism in the upcoming struggle over the political, social, economic and cultural organization of the state was already reflected in 1945–1948, mainly in the cultural sphere, as evinced by the publication *Na ztracené vartě Západu: Antologie české nesocialistické publicistiky z let 1945–1948* [The abandoned post of the West: Anthology of Czech non-socialist journalism 1945–1948], compiled by Milan Drápala. The conference papers read at the First Czech Writers' Congress, which was held in the summer of 1946, also clearly reveal the scope of disputes between communist and non-communist participants of the congress as well as in general among the participants in the then cultural life. See KOPECKÝ, Jan (ed.): *Účtování a výhledy: Sborník prvního sjezdu českých spisovatelů* [Settling accounts and outlooks: Collection of the first Czech Writers' Congress]. Praha, Mladá fronta 1948.

Quite naturally, since they had no opportunity to contribute to the public discourse, they avoided it altogether. And it is worth pointing out that these were not just a few individuals or solely intellectuals. Even though two fifths of the population in Czechoslovakia voted for the Communist Party before the February 1948 coup, *the votes of more than half of the population* were based on different political criteria and value systems (either philosophical, ideological or religious). Although some of them later internalized some of the values of the new system in their private lives, the vast majority continued to adhere to traditional practices and preserved their original beliefs and values. “Revisionists,” however, maintain that the attitudes of the entire society were identical with the attitudes of those who perceived the dictatorship, in its quest of “state socialism,” as unavoidable and an inevitable path towards Marxist-Leninist ideology, or at least towards achieving their personal or group objectives.¹⁷ As a result, they paid only slight attention to civilisation’s dimension of *tradition*, which had survived from generation to generation – and along with it also to the group of the population that considered traditional beliefs, values and symbols more important than the beliefs, values and symbols imposed on them by the ideology and moral of the “revolutionary” regime.¹⁸

5) It is not just a question of how people themselves perceived the system of “state socialism” and in particular the dictatorial regime, how they behaved in it and how they responded to its stimuli (though this does require further clarification), but also of how the dictatorial regime *influenced and manipulated* their perception and interpretation of reality, or how it sought to remodel, redirect and transform their identity.¹⁹ What sort of information was provided to people and what sort of informa-

17 See for example KOLÁŘ, Pavel: Communism in Eastern Europe. In: SMITH, S. A.: *The Oxford Handbook of The History of Communism*, chapter 11, pp. 203–219, mainly pp. 208–210. According to the theory of “everydayness,” the regime did not rely solely on the use of repression, but was also actively supported by those who profited or hoped to profit from it. “Power” may punish people, but it cannot convince them to become village mayor, the leader of work brigades or a local police assistant. “Power” is a product of social interaction and cannot be interpreted as an antithesis of society. This finding of Kolář can obviously be applied to that part of society that supported the regime – whether out of conviction or for reasons of profit. Nevertheless, the other part of society, the part which only seemingly “accepted” the regime’s system and its politics, and which lacked the same opportunities as its supporters, viewed the regime through completely different lenses. The different motives and attitudes of both parts of society cannot be considered to be identical.

18 European perspectives were not only based on the experience of the Cold War, but also on older traditions, which did not disappear completely after the Second World War. This applies, for example, to religious traditions, liberal thought and aesthetic ideals, as well as to the influence of the enlightenment, modern democracy, science and industrialisation – and naturally also to totalitarian dictatorships, as pointed out in the introduction to the collection of essays: VOWINCKEL, Annette – PAYK, Marcus M. – LINDENBERGER, Thomas (ed.): *Cold War Cultures: Perspectives on Eastern and Western European Societies*. New York – Oxford, Berghahn Books 2012.

19 See BAUERKÄMPER, Arnd: *Ländliche Gesellschaft in der kommunistischen Diktatur: Zwangsmodernisierung und Tradition in Brandenburg, 1945–1963*. Köln/R., Böhlau 2002, p. 497. The author confirms that the virtually unlimited claim of the leadership of the

tion was concealed from them? How did the regime shape their ideas and attitudes (through media, schools, official art, celebrations and manifestations, broadly based “education” of the public, “political training” of various professions, ideological theses, terminology and also through dialectic interpretation and deductive implementation of premises formulated by “classics”)? What is important to realize is that it was not only the omnipresent propaganda, often with science and arts in its service, but also specific and differentiated policies applied in the everyday life of society (such as selective allocation of benefits, or on the contrary, selective imposition of sanctions) that contributed to the internalization of a value system, which was to provide people with a reliable manual of how to interpret reality, politics, history and ultimately also the meaning of life. And also, the extent to which these measures were effective in mobilizing people to seek transformation to the “new man.” It was largely the ideology in the service of *institutionally organized power, controlling necessary apparatus*²⁰ that was to initiate changes leading to a new society, “tailored to the needs of the regime.”²¹

Therefore, in order to interpret the life of society and its transformation according to the communist ideology (which has, however, never been fully completed – *absolute* totality is utopia), explaining the structures and functions of the dictatorship, which constitute a framework and a driving force of this development, is as important as explaining the activities of people who live within this framework, who respond to the regime’s interventions and who seek ways of successfully pursuing their own initiatives and interests.²² In any case, totalitarianism continues to be

Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED) to a monopoly of knowledge, rule, formation and control was applied with such force that it permanently overexerted the centre of power. The rulers were thus at least temporarily hunted by their own politics, but this did not mean, according to the author, that they would renounce their right to rule and relinquish control over society.

- 20 For the Polish philosopher Leszek Kołakowski, the role of ideology in the totalitarian system is to provide the intellectually privileged class (the proletariat), represented later by the Party “nomenklatura,” with a scientific formula on how to organize society rationally in order to ensure its prosperity and achieve, in the not-so-distant future, a state of perfection; and this truth is subsequently enforced on the entire society. According to Kołakowski, “the dictatorship of the Party manifests itself as the dictatorship of truth.” Despite the fact that the totalitarian institutions begin to disintegrate during the late stages of the regime, *totalitarian will* persist, and the regime’s protagonists still hope that after temporary difficulties, generated mainly by class enemies, the historically correct, inevitable and triumphant order will be established. KOŁAKOWSKI, Leszek: *Der Zusammenbruch des Kommunismus als philosophisches Ereignis*. In: ŚPIEWAK, Paweł (ed.): *Anti-Totalitarismus: Eine polnische Debatte*. Frankfurt/M., Suhrkamp 2003, pp. 117 and 119; emphasis in italics added by the author of this article.
- 21 As expressed by Michael Geyer in the introduction to the collection of essays *Za obzor totalitarismu* [Beyond totalitarianism] (p. 55), with a reference to one of the essays (FRITZSCH, Peter – HELLBECK, Jochen: *Nový člověk stalinského Ruska a nacistického Německa* [The new man in Stalinist Russia and Nazi Germany]. In: *Ibid*, pp. 404–457).
- 22 Social history, not taking into account political history, helps to explain just as little as political history without regard to social processes. See FULBROOK, Mary: *Methodologische*

a point of reference, even when questioned or criticized.²³ Both the supporters of the totalitarian theory and the supporters of historical revisionism are therefore right, though only to a certain extent.²⁴ The dictatorship clearly meant something different to those who built the regime, supported it and profited from it than it did to those who suffered from it and opposed it. Understanding these differences and explaining their roots is therefore of crucial importance. And in this respect, the supporters of both approaches still fall short.²⁵

The Later Version of Totalitarianism

Despite criticisms of both Carl J. Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski's and Hannah Arendt's classic models of totalitarianism, their work was built upon, expanded and further developed by a number of scholars.²⁶ These scholars challenged the validity of six basic features of totalitarianism as briefly formulated by Friedrich. At the same time they tried to reassess how the regime's structure and functioning affected the penetration of state power into society and how society responded to this pressure. They explored changes in governance after Stalin's death and mapped the gradual reduction and transformation of terror,²⁷ an important feature of former models, but the continuation of which was firmly rejected by the “revisionists” in the later stages of dictatorship. Not even the successors of “classics” of the totalitarian theory considered terror to be a constitutive feature of totalitarianism,²⁸ encoded in the DNA

Überlegungen zu einer Gesellschaftsgeschichte der DDR. In: BESSEL, R. – JESSEN, R. (ed.): *Die Grenzen der Diktatur*, p. 295 (see footnote 12).

- 23 See HOENIGOVÁ, Bianca: Možnosti a meze jednoho paradigmatu: Teorie totalitarismu aplikovaná na státní socialismus středovýchodní Evropy [Possibilities and limits of a paradigm: The theory of totalitarianism applied to state socialism in East Central Europe]. In: *Soudobé dějiny*, Vol. 15, No. 4 (2008), p. 652.
- 24 See McDERMOTT, K.: Stalin and Stalinism, pp. 72–73. (See footnote 11.)
- 25 Thomas Linderberger outlined an inspiring list of works that can complement, expand and adjust the structural concept of dictatorship with studies of the everyday “social practice” (and *vice versa*). See “Alltagsgeschichte und ihr möglicher Beitrag zu einer Gesellschaftsgeschichte der DDR,” mainly in the part 4 titled “Herrschaft als soziale Praxis’ in der DDR: Eine Skizze.” In: BESSEL, R. – JESSEN, R. (ed.): *Die Grenzen der Diktatur*, pp. 312–321.
- 26 From the quantity of relevant sources, I have selected for reference four German collections, containing important works of many well-versed authors: SEIDEL, B. – ENKNER, S. (ed.): *Wege der Totalitarismus-Forschung* (see footnote 7); SIEGEL, Achim (ed.): *Totalitarismustheorien nach dem Ende des Kommunismus*. Köln/R. – Weimar, Böhlau 1998; BESSEL, R. – JESSEN, R.: *Die Grenzen der Diktatur* (see footnote 12); JESSE, E. (ed.): *Totalitarismus im 20. Jahrhundert* (see footnote 2).
- 27 The terror had not only a deterrent function, but also an *ideological* function: it was to challenge and disintegrate the faith in existing “routine matters” and on the other hand help to reinforce a new construction of reality in people's minds. With advancing indoctrination, this function lost its importance.
- 28 During the period when it was important to consolidate the rule of the Party and the state apparatus so as to permanently secure the revolutionary transition to the state-socialist system, terror principally had a *political* function. This was to demonstrate the unquestionable authority of the Party leadership, enforce new norms on society and delineate the regime's boundaries, as well as to warn that there was no turning back from the path to

of the communist regimes, but only a side effect in times of intensified battle against “enemies, traitors and deviationists.”²⁹ Moreover, they came to the conclusion that Stalinist terror was not merely a product of the regime, but also a product of society fuelled from below.³⁰

Thus, in the works of Juan José Linz, the influential Spanish-German political scientist, who wrote a host of works on the forms and interpretation of non-democratic regimes, mass terror was no longer one of the basic features of the communist regime after Stalin’s death.³¹ Linz identifies the following characteristics of the totalitarian system:

1) There is a monistic (but not monolithic) centre of power, and whatever pluralism of institutions or groups exists, it derives its legitimacy from that centre, and is mostly a political creation rather than an outgrowth of the dynamics of the pre-existing society.

2) There is an exclusive, autonomous, more or less intellectually elaborated ideology with which the ruling group or leader of the party identify and which they use as a basis for policies and/or as an instrument of its legitimization. The ideology sets some boundaries beyond which lies heterodoxy that does not remain unsanctioned. The ideology goes beyond a particular programme or definition of the boundaries of legitimate political action to provide, presumably, some ultimate meaning, sense of historical purpose, and interpretation of social reality.

3) Citizen participation in and active mobilization for collective political and social tasks are encouraged, demanded and rewarded, and these activities are channelled through a single party and many monopolistic secondary groups. Passive obedience and apathy, retreat into private life, characteristic of many authoritarian regimes, are considered undesirable by the rulers. The participation of the population is, however,

communism. Terror, at that time, became one of the methods of rule. However, as soon as the rule of the Party was consolidated, its function changed. See STRAUSS, Julia C.: Communist Revolution and Political Terror. In: SMITH, S. A. (ed.): *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Communism*, pp. 365–366.

29 *Ibid.*, p. 356.

30 Documents found after the opening of Soviet archives reveal that even the Great Terror of the Stalin period of the 1930s was not merely an act of Stalin and of his state apparatus, which unleashed it, but that it was also substantially fuelled by denunciations “from below.” There were many people who exploited the hysteria triggered by “the enemy hunting” and used it to their own purposes. See, for example, SIEGELBAUM, Lewis – SOKOLOV, Andrei: *Stalinism as a Way of Life: A Narrative in Documents*. New Haven, Yale University Press 2004, pp. 22–25.

31 In its latest stages, when the principle referred to as socialist lawfulness was introduced, the Soviet Union developed in this direction. However, according to Linz, it is not hard to imagine stabilized political systems that have all the features of totalitarianism, with the exception of broadly based and all-pervading terror. LINZ, J. J.: *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes*, p. 74 (see footnote 2); IDEM: Types of Political Regimes and Respect for Human Rights: Historical and Crossnational Perspectives. In: ASBJØRN, Eide – HAGTVET, Bernt (ed.): *Human Rights in Perspective: Global Assessments*. Oxford, Blackwell 1992, pp. 177–221; study was also published in German translation in the collection: JESSE, E. (ed.): *Totalitarismus im 20. Jahrhundert*, pp. 519–571, here pp. 550–551.

limited to fulfilling an overall objective formulated by the centre, which defines the legitimacy of goals and organizations that are fully under its control.³²

Since the late 1960s, scholars focused on new repressive practices of the post-Stalinist period, now more rational and sophisticated. Mass terror was replaced by advanced manipulation and domination of the population by the state, controlled by the monopoly of one party, whose members were personally in charge of the entire state apparatus. The combination of the basic features of the totalitarian regime and control of the population were explored, for example, by German political scientist Peter Graf von Kielmansegg. Kielmansegg argues that the enforcement of totalitarian rule may be described as *continuous efforts to motivate and control society from one monopolistic centre*. Social behaviour is controlled by ideology, which determines, in an exclusive and binding manner, socially relevant values and norms constituting a framework upon which reality is understood. This also determines the manner in which power is exercised, because *all opportunities to exert influence are concentrated in the monopolistic leading centre*. The scope of its power to make decisions as well as the intensity of sanctions applied by it is in principle unlimited. Kielmansegg considers the term “totalitarian rule” to be appropriate for this combination of features.³³

This author also points to the fact that, for a long time, under the influence of Hitler’s and Stalin’s despotism, terror, in the sense of unlimited and arbitrary use of physical violence, was considered a constitutive element of totalitarian rule. According to him, we should not focus on sanctions, regardless of their form, but rather on the *potential of unlimited power, which may freely decide on life opportunities of individuals*, either regarding education, career prospects, satisfying material needs or possibilities of communication. If someone has power, which is not limited by controllable conditions, and if it may be used for repression, then it is more than justified to label this sanction potential as totalitarian.³⁴ According to Kielmansegg, the “stability” of a totalitarian system therefore depends on the existence and *facilities of institutions and authorities capable of using terror if necessary*. The decisive factor is that *the police and judiciary apparatus represent an instrument of power of the ruling party*, which it may (but need not), use at its discretion whenever it decides to.

A clear distinction between constitutive and secondary features of dictatorship was drawn by Martin Drath.³⁵ According to him, a primary trait of totalitarianism, as an ideal-typical concept, is the intention of one group of political actors to *establish a completely new value system on a society, despite the society’s resistance and its existing preferences*. In his interpretation, this is what differentiates totalitarian and

32 See LINZ, J. J.: *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes*, pp. 70–71.

33 KIELMANSEGG, Peter Graf von: *Krise der Totalitarismustheorie?* In: JESSE, E. (ed.): *Totalitarismus im 20. Jahrhundert*, pp. 286–304, here p. 298. The article was originally published in the journal *Zeitschrift für Politik* in 1974.

34 *Ibid.*, p. 299.

35 DRATH, Martin: *Totalitarismus in der Volksdemokratie*. In: RICHERT, Ernst (ed.): *Macht ohne Mandat*. Köln/R. – Opladen, Westdeutscher Verlag 1958, pp. ix–xxxiv; again in SEIDEL, B. – JENKNER, S. (ed.): *Wege der Totalitarismusforschung*, pp. 310–358.

authoritarian regimes.³⁶ Secondary features then include all organizational (structural), technical as well as procedural prerequisites necessary to put the primary goal into effect. And it is of little importance whether the society under totalitarian rule puts up real resistance or whether this resistance is just imaginary, anticipated (i.e. there is a possibility that it could be mounted). Those who plan to install a totalitarian system want to imprint new contents as well as the power to impose them “absolutely,” not only “relatively.”³⁷ The determining feature of totalitarianism according to Drath is not lack of freedom as such, but rather *enforced lack of freedom*, which also includes coercion to self-restraint (*Zwang zum Zwange*).³⁸ By this Drath means deliberate activity of the governing regime to impose a value system on the dominated subjects, which is to control their beliefs and behaviour.

Drath’s concept, which explains the essence and effects of the totalitarian regime, was elaborated by Werner Josef Patzelt, who applied it to the analysis of everyday life at a microsocial level.³⁹ Patzelt explores the transformation of social values under the influence of propaganda and everyday coercion, explaining the totalitarian rule from a bottom-up perspective. Research into dictatorship is to be complemented and further specified by a better understanding of how it is experienced in the everyday life of the regime’s subjects, or in other words, how the regime’s subjects internalize the regime’s activities aimed at transforming the pre-existing value system. He aims to *explain the processes of creating a new social or political reality, as well as the mechanisms of its consolidation*, which are to result in loyal behaviour of the subjects. His focus is on the conceptualization of mechanisms and strategies used by the totalitarian power to destroy old “routine matters” (concepts and values previously regarded as obvious things) in the society’s consciousness and establish new “routine matters.” He also explores the process of decomposition of this new, imposed construction of reality, which occurs when ideology comes into conflict with the expectations it had previously aroused.

In like manner Michel Foucault, who had long before that studied the process of disciplining citizens’ behaviour and thoughts by the state, carried out through either violent or more rational governmental methods, defined totality as *party governance*. One single party monopolizes the state, restricts the autonomy of its institutions and manages state affairs.⁴⁰ Foucault explores the structures of power seeing them as global strategies that traverse and use local tactics of domination. By this, Foucault

36 *Ibid.*, p. 337.

37 *Ibid.*, p. 347.

38 *Ibid.*, p. 342.

39 PATZELT, Werner J.: Wirklichkeitskonstruktion im Totalitarismus: Eine ethnomethodologische Weiterführung der Totalitarismuskonzeption von Martin Drath. In: SIEGEL, A. (ed.): Totalitarismustheorien nach dem Ende des Kommunismus, pp. 235–272 (see footnote 26).

40 See FOUCAULT, Michel: *Zrození biopolitiky: Kurz na Collège de France (1978–1979)* [The birth of biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France (1978–1979)]. Brno, Centrum pro studium demokracie a kultury 2009, lecture of 7 March 1979, pp. 170–171.

emphasizes that subjects are in fact constituted through subjugation.⁴¹ Totality is defined as the practical governance of one party, carried out through the state and its institutions and using different channels and instruments, with the aim to discipline and reorient society (which should acquire “correct” – i.e. required by the regime – beliefs, values and attitudes towards the state and public affairs). Foucault asserts that the “constitution of the subject” according to the state-imposed pattern is characteristic for totalitarian regimes.

Much earlier, a completely different view on totality was offered by Karl Raymond Popper. Popper pointed to the fact that totalitarian dictatorship draws on a theory that considers morality mere political hygiene. Following this logic, moral actions are those carried out in the interest of a group, tribe, class or state. Any actions in conflict with these interests, or detrimental to them, must be excluded, uprooted. The human being therefore becomes just a small cog in the large wheel of society, completely dependent on the collective and controlled from above by a *morality of a closed society*. Totalitarianism is not completely amoral, but the morality is exclusively collectivistic. Popper, by contrast, demands that politics be controlled from below by citizens. “What we need and what we want is to moralize politics, and not to politicize morals” is his credo.⁴²

The central role of the monopolistic ruling party in forming societies under totalitarian dictatorship is considered obvious today. “Regime” and social actors may live in a symbiosis, but the resources and competencies to make decisions remain unequally distributed. The ruling party draws coordinates and delineates action spaces, as well as taboo areas. The rule of one party and command economy materialize into power, which directs masses – without regard to their *Eigen-Sinn*.⁴³

Regime and Society

The ideal-typical model of totalitarianism, describing the Stalinist period, was not therefore just an abstraction. In its later form, it was able to explain, to a great extent (though not entirely), the conditions in which *the life of society* in the communist regime developed – not only under Stalin’s rule, but also after his death. Even a number of works critical of the totalitarian theory or some of its theses acknowledge *the important role the institutional framework and governance techniques played in the*

41 IDEM: *Je třeba chránit společnost: Kurs na Collège de France 1975–1976* [Society must be defended: Lectures at the Collège de France (1978–1979)]. Praha, Filosofia 2005, lecture of 21 January 1976, pp. 54–55.

42 POPPER, Karl Raymond: *Otevřená společnost a její nepřátelé*, Vol. 1: *Uhrnutí Platónem* [Open society and its enemies, Vol. 1: The Age of Plato]. (Translated from English by Miloš Calda and Josef Moural.) Praha, Oikoymenth 1994, pp. 101–107, cit. p. 106. Popper’s classical work was published for the first time in 1945.

43 See BOYER, Christoph: Der Beitrag der Sozialgeschichte zur Erforschung kommunistischer Systeme. In: BRENNER, Christiane – HEUMOS, Peter (ed.): *Sozialgeschichtliche Kommunismusforschung: Tschechoslowakei, Polen, Ungarn und DDR 1948–1968. Vorträge der Tagung des Collegium Carolinum in Bad Wiessee vom 22. bis 24. November 2002*. München, Oldenbourg 2005, p. 24.

constitution of subjects in dictatorial regimes. In the introduction to her work on life under the Stalinist system, the Australian American historian Sheila Fitzpatrick lists the features that characterize this system as (*shorthand*) a complex of institutions, structures, and rituals that made up the habitat of the *Homo Sovieticus* in the Stalin era.⁴⁴ In her opinion, the main features include: one party rule, Marxist-Leninist ideology, rampant bureaucracy, leader cults, state control over production and distribution, social engineering, affirmative action on behalf of workers, stigmatization of “class enemies,” police surveillance, terror and the various informal, personal arrangements whereby people at every level sought to protect themselves and obtain some benefits. All were part of the Stalinist *habitat*.⁴⁵ This “shorthand” suggests that Fitzpatrick also saw the structures of the regime, which use bureaucracy and apparatus (ideological pressure, police and terror) to exercise control over both the economy and society, as a solid framework of everyday life. Within this habitat, people not only seek their place in the labour market, but also need to be wary of potential sanctions and try somehow to obtain – even if it is risky – certain benefits or scarce goods and services. Although some features and ways of governance in the dictatorship changed after Stalin’s death, the existing structures of power were preserved and continued to influence the thoughts, values and behaviour of society, albeit less aggressively.

In a similar way, German historian Thomas Lindenberger characterized the communist dictatorship of the *East German Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands* (SED), even in its later stages, as *an effort of the ruling party to regulate social life*, control its dynamics and, if necessary, restrain it down to the level of an individual way of life. The framework of the dictatorship offered only a limited space for the activity and influence of society. Outside the work collective, village or neighborhood and beyond the boundaries of the school classroom or local cultural associations, there were no institutions that could serve as bases for negotiating material interests and for articulating social and cultural needs. This was admissible only within the basic structures and welcomed only in the sense of the slogan “cooperate and then govern with us.”⁴⁶

A remarkably balanced perspective on the research of life under dictatorship is offered by a collection of essays entitled *Beyond Totalitarianism*.⁴⁷ Although it challenges some of the traditional dichotomies in the Nazism-Stalinism comparison, this work still recognizes the active role of the regime in controlling and constituting the society’s identity. The essays are based not only on subjective social mechanisms viewed solely from the perspective of everyday life, but also draw on parameters that define *conditions created by the regime*, in which the everyday life of society

44 FITZPATRICK, Sheila: *Everyday Stalinism: Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times. Soviet Russia in the 1930s*. New York – Oxford, Oxford University Press 2000, pp. 2–3.

45 *Ibid.*

46 LINDENBERGER, Thomas: *Herrschaft und Eigen-Sinn in der Diktatur: Das Alltagsleben der DDR und sein Platz in der Erinnerungskultur des vereinten Deutschlands*. In: *Aus der Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, series B, Vol. 52, No. 40 (26 May 2002), mainly part 2: *Die Diktatur der Grenze(n)*, pp. 5–12.

47 See footnote 2.

unfolded. These conditions included not only the systems of power, economic and social organization established by revolution (or by another act of seizing monopoly power), but also the results of “interaction and confrontation” between the ruling party (the dictatorial regime) and the everyday life of society. Among these conditions were not only political (such as the exclusion of opposition) and economic measures (expropriation), or intensive ideological indoctrination, but also identification of “class of supporters,” which formed a power base of the regime and profited from it. Alongside the identification of a base of favoured citizens, there was the identification of a stigmatized mass of those who were considered unreliable, or rather potential enemies, who were excluded – with all that entailed in terms of rations, limited opportunities in everyday life or potential use of repression. As stated in one of the essays, “within the limits of given privileges and predestined stigmatization, the Soviet people could relatively freely (or astutely) assume a desired social identity.”⁴⁸ This predetermination of opportunities by the regime remained in place in the Soviet Union, as well as in its communist satellites (including Czechoslovakia) until their collapse.

The interconnection and inseparability of the frameworks of system and civilisation from everyday life was also emphasized by the Austrian sociologist Alfred Schütz, who analyzed the structures of the life-world in detail.⁴⁹ He illustrated this interdependency by an analysis of the social conditionality of what is subjectively relevant in a social situation (what is important for an individual).⁵⁰ He drew on a generally accepted premise that the world of everyday life is in principle a social reality. Individuals enter a situation (social framework) with a certain system of interpretation (how the situation should be interpreted) and motivation (how they intend to act in the situation), which determine what they consider natural and routine, or on the contrary, problematic and hence something that requires further reflection and interpretation. What is crucial is that the individuals’ interpretation and motivation connected to the situation are not always based only on their own experience, but also on socially “objectivized” experience, affecting individuals as *social a priori*. Moreover, there are two historically changing dimensions that interact causally: division of power (*Herrschaftsverhältnisse*) and division of labour. Depending on the roles individuals assume in society, they have unequal opportunities and powers. The social situation may be perceived differently by those who have better access to opportunities because of their position of power than by those whose opportunities are limited by power. The division of power and labour (such

48 BROWNING, Christopher R. – SIEGELBAUM, Lewis H.: Systémové předpoklady sociálního inženýrství: Stalinské schéma identifikace a nacistický koncept *Volksgemeinschaft* [Frameworks for social engineering: The Stalinist scheme of identification and the Nazi *volksgemeinschaft*]. In: GEYER, M. – FITZPATRICKOVÁ, S. (ed.): *Za obzor totalitarismu*, p. 316. The book was translated from English by Jan Mervart and Jakub Rákosník.

49 See SCHÜTZ, Alfred – LUCKMANN, Thomas: *Strukturen der Lebenswelt*. Konstanz, UVK Verlagsgesellschaft 2003. *Lebenswelt* is understood here as a totality of the natural and social world (p. 32), as a horizon of our life and its interpretation (p. 39).

50 *Ibid.*, pp. 342–343.

as the rule that party members have priority access to leading positions in society in the communist dictatorship – note by the author) are factors that (unequally) influence the life of individuals, families and social groups in their everyday life. Both spheres – the everyday life of people and the influence of the civilisation and the system – form an interconnected social reality. One perspective does not exclude the other, but rather complements it.

When confronted with later developments of communist dictatorships after Stalin's death, the theory therefore not only described the system of the "state party" rule more accurately – i.e. its *influence over the identity of the subjects*, over the way they perceived, constructed and interpreted reality – but also the efforts of different citizens' groups to cope, through different approaches, with the new situation, and on the basis of different motives and interests to adopt either an active or passive attitude towards the regime. The citizens' beliefs and activities were therefore perceived both in the dimension of everydayness, and in relation to the policy and methods applied by the regime. Both these components were closely bound – though still asymmetrically.

Totalitarian or Authoritarian?

For some of the authors, the post-Stalinist system was, by its nature, no longer totalitarian, but rather an authoritarian or "modern" dictatorship.⁵¹ In his extensive research, political scientist Juan José Linz pointed out the substantial differences between authoritarian and totalitarian dictatorships.⁵² The central characteristics of *totalitarianism* according to Linz are, firstly, an absence of political, economic or social pluralism in state organization (*polity*) and, secondly, the fact that the former sources of pluralism had been uprooted or systematically suppressed. In an *authoritarian regime*, by contrast, a certain political, as well as often an extensive economic and social pluralism, is preserved.⁵³ Totalitarian regimes remove or exclude old elites, whereas authoritarian regimes often integrate experts or other prominent figures from former elites in their structures. While a totalitarian regime demands, mobilizes and rewards active participation in a collective task, authoritarian regimes consider political engagement of the population undesirable and therefore do not encourage it. Moreover, the legitimacy of the authoritarian regime is not based on generally formulated ideology as in a totalitarian regime, but rather on extreme "mentalities," such as patriotism or nationalism.⁵⁴ Unlike totalitarianism, authoritarian regimes seek neither a radical transformation of value systems nor a radical

51 On the ambiguity of the term modernity see WAGNER, Peter: *Modernity as Experience and Interpretation: A New Sociology of Modernity*. Cambridge, Polity Press 2008.

52 LINZ, J. J.: *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes* (see footnote 2); LINZ, Juan José – STEPAN, Alfred: *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and post-Communist Europe*. Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press 1996.

53 See LINZ, J. J. – STEPAN, A.: *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*, pp. 42–43.

54 Linz's term "mentality" is inspired by the German sociologist Theodor Geiger, who, in contrast to the ideologies as systems of thoughts, defines mentalities as "ways of thinking and feeling," more emotional than rational. While mentality is an intellectual attitude, ideology is an intellectual content. Mentality is a psychological precondition and preparedness,

transformation of social structure; they are conservative in essence.⁵⁵ In his later work, Linz proposed applying the term “post-totalitarianism” to the period after Stalin’s death. Within this system, the structures of totalitarianism are preserved, but the methods of control and repression are modified (this issue will be discussed further in the second part of this work).

The dictatorships of the 20th century are sometimes termed “modern” regimes. Modernity is in this case seen primarily in the conditions brought about by modern times – mainly in the concentration of the masses, urbanization, industrialization, and secularization, as well as in the use of technical and methodical innovations that enable mass control, reorientation and manipulation of the population by the ruling elite and institutions that serve the interests of these elites.⁵⁶ Modern dictatorships are also mainly concerned with installing and preserving the monopoly of power, which allows them to indoctrinate the population. They do not, however, allow for political pluralism. This leaves the population with no legal alternatives to changing, or rather removing the government, which continually seeks to control the state and to radically transform the society’s identity.⁵⁷

The totalitarian dictatorship differs from all proposed alternatives not only by radically changing political, economic and social organization (rooting out the previous system), but primarily by seeking radical transformation of the beliefs and value system of the entire society. The totalitarian *plan* of the ruling party is not, however, always achieved, and in such a case the plan itself does therefore not yet constitute

whereas ideology is a reflection and self-interpretation. See LINZ, J. J.: *Totalitäre und autoritäre Regime*, pp. 132–134 – see footnote 2.

55 A more detailed overview of authoritarian regimes in Linz’s interpretation is outlined by Stanislav Balík in his essay *Totalitní a autoritativní režimy* [Totalitarian and authoritarian regimes] (Brno, Filozofická fakulta Masarykovy univerzity 2007, pp. 41–52). The author shows that in the 1990s Linz classified post-totalitarian regimes, which were formerly considered authoritarian, as a new independent type. On the interpretation of the communist dictatorship, see also: BALÍK, Stanislav: *Komunistický režim v Československu a přechod k demokracii* [The communist regime in Czechoslovakia and transition to democracy]. In: *15 let od listopadu 89 očima přímých účastníků studentské demonstrace*, 16. 11. 2004 [15 years from November 89 through the eyes of student demonstration direct participants, 16 November 2004]. Praha, Centrum pro ekonomiku a politiku 2005. The text is also available online at: <http://cepin.cz/cze/prednaska.php?ID=473>.

56 The modernity of the communist dictatorship is justified differently by historian Michal Pullman: “if we can document an existence of spheres outside the imminent control of the apparatus (such as households, sports or holidays) and an effort of this apparatus to stabilize law, then we have an image of modern dictatorship in front of us, and not a totalitarian regime.” PULLMANN, Michal: *Ještě k modelu totalitního panství: Odpověď na text Karla Hrubého v DaS 3/2012* [More on the model of totalitarian rule: Response to the text of Karel Hrubý in *Dějiny a Současnost* March 2012]. In: *Dějiny a současnost*, Vol. 34, No. 4 (2012), p. 14.

57 “[...] neither in Stalinism, nor in post-Stalinism had the communist government, represented by the Party, renounced its totalitarian right of hegemony over the society.” (KOLÁŘ, Pavel: *Čtyři “základní rozpory” východoevropského komunismu* [Four “fundamental contradictions” of East European Communism]. In: *Soudobé dějiny*, Vol. 22, No. 1–2 (2015), p. 146.)

a totality. Nevertheless, to implement the plan the regime has at its disposal the necessary institutions and apparatus that can be used according to the centre's power interests. So it is not merely the *plan*, but rather the *process of its implementation* that establishes a totalitarian dictatorship in practice. The power base of this implementation is constituted by people who support the monopoly rule of one party and its policy and efforts to unite the society on political, social and ideological grounds. This is reinforced by those in society who are indifferent and restrict their activities to the dimension of everyday life, but conform by taking on assigned roles. Others in society feel powerless and endeavour to ensure the safety of their families by avoiding opinions or behaviour that will draw attention to them. These people have little trust in the communist state's authorities and their competencies and therefore they become a permanent and latent agent of attempts to change the regime.

In the light of these findings, the attempt to describe the communist dictatorship after Stalin's death with a term that does not reflect its continuity with totalitarianism seems rather groundless.⁵⁸ *There is no continual transition between totalitarianism and an authoritarian regime.*⁵⁹ On the contrary, a strong continuity can be identified between totalitarianism and the later stages of communist dictatorship. It seems to me therefore appropriate to label the later stages of communist dictatorships, which are a continuation of totalitarianism of the Stalinist type, with the term *post-totalitarianism*, just as Juan José Linz has done in his later works.⁶⁰

Models of political regimes should, however, always be considered ideal-typical constructs as they do not exist in an extremely pure and absolute form. Only the specific types of regimes are real, with all their unsystematic impurities, shortcomings and a certain amount of susceptibility to failure. It is therefore more realistic if we perceive *these regimes* on an imaginary axis somewhere between both extremes – represented on the one side by an unfree society, which is *completely institutionalized* by the regime that does not allow for any change, and on the other by a society *under a largely pluralistic regime*, in which people have freedom of choice⁶¹ and can legally seek alternatives to the existing regime.

58 Historian Pavel Kolář prefers the term “state socialism” over “generalizing labels” such as “totalitarian regime” or, in short, “totality.” Those who thought in wider social-historical context gave preference to the term “state socialism.” However, the term “state socialism” was also used for regimes in which the socialist-ruled government nationalized the major part of the economy, but at the same time preserved democratic rule (as in the postwar Czechoslovakia in 1945–1948 or, to a great extent, also in the postwar Great Britain under the Labour Party). Notwithstanding this, after February 1948 this type of regime in Czechoslovakia (as in all other communist states in Europe) changed to a *dictatorship of one party*, which excluded any opposition, or plurality.

59 See LINZ, J. J. – STEPAN, A.: *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*, p. 294 (see footnote 52).

60 On Linz's theory of post-totalitarianism, see ZNOJ, Milan – KOUBEK, Jiří: Totalitarismus a posttotalitarismus v Čechách [Totalitarianism and post-totalitarianism in the Czech Republic]. In: *Soudobé dějiny*, Vol. 16, No. 4 (2009), in particular pp. 728–729.

61 BERGER, Peter L. – LUCKMANN, Thomas: *Sociální konstrukce reality: Pojednání o sociologii vědění* [The social construction of reality: Essay on the sociology of knowledge]. Brno,

Dictatorship in Czechoslovakia after Stalin

Later works on the totalitarianism theory, and the new Linz model of post-totalitarianism in particular, also enable us to gain a better understanding of the individual phases of the communist dictatorship in former Czechoslovakia.⁶² In the light of these findings, we can trace which substantial features changed, or on the contrary, which of the features were preserved in the individual stages of the communist dictatorship in Czechoslovakia between the time of Stalin’s death and the regime’s downfall at the end of 1989.

Extreme Totalitarianism of the Stalin Era

This type of dictatorship followed the previous system of totalitarianism of the founding stage, which developed under Lenin’s leadership and shortly after his death. Its aim was to build a new order on the ruins of the existing social system, which in accordance with the tenets of Marxism-Leninism would give rise to “a new society,” as well as to a new “socialist” man. This (Leninist) system already entailed *the basic characteristics of totalitarian rule*: plurality in political life was inhibited by a prohibition of other political parties, and the creation of factions within the Communist Party was prevented by an introduction of a principle referred to as “democratic centralism.” The monopoly of power of the Communist Party, or rather of its leading elites, was established. These elites subsequently took over the control of institutions and instruments of governance in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres of the state. Party leadership was collective, though Lenin’s influence predominated. Economy was brought under state ownership and subjected to central planning. The life of the entire society was militarized. By founding the Cheka (and the subsequent political police organizations), mechanisms were created to control society and systematically repress class, political or ideological enemies by using violent methods outside the law. Marxism-Leninism became the official ideology of the state, and its utopian potential was used by the leadership as an instrument of intensive mobilization of the masses, in particular of Communist Party members, the industrial proletariat and young people.

In the first years after the revolution, during the civil war, the ruling Bolshevik party still struggled to consolidate the system. Only in the late 1920s the situation stabilized. At the end of the 1920s, Stalin rose to power and became the leader. Later in the 1930s, he was able to diverge from Lenin’s regime and convert totalitarianism into its extreme form, characterized by the highest possible centralization of all power and influence in the personality of the leader (General Secretary of the Party).

Centrum pro studium demokracie a kultury 1999 (the original English edition was published in 1966).

62 See LINZ, J. J.: *Totalitäre und autoritäre Regime*, pp. 227–256. The translation of the original English edition from year 2000 was in the German edition complemented by pages 245–256, which include also parts of the text of the Linz and Stepan’s work *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*.

The leader thus became the undisputed arbiter on the management of the Party and state, as well as on issues related to ideology, science, education, military affairs, etc. Industrialization, collectivization, agriculture and with this also the alleged struggle against the enemies and saboteurs of the Soviet system took on unprecedented intensity and proportions. The instruments of coercion, intimidation and terror were used on a massive scale, without any control or restriction by law. The simplified version of ideology as interpreted by Stalin became the dogma of the communist world. The formation of the communist regimes in the satellite states of the Soviet Union after the Second World War was still strongly influenced by this extreme form of Stalinist dictatorship. After a brief attempt to set out on “a specific Czechoslovak road to socialism,” the totalitarian regime of the Stalinist type was established in Czechoslovakia as well.

Until the mid-1950s, the communist dictatorship in Czechoslovakia generally corresponded to this model. There was an unrivalled rule of one party, governing both the state and society, tolerating no opposition, and, in the spirit of binding ideology, destroying all democratic institutions, civic society and other sources of plurality. To achieve these ends, the Communist Party used terror unrestricted by law, controlled media and mass and interest organizations, completed nationalization of the industry and small businesses, collectivized agriculture, controlled the economy through central planning, and maintained a monopoly over the use of weapons.⁶³

Transition from Totalitarianism to Early Post-Totalitarianism: The Post-Stalinist Period

After Stalin's death, the stage of *extreme* totalitarianism in the Soviet Union ended, and this was followed by some changes in the satellite states as well. In order to prevent the concentration of power in the hands of one leader, which might also threaten the members of the ruling elite, the principle of collective Communist Party leadership was laid down. A year after the death of Klement Gottwald, the Chairman of the Communist Party and the President of Czechoslovakia, state security in Czechoslovakia was decentralized to prevent the concentration of excessive power in the hands of its leadership. Mass terror against “enemy groups” was gradually replaced by selective methods of persecution. Nevertheless, the existing totalitarian structures remained in place. The leading role of the Communist Party continued to be inviolable and irrevocable, with the monopoly of its political-bureaucratic elite therefore being preserved. The population was still dependent on the state as its

63 More light was shed on the politics, ideology and practices of this period by the works of several older historians, Karel Kaplan in particular. His exile and later works brought to attention a great deal of material that was not freely available at the time. Kaplan (as well as other older historians) is criticized by the revisionists for describing this period as pervaded by terror and society as completely oppressed by the regime. See, for example, PULLMANN, Michal: *Život v komunistické diktatuře: O povaze a proměnách soudobých dějin po roce 1989* [Life under the communist dictatorship: On the character and transformation of contemporary history after 1989]. In: *Dějiny a současnost*, Vol. 33, No. 12 (2011), p. 14.

exclusive employer, as well as on local authorities, which granted or denied privileges, or access to career opportunities. The dominant position of Marxist-Leninist ideology was still carefully maintained. The posts within the Communist Party leadership continued to be occupied by Communist Party members, coming from structures created by the previous (extremely totalitarian) system. These leaders had grown up within the Party organization, Party apparatus or the technocratic bodies of the totalitarian regime and therefore adopted their mentality as well as their working practices. Although the post-totalitarian system turned from the ruthless repression of the Stalin period, *the mechanisms of governing and controlling society were still operating* in various forms.

Having been disciplined by the Stalinist regime and having learned from experience with the dictatorship, society remained heavily dependent on the politics of existing power in the period of destalinisation.⁶⁴ Despite all the hardships imposed on them by the system, people learned to think, talk and behave in order to succeed in their everyday life, and at the same time to avoid problems. Massive control of the population was still in place, carried out not only by state security bodies, but also by mass organizations, such as unions, youth or Communist Party organizations (down to the level of street or house informants), which informed on the behaviour and “mood” of its members, as well as on any complaints or criticism made by individuals in local communities, enterprises, state bureaus or at workplaces.⁶⁵ Greater opportunities opened up to those who supported the policy of the Communist Party. However, others found themselves at odds with the regime’s demands. The focus of many people gradually shifted to individual or family interests and often also to the traditional ways of thinking and interpreting the world, which, despite the considerable efforts of the Communist Party to enforce unity of thought within the “new society,” still survived in their deep privacy as a means of defence.

Despite certain differences, both types of regimes (Stalinist, totalitarian and post-Stalinist, post-totalitarian) relied on almost identical structures of power and state apparatus from which any political pluralism continued to be excluded. Both regimes were also characterized by an absence of civic society, with its “bourgeois” base having been forced out, or rather “uprooted,” by the revolutionary transformation,

64 Life in rural areas was probably the most affected by extreme totalitarianism. Nationalization, collectivization and expatriation of undesirable persons completely changed life in the villages, not only in material terms (changes in ownership, different ways of production, remuneration for work), but also in interpersonal relations, which had previously been based predominantly on traditional social and moral norms. The asymmetry of power was here apparent in its full extent. See JECH, Karel: *Soumrak selského stavu 1945–1960* [Twilight of the peasantry 1945–1960]. (Sešity Ústavu pro soudobé dějiny, č. 21 [Textbooks of the Institute of Contemporary History, No. 21].) Praha, ÚSD AV ČR 2001; similarly for the GDR: BAUERKÄMPER, Arnd: *Ländliche Gese]lschaft in der kommunistischen Diktatur: Zwangsmodernisierung und Tradition in Brandenburg*. Köln/R., Böhlau 2002; LUDZ, P. Ch.: Entwurf einer soziologischen Theorie totalitär verfasster Gesellschaft, mainly pp. 576–590 – see footnote 7.

65 See FULBROOK, M.: Methodologische Überlegungen zu einer Gesellschaftsgeschichte der DDR (see footnote 22).

ideological aggression and persecution. In this respect, both regimes were clearly differentiated from the authoritarian regimes.⁶⁶ *Early* post-totalitarianism thus closely followed on the previous political, economic and social system and its *totalitarian way of rule*. Totalitarian rule could not be imposed where a totalitarian regime had not been previously established.⁶⁷ There was a clear continuity between both types of regimes. The vast majority of organizational forms of the ruling party and state, as well as of unions, agricultural collectives, cultural unions, communication systems and other organizations, had already been established in the satellite states of Moscow, and therefore also in Czechoslovakia, in the period of Stalinist totalitarianism. They then remained in place in the post-totalitarian phase.⁶⁸

Also the ideology, as previously dogmatically codified by Stalin, continued to exert its influence.⁶⁹ This was closely related to the fact that influential regime functionaries, who, with rare exceptions, kept their positions in the leading boards of the Communist Party, sought to distance themselves from the excesses of the period of “the cult of personality” and therefore avoid being held responsible for the brutal violence and political processes, which had resulted in more than 200 executions (not only of non-communists, but also of functionaries of the Communist Party) and affected many thousands of people. Stalinist ideology could not be preserved in its dogmatic form, but the functionaries could not allow its destruction or radical change either, for that would deprive them of the legitimacy that protected them. In 1956, the leadership of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (KSČ) still success-

66 See THOMPSON, Mark R.: Weder totalitär noch autoritär: Post-totalitarismus in Osteuropa. In: SIEGEL, A. (ed.): *Totalitarismustheorien nach dem Ende des Kommunismus*, pp. 309–339 (see footnote 26).

67 See LINZ, J. J. – STEPAN, A.: *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*, p. 293.

68 *Ibid.*, p. 245.

69 The simplified conception of the world, as “explained” in a binding way in Stalin’s brochure *On Dialectic and Historical Materialism*, continued to exert its influence. This normative text by Stalin had already been published in Czechoslovakia in 1945. In 1949, its fourth edition was printed, and new editions were constantly reprinted. By the same token, the printing of “Stalin’s” *History of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks)*, in which this work formed a separate chapter, reached hundreds of thousand copies. As recalled by sociologist Miloslav Petrušek: “The edition of a textbook that my generation studied from appeared in 1954, that is one year after Stalin’s death: it was the 14th edition and with it the overall printing in the Czech language reached 702,700 copies.” The general public, which was exposed to these massively disseminated views, also succumbed to the materialistic interpretation of history as canonized by Stalin. Stalin’s concept of orthodoxy (what is the truth) and heresy (what is a lie) was cemented in the minds of the Communist Party members. The Party was always right. PETRUŠEK, Miloslav: Stalinova verze marxismu jako jeho “ortodoxní” model: Dějiny VKS(b) po pětasedmdesáti letech. Kapitola z historické sociologie [Stalin’s version of Marxism as his “orthodox” model: History of the All-Union Communist Party (the Bolsheviks) after 75 years. A chapter from Historical Sociology]. In: *Historická sociologie*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (2013), pp. 33–54, cit. p. 37, footnote 4. Ideology, however, often adapted to a new situation. An inspiring essay titled “Běsi, nebo piroh socialismu?” [Demons, or the pie of *socialism*?] on the transformation of (Marx-)Leninist ideology and its role in installing and preserving the communist dictatorship was published by Josef Mlejnek in *Securitas Imperii*, Vol. 26/1 (2015), pp. 12–36.

fully curtailed any expression of criticism within and outside the Party (for example at the 2nd Congress of the Writers’ Union or during the traditional student festival *Majáles*) and interpreted the revolts in Poland and Hungary through the spirit of ideological dogmatism. In 1959, the leaders still considered revisionist attempts to be more dangerous than maintaining dogmatism.⁷⁰ Resistance to a gradual change of interpreting communist policy and ideology under the motto of returning to an “authentic” Marx only decreased in the 1960s.⁷¹ From then on, the Communist Party leadership merely focused on slowing down the process.

Attempts to Reform the System

The early 1960s opened up new opportunities for more liberal reforms of the system and its form of rule.⁷² The most obvious symptoms of these reforms were increased tolerance to inner-Party criticism and the liberalization of artistic production (mainly film production and fine arts). The Kafka conference, held in Liblice in 1963, and the publishing of Czech philosopher Karel Kosík’s book *Dialectics of the Concrete* within the same year also gave clear signals that public space for discourse was beginning to open. Interest groups, such as art unions, started to become active. The 4th Congress of the Writers’ Union in June 1967 not only openly demonstrated the courage of the participants to express their thoughts more freely, but also violated “the boundaries of the dictatorship” by seeking a broader space for exchanging opinions.⁷³ An open discussion was held at the conference on the methods used by the regime to control society.⁷⁴ The following months saw a split in the Communist Party leadership, which

70 See Zpráva o současné situaci ve filosofii: Usnesení ÚV KSČ ze dne 24. března 1959 [Report on the current situation in philosophy: Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia dated 24 March 1959]. In: *Usnesení a dokumenty ÚV KSČ: Od XI. sjezdu do celostátní konference KSČ 1960* [Resolutions and documents of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia: From the 11th congress until the all-state conference of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia 1960]. Praha, Státní nakladatelství politické literatury 1960, pp. 305–319.

71 See KOPEČEK, Michal: *Hledání ztraceného smyslu revoluce: Zrod a počátky marxistického revisionismu ve střední Evropě 1953–1960* [Quest for the revolution’s lost meaning: Origins of Marxist revisionism in Central Europe 1953–1960]. Praha, Argo 2009, mainly pp. 293–294.

72 “However, this was not to be a complete reform of popular democratic system, let alone any alternative political vision. The debate on the reform was driven mainly by attempts to return to the ideological foundations of Marxism, and not by attempts to succumb to a theoretical revision. This revived Marxism was to serve as an instrument to better understand its own previous deformation as well as the current reality of socialism.” *Ibid.*, p. 309.

73 See HRUBÝ, Karel: *Tíha omylu* [The burden of an error]. In: *Listy*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (2002), pp. 25–29.

74 In his speech at the 4th Czechoslovak Writers’ congress, Ludvík Vaculík accused the authorities not only of suppressing the rights of the citizens, but directly of degrading them to submissive subjects of political power and powerless victims of their objectives. According to Vaculík, by its measures the power creates an atmosphere of fear, political indifference and civic resignation, and casts citizens into a new unprecedented subjection. It selects its assistants from people who long for power and profit, and also from people who have an obedient character or bad conscience. “It is possible to mould people who have fear

resulted in the defeat of the group around the President and the First Secretary of the Party's Central Committee, Antonín Novotný. The opposition faction within the Communist Party then drew on the expertise of social sciences institutes, as well as on the reactivated intellectual community (which was still fully integrated in the dogmatic ideology and Party politics during the Stalinist period), and pursued a new reform version of communist theory and the regime's practice. The reforms aimed not only at overcoming the Stalinist "deformations," increasing bottom-up control of institutions and authorities, and setting out an open mechanism of informing the public, but also at broadening civil rights and restoring some of the freedoms that had been suppressed in Czechoslovakia after February 1948. A more open policy of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia was aimed at increasing, among other things, public support for the reformed system of "state socialism," although its continued existence was not brought into question at the time.

The Communist Party was still the leading power in the state. However, the monopoly of power of the bureaucratic elites in control of the Party was badly disrupted by the split, and the elites consequently lost the absolute control they had previously held. New interest groups, which *emerged independently of the desires or initiative of the Communist Party leadership*, were no longer subject to persecution (such as the Club of Committed Non-Party Members, or KAN as it was known; the Club 231, or K-231; the reviving Social Democratic Party). The directive approach of the Communist Party towards the unions, youth and other mass organizations was also liberalized. Even the pseudo-parties of the National Front became active in order to gain a certain autonomy. Nevertheless, political pluralism was not allowed, and KAN, K-231 and the Social Democratic Party never came to be officially recognized.⁷⁵ Still, the liberalization, which came about after press and public speech censorship was to a great extent relaxed, clearly indicated that the regime dissociated itself from the Stalinist *extreme* totalitarianism in a more decisive and genuine manner than during the Novotný period. The activity of society was also unprecedented. Opinions outside the previous authoritarian discourse were discussed in the public space.⁷⁶ In 1968, the totalitarian system transformed, according to Linz's terminology, into a "post-totalitarian regime *by choice*," for it was partly initiated by choice from "above" (by some of the Communist Party officials and intellectuals) and partly by support from

and many children, people previously humiliated, who trustingly accept an offer of new pride, and then also people who are dull by nature. For a certain period of time, under certain circumstances and for certain tasks, even various moral absolutists and altruistic, albeit badly informed, enthusiasts like me may temporarily serve the purposes of the power" Vaculík stated openly. *IV. sjezd Svazu československých spisovatelů: Protokol. Praha 27.–29. června 1967* [The 4th congress of the Czechoslovak Writers' Union: Protocol. Prague 27–29 June 1967]. Praha, Československý spisovatel 1968, p. 143.

75 See HOPPE, Jiří: *Opozice '68: Sociální demokracie, KAN a K-231 v období pražského jara* [Opposition '68: The Social Democratic Party, KAN and K-231 during the Prague Spring period]. Praha, Prostor 2009.

76 See HRUBÝ, Karel: *Politické rozpravy intelektuálů za "pražského jara"* [Political discourses of intellectuals during the "Prague Spring"]. In: *Soudobé dějiny*, Vol. 15, No. 3–4 (2008), pp. 545–574.

“below” (by some of the Communist Party membership, as well as by a number of people outside the Party).

The eight months of attempts to reform the communist system in Czechoslovakia, which took place between January and August 1968, differ from the previous years by exposing a *division in the regime leadership and its power base*. Until then, Party policy (seemingly cohesive) appeared to have the support of the majority of the population, which (at least outwardly) responded positively to its calls for mobilization, adopted the language of ideology, respected Party hierarchy and behaved “obediently” (“the consent” of the voters was reflected in almost a 100 per cent agreement with the government of one party, camouflaged by the National Front). In the first months of 1968, the Communist Party, however, switched from speaking with one voice to speaking with at least three different voices, as shown in the work of historian Jitka Vondrová.⁷⁷ There were conservative powers opposing any reforms, and in opposition to them were progressive powers, which on the contrary pursued a reform, or redress, of the previous regime’s mistakes as well as of the existing flaws. However, there was no unity even among the reformers. There was a core supporting the Party’s First Secretary Alexander Dubček, which sought to humanize and liberalize Stalin’s heritage without disrupting its “socialist substance,” i.e. economic planning, “common ownership of the means of production” and the monopoly of power of the Communist Party (as expressed in the Communist Party’s Action Programme from April 1968). The reformers around Dubček promised the control of power “on the basis of partnership, competition of ideas and people,” as was also outlined in the proposed report of the planned Communist Party congress from August 1968. However, this was on condition that the reforms would not turn anti-socialist or anti-communist (which was also unacceptable for the USSR and other “allies” within the Eastern Bloc).⁷⁸ Nevertheless, the advocates of radical reform (many intellectuals and for example also the Party’s City Committee in Prague) often crossed the boundaries of the communist catechism and in the longer term pursued political pluralism.⁷⁹ Although these proposals had an unexpectedly strong support on the part of the population, the position of radical reformists within the Party was not sufficiently strong to enable them to push their proposals through against the will of

77 VONDROVÁ, Jitka: *Reforma? Revoluce? Pražské jaro 1968 a Praha* [Reform? Revolution? The Prague Spring 1968 and Prague]. (Sešity Ústavu pro soudobé dějiny AV ČR, Vol. 45.) Praha, ÚSD AV ČR 2013, p. 9.

78 *Ibid.*

79 The objective of the reform was clearly expressed by the Marxist philosopher Robert Kalivoda: “For the present stage in the implementation of socialist democracy, this in practice means the creation of *absolute freedom* for various world-view and cultural concepts, provided that they respect the socialist organization of society.” KALIVODA, Robert: *Demokratizace a kritické myšlení* [Democratization and critical thinking]. In: *Literární listy*, Vol. 1, No. 11 (1968), p. 6. In the reform, Kalivoda included also the possibility of plurality of political parties, prohibition of censorship guaranteed by law, abolition of “cadre limits” as well as of the leading role of the Communist Party, as anchored in the Constitution. All this, however, with one condition: that the “common core of the socialist programme” would be preserved in partnership with the Communist Party.

the still strong Party centre. The leading position of the Communist Party (despite the division of Party elites) was not to be questioned. Not even the Slovaks' attempts at greater autonomy could challenge the communist rule in both parts of the republic.

The brief existence of the Prague Spring thus resulted in one major finding: not only the Party, but principally *the society*, previously presented by regime propaganda as a legion marching in close formation behind the Communist Party, turned out to be heterogeneous and differentiated in terms of interests, beliefs and values.⁸⁰ Apart from loyal followers of the Party's policy and ideology, there was a big portion of society (including Communist Party members) which voiced – now even in the press and in public discourse – its criticism or direct rejection of former politics. This heterogeneity in society's perception, beliefs and values was to emerge again in full force and with important implications at the end of the 1980s. The “uniform society” proved to be an illusion. The dynamics of this reform process, originally set in motion by Nikita Khrushchev, was brought to an end by Brezhnev's restoration. The occupation of Czechoslovakia clearly marked an end to the rule of one party, which reforms, but at the same time remains the irrevocable “leading” power of the regime, and therefore also that of the “socialistic” system.⁸¹

Frozen Post-Totalitarianism: The Brezhnev and Husák Era

After 21 August 1968, there was pressure from the “revolution centre” for strong action against the reforms and the protagonists, and gradually the totalitarian regime was restored in its post-Stalinist form. Nevertheless, measures preventing the use of unlimited power and ruthless methods by one leader remained in place. The restoration of the former (post-Stalinist) regime, albeit with this limitation (which was accompanied by Party screenings, expulsions from the Communist Party and selective sanctions against those who thought otherwise, but no longer mass terror), resulted in pacifying that section of society which had been activated during the Prague Spring. Gradually, the regime entered into the phase of *frozen post-totalitarianism*,

80 This observation had already been made by Ferdinand Peroutka in his interview with Václav Havel, who visited him at his country house at Lost Lake while staying in the US in 1968. In *Long-distance Interrogation* with Karel Hviždala, Havel reproduces it as follows: “[...] it will be important to preserve one less prominent, albeit from the long-term perspective extremely substantial issue from the Prague Spring: plurality of social association ‘from below’ [...] as a political expression of the real intentions of life and an instrument of its defence against the totalitarian claims of the system.” HAVEL, Václav: *Dálkový výslech* [Long-distance interrogation]. In: IDEM: *Eseje a jiné texty z let 1970–1989: Dálkový výslech* [Essays and other texts 1970–1989: Long-distance interrogation] (Documents, Vol. 4). (Ed. Jan Šulc.) Praha, Torst 1999, pp. 699–917, cit. p. 720.

81 This type of regime, towards which the Czechoslovak attempt at reform was headed in 1968, was eventually implemented, after a transitional type of *mature* post-totalitarianism, in its radical form in Hungary at the end of the 1980s. The leadership of the Hungarian Communist Party decided to depart from the Soviet monopolist system and prepared a transition to a pluralist system, which eventually allowed competition between democratic parties as well. The development in Poland took the same direction, albeit in a different way. Cf. LINZ, J. J. – STEPAN, A.: *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*, pp. 306–311.

as aptly termed by Juan José Linz. The regime did not abandon totality, as the term might suggest, but it was a *totality operating in a different way* (as closer characterized for example by Václav Havel in his essay *Power of the Powerless*).⁸² It consisted of a system of continuous rectification, resulting in control of the population not only by the regime, but also by the citizens themselves, that is by their everyday environment, which adapted – intentionally or unintentionally – to the conditions they were compelled to live under. The life of universities and research institutions was also strongly affected, mainly in the field of the humanities and social sciences. The period after the intervention of “fraternal” armies was therefore for some “a participatory dictatorship” (in the words of Martin Sabrow), in which Communist Party leadership drew its support from those who agreed with the programme of “normalization.” For others, however, it remained a hard-line post-totalitarian system based on the Party apparatus, loyal experts and secret police, with whose assistance the system identified, excluded and eliminated its critics and enemies (this entailed purges, degradation at work, precluding access to higher education, etc.). The consent of the population was no longer needed as it had previously been sufficiently disciplined and pacified, and was now (at least outwardly) obedient.

The post-totalitarian regime of the 1970s consolidated all major structures and functions that are typical of totalitarianism: concentration of power in all key areas of the life of the state and society in the hands of the political-bureaucratic elite, uprooting of any signs of political pluralism, authoritative influence of (Marxist)-Leninist ideology, control of the population by secret police (which was in 1974 again subordinated to the Ministry of the Interior), the “nomenklatura” system in appointing key positions with a clear cadre limit for non-Communists and preference for “reliable” Communist Party members. The unity of the ruling party and the state, which was symbolically demonstrated during the leaderships of Klement Gottwald and Antonín Novotný by the fact that the first man in the Communist Party was also the first man in the state (President of the Czechoslovak Republic), was ostentatiously confirmed after the resignation of General Ludvík Svoboda when Gustav Husák became both the Secretary General of the Party’s Central Committee and the President of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. Repressive justice and repressive measures varied from the former extreme forms (mainly from the terror of the early 1950s) by a greater respect for laws, which were to be, at least *formally*, observed. *The political, economic and ideological structure, its interconnectedness, a privileged position of the Communist Party and the ideology, along with the professionally organized control of the population, remained the central characteristics of the frozen post-totalitarian regime* – despite the fact that in the upcoming years its control mechanisms began to weaken, primarily in the area of economy and on the local level.

82 “I do not wish to imply by the prefix “post” that the system is no longer totalitarian; on the contrary, I mean that it is totalitarian in a way fundamentally *different* from classical dictatorships, *different* from totalitarianism as we usually understand it.” HAVEL, Václav: *Moc bezmocných* [Power of the Powerless]. In: IDEM: *Eseje a jiné texty z let 1970–1989: Dálkový výslech*, pp. 224–330, cit. p. 230, emphasis in italics in original.

At that time the influence of ideology over society also changed significantly.⁸³ It was no longer an inspiration, and its content was narrowed down to some compulsory phrases that served people by helping them avoid suspicion of being enemies. The pressure of Western civilisation also played its part. Despite its isolation from the non-communist world, society was still influenced by global trends in living, dressing, consumer goods and artistic expression (mainly in the area of popular music). Information and artistic representations from the liberally orientated Western world also leaked in through modern media such as radio and television. Moreover, there was a change in the international climate, symbolized by the signing of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Helsinki. From the mid-1970s, this had fostered opposing sentiments in society. Still, repressions were no longer massive, but rather selective. Only a few people expressed their dissent publicly (for example the Chartists, authors and publishers of *samizdat*, and some artistic groups). Yet, in the consciousness of the society, and mainly among the youth, openly critical attitudes and demonstrations of defiance were increasing considerably.

Post-Totalitarianism by Decay

Hence, *society* in (approximately) the last decade of the communist regime had already transformed in many aspects. The older generation had partially or fully identified with the state-socialist system and the communist dictatorship, or had simply become accustomed to it. Still, there were many people who could not fully accept it. A new generation was growing up and brought with it an increasing number of non-conformist young people who expressed their protests against the restrictive regime through alternative ways of living. In *the perception* of the majority of the society, however, the dictatorship became a routine; *it degenerated into a habitual state of affairs*, to which people largely conformed, seeking to improve or at least preserve their existing way of life.

Positions in *the state apparatus* were still held by members of the Communist Party, but their qualifications for this work were different. The leading posts were now occupied by younger people who were no longer ideological fanatics, but rather experienced managers. They relied less on the working class (though rhetorically they still called on it) and more on the “nomenklatura cadres,” institutions and apparatus, including the security forces. Improving economic parameters and supply problems was undoubtedly important for them, as well as having their “peace

83 According to historian Lenka Kalinová, due to the disillusion that followed the events of 1968, part of the population, including workers, ceased to engage in actions for social values, and paid more attention to private activities and to improving their living conditions in line with the criteria of the consumer society. KALINOVÁ, Lenka: *Dělníci v normalizaci: Dělnictvo a sociální stát v Československu. Sociální postavení a postoje dělnictva v 70. a 80. letech* [Workers in the “normalization” era: The working class and the welfare state in Czechoslovakia. Social status and the attitudes of the workers in the 1970s and 1980s]. In: TŮMA, Oldřich – VILÍMEK, Tomáš (ed.): *Česká společnost v 70. a 80. letech: Sociální a ekonomické aspekty* [Czech society in the 1970s and 1980s: Social and economic aspects]. (Česká společnost po roce 1945 [Czech society after 1945], Vol. 11.) Praha, ÚSD AV ČR 2012, p. 55.

to work.” Nevertheless, just as for their older comrades in the leadership, their primary concern was to remain in office or rise in power. The Communist Party as such remained “totalitarian.” In contrast to the leaders in Poland and Hungary, their counterparts in Czechoslovakia had no intention of sharing power with the opposition or of introducing major reforms. Until its final days, the “normalization” regime did not renounce its heavily bureaucratized monopoly of power, but preserved most of the mechanisms to control society.⁸⁴ Ideology no longer served to motivate people, but it was still officially in force. The Communist Party leadership was content with outward displays of loyalty, and consequently less emphasis was put on indoctrination. Ideology seemed to be firmly anchored in the consciousness of the population through education, media influence and the regime language. Despite its apparent stability, by losing external support (after Gorbachev’s change in foreign policy during the *perestroika*) the regime became internally vulnerable.⁸⁵ Due to increasing political helplessness among the ruling bureaucratic elite and the ideological ritualization of politics, there was more room for private and critical action by society *in a non-political sphere*. Society, however, still lacked sufficient power to force the ruling elite to adopt reforms leading to a substantial change in the character of the dictatorship.

The relations between the ruling power and the population settled down to mutual efforts to avoid conflict. For the majority of the population, the dictatorship was an unchangeable system (secured by an alliance with the Soviet Union, which was to last “forever”), which maintained its regulative functions, but whose rules and measures could be circumvented (through corruption, by using personal contacts, purchasing black market goods and services, etc.). People could also find their “niches” free of the regime’s influence and ideological pressure. Within the existing framework, people pursued their personal goals (to advance in their careers, obtain better housing, education, etc.), sought friendly relations with their neighbours or colleagues at work, as well as a carefree life with their families and friends, or pleasantly spent leisure time. This positive attitude of people to preserve and cultivate

84 See PULLMANN, Michal: Gewalt in der Umbruchzeit der ČSSR. In: SABROW, Martin (ed.): *1989 und die Rolle der Gewalt*. Göttingen, Wallstein 2012, pp. 337–356. Pullman states here that the former practice of state violence, which repressed mainly political opposition, religious communities, non-conformist behaviour, etc., remained in place practically unchanged until the end of the decade, despite all the reforms of the 1980s. The persecution of dissenters and non-conformists continued, often also affecting family members and relatives, as well as having long-term consequences for their future lives. “Centralization of repressive bodies and classification of their decisions and procedures remained the most important feature of the state-socialist organization until its very collapse.” *Ibid.*, p. 337; see also Writing History in the Czech and Slovak Republics: An Interview with Michal Pullman. In: *Social History*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (November 2012), pp. 384–385.

85 The external stability of the system is determined by its integration into a bigger power bloc, wherein individual elements mutually strengthen and condition themselves and wherein any inner conflicts are resolved by interventions of the power. Cf. PETRUSEK, Miloslav: *Společnost pozdní doby* [Societies of the late times]. Praha, Sociologické nakladatelství 2006, chapter “Post-totalitní společnost” [Post-totalitarian society], pp. 314–316.

life is sometimes used as an argument against labelling the late “normalization” regime as totalitarian.⁸⁶ Yet it cannot be used to legitimize the communist dictatorship as “modern” and “non-totalitarian” for it is an inherent capacity of people, which manifests itself in any regime and under all circumstances. Mass celebrations and rituals demanded demonstrations of unity and respect for the Communist Party’s authority, and adherence to regime symbols and manifestations of collective ardour (such as celebrations of 1 May or of the Russian October Revolution) still gave an impression of ideological and political unity between the Communist Party and society, which may have been viewed as genuine by Party supporters and sympathizers. This apparent stabilization led the regime to change its stance on civic passivity. While in the earlier stages of the communist dictatorship passivity was suspicious, it was viewed more favourably in its later stages. If passive citizens observed rituals, they were not considered *eo ipso* suspicious just because they did not engage in other social activities (as in Kádár’s Hungary). However, beneath the manifested (that is not real) unity and “obedience” lay a diversity of interests and conflicts, as well as an ideological vacuum, or discontent.

The discontent became widespread, pervading atmosphere of the entire society. One of its effects was the development of a grey zone of people who still fulfilled certain functions within the regime, but no longer believed in it, and consequently became increasingly sympathetic to criticism of the regime.⁸⁷ Society sensed the growing problems of the regime and its lack of determination and began to challenge its authority. The revolt was not political, for that was still dangerous. However, society was losing interest in ideology and public affairs, and was increasingly withdrawing into the private sphere. Economic managers and local functionaries relaxed their ties with the centre. Lower functionaries and rank-and-file members of the Communist Party no longer fulfilled their obligations with zeal, nor did the ideology mobilize people by offering new perspectives. The Party was no longer viewed as a battle formation, but rather as a means to better opportunities. As the Marxist utopian dream faded, both Party and state cadres at the middle and lower levels lost their faith in the vision of a classless society.⁸⁸ This subsequently weakened the operation of the entire system. And it was primarily due to the *regime’s weakness, and not its intentions or benevolence* that a wider space opened up for opposition and

86 See PULLMANN, M.: Ještě k modelu totalitního panství (see footnote 56).

87 ŠIKLOVÁ, Jiřina: Šedá zóna a budoucnost disentu v Československu [The grey zone and the future of the dissent in Czechoslovakia]. In: *Proměny*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (1990), pp. 5–12. The text of the speech, which the author had sent to a symposium held at the beginning of October 1989 in the Bavarian town of Franken, was published in New York’s exile magazine only after the fall of communism.

88 “Over the course of the 1960s, the 1970s and mainly in the 1980s, the majority of rank-and-file Communist Party members probably lost faith in the attainability of the truly classless communist society. Throughout this entire period, however, the Communists have not ceased to believe in the legitimate right of the workers’ parties to lead society on the path to an indeterminate alternative to both capitalism and Stalinism.” KOLÁŘ, Pavel: Strana jako utopie: Komunistická identita po pádu stalinismu [The Party as utopia: Communist identity after Stalinism]. In: *Soudobé dějiny*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (2012), p. 254.

non-conformist activities (the birth of new independent initiatives, dissemination of the *samizdat*, the organization of rock and underground concerts).⁸⁹

The disintegration of the Communist Party authority and its lack of capacity to govern marked the end of the final stage of the Party’s monopoly of rule. As predicted by Zbigniew Brzezinski in 1971 in his analysis of the development of totalitarianism, a period of “dysfunctional totality” began at the end of the 1980s: political elites resisted any major reforms. The dominance of the system and ideology over society was undermined and the subordination of society was therefore less dogmatic and no longer absolute. Dissenting opinions and differently oriented groups began to spring up. Repressive methods were still considered legitimate, but were no longer used automatically.⁹⁰ There was a lack of perspective and a lack of will to carry out any major reforms of the system, let alone to change the regime. Solely the will of the power-bureaucratic elite to keep a monopoly of rule persisted. This phase was termed by Juan Linz *post-totalitarianism by decay*.⁹¹

89 According to Petr Pithart, unlike the authoritarian regimes, the “normalization” regime still “fairly reliably kept in the state of numbness also those spheres of the public life, which the authoritarian regimes normally ‘let live’ with indifference, or more or less tolerate them.” A certain permeability of the “normalization” regime can be attributed solely to its weakness, and not in the least to its realism or openness to tolerance. PITHART, Petr: 1969–1989: *Chybějící pojem, či spíše nechuť k porozumění?* [1969–1989: Are we in the need of a concept or do we simply lack the will to understand?]. In: *Ibid.*, Vol. 16, No. 4 (2009), p. 690. In contrast to that, political scientist Stanislav Balík considers the existence of the “social contract” (i.e. an offer of social certainties and relatively increased prosperity in exchange for depoliticization of society, in other words for renouncing the possibility of actively intervening in the politics) to be evidence that the regime in Czechoslovakia could no longer be totalitarian in the period of “normalization.” According to him, it should be considered authoritarian, because the existence of a social contract with the public is a typical feature of authoritarian regimes (and “impossible in totalitarian regimes”). BALÍK, Stanislav: *Komunistický režim v Československu a přechod k demokracii – see footnote 55*. Balík, however, overlooks one important detail, which has been pointed out by Pithart: authoritarian regimes also tolerate a certain freedom for society in the sphere of public life (for example in the area of economics or in world-views), which the totalitarian regime aims to keep under its control even in the stage of its dysfunction (i.e. in the stage of numbness). What is characteristic for the authoritarian regime from the very beginning (a certain plurality in all areas excluding politics), is in the final stage of “normalization” a result of the regime’s weakness, and not of its will or changes in the structure.

90 BRZEZINSKI, Zbigniew: *Dysfunctional Totalitarianism*. In: BEYME, Klaus von (ed.): *Theory and Politics*. Den Haag, Kluwer 1971. Reprinted in German translation in: JESSE, E. (ed.): *Totalitarismus im 20. Jahrhundert*, pp. 263–276 (see footnote 2).

91 Political scientist Jan Cívín compares the Czechoslovak regime of the second half of the 1980s from the different perspectives of theories of totalitarian, post-totalitarian and authoritarian regimes, and outlines its characteristics as follows: “The Communist Party still maintains a dominant position in society. However, it takes into consideration the views of experts, and its power becomes increasingly rational and bureaucratic. On the outside, it still gives the impression of being homogeneous, but in reality latent conflicts exist between the pragmatic and orthodox Party members. Still, an entire pragmatically oriented faction within the party is not formed. The regime at the same time loses its legitimacy as well as its ideological anchorage. This is because the ideology becomes more formal and hollow. Moreover, the regime turns

Million “Dissent”

Towards the end of the 1980s, a large part of society in Czechoslovakia – encouraged by the successes of the popular movements in Poland and Hungary, the activities of the public in the German Democratic Republic and the attitude of Gorbachev’s leadership, which had linked the *perestroika* plan with the principle of non-intervention in the affairs of the satellite states⁹² – adopted a quite different public discourse than in the previous decades, which had been shaped and regulated by the regime.⁹³ While in the 1970s and 1980s dissent was gradually limited to several thousand people, in the spring and autumn of 1989 the petition “Několik vět” [Just a few sentences], demanding open dialogue and greater liberties, had already been signed by tens of thousands of people. In November and December 1989, the number of people protesting against the regime grew to a million. However, the courage of the majority of society to bring down the dictatorship did not grow solely out of resignation, weariness of the regime or lack of faith in its

‘schizophrenic.’ There is an apparent contradiction between the official and unofficial versions of the world, and virtually nobody any longer believes in the first one. The ‘ice armour’ of the frozen post-totalitarianism begins to ‘thaw,’ which is a sign of the impending fall of the regime.” CIVÍN, Jan: Tání československého komunistického režimu v letech 1985–1989 [Melting of the communist regime in Czechoslovakia 1985–1989]. In: BUDIL, Ivo – NOVÁKOVÁ, Tereza (ed.): *Totalitarismus*, sv. 2: *Zkušenost střední a východní Evropy* [Totalitarianism, Vol. 2: Experience of Central and Eastern Europe]. Plzeň, Západočeská univerzita 2006, pp. 35–42, here p. 41.

- 92 Soviet leadership did not intervene in the internal crises of the Czechoslovak regime: “[...] in the final stage, the decisive role was played by the domestic factors. These factors included above all the awakening of society and its increasing courage – or rather of some social, professional and age groups – as well as the existence of organised (and to a certain extent also socially established) opposition, which took over the lead of the social movement, had the necessary faith of the public and was able to swiftly react to the development of the situation.” TŮMA, Oldřich: Mezinárodní souvislosti kolapsu komunistického režimu v Československu [The international context of the collapse of the communist regime in Czechoslovakia]. In: KOCIAN, Jiří – TŮMA, Oldřich (ed.): *Deset let soudobých dějin: Jednání sekce Soudobé dějiny na VIII. sjezdu českých historiků* [Ten years of contemporary history: Proceedings of the Contemporary History section at the 8th Congress of Czech Historians]. Praha, ÚSD AV ČR 2001, p. 125.
- 93 Over the course of 1988, a manifesto entitled “Democracy for All” was drawn up by a new opposition group called Movement for Civic Freedom, which originated from Charta 77. The manifesto pointed out the bleak state of society and the country, of which the current government was aware, but was nevertheless unwilling to give up its totalitarian rule. The manifesto demanded not only freedom of spiritual life or movement, and restoration of legal order, but also a return to political pluralism. It *protested against the leading position of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, or of any other political party or association of organizations usurping the right to act on behalf of all, being anchored in the Constitution*. *Demokracii pro všechny: Manifest Hnutí za občanskou svobodu* [Democracy for all: Manifesto of the Movement for Civic Freedom]. In: HLUŠIČKOVÁ, Růžena – CÍSAŘOVSKÁ, Blanka (ed.): *Hnutí za občanskou svobodu 1988–1989: Sborník dokumentů*. [The Movement for Civic Freedom 1988–1989: A collection of documents]. Praha, Ústav pro soudobé dějiny AV ČR – Maxdorf 1994, pp. 25–34, cit. p. 26. Cf. also MIDDELL, Matthias: Two Ways of Telling the Story? In: SMITH, S. A. (ed.): *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Communism*, p. 174 (see footnote 11).

ideology and authoritarian discourse. It stemmed also from an irrepressible desire for a more dignified and fuller life, a desire which had survived in traditions and customs during the entire communist dictatorship, as well as in the thoughts and perceptions of the majority of the society, although it was publicly endorsed only by a small handful of Chartists and other opponents of the regime. Moreover, there was broad support in society for the traditions of political democracy and the ideals of social justice and these combined into the vision of a synthesis between a socialist system and a democratic pluralistic regime.⁹⁴ Had it not been for a permanent aversion to the dictatorship, which imposed a different value system and moral on people, awareness of an alternative political world-view and moral, ideas and values, and subliminal hope for a different, better state organization and fuller life of society, it would be hard to explain why so many people took to the streets at the end of 1989 to protest against the communist dictatorship, which still had an efficient repressive apparatus at its disposal.

Conclusion

The final stage of the communist dictatorship in Czechoslovakia was not an entirely new type of regime, but rather a continually developing and subsequently degenerating product of the totalitarian regime.⁹⁵ The post-totalitarian regime reproduced totalitarian power and economic and social structures, and these remained in force under the Communist Party's monopoly of rule. Communist ideology was still a key framework for interpreting the world and history, as well as for shaping value norms. However, despite the persisting arbitrary role of the Communist Party and its ideology, the pressure of ideological indoctrination had only little effect on society. The private life of large segments of society was therefore still governed by traditional norms, beliefs and values. Despite somewhat relaxed criteria of social exclusion, society remained divided between those who enjoyed some privileges, and the majority of people who were disadvantaged under political and ideological criteria, or those who were stigmatized as enemies of society due to their non-conformism and were ostracized and persecuted. While people used the weakness of the regime to pursue their everyday interests, direct opposition or any other political pluralism outside the ruling party continued to be inadmissible – the National Front and mass “social organizations” remained under the control of the

94 On the basis of these traditions, new attempt of the society to bring down the communist government was already anticipated by Canadian historian Herbert Gordon Skilling in his monograph *Czechoslovakia's Interrupted Revolution* (Princeton, Princeton University Press 1976, p. 852).

95 The question whether the communist dictatorship in Czechoslovakia was not in fact constituted by two stages of *totalitarian* system had already been raised by Oldřich Tůma in the conclusion of his review of Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan's book *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*. He pointed to the possibility that the post-totalitarian phase was already embedded and present in the foundations of the totalitarian regime. TŮMA, Oldřich: Poznámka k typologii komunistických režimů [On the typology of communist regimes]. In: *Soudobé dějiny*, Vol. 4, No. 3–4 (1997), pp. 534–537.

Communist Party. Right up until the final days of the communist dictatorship, the ruling party preserved the potential to exercise control and carry out repressions through its state apparatus. Even in a situation where the ideology was losing its appeal and the utopian visions were withering away, with the Communist Party and state leadership sinking into political impotence and the political-economic system bloated and bureaucratized, the “normalization” regime still preserved many totalitarian structures and practices.⁹⁶ Political elites learnt more rational and sophisticated methods of governance. Their major concern, however, was to maintain the leading role of the Communist Party, preserve the “socialist” economic system and create the (at least fictitious) unity of society and the state on the basis of Marxism-Leninism.

The regime in Czechoslovakia became weak and dysfunctional. It *did not gradually lose its totalitarian character* as in Poland and Hungary, where (under different circumstances and in different ways) the relevant establishments gradually relaxed their monopoly of power. This also undermined the dominance of the communist ideology. In Poland and Hungary, regimes transformed into a new form, under which political pluralism was restored, dialogue was initiated and power shared with the opposition, and subsequently elections with multiple candidacies were organized.⁹⁷ In contrast to Poland and Hungary, *Czechoslovakia had not transformed from a communist regime into a different type of regime without totalitarian features before it became a pluralistic democracy*. Although the regime had lost its remaining authority and capacity to act in the last months of its existence, *it had not renounced its claim to monopolistic, unshared rule of the state, economy and society, which was legitimized by a still valid, albeit hollow, ideology. A plurality of political subjects or social and cultural structures outside the control of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (i.e. outside the organizations of the National Front) was not allowed by the Constitution*. Nor was it considered a pragmatic measure by the political leadership, as it had been in Poland and Hungary.⁹⁸ Czechoslovak Communists showed no intention (there had been no time for this either) for a compromise transformation to an alternative type of regime, as had happened in those communist states, in which the Western type of liberal-democratic regime was preceded by a regime displaying both authoritarian traits and clear elements of political pluralism.⁹⁹

96 The criteria and measure of totality are not merely a lack of democracy, but rather the scope and intensity of externally controlled, but also deep-rooted (internalized) conformism (cf. WALICKI, Andrzej: *War die PLR ein totalitärer Staat?* In: ŚPIEWAK, P. (ed.): *Anti-Totalitarismus*, p. 459 – see footnote 21).

97 See LINZ, J. J. – STEPAN, A.: *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*, pp. 306–307; WALICKI, A.: *War die PLR ein totalitärer Staat?*, pp. 456–466; CIVÍN, J.: *Tání československého komunistického režimu v letech 1985–1989*, p. 38 (see footnote 91).

98 See LINZ, J. J. – STEPAN, A.: *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*, pp. 306–311.

99 The question of why in some countries (for example in GDR, CSSR) *frozen, decaying* post-totalitarianism persisted until the very last days, whereas in other countries (Poland, Hungary) it converted into a *mature* post-totalitarianism, was asked by Mark Thompson. He pointed out the patriotic politics of the Polish and Hungarian Communist Parties' leaderships, which sought to break away from the influence of Moscow and liberalise some

When confronted with mass demonstrations of hundreds of thousands of people, the ruling elites did not venture to use violence. On 29 November 1989, only 12 days after the student demonstration, which had still been suppressed by armed forces, and two days after a symbolic general strike, an extraordinary meeting of the Federal Parliament, which was still controlled by the Communist Party, was held, and the article on the leading role of the Communist Party and on Marxism-Leninism as state ideology was deleted from the Constitution. After weeks of gradual capitulation, the transition from a dictatorship to another political-economic system and *pluralistic democracy* had been completed.

Final Remarks

By focusing on explaining *the stability* of the dictatorial regime in Czechoslovakia, the revisionists failed to sufficiently explain the development which eventually led to the regime’s downfall. Despite the fact that the regime still had the repressive apparatus at its disposal, “the eternal rule of one party” was *rejected by the masses* in 1989 and replaced by an alternative, pluralistic system, characterized by respect for human rights and control of the government by society “from below.” A new perspective was offered by those in society who still cherished many former democratic and humanistic traditions. By not taking into account the real beliefs, motives and values of this part of society, the revisionists failed to perceive the power of its anti-regime potential clearly.¹⁰⁰ Undoubtedly, *the disillusion* of many Communist Party members, and of those profiting from the regime, over the disappointing development of the state, its deteriorating economy and the civil unrest, all of which left them feeling powerless, also played an important part. However, for the majority of society, which had not fully internalized the values enforced by the regime and which – their conformist behaviour in public notwithstanding – had

areas of the system, without at the same time provoking Moscow. THOMPSON, M.: Weder totalitär noch autoritär, pp. 335–336 – see footnote 66.

100 On the one hand, they recognize its influence: “The festive atmosphere of the unity of the revolutionary days along with the persisting danger of excessive state violence (which could not be ruled out for a long time) confirmed this recodification. The internal peace was no longer guaranteed by the old leadership of the party and the state, but rather by new elites who had arisen from the former opposition.” PULLMANN, M.: Gewalt in der Umbruchzeit der ČSSR, p. 353 n. – see footnote 84. On the other hand, in an article published by Michal Pullman together with Pavel Kolář, the importance of these opposition elites is described ironically: “[...] other clever minds convey the idea that normalization was a ‘totalitarian regime,’ in which we continuously trembled in fear of repression and secretly waited for a moment when everything here would ‘burst’ so that we could get into the streets wearing tricolour badges. As if communist Czechoslovakia was a country of 15 million Chartists, who only pretended to be living false ‘normal’ lives.” KOLÁŘ, Pavel – PULLMANN, Michal: Kdo se bojí normalizační každodennosti? Bez studia “banalit” všedního dne nepochopíme ani trvání, ani pád komunistické diktatury [Who is afraid of “normalization” everydayness? Without studying the “banalities” of everyday life we can hardly understand the duration or fall of the communist dictatorship]. In: *MF Dnes*, appendix *Kavárna*, 29 October 2011, pp. 33–36, cit. p. 33.

never fully identified with the policy, goals and ideology of the Communist Party, the end of the regime was associated with *hope*. *Hope* of removing existing restrictions, abolishing annoying rituals and *creating broader political pluralism, as well as of establishing a plurality of opinion and values that would enable them as individuals to acquire greater rights and greater influence over the world they wished to live in.*¹⁰¹

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Translated by Blanka Medková

101 A transition from the state-socialist system with a monopoly of the Communist Party to a capitalist economy and pluralistic democracy is viewed differently by a revisionist historian. In order to save a neutral image of the communist dictatorship as a modern state form, which does not deserve *a priori* condemnation, he presents society as a mass living solely for non-political interests of “everydayness.” The very same society, which according to him had stabilized and legitimized the communist regime during the four decades, then exchanged the illusion of redemptive state “socialism” for another illusion of a better future in the capitalist economy and pluralistic democracy: “It seems that mottoes such as ‘democracy,’ ‘market,’ ‘individual opportunities’ or ‘hard work’ today fulfil a similar role as their normalization predecessors ‘socialism,’ ‘planning,’ ‘bright future’ or ‘dialectic approach.’ Mostly, they do not refer to adequate contents and projects (they have no determinate significance), but rather enable people in their everyday communication to convince themselves that *it is worth reaching a consensus which will guarantee general content of decent people* (i.e. of the majority of the population) with the plurality of their everyday orientations and which will effectively exclude everything that is dangerous, dirty, suspicious or fraudulent (before 1989 for example Romany people and dissidents, and later Romany people and homeless people or immigrants).” PULLMANN, Michal: *Konec experimentu: Přestavba a pád komunismu v Československu* [The end of the experiment: *Perestroika* and the demise of communism in Czechoslovakia]. Praha, Scriptorium 2011, p. 226 (emphasis in italics added by the author of this article). There were undoubtedly many people who were willing to live in a consensus with *any* regime, as long as it guaranteed them “a general content of decent people,” but this no reason for substituting *pars pro toto*.

Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf*

Milan Hauner

A critical edition of *Mein Kampf* by the Institute for Contemporary History, Munich-Berlin 2016. Edited by Christian Hartmann, Thomas Vordermayer, Othmar Plöckinger and Roman Töppel, with further collaboration of Pascal Trees, Angelika Reizle, and Martina Seewald-Mooser. Vol. 1: 947 pages, Vol. 2: 1019 pages. ISBN 978-3-9814052-3-1.

“We Are Not Finished with Hitler Yet...”

Several German historians selected this quote in the 1980s as their motto. The quote provided them with a kind of permanent challenge to persevere in their critical studies of the Third Reich.¹ It is certainly useful to be reminded of that challenge in connection with *Mein Kampf*, often referred to as “the Bible of the Nazi movement,” whether we are contemplating the book as Hitler’s mere autobiography, covering the first three and half decades of his life or as an exposition of his doctrine of National Socialism, in which Hitler insisted in solving the “Jewish Question” and preached the necessity of conquering a new *Lebensraum* in the East. Whatever view we may hold on the role of the individual in history, Hitler remains a challenge. In the opinion of John Lukacs, Hitler was “the most extraordinary figure in the history of the 20th century.”² This was because of his unique manifold

1 SCHREIBER, Gerhard: *Hitler Interpretationen 1923–83*. Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft 1984.

2 LUKACS, John: *The Hitler of History*. New York, Knopf 1997, pp. xi and 262–268.

functions he occupied and fulfilled as an ideologue, the *Führer*, the political and military leader in one person, to the ultimate detriment of his country and people. Hitler may have been the most popular revolutionary leader in the history of the modern world. Why? Because Hitler belongs to the democratic, not the aristocratic age of history, says Lukacs. He is not properly comparable to a Caesar, a Cromwell, a Napoleon. Utterly different from them, he was able to energize the majority of a great people, in his lifetime the most educated people of the world, to follow his leadership to astonishing achievements while making them to believe that what they stood for was not only the regained justice for Germany but was seen by the Germans even as an antithesis of evil – whereas the rest of the world would see in him the opposite, the very incarnation of evil. And the Germans followed him with confidence to conquer almost all of Europe, achieving a German hegemony soon lost, because of *hubris* when the *Führer* overreached himself. His *Reich*, which was to have lasted a thousand years, ended after less than 13. Yet he had an enormous impact and left a more indelible mark upon this century than any other dictator, a Lenin or a Stalin or a Mao.³

Did Hiler deserve the attribute “Great?” Could one find in Hitler’s carrier during peacetime moments of greatness that would rank him equal with great German statesmen such as Bismarck? Even if one attaches to Hitler’s name the attribute “negative greatness?” Among Germany’s prominent authors Joachim Fest was the first who asked this ill-fated question in the preface of his bestseller.⁴ Fest deliberately selected the period ending in 1938, arguing that had Hitler died at the end of that year, the bloodless expansion of the German Reich by the *Anschluss* of Austria and Sudetenland would have guaranteed him place among Germany’s “Greats.” The year 1938 was the year in which the policy of appeasement was triumphant. The American magazine *Time* had indeed proclaimed Hitler “The Man of the Year 1918.”

How was it possible that this nobody from nowhere, a migrant in Germany with unfinished high school, could exercise such powerful influence through his oratorical skills, which, incidentally, did not exist before the age of 30. How can we explain the extraordinary career of this genuine “nobody,” whom the Viennese writer Karl Kraus defined in his often-quoted paradox: “As to Hitler, nothing comes up my mind.” Hitler was no external tyrant imposed on Germany. His political party turned out to be the strongest in the elections, he was legally appointed to the post of the Reich Chancellor, and between 1933 and 1940 he became the arguably most popular head of state in the world. That is why his place in the history of the world will be pondered by people for a long time to come. And this is why we cannot ignore *Mein Kampf* and why this critical edition, published in January 2016, after three years of preparation, by a team of historians from the Institute of Contemporary History in Munich, might prove its usefulness.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 50.

4 FEST, Joachim: *Hitler*. Munich, Propyläen-Verlag 1973; Czech translation: *Hitler: Kompletní životopis*. Praha, Naše vojsko 2008.

If we try to trace Hitler's life even through his heavily stylized autobiography in *Mein Kampf*, what picture will emerge? That of an obscure Viennese bohemian, who had talent for drawing and dreamt of becoming an architect. He loved music but never learnt to play a musical instrument; he was incapable of maintaining intimate friendships. In spite of his evasion of military service in Austria he nevertheless would enlist in the Bavarian army as a volunteer, become a brave soldier in the Great War and fight to the bitter end. The end of the war found him in hospital, blinded from poisonous gas. This personal traumatic episode coincided in his mind with two collective traumas, Germany's surrender and the outbreak of revolution. All three together compounded to create what was to become probably the most important turning point in Hitler's life. Hitler himself wrote in *Mein Kampf* that his miraculous recovery from blindness was a sign of Providence which turned him into a politician. This, again, looks like extreme self-stylization penned in 1924/5 and must be read with extreme caution. Hitler still had a long way to go. But even in retrospect, November 1918 must have been Hitler's intellectual and psychological watershed. In overcoming his temporary blindness Hitler's most immediate desire did not stretch beyond remaining soldier as long as possible since he had no other place to go. The military provided him with a roof over head, dress, pocket money and regular free meals.

Although diagnosed as a "hysterical psychopath," Hitler was allegedly cured and his personality changed by a combination of shock therapy and hypnosis administered by Dr Edmund Forster, the chief psychiatrist at the hospital in Pasewalk. This incident has been repeatedly seized upon by psycho-historians like Rudolph Binion, who also emphasized the shattering impact the death of Hitler's mother Klara, caused by breast cancer, had on the 17-year old Adolf⁵; and may have laid the seeds of his subconscious anti-Semitism, based on the fact that Klara's survival rested in the hands of Dr Eduard Bloch, a Jew.⁶ A convincing explanation of Hitler's personality has yet to be written, for we know *what* Hitler did but still do not know *why*.

Even the more restrained among Hitler's biographers are compelled to admit that in November 1918 a turning point occurred in Hitler's life and that thereafter a different Hitler was about to enter *history*. Thus, at the age of 30 plus, a previously shy Hitler, having been systematically refused military promotion for his complete lack of authority and inability to command, discovers in the following months that he had a previously unknown gift of vulgar rhetoric that could keep large audiences in thrall to his hypnotizing words on a variety of emotional topics, ranging from the lost war to anti-Semitism. In 1923 he felt confident enough to lead the National Socialist German Workers' Party (*NSDAP*) in an abortive coup that ended in trial and a 5-year sentence, reduced to one year after appeal because of "good behaviour."

5 BINION, Rudolf: *Hitler among the Germans*. New York, Elsevier 1967.

6 HAMANN, Brigitte: *Hitlers Edeljude: Das Leben des Armenarztes Eduard Bloch*. Munich, Piper 2008; Czech translation: *Hitlerův ušlechtilý Žid*. Praha, Prostor 2012.

Still in his forties and at the helm of the most populous and industrialized European country, Hitler launched a programme of radical legal and social changes inside Germany. Fighting at the same time to overcome the trauma and humiliation of the lost war, Hitler succeeded in imposing a brutal concept of biological regeneration whose major component was anti-Semitism, through which he created the image of a combined mortal enemy, the Judeo-Bolshevik subhuman threatening from the East to destroy Western civilization. Installed in power as the *Führer* and Reich Chancellor of Germany, he soon added the title of the supreme war commander, to whom millions of Germans swore their absolute obedience, and he was ready to guide them like sleepwalkers to the fulfilment of the prophecy he had formulated in *Mein Kampf* and in his early speeches: *Germany will either be a world power, or there will be no Germany.*

One triumphant *Blitzkrieg* followed the other, hiding the ultimate aim of Hitler's "other" war, the racial war, which was to bring about a radical racial revolution based on the superiority of the "Nordic man." To achieve this aim Hitler dragged the German people of "willing executioners"⁷ into a war of racial extermination and almost succeeded in destroying the entire Jewish population of Europe. Thus, Hitler's biological obsession to keep the Nordic German race preserved from contamination by Jewish blood and venereal diseases like syphilis, seems to have been Hitler's overriding mental preoccupation often overshadowing his daily business as a military leader. With his project of creating a New Order based on World Dominion (*Weltherrschaft*) of the Nordic-Germanic race over the rest of the world, the 50-year old Hitler rose in no time to become the most sinister conqueror of the century. Was he also the leading mass murder as well? This title, surely, must belong to Stalin as far as sheer numbers go. But Hitler still retains the dubious primacy as the most efficient killer in direct executions.

When, after Stalingrad, he realized that Germany could not possibly win the war, Hitler translated this into his perverse racial attitude that the German people proved itself weaker, unworthy of his genius, and that "the stronger Eastern people should inherit the future."⁸ Still, the final verdict on Hitler keeps escaping us. Churchill's verdict of 1939 on the Sphinx-like Stalin being a *riddle, wrapped up in mystery inside an enigma*, would fit Hitler's character better than anyone else's of his contemporaries. "Alternatively driven by reason, by temperament, or by dark instincts, Hitler was more enigmatic than anyone in German history had ever been before him."⁹

I have introduced this preface with a quote from a book by a German historian of the younger generation: *We are not finished with Hitler yet.* I wish I could say that the quote appears to me too gloomy and that, 40 years later this is no longer

7 GOLDHAGEN, Daniel: *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust.* New York, Knopf 1996.

8 SHRAMM, Percy E.: *Hitler: The Man and Military Leader.* Chicago, Chicago Review Press 1971, p. 30.

9 *Ibid.*

true. Alas, Hitler has become so deeply amalgamated with the relatively very short Nazi era of less than 13 years that not only the German history of this period, but the entire European history, too, might remain identified with Hitler. Every historical dispute in Germany since 1945 has been carried out, implicitly if not always explicitly, in Hitler's shadow: the notorious waves of the *Historikerstreit*, the debate over Daniel Goldhagen's impertinently provocative book, the impact of the movies like the *Holocaust* (1977) and the *Untergang* (2004), including the greatest postwar literary scandal involving the selling of forged Hitler Diaries in 1983, which constitutes perhaps the biggest fraud in publishing history,¹⁰ and the David Irving's "Holocaust Denial Trial" of 2000,¹¹ and the follow-up to the critical edition of *Mein Kampf* in 2016, which is here under review. And that was certainly not the last time we heard of Hitler and his disturbing legacy.

Adolf Hitler and Mein Kampf

Why is *Mein Kampf* so important for understanding Nazism and Hitler himself? Other charismatic world leaders might have produced their recitals, Chairman Mao left behind his *Little Red Book*, President Saparmurat Niyazov, the *Turkmenbashi* (Father of the Turkmen Nation), his *Ruhnama* [Book of the soul], but the historic place of *Mein Kampf* remains quite unique. Eberhard Jäckel, one of the leading German historians on Hitler's Germany, expressed the significance of *Mein Kampf* very succinctly when he wrote that "rarely in history, if indeed ever, would a ruler even before he seized power, reveal in writing what he was about to carry out, as Hitler had done."¹²

Upon Germany's defeat and Hitler's suicide in 1945 *Mein Kampf* was already considered "the most dangerous book in the world." In contemporary and future retrospection however, the book may be considered as one of the most important manifestos of political modernism, as Roger Griffin argues, since it had given the Nazi movement the charge of "revitalization," which would carry it, like Mussolini's Fascism in 1922, to the conquest of state power needed for the realization of one of the most shocking and treacherous socio-political and ideological revolutions of the 20th century.¹³ Whatever are the reasons for taking *Mein Kampf* seriously, it took more than 90 years since Hitler's book was first published and 70 years since the dramatic suicide of its author, to accept the fact that an unabbreviated and fully commented critical edition should be finally published. It so happened that that

10 See the fascinating account by HARRIS, Robert: *Selling Hitler: The Story of the Hitler Diaries*. London, Arrow 1996.

11 EVANS, Richard J.: *Telling Lies About Hitler: The Holocaust, History, and the David Irving Trial*. London, Verso 2002.

12 JÄCKEL, Eberhard: *Hitlers Weltanschauung*. Stuttgart, Deutsche Verlags-Amstalt 1981, p. 7.

13 GRIFFIN, Roger: *Modernism and Fascism: The Sense of a Beginning under Mussolini and Hitler*. Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan 2007, p. 264. Available now also in Czech: *Modernismus a fašismus*. Praha, Karolinum 2016.

the place of publication was the same where Hitler's movement had originated for the simple reason: it was the seat of Germany's finest research institution on contemporary history and specifically dedicated to the study of the Nazi era. Because the copyright on *Mein Kampf*, owned by the Bavarian government, was to expire on 31 December 2015, the work on the critical edition had to start at least three years earlier. Hitler's *Mein Kampf* consisted originally of two volumes, published separately in 1925 and 1926. While still in jail Hitler agreed in June 1924 that the publishers should announce the following month of July 1924 as the publication date under an incredibly clumsy title: *Four and Half Years of Struggle against Lies, Stupidity and Cowardice*, with a subtitle *A Reckoning (Eine Abrechnung)*. Since the July deadline could not have been met, nor any of the following ones for that matter, publishers stopped for good their campaign of advertising Hitler's book. Eventually, after much pushing the first volume with a much more effective title *Mein Kampf* was published on 18 July 1925 with the same subtitle, *A Reckoning*, by the Franz Eher Verlag in Munich. It did not sell well at first, but after 1933 it became the most published book in the German language. By 1945 over 12,5 million copies were sold in over 1,000 editions and translations into at least 17 languages were arranged. The last proven edition of *Mein Kampf* appeared in the autumn of 1944. As for royalties the author Hitler was entitled to receive 10 per cent from each sold volume of the so-called Popular Edition (*Volksausgabe*) sold at 12 marks. According to Max Amann's postwar testimony, Hitler's honorarium reached the sum of 15 million marks, of which he allegedly called off 8 million.¹⁴

Out of these millions of copies, a surprising amount survived the war and the iconoclasm of Nazi cultural monuments, emanating from Order No. 4 of the Allied Controlled Commission for Germany of 13 May 1945, according to which "literature and works of national socialist and militaristic character" were to be destroyed. Consequently, in May 1945 when the Allies seized the property of the Eher Verlag, Hitler's publisher, they automatically banned *Mein Kampf* in Germany and Austria. Soon the Allies transferred the copyright of *Mein Kampf* to the Bavarian government. Its representatives not only refused to allow Hitler's book to be published in Germany but tried to ban – though unsuccessfully – its publication abroad as well. Today, full and slanted translations of *Mein Kampf* are being printed and sold in at least a dozen countries.¹⁵ A Russian copy of *Mein Kampf* was first printed in 1992. Copies with Hitler's own signature at auctions can match prices in five digits. In India, Turkey and the Arab world, versions of *Mein Kampf* belong to bestsellers mainly for the book's anti-Semitic contents. In September 2010 *Mein Kampf* appeared on India's bestsellers list; in Turkey *Mein Kampf* has been a bestseller

14 PLÖCKINGER, Othmar: *Geschichte eines Buches-Adolf Hitlers Mein Kampf*, München, Oldenbourg 2006, p. 184.

15 France, Greece, Spain, Portugal, Italy, England, the US, Brazil, Mexico, Lebanon, Japan, etc. According to a list – by no means complete – in: MASER, Werner: *Adolf Hitler's Mein Kampf: Der Fahrplan eines Welteroberers*. (6th edition) Esslingen, Bechtle 1981.

since 2005. A real boom exploded on the internet. Hitler's *Mein Kampf* reduced in size and edited can be nowadays easily found in various databanks.

The impact of *Mein Kampf* in the wider world could not be underestimated. In the United States several parallel translations of *Mein Kampf* appeared in the 1930s. Until 1942 about 250,000 copies were sold. The most skilled translation remains Ralph Manheim's, published and distributed until today by Houghton & Mifflin. The first English translation of an abbreviated edition under the title *My Struggle* was published with the permission of the Franz Eher Verlag by Hurst & Blackett. Until 1939 the publishers sold 90,000 copies. That same year Hurst & Blackett, bypassing the permission, came out with a full translation but under the original title *Mein Kampf*, of which between 150,000 and 200,000 copies were sold. It was this volume that George Orwell in March 1940, looking at Hitler's brownshirt photograph, felt compelled to comment: "It is a pathetic, dog-like face, the face of a man suffering under intolerable wrongs. [...] He is the martyr, the victim, Prometheus chained to the rock, the self-sacrificing hero who fights single-handed against impossible odds. If he were killing a mouse he would know how to make it seem like a dragon. One feels, as with Napoleon, that he is fighting against destiny that he *can't* win, and yet that he somehow deserves it."¹⁶

In the preface to *Mein Kampf*, written in the Landsberg Prison, Hitler opens with a surprising understatement over his own writing since he was not so happy with the written word. It is the spoken word through great orators, he believes, which makes a political movement great – not great writers. This is particularly true in Hitler's case whose gift of abrasive oratory became the foundation stone of his political success. Hitler would not have turned into the *Führer* on the basis of *Mein Kampf* alone; he needed to be a speaker. Yet, the doctrine must be systematically organized and presented, admits reluctantly Hitler, and that can only happen in a written form. As for the style of *Mein Kampf*, Hitler himself admitted to his legal adviser Hans Frank: "I am not a writer. What beautiful Italian Mussolini writes and speaks! I cannot do the same in German. Ideas escape me while I am writing. *Mein Kampf* is a collection of leader articles from *Völkischer Beobachter*, and I believe that even there they would not be accepted from the point of view of language. As for the content, I would not like to change it. Although they may appear as 'fantasies behind bars,' there is also a certain logic in the dream. Only the chapter on syphilis should I completely rearrange, for it is mistaken."¹⁷ To Goebbels *Mein Kampf* appeared as an honest and brave attempt on Hitler's part, "only its style was sometimes unbearable."¹⁸ Without the serious study of *Mein Kampf* itself, however tedious, clumsy, dull, tiresome many of the book's passages must appear, the role of Hitler in recent German history would remain very superficial.

16 ORWELL, George: *New English Weekly*, 21 March 1940.

17 FRANK, Hans: *Im Angesicht des Galgens*. Munich, F. A. Beck 1953, p. 45; *Mein Kampf* (1939), p. 269.

18 Goebbels cited in: www.spiegel.de/international/germany/new-annotated-mein-kampf-offers-insight-into-hitler-a-1072032.html.

The first volume of *Mein Kampf* is largely autobiographical. Hitler drafted it in the second half of 1924 in the Landsberg Prison and typed it himself on a typewriter supplied by Helene Bechstein, the wife of a rich piano manufacturer who was also one of the most persistent admirers of *Wolffi*, visiting him more frequently in prison than other worshippers. A detailed analysis of Rudolf Hess' correspondence, particularly with his future wife Ilse Pröhl, who with her husband would copy-edit *Mein Kampf* in the 1930s, revealed that Hess, who was also tried and imprisoned along with Hitler after the abortive coup of November 1923 in the same Landsberg Fortress on the same floor as Hitler, was not the original typist as has been often surmised.

It seems that the first typescript was done by Hitler himself or a hired typist outside the prison after Hitler's premature release on parole "for good behavior" in December 1924. The search for the original manuscript, either handwritten or typewritten, had continued ever since. It is assumed that after the publication of the first volume Hitler instructed the publishers to give the manuscript to Helene Bechstein, which she might have destroyed at the end of the war. More probable seems the possibility that whatever papers Hitler kept in his private archives outside the Reich chancellery, e.g., in his Munich apartment at *Prinzregentenplatz* No. 16, or his Alpine residence at *Berghof*, Obersalzberg, were systematically destroyed by Julius Schaub, his *Chefadjutant*, in the last days of April 1945. Several days later 300 RAF bombers attacked Obersalzberg and smashed almost every single building including Hitler's *Berghof*.

Hitler will spend the summer of 1926 in Berchtesgaden and Obersalzberg dictating the second volume of *Mein Kampf*, using, as he himself admitted, leading articles from *Völkischer Beobachter*. Most of the corrections he did in October while still finishing the last chapters. This time he had a typist at his disposal. Text editing was done by Hitler's close collaborators from *Völkischer Beobachter*, Max Amann, Rudolf Hess and Ilse Pröhl, up to about 10 persons. Among them, Rev. Dr Bernhard Rudolf Stempfle, a former priest, journalist and *Gymnasiallehrer*, appears perhaps as the most intriguing. Despite the fact that he was a single-minded anti-Semite, he engaged in sharp polemics with Hitler. Stempfle has been credited with the first extremely detailed review of *Mein Kampf* of 29 July 1925, which circulated anonymously, proving that Hitler was not the sole author of *Mein Kampf* which, naturally, made the future dictator very angry. Nine years later, during the so-called Röhms Putsch, Semple was arrested – which could not have happened without Hitler's knowledge – taken to Dachau concentration camp and executed without trial.¹⁹

The second volume of *Mein Kampf*, subtitled *The National Socialist Movement*, was published in Munich on 11 December 1926. For the first time Hitler revealed his long-term goals, especially in chapter 14 on *Eastern Orientation or Eastern Policy*: "To gather our people and their strength for a march on that road which will lead this people out of its present restricted Living Space (*Lebensraum*) to new land and

19 PLÖCKINGER, Othmar: *Geschichte eines Buches-Adolf Hitlers Mein Kampf*, pp. 133–141.

soil, and hence also free it from the danger of vanishing from the earth or of serving others as a slave nation.” Hitler’s prophetic aim was to convince his listeners that Germany of the year 2000 would need space and soil to contain 250 million citizens. “We National Socialists must go further,” declares Hitler, “without extension of its soil a great nation seems doomed to destruction [...] *Germany will either be a world power or there will be no Germany* [...] We stop the endless German drive to the south and west, and turn our gaze towards the land in the east. At long last we break off the colonial and commercial policy of the pre-war period and shift to the soil policy of the future. If we speak of soil in Europe today, we can primarily have in mind only Russia and her vassal border states.”²⁰

In Hitler’s view the Russian Empire was a creation of a “Germanic nucleus of its upper leading strata [...] today regarded as almost totally exterminated [...] and replaced by the Jew. Impossible as it is for the Russian by himself to shake off the yoke of the Jew by his own resources, it is equally impossible for the Jew to maintain the mighty empire forever. He himself is no element of organization, but a ferment of decomposition [...] We have been chosen by Fate as witness of a catastrophe which will be the mightiest confirmation of the soundness of the nationalist [racial] theory.”²¹

In chapters 5, 10, 13 and 14 of *Mein Kampf*, dealing with the World War, Hitler’s critique laid down a grand design for Germany’s European political alliance with Britain and Italy. Since the interests of both powers were compatible, Hitler believed that neither of them would interfere with Germany’s course of expansion in the east and help her to isolate France. According to Hitler’s hypothetical “Programme” of establishing a world empire by stages, Germany must again become a great power in three major steps: Unification of all ethnic Germans, starting with the *Anschluss* of Austria (*Sudetenland* is implied – though not explicitly mentioned in *Mein Kampf*); further consolidation of the Greater German Reich through rearmament combined with treaties of alliance with Britain and Italy. The latter should be won over by sacrificing South Tirol – even if this pragmatic offer meant a fundamental breach of racial principles of holding the German race together. This would bring about the isolation of France – “Germany’s mortal enemy” (*Deutschlands Todfeind*). War with France and her elimination as a great power, thereby removing the danger of a second front; preparing for the war with the Soviet Union and for the acquisition of land in the East. Hitler believed that a German hegemony over Europe directed against communist Russia would be in British interest, just as the maintenance of the British Empire, if only from the racial point of view, would be in the interest of National Socialist Germany. The conquest of the Soviet Union would create the new *Lebensraum* for the growing German population which – as Hitler tried to persuade his readers – can no longer sustain itself due to the shrinking agricultural soil, and prepare the “Greater Germanic Empire” for the final stage of world

20 *Mein Kampf* (1939), p. 742.

21 *Ibid.*, pp. 742–743.

conquest in alliance with the British and (possibly if not inevitably) the Japanese against the American empire.²²

Why should Hitler's *Mein Kampf* deserve our attention? Without *Mein Kampf* other sources and testimonies attributed to Hitler, such as his countless speeches, articles and other texts, would have otherwise been much less relevant. These personal testimonies found themselves promoted to the first rank as historical sources only because of Hitler's book. Why is *Mein Kampf* such an important source? Not for its symbolic or monetary value. Simply because it remains the most detailed manifold testimony of Hitler's life and the formation of his worldview leading to so far the most destructive war of mankind. It remains a unique personal autobiography of the first stage Hitler's life before – as he himself wrote – he turned into a politician. Never again will Hitler have the opportunity for instance to recall details from his childhood and adulthood – however incomplete.

How many people read *Mein Kampf*? In the opinion of the editors *Mein Kampf* was certainly read even prior to 1933 in Germany by a much larger readership than was originally assumed. After Hitler seized power in January 1933 it became the compulsory “unread bestseller” of less than 800 pages. But how many Germans read *Mein Kampf* and why could its perilous contents not be critically assessed within the nation that belonged to the best educated in the world? In order to answer this difficult question, we must first expose the myth associated with the book and widely spread as soon as the war ended, namely that very few Germans read the book because it was said to be almost unreadable for its extremist contents and mediocre style. Consequently, if one would follow this line of argumentation, how could Germans be held responsible for the crimes perpetrated by Hitler's Germany, if they hardly had time to read “the most dangerous book in the world,” let alone understand its contents. This simplistic view is no longer justifiable thanks to research especially done by the editors, who tried to verify the wide-spread myth that despite the high number of copies very few people actually read *Mein Kampf*. Recent research has established that the readership of *Mein Kampf* was actually wider than had been assumed after Germany's defeat. If the percentage of the inquiry (23 per cent) is expressed through figures, then about 15 million Germans were believed to have read *Mein Kampf*. Although it is a sizeable figure, it should not be imposed as a label of collective guilt on the German nation as a whole without examining the contents.

As for the significance of the contents (which allegedly escaped the attention of the 15 million German readers), it should suffice to glance at the opening page of the first volume to realize that the page contains, in a nutshell, the basics of Hitler's *Weltanschauung*. It is all there: the belief in racial superiority of the German race, the need to absorb Austria into Germany, and the quest for a new *Lebensraum* for the sake of feeding the hungry German nation. Missing are only the alleged main culprit and sources of all calamity to the Germans, Marxism and Judaism, which

22 HAUNER, Milan: Did Hitler Want a World Dominion?, In: *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (1978), pp. 15–32.

appear several pages further.²³ Have the German readers been so blind and self-conceited to overlook the first page of *Mein Kampf*? There have been of course authors in and outside Germany who understood the message of *Mein Kampf* and tried to ring the alarm bell. Theodor Heuss, the future President of the Federal Republic, or the courageous Austrian journalist Irene Harand.²⁴ Today Heuss' criticism in his polemics of 1932 of Hitler's anti-Semitism may appear mild for the brave German liberal could hardly anticipate the horrors of the Final Solution. However, Heuss was right on the target when describing the quest for territorial acquisitions in Eastern Europe as the foundation stone of Hitler's foreign policy.

There is no other comprehensive source than *Mein Kampf*, in which Hitler would dare to announce his "Programme" or "Schedule" (*Fahrplan* – according to Werner Maser²⁵). For the first time, after 90 years since its first publication, and 70 years after Hitler's death, the Institute for Contemporary History in Munich is publishing the unabridged version of *Mein Kampf* with a running critical commentary. What a critical edition means in the German context, is advertised already on the cover: more than 3,500 "professional notes" that are juxtaposed with Hitler's own text. The editors offer insights with detailed background materials based on latest research, thereby fact-checking the *Führer's* own text and explaining various ideological concepts. They have tried to place Hitler's utterances into proper historical context, disclosing Hitler's sources, correcting errors and one-sided interpretations. Moreover, they are also trying to juxtapose Hitler's ideas at the time of writing *Mein Kampf* with his deeds as he began to put them into effect as dictator between 1933 and 1945. This critical edition does not have a colourful jacket with Hitler's portrait. It is bound in a neutral grey canvass without any ornaments.

Did those 3,500 notes help to understand Hitler better? Do we need so many footnotes with exhausting comments to prove that Hitler was a liar and a monster? In two volumes and almost 2,000 pages? Weighing almost six kilograms? Was it necessary to put up to 15 comments per page to accompany Hitler's original text, thereby making the critical edition of *Mein Kampf* almost unreadable? Moreover, if one looks at *Mein Kampf* as a *de facto* blueprint for the forthcoming mass murder, should one apply to this detested tract the sophisticated instruments of historical criticism?

It would have been too easy to enumerate Hitler's errors and falsehoods and take them as the ultimate aim of a critical edition of *Mein Kampf*. Konrad Heiden, one of the first biographers of Hitler, wrote that his aim was not to prove that Hitler

23 *Mein Kampf* (1939), pp.1 and 20.

24 HEUSS, Theodor: *Hitlers Weg. Eine historisch-politische Studie über den Nationalsozialismus*. Stuttgart, Union 1932; HARAND, Irene: *Sein Kampf: Antwort an Hitler*. Vienna, own publishing 1935; see also ENSOR, Kirkwood R.C.: *Herr Hitler's Self-Disclosure in Mein Kampf*. Oxford, Clarendon 1939.

25 MASER, Werner: *Hitlers Mein Kampf: Der Fahrplan eines Welteroberers*. Esslingen, Bechtle 1966 (several editions were published between 1966 and 1981; an English edition was published in 1970 by Faber publishing house).

was a liar, but how he acquired those dangerous ideas and how he handled them.²⁶ Given the interval of 70 years since Hitler's death and the prestigious reputation of the Institute, nothing like a complete approach through a top-notch professional team, equipped with the best instruments of critical German scholarship, was possible. The authors were very much aware of that and at the end of the 80-page long introduction they summarized the categories and principles of their commentary into 10 groups. Here are some of the important ones:

Checking and correcting Hitler's own biographical data since Hitler was known for his tendency to suppress them entirely or to manipulate them pretty notoriously: In several earlier drafts Hitler described his childhood and school years in Upper Austria, his adolescent years in Vienna – without naming a single friend or acquaintance! School for Hitler was a sheer waste of time with incompetent teachers – with one exception perhaps, Dr Leopold Pötsch, his history teacher at the Linz *Realschule*. Hitler adored Pötsch because he imbued his pupils with the ideology of pan-Germanism, the dream of Greater Germany under the leadership of Prussia rather than Austria. Hitler's description of his important years in Vienna remain very porous. When he failed the second time the entry exams to the Arts Academy in October 1908, Hitler decided brusquely to move from the apartment he shared with his only friend, August (Gustl) Kubizek, a student of music, without leaving a note of explanation. He joins the vast army of homeless and unemployed in the Austrian capital. He says in *Mein Kampf* that he changed several jobs as a day labourer and finishing as a “draftsman and aquarellist.”²⁷ His last address in Vienna was the modern men's hostel in *Meldemanngasse*, where he stayed between 1910 and 1913. He could effort it thanks to regular income from painted watercolour postcards he sold through Jewish partners. His other source of income was the inheritance money from his parents, his mother's pension which he had to share reluctantly with his sisters and loans from his aunt Johanna in Spital. These were all topics suppressed in the first volume of *Mein Kampf*.

Hitler's flight from Vienna to Munich in May 1913 was not only caused by the fact that since 1909 he was fleeing from conscription. It is plausible that he wanted and was planning to leave Vienna already in the spring of 1912 – as he writes confusedly in *Mein Kampf* – but decided to wait till April 1913 because he was entitled, on reaching the age of 24, to collect his patrimony. None of the financial details involving young Hitler's heritage from his parents and relatives finds a spot in Hitler's book. Having stylized himself in *Mein Kampf* as a political refugee of pan-German predisposition, Hitler could not mention such profane circumstances of his vacillation to leave Vienna, let alone the haggling over money that legally belonged to his sisters. Everything in Hitler's story is related to him personally. He is in the centre of everything. How he suffered from the cold and lack of money, etc., which was not true.

26 HEIDEN, Konrad: *Adolf Hitler: Eine Biographie*. (2 Vols.) Zürich, Europaverl 1936.

27 *Mein Kampf* (1939), p. 35.

Like in the case of Vienna six years earlier, Hitler does not mention the fact that he had a roommate in Munich whose name he does not want to disclose. In Vienna it was his already mentioned (and presumably the only) friend from Linz, Gustl Kubizek, whose parents were of Czech origin. Hitler travelled with Rudolf Häusler, a friend from the Viennese dormitory with whom he will share a room in Munich, *Schleissheimerstrasse* No. 34, and the same landlord, taylor Joseph Popp, with whom Hitler will conduct correspondence as a soldier during the war.

In the brief assessment of his schoolyears Hitler provides a very negative picture of wasting his time among useless teachers – with one exception only, which was Dr. Leopold Pötsch, Hitler's history teacher at the *Realschule* in Linz, who distinguished himself through his ultranationalistic presentation favouring Greater Germany ruled by Prussia rather than Smaller Germany under Austria. Hitler admits that Pötsch, often moving his pupils to tears, made history his most beloved subject at school. In *Mein Kampf* Hitler is upset by what he calls "Slavization." His baseless criticism of "Czechization" is obvious in connection with the heir to the throne, archduke Franz Ferdinand – apparently based on the fact that his wife, Countess Sophie Chotek, belonged to Bohemian aristocracy.²⁸ Hitler claims that it was in Vienna at the age of 20 that he became so politically astute that he spotted two mortal threats to the society, namely Marxism and Judaism. Consequently, during this period, he writes with utmost self-confidence, "a world picture and worldview took shape within me, which became the granite foundation of all my acts. So that I had very little to add to what I had then created and have had to alter nothing."²⁹ This of course is, yet again, Hitler's self-imposed stylization in the course of writing *Mein Kampf* 1924–25. His real deep emersion into politics, notwithstanding his passion for political debates noticed by fellow soldiers in the trenches, was not awoken till his traumatic experience in the Pasewalk field hospital in November 1918. As Brigitte Hamann and other authors (e.g., Joachimsthaler, Plöckinger, Reuth, Weber) convincingly argued there is no strong evidence that Hitler had shown signs of being a rabid anti-Semite in Vienna or during the war.³⁰

Regarding his immediate family, Hitler mentions them sporadically. He writes that he respected his father, but loved his mother dearly. However, his parents seem to be nameless. So is the rest of the family, Adolf's surviving siblings. Out of seven, four of whom died at an early age, three were still alive at the time of writing *Mein Kampf*: His half-brother Alois Jr. (1882–1956), who left the home at the age of 14 after a dispute with his uncompromising alcoholic father Alois Hitler, born Schickelgruber (1837–1903); and above all, he does not mention his sisters Angela (1883–1949) and Paula (1896–1960). He avoided them since inheriting a substantial amount of money (equal to the annual salary of a junior teacher) from his aunt Johanna, a sister of his mother Klara (1860–1907), which he refused to

28 *Mein Kampf* (1939), pp.13, 101, 120 and 131.

29 *Mein Kampf* (1939), pp. 20–21 and 170.

30 HAMANN, Brigitte: *Hitlers Wien: Lehrjahre eines Diktators*. München, Piper 1996.

share with his sisters until ordered to do so by tribunal. Throughout the entire period of the war and thereafter until 1920 there is no evidence that Hitler sought contact with his sisters who stayed in Linz and then in Vienna. His wartime furloughs or convalescence leaves because of injuries were spent exclusively in Germany. Hitler's deep affection for his mother Klara was confirmed independently by the family doctor, Eduard Bloch, a Jew from southern Bohemia who treated Klara's cancer and attended her funeral in Urfahr, a suburb of Linz. His personal attachment to Hitler's family is witnessed through several postcards expressing deep gratitude that Hitler sent to Dr Bloch from Vienna and which Gestapo tried later to acquire and destroy. Dr Bloch was born in Hluboká nad Vltavou and studied medicine in Prague.³¹ Hitler understandably does not mention the doctor's name in his book or elsewhere, nor does he mention his Jewish business partners who helped him to sell watercolour postcards in Vienna.

In addition to his childhood and adulthood in Vienna volume one of *Mein Kampf* covers the five years Hitler spent with the German-Bavarian military and the impressions of war, followed by the years of political chaos and the account of the origins of the National Socialist movement he himself helped to shape. Hitler's impressions of the war itself are extremely porous and superficial, subjected to his self-stylized myth of a quiet but brave soldier risking often his life as one of the regimental messengers.³² At the very end of the war he received the Iron Cross First Class, given for outstanding bravery on the recommendation of his immediate superior, a Jewish officer Hugo Guttmann – another detail which Hitler avoids mentioning.

“But I Decided to Become a Politician”

Hitler's political life did not begin before he reached the age of 30 when the war ended. He himself used the symbolic phrase: “And I decided to become a politician,” with which he starts a new chapter of his postwar activities having left the lazaret of Pasewalk and returned to Munich.³³ His career as a politician was not at all so straightforward as he wrote six years later in *Mein Kampf*. His catharsis – if we may call it so – seemed to have been the outcome of at least three dramatic shocks Germany experienced linked up with his personal trauma. These three shocks were the armistice, the abdication of the *Kaiser* and the outbreak of revolution through the sailors' rising in the German navy. Hitler's personal trauma was the loss of eyesight during the night of 13 to 14 October 1918 in Flandern, resulting from the mustard gas attack by the British artillery. Within a few days his clinical blindness

31 See footnote 7.

32 For the critical analyses of Hitler's life as a soldier see: PLÖCKINGER, Othmar: *Unter Soldaten und Agitatoren: Hitlers prägende Jahre im deutschen Militär 1918–1920*. München, Paderborn 2013; WEBER, Thomas: *Hitler's First War: Adolf Hitler, the Men of the List Regiment, and the First World War*. Oxford, OUP 2010; IDEM: *Wie Adolf Hitler zum Nazi wurde: Vom unpolitischen Soldaten zum Autor von Mein Kampf*. Berlin Ullstein 2016.

33 *Mein Kampf* (1939), pp. 225 and 226–235.

was showing symptoms of hysterical blindness.³⁴ After preliminary treatment in a dressing station at Oudenaarde Hitler had to be sent to a special emergency hospital dealing with the combined effects of blindness and hysteria. It took five days and nights in an ambulance train crisscrossing Germany before Hitler could be delivered to such a lazaret in Pasewalk on the Baltic coast. Because Hitler's medical report from Pasewalk is still missing, his highly emotional description in *Mein Kampf* remains the only source for guessing what happened to him during the following four crucial weeks.

The editors of the critical edition of *Mein Kampf* decided to bypass this highly controversial chapter in Hitler's survival. Perhaps with justification because it would have required too much speculation. Thus, the name of Dr Edmund Forster, the experienced psychiatrist who tried to cure Hitler through hypnotherapy, is not even mentioned in the comprehensive name index of the critical edition. Forster specialized in treating patients suffering from shell shocks or *Granatenerschütterung* (in today's jargon the PTSD, post-traumatic stress disorder) with hypnotherapy, a method which made remarkable progress during the war in Germany's military medicine.³⁵ Before historians were able to find the name of the psychiatrist who treated Hitler and establish the still incomplete details of Hitler's cure through hypnotherapy, the entire (still hypothetical!) procedure of Hitler's transformation had been written up with unusual insight in a work of fiction by the writer Ernst Weiss. The manuscript, completed in early 1940, was for many years considered lost. How could a little-known writer Weiss create such a novel? Neither was he present in Pasewalk in November 1918 nor has he ever met Hitler!³⁶

34 HORSTMANN, Bernhard: *Hitler in Pasewalk: Die Hypnose und ihre Folgen*. Düsseldorf, Droste 2004, chapters vi and vii; LEWIS, David: *The Man Who Invented Hitler*. London, Headline 2003, pp. 147–164. Lewis discusses in great detail whether Hitler's eyes were affected by chlorine or mustard gas ammunition. Czech edition: *Muž, který stvořil Hitlera*. Praha, Práh 2005.

35 Equally missing in the index is the name of the important psychohistorian Rudolph Binion and his works, e.g., *Hitler Among the Germans*. DeKalb, Northern Illinois Univsity Press 1976.

36 Dr Ernst Weiss (1884–1940), was born in Brno. He studied medicine and psychiatry in Vienna under Sigmund Freud. He served the entire war as a surgeon on the front. After the war he turned to writing. His last novel, *The Eyewitness*, features a soldier in the German army, "A. H." of Austrian extraction, being treated after shell shock by hypnotherapy in a small lazaret in a Pomeranian town "P." Hypnotherapy will radically transform the personality of A. H. In June 1940 Weiss, hiding in Paris, committed suicide while German troops entered the city. The manuscript however survived the war and was not published until 1963 privately under the title, *Ich – der Augenzeuge* (Icking, Kreiselmeier Verlag), English edition: *The Eyewitness* (Boston, Houghton & Mifflin 1977), Czech edition: *Očítý svědek* (Praha, Odeon 1968), epilogue by Eduard Goldstücker. According to the subsequent research conducted by Rudolph Binion and David Lewis (see notes 35 and 36 above), Professor Forster visited in July 1933 the editors of the anti-Nazi publication *Das neue Tage-Buch* in Paris where he allegedly presented a copy of Hitler's *Krankenblatt*, which he accompanied with a personal testimony how he participated in November 1918 in the process of transforming Hitler into a future *Führer*, a modern *Frankenstein*. Ernst Weiss was present

The reader of *Mein Kampf* will find no hint to satisfy the fundamental query into what had caused the important transformation at the age of 30 of Hitler's personality from an anonymous soldier into the future charismatic leader with extraordinary oratorical gifts. How could this political nobody, a migrant from Austria with absolutely no roots in the country, assume gradually power over Germany, and within few more years over most of Europe, to eventually attempt as the *Gröfaz* to become the last world conqueror.³⁷ Since it already happened at the cost of around 50 million human lives and monumental destruction, we cannot call it a maniacal phantasy. However, the process of how and why remains still mindboggling.

When Hitler writes in *Mein Kampf* that already in November 1918 he decided to become a politician, he is clearly exaggerating.³⁸ It was not so simple and straightforward. Next to Dr Forster more "mid-wives" were needed to complete the creation of the *Führer*. After the incomplete hypnotherapeutic cure, he was discharged on 19 December 1918. During the long and slow journey from Pasewalk via Berlin to Munich, Hitler must have noticed the revolutionary turmoil and the chaotic return of almost six million German soldiers from the front. He was still in uniform and threatened by demobilization which he wanted to avoid at all costs. Where should he go? The army was his home providing him with shelter, food and pocket money. He had no job, no family to return to. Hitler's main task was now to survive and stay in the army amidst the revolutionary chaos as long as it was feasible. But the Munich garrison was run by the socialist soviets, soldiers' councils, loyal to socialist governments in Berlin and in Munich. In contradistinction to Hitler's own account in *Mein Kampf* that he already possessed firm ingredients of the future Nazi ideology from Vienna,³⁹ recent research has demonstrated that after arriving in Munich from Pasewalk in December 1918 Hitler was still politically confused and could have developed in different directions.⁴⁰

One decisive watershed was Hitler's experience with the short-lived Munich Socialist Republic lasting only from February to the end of April 1919. After the assassination of its first Prime Minister Kurt Eisner on 21 February the radical minority took over and proclaimed Bavaria a "Soviet" Republic in early April (the German term "*Räterepublik*," is a faithful translation of the Russian word *Soviet*). The fact that Corporal Hitler was elected as battalion's representative (*Vertrauensmann*)

at the meeting. Professor Forster, though urged not to go back to Germany, returned to his neurologic clinic at the University of Greifswald, where, under a steady stream of denunciations and persecution by the Gestapo, he committed suicide on 11 September.

37 *Gröfaz – Grösster Feldherr Aller Zeiten* [Greatest military leader of all times] a sarcastic acronym assigned to Hitler by German soldiers after the defeat at Stalingrad 1942/43. See HAUNER, Milan: *Hitler: Den po dni* [Hitler: Day after day]. Praha, Toužimský a Moravec 2017, foreword and pp. 7–20, 58–64 and 331–33.

38 *Mein Kampf* (1939), pp. 221–25.

39 See footnote 31.

40 WEBER, Thomas: *Hitler's First War*, p. 252; PLÖCKINGER, Othmar: *Unter Soldaten und Agitatoren*, p. 31; WEBER, Thomas: *Wie Hitler zum Nazi wurde*. Berlin, Ullstein 2016, pp. 328 and 345–47.

for the second time, does not mean that he sympathized with the Communists. On the other hand, as an elected regimental *Vertrauensmann* during the Munich Soviet Republic, Hitler should have been properly interrogated after the defeat of the Communists. He was not thanks to his “adjustment” strategy that he used in order to stay with the military at all costs and as long as possible. Military documents covering the activities of the 2nd regiment of the Munich garrison in which Hitler served showed that during the entire period of the Council Republic Corporal Hitler's main occupation was that of the regimental librarian.⁴¹

Was Hitler “neutral” in the last days of the Munich Socialist Republic? If he was “neutral,” how “neutral” was he? Experts' opinions differ. The prevailing view is that Hitler, having been during the socialist rule for the second time elected as the battalion's representative, sympathized with the Majority Social Democrats whose government had to flee Munich after the communist takeover in April 1919. After the defeat of the Munich Soviet Republic by the combined forces of the *Reichswehr* and the *Freikorps*, Hitler should have been arrested and properly interrogated. However, thanks presumably to the testimony of officers who knew him well, Hitler was appointed a member of an emergence tribunal investigating the activities of his fellow soldiers during the rule of the Communists. Who was responsible for Hitler's nomination has not been ascertained? In *Mein Kampf* Hitler himself is extremely reticent about his activities in Munich during the first half of 1919. In order to create an *alibi*, he describes a dramatic scene how on 27 April Red Guards came to the barracks to arrest him and how he single-handedly chased them off.⁴² The whole episode appears fictitious. In the end librarian Corporal Hitler was allowed to stay in the barracks. The army needed propagandists.

The salient points in Hitler's new career will then quickly follow. He was selected for a crash course for army propagandists by Captain Karl Mayr. Next to Dietrich Eckart, Mayr became Hitler's most influential mentor, a true “mid-wife” in Hitler's transformation. At the Lechfeld camp Hitler's speech met with unexpected success. In September Hitler entered the miniscule German Workers' Party (DAP) under the orders of Captain Mayr and wrote a long letter on anti-Semitism to a fellow army propagandist – Adolf Gemlich. Although Hitler is silent about this critical stage in his career, the editors of the critical edition, having almost 2,000 pages at their disposal, could have devoted more space and energy to this crucial period of Hitler's political transition. Historian Ian Kershaw believes that Hitler's experience of the collapse of the Munich Soviet Republic, in which Jews were strongly represented, several of them in transit from Russia, together with the propaganda schooling by the *Reichswehr*, created the inevitable ideological volte-face in his *Weltanschauung*.⁴³ Hitler became an anti-Semite and anti-communist.

41 Personal information from Dr Plöckinger. See also Plöckinger's interview with the magazine *Der Spiegel*, August 2013, p. 45.

42 *Mein Kampf* (1939), p. 226.

43 KERSHAW, Ian: *Hitler: 1889–1936, Hubris*. London, Allen Lane 1998, pp. 119–21.

Hitler becomes a challenge and a threat when three important ingredients are integrated in an amalgam of “world ideology” (*Weltanschauung*), containing his doctrines of racism, living space (*Lebensraum*) and the charismatic concept of leadership (*Führer*). The whole notion of “Leader,” according to the editors, emerged gradually from mass gatherings around a popular speaker of what was fundamentally anti-democratic militant political movement. Hitler himself admitted that he had been inspired by two leadership personalities he encountered during his early years in Vienna. Karl Lueger, the founder of the Christian-Social Party in Austria, and Georg von Schönerer, the leader of the Austrian pan-Germans. But Hitler’s admiration for the two men, both declared anti-Semites, was not without criticism. He derided their trust in the parliamentary system and in the open political debate.⁴⁴

The definitive portrait of Hitler has not been written yet. We have become gradually familiar with all the details *what* Hitler had achieved in 1919, but with virtually none *why* he did what he did.

How serious was for instance Hitler’s anti-Semitism whose effectiveness Hitler tested publicly in the second half of 1919? How did Hitler construe the notion of *Lebensraum* when he did not study geopolitical theories? When and why did he couple anti-Semitism with anti-Bolshevism? When did he change the priorities of Germany’s traditional foreign policy?

Racism, Lebensraum and the Russian Card

The second volume of *Mein Kampf*, published in December 1926, deals with the early history of the National-Socialist Party (NSDAP) up to the Beerhall Putsch of November 1923. Hitler devoted most of the space to the exposition of the movement’s world view (*Weltanschauung*). This ideology was a mixture of a specific German *Völkish* nationalism with anti-capitalist (read: anti-Jewish) and anti-communist slogans, which will soon merge into a specific anti-Bolshevik anti-Semitism under the influence of Hitler’s Russian experts, Max Erwin von Scheubner-Richter and Alfred Rosenberg, both born as Russian subjects, who believed that there was a Zionist conspiracy aiming at world dominion. In Hitler’s jargon this is described as “Jewish world Bolshevization” (*jüdische Weltbolschewisierung*) and serves as the common denominator for absolute evil and disaster threatening Germany. Categories also discussed by Hitler like political parties, propaganda, German Federation, trade unions, etc., are constantly exposed to this artificial Jewish deterrent.

Although he does not name Rosenberg, Hitler must have used his pamphlets on race and the Jewish question for his own chapter 11 in volume 1, entitled Nation and Race. In the same chapter Hitler mentions the fraudulent *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, whose claim to be working towards a world Jewish domination fell neatly into Hitler’s own concept of worldwide Zionist conspiracy.⁴⁵ Although Hitler admitted

44 *Mein Kampf* (1939), pp. 107 and 114.

45 *Mein Kampf* (1939), p. 337.

that several newspapers had already written that the Protocols were a forgery of the tsarist police, that would not change the manifest Jewish desire to rule the world.⁴⁶ Extracts from the Protocols began to circulate in Germany already since July 1919. They were brought to Germany by rightwing Russian emigrés with whom Hitler was in touch through his Russian-Baltic advisers, Rosenberg and Scheubner-Richter, who was the driving force behind their organization *Aufbau*.⁴⁷ Hitler referred to the Protocols in his speeches in 1921. While writing *Mein Kampf* Hitler would presumably use the Rosenberg's 1923 version edited by his friend Alfred Rosenberg.⁴⁸

The ideological and historical roots of Hitler's anti-Semitism, would comprise a larger number of authors on the subject of race and the "Jewish Question," whom again Hitler does not mention by name. He mentions only Houston Steward Chamberlain, with whom he was personally acquainted.⁴⁹ One cannot leave out the impact of the virulent anti-Semitic pamphlets by Hitler's intellectual tutor Dietrich Eckart (1868–1923). Experts however agree that their effect on Hitler could not match that of the *Protocols* – perhaps with one exception: Henry Ford's *International Jew-The World's Foremost Problem* (Detroit, 1920), whose German translation, appeared in 1921 and made Henry Ford Hitler's chief anti-Semitic icon, which he acknowledged by hanging a big portrait of him on his office wall for all to see.⁵⁰

Apart from biographical information the editors looked up Hitler's own reading list, books on subjects like national economy, race and the "Jewish question." However, because Hitler seldom used references it is often difficult to challenge his data. *Mein Kampf* is not an academic work. Hitler, therefore, did not feel compelled to provide for each fact a footnote. Among the few exceptions were works by Gottfried Feder, *The National and Social Foundation of the German State* (1923) and his anti-capitalist lectures on the subject of *Breaking the Interest Slavery*.⁵¹

Is it justified to ask how serious was Hitler's eugenic racism and anti-Semitism? How could any rational human being doubt it, would be the straightforward answer! With half a million dead victims of Nazi practices of euthanasia and the estimated figure of six million dead Jews, how could one have any doubts that Hitler was not serious in his revolutionary endeavour to purify the Nordic Aryan race! However, recent historical research confirms the sober conclusion that up to Hitler's age of 30,

46 *Mein Kampf* (2016), p. 800.

47 KELLOG, Michael: *The Russian Roots of Nazism: White Emigrés and the Making of National Socialism, 1917–1945*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 2005. The full name of the organization was *Aufbau: wirtschaftliche Vereinigung für den Osten*.

48 ROSENBERG, Alfred: *Die Protokolle der Weisen von Zion und die jüdische Weltpolitik*. München, publishing house unknown 1923. IDEM: *Die Spur des Juden im Wandel der Zeiten*, München, publishing house unknown 1920; IDEM: *Pest in Russland! Der Bolschewismus, seine Häupter, Handlanger und Opfer*. München, Dt. Volksverl Boepple 1922.

49 CHAMBERLAIN, Houston Stewart: *The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*. Place and publisher unknown, 1909, German translation: *Die Grundlagen des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*. (2 Vols.) München, Bruckmann 1944.

50 FORD, Henry: *Der internationale Jude: Ein Weltproblem*. (2 Vols.) Leipzig, Hammer Verlag 1921.

51 FEDER, Gottfried: *Brechung der Zinsknechtschaft des Geldes*. Diessen, J. C. Huber 1919.

contrary to what he writes in *Mein Kampf*, no serious anti-Semitic or racist views in his utterances could be found.⁵² How can we explain this paradox?

The author of this article is led to believe that without Hitler's additional dramatic experience with the short-lived Munich Soviet Republic in April 1919, Hitler would have needed another dramatic opportunity to absorb anti-Semitism into his *Weltanschauung*. The Munich Soviet Republic had a disproportionately high number of Jewish intellectuals, including several leading Communists who came from Russia. Although the reign of the a“Judobolsheviks” in Munich was a short one (7 April – 1 May 1919), their presence was directly linked with massacres committed by the Red Guards, which added heat to the anti-Semitic feelings of the population that Hitler felt compelled to share. The hitherto neutral Hitler, or moderate socialist, elected twice to represent the ranks as their spokesman at the battalion level, becomes during the Marshall Law a member of a committee that carries out purges in his regiment. He cannot waver any longer by sitting on the fence and avoiding engagement and demobilization. He might stay in the army for a couple more months but he must take sides. It is not enough that he cares for the regimental library. He further agrees to be enrolled as an army agitator in a series of specially designed propaganda courses led by Captain Karl Mayr, which Hitler attended during the summer of 1919.⁵³ Having been released from the army by the end of March 1920, Hitler is being mentored by Dietrich Eckart, a rabid anti-Semite himself. It was Eckart who helped the NSDAP to purchase their main paper, *Völkischer Beobachter*. The influence of the Russian faction that brought the *Protocols* to Germany, through the presence of two prominent Baltic Germans in Hitler's entourage as mentioned above, cannot be underestimated.

52 Next to already mentioned authors like Hamann, Plöckinger and Weber, the works of Ralf Georg Reuth reached the same conclusion that Hitler turned into an anti-Semite only after the defeat (2 May 1919) of the Munich Soviet Republic. The second catalyst for Hitler's strengthening of anti-Semitic views was the acceptance of the Versailles Peace terms by the German government (7 May 1919). See REUTH, Ralf Georg: *Hitlers Judenhass*. München, Piper 2009. Czech translation: *Hitlerova nenávisť k Židům*. Praha, Euromedia 2011.

53 Among people who had decisive impact upon Hitler was Karl Mayr (1883–1945) whose fate remained one of the most intriguing. During the war he served with the German military mission in Turkey, participated in the suppression of the Munich Soviet Republic as an intelligence officer on General von Oven's staff, supervised Hitler's training as anti-Bolshevik agitator and was instrumental in September 1919 in Hitler's writing the “Gemlich Letter” (the first authentic proof of Hitler's anti-Semitism), ordered Hitler to join the German Workers' Party, despatched Hitler to Berlin by aeroplane in March 1920 to get in touch with the Kapp Putsch conspirators. From a supporter of the NSDAP Mayr turned in 1925 in the opposite direction and joined the Social Democrats as adviser for the *Reichsbanner*. In 1933 he emigrated to France where he was arrested by the Gestapo in 1940 and sent to the Buchenwald concentration camp where he died, presumably murdered in February 1945. The US periodical *Current History* in its November 1941 issue, pp. 193–199, published an article “I was Hitler's Boss” purported to be written by Karl Mayr. The article however contains many factographical errors which make Karl Mayr's authorship problematic.

The widely-held view that as far as geopolitics was concerned Hitler must have digested the main ideas about the future *Lebensraum*⁵⁴ in the East from Professor Karl Haushofer of Munich through the latter's assistant and later the Führer's first deputy, Rudolf Hess, is not shared by the editors.⁵⁵ Despite numerous affinities between German geopolitics and national socialist ideology regarding the influence of environment, considerable differences prevailed.⁵⁶ Although Haushofer held the founder of German geopolitics and author of the term *Lebensraum* Friedrich Ratzel⁵⁷ in high esteem, his area of interest was not East-Central Europe, but the Far East with Japan at its centre. Moreover, he was a life-long advocate of a German-Japanese axis with Russia as an equal partner in the middle providing the necessary land bridge between Europe and Asia. Besides, his wife was Jewish and he resented Hitler's idea of *Lebensraum* founded on the principles of biological racism. When he was invited to write a book review of *Mein Kampf*, he declined saying that Hitler's book was pure propaganda and had nothing to do with geopolitics.⁵⁸

Relying on the Russian expert Scheubner-Richter, Hitler anticipated the collapse of the Soviet regime any day. When the news of Lenin's death reached him in Landsberg at the end of January 1924, Hitler was disappointed that disintegration of the USSR did not follow and went to the other extreme. According to the hitherto plan that had been designed by Scheubner-Richter an anti-communist alliance of nationalistic Germany and monarchist Russia seemed plausible. The eastern *Lebensraum* for future German expansion was to be gained by supporters of a restored Russian monarchy among the "white" immigrants, who in Munich alone numbered several hundreds and with whom Rosenberg and Scheubner-Richter had been in daily contact through the *Aufbau* organization.⁵⁹ Scheubner-Richter however was killed marching on Hitler's right side during the abortive beerhall putsch on 9 November 1923.⁶⁰ Three months thereafter the severely ill Lenin died but the anticipated monarchist coup in Russia did not realize. Hitler concluded that the *Lebensraum* he dreamt about to realize in the East would have to be achieved without Russia's partnership.⁶¹ If with Scheubner-Richter now dead one particular

54 For the spread of the term *Lebensraum* other authors should take the credit like GRIMM, Hans: *Volk ohne Raum* (Munich, Klosterhaus Verlag 1926).

55 *Mein Kampf* (2016), p. 1630.

56 GIACCARIA, Paolo and MINCA, Claudio (eds.): *Hitler's Geographies. The Spatialities of the Third Reich*. Chicago, Chicago University Press 2016.

57 RATZEL, Friedrich: *Politische Geographie*. Munich, publishing house unknown 1897.

58 JACOBSEN, Hans-Adolf: *Karl Haushofer: Leben und Werk*. (Vol. 1.) Boppard am Rhein, Harald Boldt 1979, p. 451.

59 According to Weber, Munich alone accounted in 1921 for 1,105 "white" Russians and 530 Baltic Germans.

60 So far, the most detailed research on Scheubner-Richter has been done by VALENTINITSCH, Bernhard: *Max-Erwin von Scheubner-Richter (1884–1923), Zeuge des Genozids an den Armeniern und früher enger Mitarbeiter Hitlers*. MA thesis defended at the University of Graz, 2012. (My personal thanks to Dr Othmar Plöckinger for enabling me access to this important work.)

61 See WEBER, Thomas: *Wie Hitler zum Nazi wurde*, pp. 328 and 420–23.

legacy of the “white Russian émigrés” had gone, another, more disturbing, that of the *Protocols* with its doctrine of the world conspiracy of the Jews, believed to be animated by the Bolsheviks recently, remained.

Another source was the *völkisch Drang* widely spread immediately after the First World War by writers like Hans Grimm (*Volk ohne Raum*, 1926), some of it going back to the teachings of a pronounced anti-Semitic German orientalist, Paul de Lagard (1827–1891), who believed in the necessity of German eastern expansion and foundation of new settlements in Russia. The more specific source however to conjure up Hitler’s image of *Lebensraum* must have come directly through General Erich Ludendorff, Hitler’s temporary close ally and after the abortive November putsch of 1923 his rival. In his capacity as chief of staff on the Eastern Front, Ludendorff ordered in November 1915 to carve out an administrative unit, nicknamed *Ober-Ost* (from *Oberbefehlshaber Ost*), which included pieces of former Russian territories of today’s Lithuania, Latvia, White Russia and a northern tip of Poland, an area in excess of 100,000 km² with approximately three million inhabitants. *Ober-Ost*, which had its own monetary system and postal service, was entirely administered by the German army and served as a source and depository of food and raw materials for German and their allied armed forces on the Eastern Front. The Russo-German Peace Treaty of Brest-Litovsk of March 1918 opened new opportunities for German advance further east including the entire region of the Black Sea and beyond. The original design of *Ober-Ost* and the experience accumulated with it during the war provided inspiration two decades later for Nazi territorial planning known as the *Generalplan Ost*, which was designed on a racist-biological foundation with the purpose of displacing millions of original inhabitants and of Germanizing the entire region.⁶²

A very important task for the editors was to explain the meaning of the Nazi jargon and pseudo-terms Hitler used profusely in *Mein Kampf*, such as e.g., *Volksgemeinschaft* (German ethnic collective determined by “race” rather than language or religion and social function), *Rassenschande* (sexual contact between people of different race), etc. Next to spotting individual factual errors in Hitler’s presentation, the editors had to correct false or one-sided presentations. Finally, the editors carefully examined where Hitler’s words were or were not reciprocated by direct action. For instance, in July 1933 series of laws were passed leading to the so-called Nurnberg race legislation of 1935: The Law of Revoking Naturalization of Jews and Gypsies who were deprived of German citizenship; the Law to Prevent Offsprings with Hereditary Defects, permitting forced sterilization of Gypsies, of mentally and physically disabled, and others considered “inferior” or “unfit.” Another subject in harmony with Hitler’s original thoughts was his major geopolitical project to conquer the East, his entire *Ostpolitik*, based on the wishful thinking to acquire a new *Lebensraum*. Hitler’s formula in *Mein Kampf* allowed no more than three options regarding the existing majority population in the East:

62 LIULEVICIUS, Vejas Gabriel: *Kingsland im Osten: Eroberung, Kolonisierung und Militärherrschaft im Ersten Weltkrieg*. Hamburg, Hamburger Edition 2002.

expulsion, enslavement or extermination... These aims the Nazi policy carried out to the letter after June 1941.

There is no explicit reference in *Mein Kampf* of the genocidal "Final Solution" for German and European Jews practiced by Hitler's Germany during the Second World War. Towards the end of volume two Hitler condemns metaphorically 12,000 to 15,000 German Jews for sabotaging the war effort – he claims – and causing Germany to lose the war. Gassing these "Hebraic nation spoilers" at the beginning of the war, Hitler claims, might have saved the lives of one million decent Germans!⁶³ As for Germany, Hitler requested in 1924–25 that Jews should be deprived of their civic rights and property and compelled to emigrate under the general term "removal" (*Entfernung*). This was his position on the Jewish Question which he took already in September 1919 in the often-quoted letter to a fellow soldier of the name Adolf Gemlich.⁶⁴ Needless to say, but useful in a book review of *Mein Kampf* destined for Czech audiences, there is no direct reference in *Mein Kampf* to Czech/Bohemian subjects or themes, not even to the existing Nazi Party (DNSAP, *Deutsche Nationalsozialistische Arbeiterpartei*) or their leaders in Czechoslovakia or postwar Austria, though Hitler shows several times his ridiculous obsession with the Bohemian-born wife of Archduke Franz Ferdinand as if her marriage alone was the cause of the Czech-German antagonism.

With more than 3,500 notes and so much thinking over the whole concept of a critical edition of Hitler's *Mein Kampf* 90 years after its first publication, one should find it very hard to search for the slightest imperfection in this supremely professional edition. Yet, at least one striking omission should have been prevented. One would assume that a critical edition on this massive scale should comprise everything from the two original *Mein Kampf* editions, including Hitler's own prominently displayed dedication, prominently displayed at the beginning of the book, to the 16 Nazi supporters, who were shot during the November 1923 Beerhall Putsch. The editors, however, decided not to publish their names. Why? The list with 16 names is a historical source. It should have been included and not censored. Where else in the book one could find the name of the very complex personality of Dr Max Erwin von Scheubner-Richter (1884–1923), Hitler's chief adviser on Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Russia, whose loss Hitler himself described as "irreplaceable," and whom historians have recently "discovered" as one of the key witnesses of the Armenian genocide when he served as the German Vice-Consul in Erzurum in 1915? Another important early supporter of Hitler was the rabid anti-Semite writer Dietrich Eckart (1868–1923), who did not participate in the putsch but died shortly thereafter and to whom Hitler dedicated the second volume of *Mein Kampf*. In this case the editors acted correctly and left Hitler's dedication to Eckhart uncensored.⁶⁵ History as a human construct must not be confused with

63 *Mein Kampf* (1939), p. 772.

64 E. Deuerlein Hitlers Eintritt in die Politik und die Reichswehr. In: *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, Vol. 12 (1959).

65 *Mein Kampf* (2016), p. 1739.

the *truth* itself, as Oscar Wilde's wise quote reminds us: "The truth is rarely pure and never simple."

Reaction to the Critical Edition of 2016

In view of the overall 70-year ban on the publication of *Mein Kampf*, which was to expire on 31 December 2015, the Institute for Contemporary History in Munich (that had already published in 1961 the so-called *Hitler's Second Book* of 1928),⁶⁶ proposed several times to publish a commented edition of *Mein Kampf* – but the Bavarian government always refused to give permission. In anticipation of the deadline when Hitler's dangerous book would be open for grab, the Institute's director Andreas Wirsching had decided three years ahead of the schedule to forestall the fallout by preparing a comprehensive critical edition of *Mein Kampf* – the very book that must be the key source to study Germany's dual catastrophe, namely the total military defeat and the consequences of racial genocide. Furthermore, a book that in its critical professional form would fill in the gaps left behind by Werner Maser's descriptive Hitler's *Mein Kampf* of 1966 (see footnote 26). Wirsching also warned before two contrasting extremes. One consisting of holding the topic as a taboo and preventing the public accessing *Mein Kampf* – as indeed the government of Bavaria did for 70 long years. The other extreme consists of excessively mentioning the name of Hitler and *Mein Kampf* in the form of satire for example, which allegedly creates an atmosphere of belittling (*Verharmlosung*) the threat.⁶⁷ Here I may differ from Wirsching for I do consider this genre as very beneficial to the health of German society, such as Chaplin's *Great Dictator*, readings from *Mein Kampf* by the late cabaretist Helmut Qualtinger, or by the contemporary Turkish-born Serdar Somuncu, or the satirical book by Timur Vermes, *Er ist wieder da* [Look who is back].⁶⁸

At the time when the authorities in Munich were still convinced that by locking up a manuscript its dangerous ideas would remain imprisoned. Since 1 January 2016, however, the Pandora Box has been open and every one can reprint *Mein Kampf* in the original or slanted form. The Bavarian government wanted the Institute for Contemporary History to be prepared for this huge task and promised financial support for the period of three years, but withdrew twice its official endorsement under pressure, especially from Israel. Agreement followed disagreement, while the original team of researchers led by Christopher Hartmann continued its important work despite the threat of withdrawal of funds. The Jewish community of Munich was gravely concerned about the news of free circulation of *Mein Kampf*.

66 *Hitlers Zweites Buch aus dem Jahre 1928*, ed. by G. L. Weinberg and H. Rothfels (1961); published in English as *Hitler's Secret Book* (1961). Found by G. L. Weinberg as a separate manuscript not related to *Mein Kampf* in the National Archives in Washington among German captured archives.

67 A. Wirsching. In: *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, No. 43–45 (2015), p. 15.

68 The book was also published in Czech as *Už je tady zas* (Praha, Argo 2016).

Charlotte Knobloch, on behalf of the Israelite Cultural Community of Munich and Upper Bavaria, spoke of “danger of catalyzing far-right sentiments.” Uri Chanoch, a Holocaust survivor, campaigned aggressively against the republication, calling on international pressure to block it. More angry protests were coming from Israel during the visit of Horst Seehofer, the Bavarian premier, who decided to withhold his state’s financial support of 500,000 Euros to the project. The decision, in turn, triggered an outcry among academics and the Bavarian legislature, which had earlier approved of the funding for the book. This time some Jewish voices, like Salomon Korn’s, representing an influential Frankfurt community, could not suppress their astonishment. “We should have already had a critical edition of *Mein Kampf* longtime ago,” he argued. Cornered into an awkward position, Seehofer’s cabinet was forced to reconsider its decision for the second time. It agreed to leave the money in place but to withhold its seal of approval. The opponents of the republication, especially those in Israel, were not mollified, which resulted in more protests. Opinions remain divided after the publication of the critical edition of *Mein Kampf* in January 2016. The first edition was limited to 4,000 copies – presumably to prevent the book to reach the bestseller list. The second edition which followed with 50,000 copies enabled the critical edition of *Mein Kampf* in April this year to hit the German bestsellers’ list after over 47,500 copies had been quickly sold. While the Bavarian Minister of Education Ludwig Spaenle could not make up his mind, Josef Kraus, the President of the German Teachers’ Union (*Deutscher Lehrerverband*) – declared that they would like to use the critical edition in schools, for he believed that as an alternative to banning *Mein Kampf* or remaining silent, it could help to immunize pupils against right-wing extremists.⁶⁹

In the Czechoslovak and Czech Republics, three maybe four attempts to publish *Mein Kampf* have been registered. The first was the heroic attempt by František Bauer who in 1936 translated and commented excerpts from *Mein Kampf* – after the Eher Verlag of Munich, which owned the copyright, refused to sign contract for the complete translation.⁷⁰ The second attempt occurred in 1993, when a prominent communist author Jiří Hájek published a book entitled *Hitler’s Mein Kampf* with selected passages and commentaries.⁷¹ A more ambitious venture was launched in 2000 by the entrepreneurial publisher Michal Zitko, who published the entire *Mein Kampf* in Czech for the first time as a money-making venture with no commentary. The Czech translation was published in hard covers with a conspicuous title and the author’s name in large gothic-styled letters crowned by the German eagle holding the swastika in its claws. The inventive publisher was prepared for the anticipated protests by providing the jacket with a kind of paper knickers covering chastely the Nazi eagle. It carried the following intriguing text: “This document is being published for the first time in the Czech language [...] lest Hitler’s

69 *Deutsche Welle* interview with Josef Kraus, 21 December 2015.

70 BAUER, František: *Můj boj: Hitler o sobě a svých cílech*. Praha, Orbis, 1936, 227 pages.

71 HÁJEK, Jiří: *Hitlerův Mein Kampf: Z bible německého nacionálního socialismu*. Přeložil a komentářem opatřil Jiří Hájek. Praha, Dialog, 1993, 224 pages.

My Struggle stops being a secretive and mythical book and lest history repeats itself. It is only from this moment that the critique of Nazism acquires firm and irrefutable foundations,” followed by bold letters, “Let nobody doubt that Nazism is synonymous with evil and caused the loss of dozens of millions of lives.”⁷² The ensuing attacks by the press and the official protest by the German Embassy did not seem to discourage Zitko. The negative publicity encouraged the sales of the Hitler book. Only when *Mein Kampf* reached 100,000 printed copies – of which at least 93,000 had been sold allowing Zitko to rake a multi-million profit – would legal authorities intervene. Subject to the Criminal Code article 260 protecting the rights and freedoms of citizens, Zitko was sentenced on 11 December 2000 to three years of imprisonment, with a conditional delay up to five years, and two million Czech crowns in fines.⁷³ That, however, was not the end of the legal marathon. In spite of Zitko’s appealing to the higher legal instances, the Tribunal of the City of Prague added two more years to his three-year sentence. The Supreme Court of the Czech Republic however, in the verdict of 10 March 2005, acquitted Zitko entirely from his alleged deed, arguing that the prosecution was unable to prove Zitko guilty of supporting neo-Nazi movements. That still was not the end of the affair. The expiration of the copyright on *Mein Kampf* in the neighbouring Bavaria by the end of 2015 presented a golden opportunity to become rich. Emerich Drtina, the owner of the Naše Vojsko publishing house, launched a Czech *Mein Kampf* on the market in the spring of 2016. The Czech translation by Slavomír Michalčík & Co. seems to be the same as the Zitko edition of 2000. The same goes for the provocative Nazi eagle with the swastika on the cover. In an interview with the *TVBlesk* agency on 25 May 2016, Drtina admitted that he sold already more than 10,000 copies during the same month and earned at least half a million Czech crowns.

What was the reaction in the US like? Peter Ross Range, writing for the *New York Times* (8 July 2014) one-and-a-half year before the expiry, is in favour of an open confrontation with the principal gospel of Nazism.⁷⁴ While the prospect of Hitler’s words circulating freely in Germany again, and in numerous translations abroad, may shock the public, Ross Range believed it should not. Why? Because, he argued, the inoculation of the younger generation against the Nazi bacillus was better served by an open confrontation with Hitler’s words than by keeping his reviled tract in the shadows of illegality. While the director of the Anti-Defamation League, along with the majority of readers, argued for publication of *Mein Kampf* (stressed: with annotation!), Ronald Lauder, the President of the World Jewish Congress, wrote to the *New York Times* editor that *Mein Kampf* served as “the inspiration and playbook for the greatest mass murder the world has ever seen,” and therefore must not be published. Because of Germany’s history, he continued, “publishing it there again

72 HITLER, Adolf: *Mein Kampf*. Czech translation Slavomír Michalčík. Praha, Otakar II 2000. Printed by *Ueberreuter co. s.r.o.* Pohořelice, 824 pages.

73 www.revuepolitika.cz/clanky/543/kauza-mein-kampf.

74 ROSS RANGE, Peter: Should Germans Read *Mein Kampf*? In: *New York Times* (8 July 2014).

at a time of rising anti-Semitism would be a travesty.”⁷⁵ As a deterrent he referred to the e-book versions of *Mein Kampf*, which in the spring of 2014 shot to the top of the best-seller lists. “What would the Holocaust survivors and their relatives think,” he concludes his protest letter, “if they visit a German bookstore and see Hitler’s book on the shelves?” Mr Lauder was obviously referring to the original *Mein Kampf* – not the critical edition to be published by the Munich Institute. It remains to be seen which of the two contrasting views, both of them legitimate and justifiable, will prevail in the end.

In my view, those who feel attracted by neo-Nazism and accept *Mein Kampf* as their Bible, cannot be rescued by the critical edition. The world construed by Adolf Hitler is immune to counter facts and critical comments. Let us hope that those deranged individuals, like lepers, remain under supervision and isolated.

The critical edition contains a comprehensive bibliography, which is probably the most exhaustive on the subject; and a limited number of illustrations, photographs and maps of places like the Landsberg prison and Obersalzberg with Berchtesgaden, where Hitler wrote *Mein Kampf*. The indices are divided into three parts: names, localities and general subjects.

This is an adjusted translation (by the author) of the article which will appear in Soudobé dějiny in 2017.

75 Letters to the Editor, *New York Times* (9 July 2014).

Review

On the Waves of RFE

The First Historical Synthesis of the Czechoslovak Service of Radio Free Europe

Petr Orság

TOMEK, Prokop: *Československá redakce Radio Free Europe: Historie a vliv na československé dějiny* [The Czechoslovak service of Radio Free Europe: Its development and impact on Czechoslovak history]. Praha, Academia 2015, 422 pages + 32 pages of images, ISBN 978-80-200-2490-9.

Five years ago, when a book entitled *Svobodně! Rádio Svobodná Evropa 1951–2011*¹ [Freely! Radio Free Europe 1951–2011] was published on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of Radio Free Europe broadcasts, I made an attempt to appraise it within the context of the poor state of research into this issue in the Czech Republic.² The vast majority of the Czech texts on the Czechoslovak service of RFE previously published were either former employees' memoirs or publications that merely

1 JUNEK, Marek et al.: *Svobodně! Rádio Svobodná Evropa 1951–2011* [Freely! Radio Free Europe 1951–2011]. Praha, Radioservis – Český rozhlas – Filozofická fakulta Univerzity Karlovy 2011.

2 See ORSÁG, Petr: *Rádio Svobodná Evropa jako dočasně/trvale odkládané badatelské téma* [Radio Free Europe as a temporarily/permanently postponed research issue]. In: *Mediální studia*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (2012), pp. 94–101.

mentioned RFE indirectly in some other context.³ There were no summarizing monographs. In like manner, detailed essays on the issue of RFE, which should logically precede such monographs, were thin on the ground (and most of these were written by a single author). The first national conference on RFE was held in the Senate in 2011 on the 60th anniversary of its broadcasts – and the already mentioned publication *Freely!*, which, regrettably, is conceptually problematic, was published as part of the conference. No other book came out of the conference papers.

The lack of attention paid to the issue in question on the domestic scene contrasted not only with the research in the West, where RFE and other Western radio stations broadcasting to Sovietized Central and Eastern Europe during the Cold War have already been the subject of research since the 1950s, but also with books published in our Central European neighbouring countries, for instance in Poland.⁴ In Poland, the key thematic Anglo-American publications are also translated for the national audience. And *vice versa*, the original Polish works are translated into English, which helps to place the results of Polish research into vital international context.⁵

The apparent lack of interest on the part of Czech authors in the history of RFE may be perhaps explained by a somewhat difficult geographical access to archival sources, and consequently also by financial costs of consulting these sources. I am referring above all to the Hoover Institution Archives at Stanford University in California, where extensive archives of RFE, as well as Radio Liberty, which broadcast to audiences in the Soviet Union, are kept together with private archives of both radio stations' former employees. In addition, other archives containing material covering the question under scrutiny are also located in the United States, including the National Archives in Washington. By the same token, the necessary language skills represent another major obstacle (not only to Czech historians). While knowledge of English is virtually essential, this alone does not suffice to compare the development of RFE national services. There are only a few researchers who can speak another language apart from English, such as Czech, or Slovak, Polish, Hungarian or Romanian. Without this knowledge, it is, however, impossible to write, for example, a comparative analysis on the extent to which the general directives of the American radio management were reflected in the agendas of the individual national services, or to compare the attitudes of the repressive apparatuses in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe to RFE's broadcasts.

This is also why the majority of Anglo-American historians in their publications on RFE history use mainly English language institutional sources, stored at the

3 See, for example, KOSATÍK, Pavel: *Ferdinand Peroutka: Pozdější život (1938–1978)* [Ferdinand Peroutka: His Later Life (1938–1978)]. Praha – Litomyšl, Paseka 2000.

4 An overview of publications on RFE history in English and Polish languages, and on various specific issues related to RFE forms part of my already mentioned book review of 2012.

5 One of them is Paweł Machcewicz, the author of several older publications in English and recently also of a work entitled *Poland's War on Radio Free Europe, 1950–1989* (Stanford, Stanford University Press 2015).

American archives, while the Czech or Polish language sources stored at the same places are largely ignored. Only several Western researchers speak more than one Eastern European language (for example Ross A. Johnson speaks Polish, but not Czech, so Tomek's publication is not accessible to him due to the language barrier). This is where the East European researchers have a comparative advantage and may act as mediators of information obtained from the local archives. Apart from the language knowledge, they are also better equipped to decipher extra-linguistic messages, which are often less evident than hard data and hence tend to remain hidden in the documents. Understanding the wider cultural context, communication codes and established customs of the different societies are the main challenges faced by foreign researchers focusing on the history of East European communism.

So, how is the domestic research faring in the wider context? It could be claimed uncompromisingly that only little has changed since the publication of *Freely!*, in other words it is stagnating. However, this would not be entirely true, despite the fact that there is only one researcher who has systematically dealt with this issue for more than one decade – Prokop Tomek, the author of the latest publication on the history of RFE's Czechoslovak service. This is all the more paradoxical given that RFE is not even the main research issue for him, but rather a kind of "hobby." Although Tomek, as an employee of the Military History Institute, specializes in other issues, (as he joked during the book release presentation) he has successfully convinced his superiors that RFE was a Cold War weapon of its kind and hence also a theme related to military history.

Perhaps, we might laugh at this, if it had been some minor, specific issue of little consequence and, from the perspective of modern history of this country, marginal. Prokop Tomek, who has so far written the majority of works on this immensely broad and multifaceted issue, would surely also welcome greater participation on the part of other researchers. At the beginning of his research, he drew mainly on sources from the archives of the security apparatus of the Ministry of the Interior of the Czechoslovak communist regime (and to a lesser degree also on the archives of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Czechoslovak Radio), on the basis of which he wrote an extensive study entitled *Objekt ALFA* [Object ALFA].⁶ Apart from several essays, published on a continuous basis, he also published two monographs in 2014: a book on Radio Liberty's balloon operations entitled *Balony svobody* [Balloons of freedom],⁷ and a biography of the former RFE's Czechoslovak service director Pavel Pecháček.⁸

6 TOMEK, Prokop: *Objekt ALFA: Československé bezpečnostní složky proti Rádiu Svobodná Evropa* [Object Alfa: Czechoslovak security forces against Radio Free Europe]. Praha, Úřad dokumentace a vyšetřování zločinů komunismu 2006, 399 pages.

7 IDEM: *Balony svobody: Letákové operace Svobodné Evropy v letech 1951–1956* [Balloons of freedom: Leaflet operations of the Radio Free Europe 1951–1956]. Cheb, Svět křídel 2014, 175 pages.

8 IDEM: *Nejlepší propaganda je pravda: Pavel Pecháček v Československém rozhlasě, v Hlasu Ameriky a ve Svobodné Evropě* [Truth is the best propaganda: Pavel Pecháček in the

In *Balony svobody*, Tomek broadened the scope of the sources used by drawing on documents from the Czech archives located outside Prague (Archives of the Centre for Czechoslovak Exile Studies at Palacký University in Olomouc) as well as on the Hoover Archives. Rich in images and with detailed descriptions of “balloon” leaflets and newspapers, the publication clearly maps the balloon projects from their very beginning until the moment when they came to a halt as a result of the brutal suppression of the Hungarian uprising by the Soviet army in 1956. The author places these activities in the context of a propaganda battle on both sides of the Iron Curtain, and at the same time presents them as a specific form of journalism of the era. In this book, he builds on his older thematic works as well as on publications previously published abroad.

In his book on Pavel Pecháček, Tomek drew on previously unknown sources on the history of the Czechoslovak services of RFE and Voice of America (VoA), which he managed to obtain directly from the personal archive of the main protagonist. It is worth noting that later Pavel Pecháček donated his personal archive to the National Archives of the Czech Republic, therefore also making it available to other researchers. Though RFE is not the only issue covered in this biographical work, it is a theme that plays a pivotal role in it. This publication is also rich in information on the Czechoslovak service of Voice of America, where Pavel Pecháček worked for 14 years.

Now, let us turn our attention to Tomek’s latest work. It can be said that with all the previous publications the author has prepared the ground for this synthesis, which he himself has modestly labelled as merely a “partial attempt” to map the history of RFE’s Czechoslovak service. Since this is an enormously broad field, such an approach is inevitable. Nevertheless, it should be clearly stated that finally there is a Czech book that can guide all those interested in the issue through the multi-layered and rugged landscape of Radio Free Europe as well as serve as a stepping stone for further research.

The book covers the period from 1950 to 1994 – that is between the year when RFE pilot broadcasting was launched and the moment when the broadcasting from Munich was terminated. This time span of the book is factually and properly justified. In my view, though, a more logical milestone to consider would be the year 1989 or 1990, when the most significant phase of RFE history came to its end. The description of the complicated search for a new location for RFE headquarters within the transformed geopolitical context after 1989 is, however, still enriching. The book also reveals, mainly to those who cannot remember it, why the valuable collections of the former RFE/RL research institute today form part of the Open Society Archives at the Central European University in Budapest, and not in Prague. In fact, there was an offer made by the billionaire George Soros, who had decided to incorporate RFE archives into his foundation and make them available to researchers, to the then government of Václav Klaus to locate both the Central European University and the vast archives to Prague. His offer was, however, turned down. As a result, already

Czechoslovak Radio, Voice of America and Radio Free Europe]. Praha, Nakladatelství Lidové noviny 2014, 251 pages.

the second generation of Czech students go to Budapest to study at the prestigious Central European University and obtain a degree, which in many ways opens doors to their professional careers. In like manner, Czech researchers need to travel to the Hungarian capital to access the Open Society Archives. (Incidentally, the Central European University Press is precisely the communication channel that effectively and in the long run makes the results of Central and Eastern European social sciences available in English to Western audiences.⁹ At present, there is no comparable institution in the Czech Republic.)

As the author declares in the introduction to the book, the narrative of RFE history is merely a starting point for developing a more substantial issue, which is a search for the place of RFE in the context of Czech history. This is undoubtedly a challenge and a long-term goal. Thanks to Tomek's work, the foundations for this research have already been laid. According to the author, it is not enough to ask "how," but we should rather enquire "why." I am not sure if I interpret this correctly. However, in my view, asking "how" is important, especially in the current phase of RFE research. Nonetheless, both questions are of course important. Tomek also asserts that before 1990, the interpretation of RFE's work and aim was strongly polarized. This is certainly true. However, I am not sure whether the polarized view of RFE has not persisted until the present and whether this is not precisely a factor that "mentally" blocks research into the issue (at least for the older generation of historians). As a matter of fact, RFE forms part of the new mythology of the "Czech tribe" and stands out, one way or another, in our collective memory. We just keep postponing answers to the question of how this myth should be grasped, or whether and how it should be critically explored. There is a certain awkwardness in the distance that the expert public keeps from the issue. Writing without bias about such ideologically turbulent times is obviously not easy, especially when the historian has personally experienced them – and RFE was one of the products of this ideologically charged era, a part of the "ideological war"; still, this in no way belittles its significance. Nevertheless, what we need after years of romantic and often hollow adoration of RFE is to avoid another extreme. It should not be labelled and revised from the opposite position, belittled as a mere instrument of US Cold War propaganda. Although it undoubtedly was such an instrument, the whole issue cannot be dismissed this easily. Despite otherwise maintaining a correct distance and keeping the text balanced, even the author occasionally (for example in the introduction) slips into a slightly Manichaeistic dualistic description in terms of the opposites of good and evil. The reality was, however, much more complex. RFE was not only a symbol of freedom for some or a personification of enemy for others (p. 13). There were also those who viewed it "merely" as a source of alternative information, as a corrective to the regime's media ballast, and not necessarily a fount of good. The fact, nevertheless, remains that for a large part of the nation, RFE broadcasts became a vital part of their everyday lives under socialism. It must

9 Central European University Press also publishes significant publications on the issue of RFE – see, for example, JOHNSON, Ross A. – PARTA, Eugene R.: *Cold War Broadcasting: Impact on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe*. Budapest – New York, CEU Press 2010.

be emphasized, however, that I do not take the aforementioned claim as reason for a polemic, but interpret it rather as a condensed “shortcut” for the needs of the book’s introduction. It is obvious from the book that the author is well-versed in the issue thanks to this long-standing interest in it and therefore understands clearly that the scale of RFE’s perception was much more structured.

The deconstruction of RFE myth is inevitable; that is, after all, a normal process. However, institutions such as RFE may be less easily grasped, and viewed as a relic of the past, by generations growing up in the present “liquid” times – times in which the traditional, big ideologies have lost their content and attractiveness, and new ideologies that are rather obscure and more difficult to comprehend are taking hold of us in a more unobtrusive way. That is why we should have as many factual books as possible at our disposal. And in that respect, Tomek’s extensive and meritorious work more than fits this purpose. It may be criticized for being overly descriptive and less analytical. To this, I would respond that a systematically organized narrative with several analytical parts is a basis and a necessary starting point. More elaborate analyses of various partial themes, as well as methodologically innovative interpretations and metatheories can then follow and build on this base. After all, the RFE question is a highly interdisciplinary issue. Apart from a traditional historical approach, social scientific methods (such as quantitative content analysis or critical discourse analysis) or linguistic analyses may be employed in the search for answers to the already mentioned question of “how.” All this remains open. In the introduction, Prokop Tomek himself indicated how multifaceted a social-cultural phenomenon RFE is and raised some questions which may deserve further attention in the future.

In the first part of the book, the author traces chronologically the development of Radio Free Europe, or more precisely of the RFE’s Czechoslovak service. The second part then explores the impact the broadcasting had on the audiences behind the Iron Curtain. It also maps the interactions of the radio with its audience, as well as Czechoslovak political leaders. The chronological order allows the author to construe the theme in the context of changes on the international political scene. RFE operations were in general affected by paramount events – such as the Hungarian revolution and its defeat in 1956; the reduction of confrontation between the West and East in the 1960s, which was reflected in the broadcasting policy (for example as evidenced by the 1964 annual report with the telling title *Bridges to East Europe*); or *détente* in the 1970s with a similar effect, when the US administration seriously considered sacrificing the continued existence of RFE to the promising policy of reducing tension between the super-powers.

The author also opens up the question of RFE’s secret financing by the CIA and relations between these institutions. He questions especially the simplistic view that RFE was an organic part of the CIA (p. 49). According to the author, the only direct relation between these institutions was within the project “Messages Home,” which was broadcast in the first half of the 1950s and was also used for encoded intelligence purposes. As regards possible CIA interventions in the content of the broadcasts, the author claims that there is no proof of this or of intelligence activities within RFE. This may of course be true; however, I would be more cautious in expressing this

view as we know only a little about the information the inaccessible CIA archives might contain, and which may be declassified one day in the future. On the other hand, there is no need to demonize the CIA's involvement – it is quite natural that the American secret service sought control (albeit an indirect and intermediated one, for example through personnel policy) over the institution it financed. The problem lies rather in the fact that this had been kept secret for so long (however, this was not easy to conceal in a free world as is illustrated in the book by the example of the journalist Fulton Lewis, who was already referring to the suspicions, dating back to 1957, of RFE being secretly financed by the CIA). As for external intervention in the broadcast contents – according to the journalist Petr Brod, though he only worked for RFE later in the 1980s and 1990s, some materials were prohibited for reasons hidden behind a vague formulation like “damaging serious foreign policy interests of the United States.” This of course could have been one of the subtle means of intervening in the media content according to the needs of the CIA, even though at that time RFE was already being openly financed by the American Congress.

Among a number of interesting findings the author presents in the book, I find especially valuable the overall information on RFE's audience surveys, which had been carried out by both RFE research department and Czechoslovak institutions, such as *Ústav pro výzkum veřejného mínění* [The Public Opinion Research Institute] under the Federal Statistical Office (the author uses the name of its successor organization from the 1990s, *Institut pro výzkum veřejného mínění*). To this end, the author compares the documents from the personal archive of Pavel Pecháček, the Hoover Archives, as well as evaluations of RFE broadcasts and other documents prepared for the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (stored predominantly in the Czech National Archive, or in the Security Services Archive). Tomek very aptly named the pitfalls of audience surveys carried out by both RFE (primarily lack of representativeness) and Czechoslovak state institutions (mainly the auto-censorship of the survey respondents, which was also highlighted in the surveys' final reports). It is rather telling that despite this even the official Czechoslovak surveys stated that roughly one quarter of the population listened to the Western radio broadcasts in the 1970s, a number which increased to one third in the following decade. Hence, this deliberate act of opposition – the author writes about “a manifestation of citizen disobedience and an expression of spiritual and intellectual independence” (p. 19) – was performed by a notable part of citizens during the so-called “normalization” era. Though it was less risky than procuring and reading exile magazines, still it tells us something substantial about the “normalization” society.

It is worth appreciating that the author included a chapter with an overview of virtually all radio stations that broadcast to Czechoslovakia in the Czech or Slovak language during the research period – this is something that anyone interested in these broadcasts will definitely find useful. The author has not omitted even so ephemeral and almost forgotten a project as Radio Innsbruck. Including radio stations broadcasting in Slovak, such as *Rádio Barcelona – Hlas Slovenskej Republiky* [Radio Barcelona – Voice of the Slovak Republic] or *Za slobodné Slovensko* [For a Free Slovakia], is also an interesting idea that refers to the already non-existent Czechoslovakia.

The book also mentions a number of small, but interesting details that complete the overall RFE image as a subtle soft power of the US foreign policy. The reader will learn that, apart from politicians such as Allan Dulles or Dwight Eisenhower, the founders of the National Committee for Free Europe included the banker Frank Altschul, the former president of the influential unions AFL-CIO William Green and the publisher of *Time* magazine Henry R. Luce.

What I would have liked to see, however, is more information on the operation of the RFE automatic telephone line, which was introduced in 1985. Given the number of telephone calls received from Czechoslovakia – over 80 calls a day immediately after the line was put into operation (!) – it would have been very interesting to learn about the issues with which so many people approached the RFE. The data on the content of the calls, if available, would be the topic for a separate essay, which could bring remarkable testimony on the transformation of the mentality in Czechoslovakia at the dawn of Gorbachev's *perestroika*.

Similarly, I would like to raise the question of whether the space dedicated in the book to the attempts of *Rada svobodného Československa* [Council of Free Czechoslovakia] to influence RFE broadcasting is not rather redundant. Rather than a proof of the “pressure that RFE’s Czechoslovak service had to cope with internally” (p. 167), is the cited memorandum not a testimony of how hopelessly the Council of Free Czechoslovakia was isolated from the reality in the 1980s? It is a positive sign that the author has also made use of the documents from the Council’s archives. Nevertheless, what was the real effect of this criticism of RFE’s Czechoslovak service, or alternately to what extent did the Council’s criticism reflect the situation in the Munich office? Did this opinion correspond to that of the majority of RFE staff? Did the Council of Free Czechoslovakia still wield any real influence over RFE’s personnel issues, or was this just wishful thinking?

The author also raises the question of the potential influence that RFE broadcasting had on the decision-making of Czechoslovak political leaders (chapter II. 4). Referring to the archives of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, he comes to the conclusion that there is no proof of RFE broadcasts “directly stirring up any feedback or reaction that would lead to political decisions.” Of course, it is a matter of debate how a “direct reaction” should be interpreted, and whether any such reaction was feasible at all. I would like to take the liberty here of referring to one of my own texts on the exile media in the era of “normalization,” where I state that since January 1969 allusions to the activities of the Munich service had been made at many important debates of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, during which the bases of “normalization” policies were gradually formulated. The views broadcast by RFE therefore formed part of the inner-party debates of the political establishment. Having to take up a position regarding these views (even if only internally) also affected the establishment’s decision-making.¹⁰

10 See ORSÁG, Petr: “Jak dál?”: Diferenciace československých exilových médií po srpnu 1968 jako výraz proměny exilové veřejné sféry [“What shall we do now?”: Differentiation of Czechoslovak exile media after August 1968 as an expression of the transformation of the

In my view, this is an important aspect that cannot be overlooked when appraising RFE's influence, whether direct or indirect, on the "normalization" political establishment. Naturally, influence is something that cannot be exactly quantified, just as the casual link between RFE broadcasts and decision-making of Czechoslovak politicians cannot be proven.

The following comment relates more to the form of the text's organization and coherence. The author uses and comments on the programme schedules of RFE broadcasting several times throughout the narrative. These are certainly valuable documents, necessary for a work on the issue under review. However, including these schedules in the main narrative made the text, at some parts, rather cluttered. Placing these daily or weekly programming schedules that the author had at his disposal in an appendix would have been preferable. In the main text, the author could have analyzed them and commented on the changing accents in the station's broadcasting – for example, in relation to the political changes both in the West and the East, deduce which programmes were introduced, cancelled or limited, and why. The original proposal of the programming schedule of RFE's Czechoslovak service of 1950, which was presented to RFE management by the then programming director Pavel Tigrid with the words that "propagandistic and political dynamite" is hidden in the majority of the programmes of the schedule (p. 59), could also have formed part of the appendices. On the other hand, the list of RFE's Czech and Slovak employees, although it is incomplete, as the author states in the introduction, is extremely useful. Should other researchers take up the issue of RFE, making the list "Who Was Who in RFE" available in an electronic form on a website would help to make this data more accurate and complete.¹¹

With his book on the history of RFE's Czechoslovak service, Prokop Tomek has filled a sizeable gap in the research on the foreign radio stations broadcasting to Czechoslovakia during the communist rule in Central Europe. There is no doubt that this text will become one of the standard works of reference for anyone interested in further RFE research. It will also find many readers among the former audience of RFE broadcasts as well as others interested in Czech/Czechoslovak postwar history.

The Czech version of this review, entitled Na vlnách RFE. První syntéza k dějinám československé redakce Rádia Svobodná Evropa, was originally published in Soudobé dějiny, Vol. 23, No. 1–2 (2016), pp. 193–200.

Translated by Blanka Medková

exile public sphere]. In: *Historica Olomucensia: Sborník prací historických*, No. 42. Olomouc, Univerzita Palackého 2012, pp. 175–192, mainly pp. 177–178.

11 Some years ago, a similar attempt was made by the Czechoslovak Documentation Centre with the *Encyclopaedia of the Czechoslovak Exile after the WWII*. This very useful project would need to be revived as soon as possible, as later it might not be possible to trace information related to many names.

Review

Southern Hospitality?

Czechoslovak Relations with Africa until 1989

Rosamund Johnston

DVOŘÁČEK, Jan, PIKNEROVÁ, Linda, ZÁHOŘÍK, Jan: *A History of Czechoslovak Involvement in Africa: Studies from the Colonial through the Soviet Eras*. Lewiston, NY – Lampeter, The Edwin Mellen Press 2014, 208 pages, ISBN 978-0-7734-0087-0.

MUEHLENBECK, Philip: *Czechoslovakia in Africa, 1945–1968*. London, Palgrave MacMillan 2016, 271 pages, ISBN 978-1-137-56144-2.

In 2005, Odd Arne Westad suggested that an understanding of superpower relations during the Cold War could be best uncovered not in Europe, but in the places where the Cold War became hottest; in what is referred to today as the global south. Westad's call to couple the previously distinct historiographies of the Cold War and decolonization has proved tremendously generative,¹ bringing discussions of the Cold War, perhaps ironically, full circle back to Europe. His appeal to explore "the transformation of Third World politics that precipitated [...] superpower

1 WESTAD, Odd Arne: *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 2005, p. 7.

involvement”² alongside the “ideological origins”³ of Moscow and Washington’s Cold War interventions has, for example, spurred an extremely fruitful English-language literature on socialist knowledge production about, and engagement in, the Third World. Authors have questioned the role of satellite states in implementing, shaping, nuancing, and obstructing Soviet Third World policy.

While Westad is the most famous proponent of studying the global Cold War, other intellectual currents also inflect the two works reviewed here: Philip Muehlenbeck’s 2016 study *Czechoslovakia in Africa, 1945–1968* and Jan Dvořáček, Linda Piknerová and Jan Záhořík’s collective work *A History of Czechoslovak Involvement in Africa*. Both titles draw from Czech-language scholarship on Prague’s diplomatic and trade relations with decolonizing African states. This field largely owes its existence to historian Petr Zídek, who wrote extensively about Czechoslovakia’s involvement in Francophone Africa in 2006,⁴ and paired with Karel Sieber the following year to examine socialist-era Czechoslovak engagement in Sub-Saharan African states.⁵ It is to Zídek, in fact, that Muehlenbeck suggests he owes his most pronounced debt (ix). Both titles additionally contribute to the current drive to understand Second World internationalism, spearheaded by the “Socialism Goes Global” project based in the United Kingdom. The Dvořáček, Piknerová and Záhořík volume in particular examines how Czechoslovak institutions “promoted the struggles of the decolonizing world to communicate an important set of internationalist values that could, they hoped, inspire a commitment to socialism.”⁶ This is just the approach advocated by James Mark and Péter Apor in a programmatic article sharing the “Socialism Goes Global” initiative’s name. In this review, I will begin by considering, in their own terms, why each of the authors suggests a study of Czechoslovak involvement in Africa is important before analyzing in more depth what the works have to say on three topics: trade, cultural ties, and the scale of socialist Czechoslovakia’s autonomy from the Soviet Union in its Africa policy.

While Philip Muehlenbeck limits his study to the years 1945–1968, Dvořáček, Piknerová and Záhořík take a longer historical view in their collective work: the three authors in fact cite the long-term nature of Czechoslovak involvement in Africa as an argument for the phenomenon’s importance. In the first chapter on Czechoslovak-Southern African relations, Linda Piknerová opens with a discussion of 19th-century traveller Emil Holub’s writings, and ends by considering the downscaling of Czechoslovak relations with the region after 1989. In the second chapter on Czech travellers’ written descriptions of Ethiopia, Jan Záhořík focuses

2 *Ibid.*, p. 1.

3 *Ibid.*

4 ZÍDEK, Petr: *Československo a francouzská Afrika 1948–1989* [Czechoslovakia and French Africa 1948–1989]. Praha, Libri 2006.

5 ZÍDEK, Petr, SIEBER, Karel: *Československo a subsaharská Afrika v letech 1948–1989* [Czechoslovakia and Sub-Saharan Africa 1948–1989]. Praha, Ústav mezinárodních vztahů 2007.

6 MARK, James, APOR, Péter: Socialism Goes Global: Decolonization and the Making of a New Culture of Internationalism in Socialist Hungary, 1956–1989. In: *The Journal of Modern History*, No. 87 (December 2015), p. 890.

on the years 1900–1948, but comments on the presence of Ethiopians in European writings (a canon in which he places these Czech works) as far back as the 15th century. Chapter three by Jan Dvořáček focuses on the nature of Czechoslovak-Soviet cooperation in Africa during the 1960s, but the author helpfully contextualizes this in a discussion of Czechoslovak involvement in Africa spanning back to the interwar period; his conclusion reflects upon the so-called “normalization” era, when he claims a “successful realization of improved relations” was achieved (p. 131). In the volume’s final chapter, co-authors Záhořík and Dvořáček assess Czechoslovak responses to Congolese decolonization between 1955–1965, in what is the most temporally discrete section of the book.

Through their *longue durée* approach, the authors present the current lack of engagement with the African continent as an exception in Czech history. Their emphasis on continuity in Czechoslovak-African relations is productive in a historiography that often focuses on the ruptures created by changes in forms of domestic Czechoslovak rule. The authors posit continuity through their examination of both official and unofficial forms of Czechoslovak engagement; they are as interested in “images, travels, expeditions, publications or missions” as they are in “the history of diplomatic relations” with the continent (p. 1). As such, businesspeople, scholars, travellers, diplomats, expatriates and missionaries all figure in what they deem a rich history of involvement with Africa from the Habsburg period until the late socialist era. They characterize Czechoslovak engagement with the continent as “rather modest and individual” (p. 166) until the 1950s when, they argue, a concerted effort was made on the part of the Czechoslovak state to increase domestic scholarly knowledge about the continent, as well as its official presence in Africa (p. 2). The trio’s emphasis on a layering of interactions negates the idea of Czechoslovak interest in Africa centering upon any one particular goal. The volume avoids whiggishness through its authors’ ultimate assertion that years’ worth of cumulative work and constructive engagement with Africa are currently being squandered by a disinterest in profiting from such historical ties.

On the importance of Czechoslovak-African relations between 1945 and 1968, meanwhile, Philip Muehlenbeck is nicely nuanced. He rejects the notion of “pericentrism,” which posits that the Cold War’s most important strategic areas lay in fact completely outside of the bipolar centres of Moscow and Washington and in both superpowers’ periphery (p. 2). Instead, he argues that Czechoslovakia was more important than you might think in Africa (and *certainly* more important than the Americans thought throughout the period – p. 2). Like Dvořáček, Piknerová and Záhořík, he stresses that Africa played an extremely prominent role in Czechoslovak foreign policy at the period in comparison to the continent’s more minor role today. As evidence, Muehlenbeck deploys the startling statistic that Czechoslovakia spent more *per capita* in aid to Africa than any other country in the world between 1955 and 1966 (p. 4). He also suggests, however, that years’ worth of painstaking Czechoslovak work fostering goodwill could be undercut by an order from Moscow (see, for example, Prague’s reticence to sell arms to Federal Nigerian forces during the Nigerian civil war and Moscow’s insistence on the sale,

leading to widespread criticism of Prague across the African continent, p. 121). Similarly, a brief charm offensive on the part of the White House could dismantle strategic Czechoslovak partnerships that had been years in the making (as was the case with Guinea and Mali). Muehlenbeck's detailed analysis of the limits to the country's involvement in Africa, as well as its striking scale, then, helpfully curbs any triumphalism that could be present in a book underscoring the significance of Czechoslovakia's role.

Like Zídek and Sieber (and unlike Dvořáček, Piknerová and Záhořík), Muehlenbeck concludes that a euphoric period of Czechoslovak diplomatic engagement with African states entered into decline around the year 1962. Prior to 1962, Prague had been cultivating "intensive relations with the so-called radical leaders," including Ghana's Nkrumah, Guinea's Sekou Touré and Mali's Keita which, in concrete terms, consisted of the supply of Czechoslovak experts and goods (p. 50). In Guinea, for example, which became the single biggest customer of Czechoslovakia's state export organization in 1961, "Czechoslovakia opened a school of journalism in Conakry and provided automobiles, trucks, motorcycles, agricultural equipment, medical supplies, a radio station, shoes, sugar, paper, textiles, office supplies, and equipment for the construction of industrial plants" (p. 61). Muehlenbeck cites a domestic economic crisis and a move towards "pragmatism" in Czechoslovakia's Africa policy as reasons for decline in Prague's relations with African states, but additionally brings helpful context from the other side of the Iron Curtain to his analysis. In fact, Muehlenbeck makes a convincing argument for understanding Czechoslovak involvement in Africa in tandem with contemporaneous American policy, rather than in isolation. Unlike Zídek and Sieber, Muehlenbeck notes how, for example, an Eisenhower administration, which had largely shunned cooperation with new African leaders from fear they may harbor communist sympathies, gave way at that time to a Kennedy administration, which invested more energy into courting African states. Originally a specialist on US-African relations, Muehlenbeck's work is strongest when he triangulates African states' relations with Czechoslovakia and the United States of America. In situating Czechoslovak involvement in Africa in a global geopolitical context, Muehlenbeck negates the notion that these bilateral relations with African states were Czechoslovakia's to negotiate alone.

Muehlenbeck suggests that economics constituted "the most important reason" for Prague's engagement in Africa (p. 2). In his first two chapters on relations with conservative and radical African states respectively, Muehlenbeck examines in detail precisely the forms that bilateral trade assumed. Unlike Linda Piknerová in her analysis of Czechoslovak-Southern African relations, Muehlenbeck suggests that trade with the apartheid-era state formed the backbone of Czechoslovak-South African relations for much of the socialist period. Piknerová, meanwhile, focuses largely on the "informal ties that were maintained by Czechoslovak compatriot communities" there during the period, and when she does discuss trade, her focus is largely the legacy of interwar Czechoslovak entrepreneurs such as Tomáš Baťa (pp. 23 and 31).

Muehlenbeck examines Czechoslovak-South African trade as a revealing case of both economics trumping ideology, and Czechoslovak autonomy from the Soviet Union. He explains that South Africa was “one of Prague’s most important trading partners outside of Eastern Europe” prior to a severance of economic relations in 1964 because “being outside of the Soviet Bloc, it provided much needed hard currency for Czechoslovakia” (p. 45). Trade between Czechoslovakia and South Africa quadrupled between 1949 and 1960. Muehlenbeck follows Zídek and Sieber in understanding the case of South Africa to be a noteworthy triumph of “economic calculations” over ideology, with General Secretary Antonín Novotný himself suggesting a blind eye should be turned to domestic South African affairs.⁷ Muehlenbeck goes as far as to contend that Czechoslovakia used its position as the lone representative of the Soviet Bloc in South Africa as an excuse to continue its economic dealings with the country, despite widespread foreign criticism. International pressure such as UN sanctions and bad press in Africa led Czechoslovakia to cease trade with South Africa in 1964, rather than a direct order from Moscow, which, according to Muehlenbeck, “had little influence over the ČSSR decision to end its lucrative economic relations with South Africa” (p. 47). As analyzed by Muehlenbeck, the case raises questions about the ultimate desirability of Czechoslovak involvement in Africa, not to mention the innate rectitude of Czechoslovak policy when autonomous from that of the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

The Dvořáček, Piknerová and Záhořík volume shines light on the cultural context in which Czechoslovak-Africa relations have historically been fostered. Linda Piknerová convincingly suggests that cultural artefacts such as the writings of travellers Emil Holub, František Foit, Jiří Hanzelka and Miroslav Zikmund have played an important role in shaping Czechoslovak knowledge of, and policy towards, newly decolonizing African states (p. 56). While Muehlenbeck offers a broad discussion of Czechoslovak social attitudes, which occasionally verges on the stereotype, Piknerová explores Czechoslovak literary production about Southern Africa in tremendous detail. She concludes that the authors she analyses “provided the Czechoslovak reader with much new knowledge” about the region, raising the profile of particular states over others in Czech and Slovak readers’ imaginations and that, indeed, Czechoslovak foreign policy was “established parallel to these adventurous expeditions” (p. 56). Jan Záhořík also focuses on the work of four Czech writers on Ethiopia; Vilém Němec, Viktor Mussik, Alois Musil and Adolf Parlesák. Záhořík’s emphasis is rather more, however, the richness of the Ethiopian historical record preserved in Czechoslovak writing about the state.

In showing how Foreign Ministry sources are awash with references to writers and adventurers such as Hanzelka, Zikmund, Holub, and Foit (which Jan Dvořáček likewise stresses on p. 113), the authors of *A History of Czechoslovak Involvement in Africa* demonstrate how Czechs’ and Slovaks’ images of the continent, derived from literature, inflected the formulation of foreign policy. This helpfully decenters the biographies of prominent political actors in the discussion of Czechoslovak foreign

7 ZÍDEK, Petr, SIEBER, Karel: *Československo a subsaharská Afrika v letech 1948–1989*, p. 14.

policy, suggesting that cultural works and social trends laid the groundwork for bilateral negotiations – or at least that those involved in such negotiations were themselves products of their cultural milieu.

Finally, on the topic of Czechoslovak autonomy from Moscow, the works in question diverge. While all the authors posit limited room for Czechoslovak maneuver in Africa, Muehlenbeck goes furthest in emphasizing the self-interest underpinning Prague's Africa policy. Muehlenbeck is emphatic that Czechoslovakia did not simply follow Soviet orders, concluding his monograph with the claim that "Czechoslovakia provided such assistance [to Africa], not because it was directed to do so by Moscow, but because it saw Africa as a place where it could create a niche for its foreign policy and expand its economy through international trade" (p. 190). Jan Dvořáček, meanwhile, offers a range of answers to this question, asserting initially that Czechoslovakia "was not simply a satellite, which, in the field of foreign policy, was forced to strictly follow Moscow's instructions, as is often portrayed" (p. 93). Dvořáček's argument here is that Czechoslovakia ceded some of its autonomy in African policy to the Soviet Union over the course of the 1960s and, henceforth, the two socialist states pooled resources so as to improve socialist bloc-African relations; a move which Dvořáček deems ultimately "successful" (p. 131). When discussing Czechoslovak involvement in a decolonizing Congo at the same period with Jan Záhořík, however, the pair conclude "despite [...] being controlled from Moscow, Czechoslovakia had its own ambitions in Africa" (p. 151). *A History of Czechoslovak Involvement in Africa*, then, suggests that Czechoslovak African policy was not simply Soviet policy in disguise, but that Prague's levels of autonomy from Moscow varied from decade to decade and state to state.

Despite positing limited room for maneuver, Dvořáček, Piknerová and Záhořík see a great deal of distance between Czechoslovak and Soviet attitudes and policies towards Africa. When involvement took the form of knowledge exchange or diplomacy, the authors code it Czechoslovak; when it was tinged by racism or took the form of arms, it is coded Soviet. In his chapter on Czech-Soviet relations with Africa in the 1960s, for example, Dvořáček discusses the racism that African students in the Soviet Bloc faced, but suggests that this was a problem above all in Moscow (p. 106). Analyzing the experiences of African students at the University of 17 November in Prague, meanwhile, Muehlenbeck suggests that this was very much a homegrown Czechoslovak phenomenon too. Reflecting upon how the mysterious death of one student who fell from a moving train prompted Zambia to repatriate a number of its nationals at their request, Muehlenbeck indeed shows how racially-motivated violence could impact bilateral relations at the highest level (p. 170). In discussing racism as a Soviet phenomenon alone, then, Dvořáček misses an opportunity to analyze forces running counter to top-down, cultural diplomatic initiatives, not to mention a broader Czechoslovak ambivalence toward socialist-era Africa policy. Dvořáček, Piknerová and Záhořík advocate collectively in their introduction for an increased engagement with the continent today on the part of Czech lawmakers. This objective may lead the authors to present past Czechoslovak involvement on

the continent rather favourably, while downplaying, omitting, or Russifying the negative aspects of previous interventions.

Together, *Czechoslovakia in Africa* and *A History of Czechoslovak Involvement in Africa* challenge the cherished notion of Czechoslovak powerlessness during the socialist period: the authors all dispute that Czechoslovak foreign policy followed that of Moscow in lockstep. In so doing, they complicate understandings of superpower involvement in the Third World as an ultimately centralized affair, working from the centre to the periphery in each and every case. Muehlenbeck demonstrates masterfully quite how Czechoslovak foreign policy varied from the expectations and observations of both superpowers during the Cold War as he toggles constantly between the broader geopolitical picture and Czechoslovak actions on the ground. *A History of Czechoslovak Involvement in Africa* suggests, meanwhile, that an analysis of Czechoslovak foreign policy is best undertaken in conjunction with an examination of unofficial cultural and personal exchanges. This culturally constructivist approach has been deployed with great results elsewhere (for example in Christina Klein's analysis of US-Asia policy in *Cold War Orientalism*).⁸ To my knowledge, however, the approach of Dvořáček, Piknerová and Záhořík marks a welcome first in discussions on Czechoslovak-Third World relations.

As each author argues quite convincingly, the African continent was of particular importance to Prague during the Cold War, but would relative insignificance offer researchers equally as generative an analytical category? Was it, in fact, the African continent's lack of strategic importance to the Soviet Union – at least before the Khrushchev era – that allowed Czechoslovakia to operate there with such a free hand? And was it the relative insignificance of Czechoslovakia as an international actor that enabled the country to avoid US pushback as it traded and fostered relations around the continent? Perhaps better put: does the case of Czechoslovakia in Africa illuminate the potential for creativity and action embedded in insignificance itself?

This review will appear in Soudobé dějiny in Czech translation in 2017.

8 KLEIN, Christina: *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945–1961*. Berkeley, University of California Press 2003.

Review

An Arduous Road of the Exile toward the Fall of the Iron Curtain

Martin Nekola

RAŠKA, Francis D.: *Dlouhá cesta k vítězství: Československá exilová hnutí po roce 1968* [originally published in English as *The Long Road to Victory: A History of Czechoslovak Exile Organizations after 1968*] (Translated from English by Vojtěch Pacner). Praha, Academia 2015, 272 pages, ISBN 978-80-200-2472-5.

In recent years, there have been just a few good studies on the Czechoslovak post-February and post-August exile. After a wave of interest in the 1990s, the broad topic now seems to be losing its appeal. Although many exile-related questions remain unanswered and activities of a crowd of personalities would merit a detailed analysis, now only a handful of researchers focus on Czechoslovak political refugees in the West during the Cold War.

The book *The Long Road to Victory: A History of Czechoslovak Exile Organizations after 1968* by Czech-American historian Francis D. Raška is thus all the more valuable for that. The author himself has long-standing ties to the exile. He was born in New Jersey, to a family of biochemist and MD Karel Raška Jr., who was active in exile structures, particularly in the Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences,

for years.¹ The author, who presently lectures at the Faculty of Social Sciences of Charles University and at the Anglo-American University in Prague, grew up in the community of fellow countrymen, had an opportunity to see the exiles' joys and hardships up-close, and he knew or has known many people, the fates of whom he describes. His work is the result of a meticulous examination of personal collections and sources in archives located in the Czech Republic, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Italy. It is a unique summarizing study presenting many interesting findings concerning a hitherto less known, rather separate, or perhaps even parallel chapter of Czech history called the exile. The text was originally written in English and published in 2012 in New York.² As a matter of fact, the previous work of Raška, *Abandoned Fighters*,³ published in Czech one year after the English original,⁴ followed a similar path. The very good translations of both books are signed by Vojtěch Pacner.

In the nine chapters of this book, the author presents the “second wind of the exile,” i.e. societies, organizations, and personalities whose voices were heard loud and clear in the exile community after 1968, when another massive wave of refugees from Czechoslovakia arrived to the West, expelled by the invasion of the Warsaw Pact troops. After a foreword and an introduction with a brief assessment of the reformist movement and the Prague Spring, Raška plunges directly into turbulent exile waters; in this respect, he cannot begin with anything else but an analysis of the activities of the Council of Free Czechoslovakia. Actually, it is to the development of this Council between its foundation on 25 February 1949 in Washington, D.C., by prominent democratic politicians, diplomats, journalists, and soldiers who had opted for leaving the country after the Communist Party coup, and 1961, when the almost defunct Council, plagued by protracted disputes of its leaders and lacking interest from the public, broke into two competing organizations,⁵ that the author devoted his previous monograph, *Abandoned Fighters*. Logically enough, the next chapter covers further, almost imperceptible developments within the Council during the 1960s up to the first half of the 1970s, when the organization managed to start an internal renaissance culminating in a first meeting of its new and considerably rejuvenated board on 28 and 29 September 1974. The

1 A detailed list of the activities is presented in the book by Miloslav Rechcigl Jr.: *Pro vlast: Padesát let Společnosti pro vědy a umění (SVU)* [For the Motherland: Fifty years of the Society of Arts and Sciences] (Praha, Academia 2012).

2 RASKA, Francis D.: *The Long Road to Victory: A History of Czechoslovak Exile Organizations after 1968*. Boulder (Colorado) – New York, East European Monographs – Columbia University Press 2012.

3 IDEM: *Opuštění bojovníci: Historie Rady svobodného Československa 1949–1961* [Abandoned fighters: The history of the Council of Free Czechoslovakia 1949–1961]. Praha, Academia 2009.

4 IDEM: *Fighting Communism from Afar: The Council of Free Czechoslovakia*. Boulder (Colorado) – New York, East European Monographs – Columbia University Press 2008.

5 The faction around Jozef Lettrich, Josef Černý, Václav Majer, Štefan Osuský, Arnošt Heidrich, and Adolf Procházka seceded from the “original” Council of Free Czechoslovakia led by the former lord mayor of Prague and chairman of the National Socialist Party Petr Zenkl, and established its own organization, Committee for Free Czechoslovakia, on 9 September 1961.

participants also elected leading representatives who, with some minor changes in their composition, successfully steered the Council of Free Czechoslovakia until the fall of communism. The process of the Council's restructuring had been preceded by a formal reconciliation with the competing Committee of Free Czechoslovakia in August 1969, and a joint statement on the first anniversary of the Soviet occupation. The two bodies, which had communicated only in terse terms during the previous eight years, thus finally found a common language, which also opened a way to closer cooperation and possibly also to a reunification.⁶ The author does not mention this minor episode; nevertheless, the fact that the length of the wait for a revival of the formerly promising exile centre took until the autumn of 1974 speaks for itself. As indicated by correspondence of the most active members of the new council, the previous quarrels about the attitude of reformist Communists, the federalization of Czechoslovakia, Sudeten Germans, Ruthenia, or the role of exile political parties, or even personal disputes disrupting constructive negotiations, definitely did not disappear with the departure of the old crew. Unfortunately, these quarrels kept coming back on a regular basis.

The author describes the new Council of Free Czechoslovakia as a progressive platform which, speaking with a united voice, was successfully involved in the Helsinki peace process and its campaign for the observation of human rights in the Eastern Bloc, and even established communication with the Charter 77 movement and dissidents at home. However, he does not write about the friction between Social Democrats Radomír Luža and Jiří Horák and Mojmír Povolný, a National Socialist and the Chairman of the Council, over the accusation of the Council's Secretary General Jaroslav Zich concerning the embezzlement of 12,000 dollars belonging to the Sokol cell in New York, nor about the effort of Martin Kvetko and other Slovaks to achieve parity representation in the Council's bodies and the unwillingness of Czechs to accept this requirement. The list of episodes showing that the atmosphere inside the Council was not ideal even after 1974 could go on and on. However, this comment is not meant to reproach the author. It is quite understandable that after dozens of pages describing recurring squabbles and disputes (often for banal reasons) of the previous Council between 1949 and 1961 in his previous book, he now wanted to avoid this unpleasant subject. The Council's national committees outside the United States, which had been established one by one in eight countries, also contributed to the successful restart of the Council of Free Czechoslovakia. Perhaps at the very least, the committees in Canada (led by Rudolf Fraštacký), Australia (František Nový), the United Kingdom (Rudolf Václavík), or Switzerland (Josef Jíša) would merit more attention.⁷

6 See *Libri Prohibiti* (Prague), Ladislav Radimský papers, Box 3, letter of Václav Majer to Ladislav Radimský dated 6 September 1969.

7 The last-named national committee even has its own archival fund, as yet unexplored and stored in the National Archives in Prague under the number and name 1553 and "Council of Free Czechoslovakia – Swiss group" (it covers the period from 1985 to 1990).

In terms of its scope and the number of interesting people who had at one time or another been its members, the Council of Free Czechoslovakia still represents a great challenge for researchers and a source of topics which will take some time to exhaust. For example, the Centre of Czechoslovak Exile Studies of Palacký University in Olomouc and the Czech National Building in New York own parts of the Council's archive that have not yet been researched; an inventory of voluminous personal funds of two prominent members of the Council, Jiří Horák (74 cardboard boxes) and Radomír Luža (200 cardboard boxes) has not yet been made and the documents remain neglected by Czech historians.

The next chapter of Raška's book describes the group of collaborators around the socialist bi-monthly *Listy*, published from 1971 by Jiří Pelikán in Rome. Appearing on its pages were political science studies, analyses, comments, poems, literary reviews, essays on various issues seen from a modern European left-wing position, and foreign language reports on the situation in Czechoslovakia for foreign readers. Pelikán, the director of Czechoslovak TV between 1963 and 1968, had belonged to the reformist faction of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and been one of the faces of the Prague Spring. Having been dismissed from the director's position, he was dispatched to Italy's capital as the cultural attaché of the Czechoslovak Embassy. He then refused to return home, applied for asylum, and became very active in the exile community as well as in local political life. Let us just remember that, in addition to Italian citizenship, he won the trust of voters in two elections to the European Parliament (1979 and 1984) as a candidate of the Socialist Party. The author made use of numerous sources on Pelikán's activities stored in the Historical Archives of the Chamber of Deputies (*L'Archivio storico della Camera dei deputati*) in Rome, particularly of his correspondence with his closest collaborators – Zdeněk Mlynář, Eduard Goldstücker, Zdeněk Hejzlar, Ota Šik, and Antonín J. Liehm. Thanks to these valuable documents, he was able to analyze in detail the beginnings of the informal *Listy* group, its ideological orientation, and deepening disputes of its members. Reformist Communists who had ended up in the West after August 1968 caused havoc in some exile circles. There were concerns that they would play the role of Trojan horses and subvert the exile community from inside. However, the *Listy* bi-monthly was consistently and fairly fulfilling the role of an open platform where a range of different opinions could be voiced, despite attacks from various viewpoints. The person of Jiří Pelikán deserves closer attention from researchers, and we can only hope that we will soon be able to read his exhaustive biography. For the time being, we have to settle for the recently published Czech translation of a book of interviews with Jiří Pelikán by Italian journalist Antonio Carioti, which the author has drawn from as well.⁸

8 *Jiří Pelikán – nepohodlný exulant: Rozhovor s Antoniem Cariotim* [Jiří Pelikán – the indigestible exile: An interview with Antonio Carioti]. Praha, Novela bohémica 2015; original edition: PELIKÁN, Jiří – CARIOTI, Antonio: *Io, esule indigesto: Il Pci a la lezione del '68 di Praga*. Milan, Reset 1998.

There were just a few exile personalities who were as controversial as journalist Pavel Tigrid. Some believed he was a communist spy, others considered him to be a paid informer of the CIA. He had many advocates and critics in the exile community; he argued with almost everyone; he left a good job in Munich's Radio Free Europe because of disputes with Ferdinand Peroutka, director of the Czechoslovak section of the station in New York; he refused to be tied by membership in organizations such as the Council of Free Czechoslovakia. He needed his own information platform to present his timeless and in many respect provocative ideas to a greater number of people. "Tigrid's Visions and Conflicts" – the name the author has given to this chapter – were naturally reflected in the *Svědectví* [Testimony] quarterly, which found its way to readers for the first time on 28 October 1956 in New York. The autumn of 1956 was marked by dramatic events in Hungary, which in turn resulted in a noticeable change of moods and expectations of exile communities, not just the Czechoslovak one, but also the Polish, Romanian, Albanian, and – first and foremost – Hungarian one. It finally dawned upon them that the conflict between the West and the East, which they had hoped could overthrow the communist regimes and help them return home, would not take place. On the contrary – they had to allow for the possibility that they would spend decades in exile. Tigrid ranked among those who did not perceive the Soviet Bloc as a rigid and unchanging monolith which needed to be defeated by force; he instead saw significance even in the smallest reforms in each country. On the pages of *Svědectví*, whose editorial office moved to Paris in 1960 (and after the fall of the Iron Curtain to Prague), he started spreading ideas of gradualism – to put it simply, ideas promoting a dialogue with reformist Communist Party members, which were the opposite of the then-prevailing markedly anti-communist exile journalism. The author describes the passions the new approach caused, providing ample quotations from the correspondence of the parties concerned. The same situation repeated itself in the 1970s, during the debate on the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans, which broke out on the pages of *Svědectví*. His close insights into the arguably most significant and most influential exile paper, which was also publishing contributions sent from Czechoslovakia, was a permanent source of irritation to the leadership of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, and which kept drawing the attention of the State Security, is one of the major merits of Raška's book. Perhaps it needs a comparison of *Svědectví* and *Kultura*, a political and cultural monthly published from June 1947 in Paris by Jerzy Giedroyc and his collaborators from the Polish exile publishing house Instytut Literacki. As a matter of fact, Tigrid openly admitted that he had been inspired by this journal.

The chapter called "Czechoslovak Exile and Radio Free Europe (RFE)" comprises 16 pages, which is not much considering the importance of the topic, and this scope clearly cannot cover everything that is significant. However, it sets events in the Czechoslovak section in a broader exile context, thus usefully complementing

other chapters of the book.⁹ Very commendable are the book's stops at the Charter 77 Foundation of František Janouch, Palach Press Agency, the Czech group of the European Nuclear Disarmament organization (in which Jan Kavan, later to become the Minister of Foreign Affairs, was active), and, last but not least, Vilém Prečan's Czechoslovak Documentation Centre for Independent Literature. During the 1980s, i.e. in the final stage of the Cold War, the institutions listed above were important exile centres, although each of them had a different focus and scope of activities.

The above list could have easily contained many other organizations meriting the attention of historians. The author briefly mentioned some of them in the final summary (pp. 244–251); however, the Naarden Committee and the Czechoslovak Advisory Committee in Western Europe, for example, would each deserve a separate publication. The summary obviously could not encompass all exile organizations, but based on their significance, spectrum of activities or membership size as filtering criteria, the book should have mentioned, for example, the Union of Czechoslovak Associations in Switzerland, the Czechoslovak National Association in Canada, or the Czech National Committee in Exile (from 1967 known as the European Coordination Centre). The otherwise very practical and useful list of exile publishing houses could certainly merit a few more entries (pp. 223–229).

The author's interviews, or rather paragraph-sized summaries of the author's interviews with 10 prominent Czech and foreign personalities which took place in 2010 and 2011 (pp. 237–243), may produce a somewhat embarrassing impression. They undoubtedly contain surprising information adding to or completely changing the picture of the Czechoslovak exile reality after August 1968. It might thus be advisable to include verbatim transcripts of selected segments of the interviews in the book.

The Long Road to Victory by Francis D. Raška is an extraordinarily useful manual for studying exile-related issues. It opens many doors, but leaves others closed. We can only hope that the author will continue his commendable research activities and soon present additional products of his work. The Czechoslovak exile still offers broad opportunities in this respect.

The Czech version of this review, entitled Klopotná cesta k pádu železné opony, was originally published in Soudobé dějiny, Vol. 23, No. 1–2 (2016), pp. 201–206.

Translated by Jiří Mareš

9 Another valuable book published in 2015 focuses only on the Radio Free Europe and prominent Czechs and Slovaks working there: TOMEK, Prokop: *Československá redakce Radio Free Europe: Historie a vliv na československé dějiny* [The Czechoslovak Service of Radio Free Europe: Its development and Impact on Czechoslovak History]. Praha, Academia 2015.

Review

On Science in the Service of People

Jan Randák – Marek Fapšo

OLŠÁKOVÁ, Doubravka: *Věda jde k lidu! Československá společnost pro šíření politických a vědeckých znalostí a popularizace věd v Československu ve 20. století* [Science meets the people! The Czechoslovak society for the dissemination of political and scientific knowledge and popularization of science in Czechoslovakia in the 20th century]. (Šťastné zítřky [Happy tomorrows], Vol. 10.). Praha, Academia 2014, 678 pages, ISBN 978-80-200-2318-6.

The Czechoslovak communist dictatorship could not rely on repressions in the long run. It is true that violence and political trials belong to its most visible attributes, and the ones still most satisfying for and liked by the media, but they cannot be viewed as the regime's exclusive constituents. Striving to strengthen their rule after February 1948, representatives of the Communist Party and the government also had to employ other strategies to achieve the society's loyalty to, or even identification with, the newly built order. Party and cultural propaganda players knew all too well that the formation and strengthening of the socialist mindset of people required incessant and systematic efforts. This was why they initiated an extracurricular education project as soon as in the early years of the dictatorship. It was assuming a more concrete shape in the course of debates and implementation of a system of cultural and educational facilities financed by state administration authorities. In November 1952, the Czechoslovak government passed a resolution on the establishment of educational facilities in the country; one year later, the

Ministry of Information and Public Education issued statutes for public education centres and public education rooms which were being established at that time.¹

The prime feat in the field of public education was the establishment of the Czechoslovak Society for the Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge (hereinafter “the Society”) in the spring of 1952. However, the great deal of attention and care paid to the establishment of the organization is in a sharp contrast with the standoffish attitude of historians who have not hitherto emphasized the area of public education and ideological disciplination too much when writing about the communist era.² It may be understandable, if evolution of their professional interests, or topics and ways of asking questions, are taken into account. However, a long-lasting overlooking of the public education segment of the power exercise mechanism would be tantamount to neglecting one of the major pillars which the communist hegemony was built on. For this reason, it is welcome that Doubravka Olšáková decided to devote her attention to circumstances accompanying the establishment of the Society and the history of the Society as an incarnation of public education tendencies of the post-February state.

Just to give some basic information, let us reiterate, together with the authoress, that the Society was modeled on the example of the Soviet All-Union Society for the Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge. Its establishment was approved at a meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia held in early March 1952, the founding congress took place in Prague at the end of June 1952. The Society was led by a central committee with central branch sections, which regional committees and sections were subordinated to. District organizations were expected to operate at a still lower level. Educational activities were thus designed to be as accessible as possible, even ubiquitous. At least this was the idea of how the organization should work. The branch sections covered astronomy, atheism and philosophy, biology, medicine, literature, international policy, pedagogy and psychology, political economy, law and state, and agriculture.

1 See ŠKODA, Kamil – PAŠKA, Pavol: *Dejiny osvety v Československu 1918–1975* [History of public education in Czechoslovakia]. Bratislava, Obzor 1977, p. 199.

2 Further to the cultural and public education policy in post-February Czechoslovakia and partly also about the Society, see KNAPÍK, Jiří: *Únor a kultura: Sovětizace české kultury 1948–1950* [The February and culture: Sovietization of Czech culture 1948–1950]. Praha, Libri 2004, pp. 300–316. On the disciplination of members of the Communist Party, see the interesting work by KAŠKA, Václav: *Neukáznění a neangažovaní: Disciplinace členů Komunistické strany Československa v letech 1948–1952* [The undisciplined and unengaged: Disciplination of members of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia between 1948 and 1952]. Praha, Ústav pro studium totalitních režimů 2014. For specific information on the Society, see RŮŽIČKOVÁ, Michaela: *Osvětový pracovník: Lektor krajského oddělení Československé společnosti pro šíření politických a vědeckých znalostí v Jihlavě* [The public education worker: Lecturer of the Regional Department of the Czechoslovak Society for the Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge]. In: FASORA, Lukáš – HANUŠ, Jiří – MALÍŘ, Jiří – NEČASOVÁ, Denisa (eds.): *Člověk na Moravě ve druhé polovině 20. století* [The man in Moravia in the second half of the 20th century]. Brno, Centrum pro studium demokracie a kultury 2011, pp. 203–215.

Although the institution was presented as a new entity, it was, from an organizational viewpoint, a follower of the Socialist Academy which had resumed its pre-war activities in 1946 under the leadership of Zdeněk Nejedlý and Arnošt Kolman. The Society devoted itself to lecturing activities and to the production of lecture texts and educational brochures. It also published popularization magazines in Bohemia and Slovakia. The Society operated under the abovementioned name until 1965, when it returned to its *de facto* original name – the Socialist Academy. Just like other institutions, the Society underwent many internal organizational or ideological transformations. Its orientation and careers of its representatives were affected by the step-by-step liberalization of the 1960s as well as the hectic period of the Prague Spring and the subsequent so-called “normalization.”

The book under review is divided into 21 chapters and subchapters. These chronologically follow the evolution of the Society; at the same time, each segment is devoted to a specific issue typical for the period it covers (for example the establishment of people’s astronomical observatories and planetaria, disputes concerning the grass and field system of V. R. Viljams, the innovators’ movement). The authoress opens her work by placing the topic of technology and science popularization into context, but she pays attention only to classics of Marxism-Leninism and their Stalinist successors, and monitors the tradition of scientific popularization primarily in the Soviet Bloc. On these few pages, we learn what Marx and Engels had written about the popularization in their *Communist Manifesto*, or what Lenin thought about it in his essay entitled *What Is To Be Done?*. As will be mentioned on the following lines, the angle of view she chose is unnecessarily modest and deprives her work of welcome and interesting relevant overlaps and prevents her from finding additional connections.

After the chapter dedicated to the process of the organization’s formation, Olšáková returns to the institutions which, in her opinion, had preceded the Society, and shows that the Society was not established from the proverbial scratch. In addition to the Socialist Academy, the authoress places the Free Thought (or the Union of Atheist Citizens) and the Workers’ Academy into the Society’s pedigree. Apart from other things, the following chapters describe, step by step, leaders of the Society and campaigns it was involved in, e.g. for atheistic education or public agriculture in the country and in agriculture. Olšáková also dedicates segments of her book to editorial activities of the Society and its foreign relations, both within the Socialist Bloc and with capitalist Europe countries. In her book’s segments, she depicts both chronological milestones in the evolution of the Society (the year 1965 and the end of the liberal phase of its evolution, the third congress and renaming of the organization) and general society and political turning points affecting its activities (the year 1968 and the invasion of the Warsaw Pact armies, the onset of the so-called “normalization”).

In spite of all partial peripeteias and difficulties in its work and the dictatorship’s erosion and ultimate fall in 1989, Doubravka Olšáková regards the Society’s activities as successful. She notes that, in retrospect, “activities of the Socialist Academy and its predecessor may seem to be one of frequent, but unsuccessful attempts of

the communist regime to indoctrinate the population. However, in the long run and considering all means available to the communist regime for this purpose, the attempt was actually very successful.” In her opinion, the proof of this success is the level of atheism among Czechs, which she attributes to the education toward scientific atheism organized by the Society. She also believes that another piece of evidence speaking for the Society’s educational success is the number of domestic advocates of peaceful use of nuclear energy, “a direct consequence of a very meticulous campaign in favour of nuclear physics and its peaceful use by communist scientists” (p. 616). It is a congenial evaluation in that the authoress is not afraid to admit successes of institutions epitomizing the communist power’s claim to the human mind. This being said, one should ask whether the public opinion polls and statistical surveys she is referring to can be automatically linked to formative activities of the Society. Evidence confirming her propositions could perhaps be brought by some *archeology of atheistic and nuclear knowledge*. However, the authoress presents these important thoughts at the end of her book, without specific research of her own, which would explicitly ask the starting question whether the communist campaigning was successful or not.

As our task is to review the book, let us first focus on its conceptual level, which in turn requires, as the first priority, to concentrate on the book’s introduction, or rather to cope with its *de facto* absence. It is a pity that the authoress, instead of stepping directly into the heart of the matter, did not devote opening paragraphs to an introduction clearly explaining the objective of her work and the importance of the topic she selected. The following hundreds of pages would have been more understandable and easier to find one’s way within for the reader. As a matter of fact, the reader would have known, from the very beginning, what the authoress’ goal and her view of the Society were when she started writing the book. Just like Darina Majerníková, who had reviewed the book before we did,³ we miss an opening outline of the context of the work explaining why it is important to cover the selected topic, why the authoress chose exactly the structure which she did, why she used only sources and documents of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia kept in Prague’s National Archive, etc. However, this is not to say that the reader ultimately does not learn about the authoress’ intention and circumstances of the origin of the work. Unfortunately, he or she has to wait until one of the last chapters of the book, and the information is provided only in a footnote (p. 597, Footnote 5). Explaining the book’s *raison d’être in such a place is not, in our opinion, very fortunate*.

Nevertheless, let us dwell on the footnote for a while. It says that the work is an intermediate product of a grant-funded project generally dedicated to the Sovietization

3 Darina Majerníková’s review (untitled) was published in *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas: jgo.e-reviews*, Vol. 4, No. 4 (2014), pp. 46–47. The review is available online in the *Rezensio.net* electronic review journal at <http://www.rezensio.net/rezensionen/zeitschriften/jahrbucher-fur-geschichte-osteuropas/jgo-e-reviews-2014/4/ReviewMonograph344592798/?searchterm=majernikova>.

of Central European scientific institutions after the onset of the communist regime. "It is thus largely based on sources from the provenance of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, in particular those produced by its Secretariat, Politburo and Ideological Department; in addition, documents of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences and the Czechoslovak Academy of Agricultural Sciences were used as well." The authoress claims the study is "oriented toward a material analysis of steps taken by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in relation to pseudoscientific institutions [...] and relations of the latter to academic institutions, in particular to the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences." And finally, the concluding part of the footnote says that "the work aims to analyze the relationship between the state and public education" (*Ibid.*).

Let us take the authoress' final message as a contrasting film for the evaluation of the book. It would be appropriate to touch upon the source base first. It is only at the end of her book that the authoress actually reveals which sources she used in previous pages. She believes that documents of central institutions are sufficient for depicting and analyzing steps of the communist leadership with respect to public education organizations among which the Society occupied the leading position. However, by focusing only on documents produced in Prague, she is leaving out very enlightening insights into the operation of the Society at the regional or district level. She thus resigns to a more plastic examination of the influence and acceptance of central decisions and measures in regions and districts. How were the centre's measures and decisions accepted there? How were the Society's central activity and interaction with the Communist Party leadership perceived and regarded? Did regional structures have any leeway to negotiate their own positions and further their requirements and needs *vis-à-vis* party structures? Needless to say, a number of Czech and Moravian archives (in Brno, Jihlava, Opava, and elsewhere) maintain funds of regional branches of the Society, which help see events taking place in Prague's centre of the organization from a proper, and sometimes critical, angle. And if Doubravka Olšáková had indeed decided to pay attention only to central bodies, she should have openly resigned to her ambition of talking about the Society as a whole. Or does she really believe that the situation in the centre can explain the situation in regions and districts, away from Prague? Is the reader supposed to believe that the authoress assumes a dichotomy of Prague's power centre making decisions and the peripheries accepting the former's instructions without asking any questions? In short – the final explanation outlined above notwithstanding, we feel a tension between the objective claimed at the end of the book, the book's name, and the work's content.

Furthermore, the reader may be surprised by the book's terminological inconsistency. The title and subtitle of the book suggests the authoress' interest in *popularization of science*, which she claims was to become – and this is something that we fully identify ourselves with – one of the key tools of progress and of achieving the communist future. However, we must ask: what was the relationship between the *popularization of science* and *public education*? The authoress seems to treat both terms as synonyms in her text. It is a pity she did not attempt to define the terms

in a greater detail and to explain their mutual relationship, and to declare once again what exactly she intends to examine within the realm of public education. As a matter of fact, the term *public education* as used after February 1948 included both popularization of scientific knowledge and cultural work.⁴ For this reason, it is not possible to fully agree with one of the authoress' opening statements, namely that "the popularization of science was in fact the only possible and enforceable measure imposed from above through which it was possible to bring the concept of a new, classless society in which the talent and capabilities of one individual serve interests of all to life" (p. 34). Why, the same statement may be voiced in connection with cultural policy and the promotion of values emphasized by cultural campaigns and individual artistic performances – the cultural work was definitely also a means of the implementation of the concept of a new, classless society.

Also related to the issue of the definition of *public education*, or *popular education* and *popularization of science* is a problem which is only marginally mentioned in the conclusive footnote mentioned above – that of the tradition of education work in the Czech milieu. It is possible to imagine that the authoress regards the Society as an instance of *popularization of science* in the domestic environment. In that case, however, she should define its role in the field of public education more accurately; if she wants to use the term *public education* without any reflection and as she also claims allegiance to the commendable work of Jiří Pokorný *Lidová výchova na přelomu 19. a 20. století* [Popular education at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries], she includes the organization she is examining into the public education tradition developed by the national movement since the 19th century.⁵ After all, even representatives of the dictatorship were counting on a possibility of legitimizing the Society by references to patriotic efforts of the previous century. Václav Kopecký and Zdeněk Nejedlý referred to public education workers and the Society's staff as socialist national revivalists.⁶

Indoctrination efforts thus were not characteristic only for the post-February regime. Even First-Republic Czechoslovakia had been paying attention to public education and the activist circles in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia had

4 "The planned building of the public education apparatus of the public administration system is one of the most important tasks. Public education centres are to be organized as basic focal hubs of cultural and public education activities among masses of working people [...]. Our task is now to deepen and expand the public education and cultural work in every respect, and to approach it as political campaign work of the utmost importance for the state and the nation, one aimed at achieving socialist goals." A speech of Minister of Information and Public Education V. Kopecký in Soběslav. In: *Rudé právo* (1 August 1950), p. 3.

5 POKORNÝ, Jiří: *Lidová výchova na přelomu 19. a 20. století* [Popular education at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries], Praha, Karolinum 2003.

6 KOPECKÝ, Václav: *Soběslavský plán kulturně osvětové činnosti* [Soběslav plan of cultural and public education activities]. Praha, Ministry of Information and Public Education 1950, p. 13; NEJEDLÝ, Zdeněk: Československá společnost pro šíření politických a vědeckých znalostí [Czechoslovak Society for the Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge]. In: IDEM: *Nedělní epistoly* [Sunday Epistles], Vol. 6: *Rok 1951–1952* [The years 1951 and 1952]. Praha, Státní nakladatelství politické literatury 1956, pp. 250–251.

also been showing some formative efforts. It is certainly possible to argue that Doubravka Olšáková was interested in the Society as a representative of a specific socio-political order. Nevertheless, a contextualization reflecting the earlier public education tendencies would have enabled the authoress to step out of the boundaries of the source base she selected and to consider specific features of communist public education – in what was it exceptional, and in what, on the other hand, was it consistent with formative efforts of modern times which can be traced far back to the Age of Enlightenment? What was new about the communist extracurricular education and in what did it only copy current trends and past examples? In addition, the limitation of ideological sources to authorities of Marxism-Leninism (and Stalinism) applied in the Czechoslovak environment made at least Italian theoretician Antonio Gramsci, whose concept of hegemony in many respect explains efforts of political players for a non-violent indoctrination of society through, *inter alia*, public education, disappear from the authoress' scope. (And if we misinterpret the authoress in this place in that she wanted to study only *popularization of science*, then we are up against the same terminological inconsistency, namely the relationship of *popularization of science* and *public education*.)

Due to the significance of the topic of the book, we believe it is necessary to review the methodological background of the text as well. The authoress uses a certain form of implicit inductive logic, as if she assumed that the sources alone could tell how things happened. It is possible to maintain this position at the level of factual information about the Society; however, the approach collapses whenever an attempt at a more profound interpretation is made. On the one hand, Doubravka Olšáková thus states that the building and operation of the whole project was controlled by the leadership of the Society and the Communist Party: “The whole organizational structure had been consulted and prepared in advance in cooperation with the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia” (p. 134). On the other hand, she almost simultaneously admits that the practice was different, that “the planned transition may not have been as smooth as initially intended” (p. 91), or that “several other people” had refused to deliver an important presentation before it was assigned to Josef Macek (p. 159). She often speaks about *negotiations* between various players, and, at the same time, about a clear *hierarchy* of the entire behemoth of the regime. How is one expected to perceive that? The facts on the history of the Society that she presents are not problematic in themselves, but their arrangement and confrontation bring questions which the authoress is unable to answer from her methodological positions.

Another important consequence of the non-reflected methodology is the use of “quasi characters” – virtual subjects of actions that are assigned human qualities. An example may be the *system*, which had to *cope with* some obstacles (p. 24). This approach produces an impression of compactness and logic, but is basically misleading. Not because we could not use such rhetoric figures of speech, but because its significance and consequences are not reflected at all in the book. On the other hand, the most remarkable parts of the book can be found in places where the above “model” is not used – where, for example, someone voiced his or her

disagreement with a decision of the commission, where someone was replaced, or where a substitution for someone could not be found. In short, there where the virtual “quasi characters” disintegrate into elements of concrete players. Proof positive of the above is, for example, a well-written and telling part dedicated to Professor of Medical Physics Jaroslav Šafránek, who repeatedly permitted himself a few “political jibes” during his public education lectures (p. 216).

At first sight, writing a history of propaganda, campaigning or public education seems methodologically easy; why, it is just a history of disseminating truths or lies. However, the book of Doubravka Olšáková shows that it is a complex intellectual exercise which must focus on suppressing banal dichotomies such as truth/lie, powerful/powerless, or knowing/ignorant. The authoress has collected a remarkable amount of materials offering an opportunity for such an interpretation, and attempted to make such interpretations herself in many places of her book. Nevertheless (as also indicated hereinbelow), the absence of methodologically clearly defined positions has prevented her from making full use of the materials; in other words, the methodological deficiencies have clear implications toward specific interpretations and their width.

From the viewpoint of Marxist-Leninist science, the part dedicated to the problematic relationship between *Party allegiance* and *objectivity* is significant. Needless to say, the authoress does not reach beyond repeating the official position; moreover, she basically relies only on one speech of Ladislav Štoll. She concludes the issue of Party allegiance and objectivity by a statement that “the new regime/system does not renounce the use of objective scientific methods, but it assumes that their results will be related to the objective reality determined by Marxism-Leninism. All summed up, scientific results are objective if they serve the bearer of objectivity in history, i.e. the people” (p. 26 n.). However, this statement of the authoress fails to outreach the level of Štoll’s source statement – she stays with her now surely paradoxical statement that the people is the measure of objectivity, without attempting to develop the proposition into an interpretation, to explain its period logic, or to outline its consequences for the practicing of science.⁷

As a matter of fact, the authoress is sometimes satisfied with categorical judgments which she unfortunately fails to elaborate. An example of the above is her quick assessment of the content of a text on the first regular congress of the Society, whose almost identical wording was printed as an editorial of *Rudé právo*⁸: “It was nothing else but another proud propaganda text [...]” (p. 143). We of course do not intend to deny the editorial its propagandistic purpose, but this is also a confirmation of deficits in the authoress’ analytical work concerning the Marxist-Leninist

7 For a source of inspiration regarding the partisan nature of historical sciences and a possible solution of the problem of the relationship between Party allegiance and objectivity in the practicing of science in a communist system, see SABROW, Martin: Historiografie NDR jako badatelský problém [Historiography of the German Democratic Republic as a research problem]. In: *Soudobé dějiny*, Vol. 7, No. 1–2 (2000), pp. 9–36.

8 Odpovědný úkol naší inteligence [A responsible task of our intelligentsia]. In: *Rudé právo* (9 March 1955), p. 1.

indivisibility of objectivity (and scientific quality) and Party allegiance (and propaganda). Actually, what kind of message does the authoress want to convey by quoting the above statement? Can statements like this be indeed treated so uncritically? And what does such a statement mean from the viewpoint of work methodology? It seems as if the authoress failed to appreciate that scientific quality, objectivity and propaganda had different meanings in different periods of time, which need not necessarily rule out each other; that what is now negatively perceived propaganda did not have to be perceived as such during the period of time under research. Instead of the “archeology of socialist propaganda” and its mechanisms, the unclear interpretation position thus leads the authoress to evaluations made *ex post* from only seemingly neutral grounds of our present time. Instead of a scientific analysis, we are offered a moral judgment.

Still, our critical remarks made so far should not eclipse the significance of the research performance of the authoress. We generally welcome the choice of a topic concerning public education. Doubravka Olšáková is one of the first researchers to present and, above all, appreciate the importance of public education for the building and stabilization of the post-February dictatorship in her voluminous book. Also commendable is the fact that she retrieved the Czechoslovak Society for the Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge from depths of oblivion specifically for this purpose. Actually, by doing so she pointed out at the relativity, or period conditionality, of meanings of specific topics and questions asked by researchers. After all, the Society was really an unoverlookable enterprise in the field of the communist transformation of Czechoslovak society. Insofar as Doubravka Olšáková's book is concerned, we can thus only ask what is hopefully just a rhetorical question now: why has popular education work so far been eclipsed by interest in political trials and repressions of the post-February dictatorship?

Certain segments of the book, especially those related to specific cases and situation (for example the story of Professor Jaroslav Šafránek mentioned above), are well-written and represent a source of inspiration for follow-on research; they relativize the monolithic character of the society and outline the limits and possibilities of autonomous acts of different players – in short, the chosen topics and archival documents help unveil the self-contradictory nature of the communist regime. In this respect, it would be good if the authoress' centrally focused research project was elaborated in detailed studies and micro-historical probes dedicated, for example, to regional or district structures and their players and flesh out the information and propositions presented in the book. Such studies could complement the authoress' sympathetic judgments on successes of public education efforts.

The rich footnotes, presentation of tables, narrations of selected life stories of specific players, and incorporation of archival documents make Doubravka Olšáková's work a must-read book and a basis for continuing research into and writing about the post-February communist public education. Let us hope that the extensive *Science Meets People!* book will be a springboard for further studies of the history of socialism in the Czech Lands and that Doubravka Olšáková's work, by its emphasis on public education and popularization of science alone, will contribute to increased

appreciation of non-violent power strategies of representatives of the communist dictatorship among researchers and to a confirmation of the trend visible in the local historiography of contemporary history, which is hopefully abandoning for good the totalitarian historical narrative and its accent on repressions and violence of the ruling power.

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Translated by Jiří Mareš

Review

Supervision against Artistic Freedom

The Czech Philharmonic Orchestra after February 1948

Václav Nájemník

IBLOVÁ, Michaela: *Česká filharmonie pod tlakem stalinské kulturní politiky v padesátých letech* [The Czech Philharmonic Orchestra under the pressure of Stalinist cultural policy in the 1950s]. Praha, Karolinum 2014, 247 pages, ISBN 978-80-246-2332-0.

The operation of cultural institutions and the life of their representatives at times of oppression and lack of freedom offer a rich and multi-layered topic for research. The topic may be made even more attractive if it is focused on a broad audience who often turn to cultural personalities with great expectations and increased sensitivity in “dark times.” Local authors have approached such topics in many different ways. Employing his typical essay-like style, František Červinka examined options of Czech culture during the Protectorate¹; however, they were no less important for Jiří Doležal, whose work unfortunately remained incomplete and did not manage to cover sub-topics such as music or theatre.² Several more specifically oriented publications on

1 ČERVINKA, František: *Česká kultura a okupace* [Czech culture and the occupation]. Praha, Torst 2002.

2 DOLEŽAL, Jiří: *Česká kultura za protektorátu: Školství, písemnictví, kinematografie* [Czech culture during the Protectorate: Education, literature, cinema]. Praha, National Film Archives 1996.

culture during the occupation have recently appeared,³ but a comprehensive grasp of the topic is still missing.

In the context of the communist movement and communist regime, there are also well-known synthetic works written by Alexej Kusák or Jiří Knapík, which deal with cultural events and cultural life in the second half of the 1940s and in the 1950s.⁴ However, if the focus is narrowed only to the field of music, it becomes obvious that the topics which authors are interested in have hitherto been rather fragmented, and the reader is thus still waiting for a comprehensive synthetic reflection on the role of music face to face with a non-democratic ruling system. At the same time, it should be mentioned that Czech musical culture is in many respects a unique phenomenon which offered the listener an opportunity to escape, at least within his or her own mind, to fleeting experiences of freedom or to remind himself or herself of the famous past. Official power structures were aware of the function of and possibilities offered by music, and they wanted to dictate their own ideas of musical expression even in this area. It is not accidental that jazz (which annoyed both the Nazis and the Communists in the initial decades of their rule) was a symbol of freedom for older generations.⁵ Rock'n'roll or big beat, which the rulers of the so-called “normalization” period were eyeing with suspicion and displeasure,⁶ although they occasionally made good use of them for negative propaganda,⁷ had a similarly unrestrained effect on younger audiences.

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- 3 See, for example, MAGINCOVÁ, Dagmar (ed.): *O protektorátu v sociokulturních souvislostech* [On the Protectorate in a socio-cultural context]. Červený Kostelec, Pavel Mervart 2011; DEMETZ, Peter: *Praha ohrožená 1939–1945: Politika, kultura, vzpomínky* [Prague in jeopardy 1939–1945: Politics, culture, recollections]. Praha, Mladá fronta 2010; MICHLOVÁ, Marie: *Protektorát, aneb Česká každodennost 1939–1945* [The Protectorate, or the Czech everydayness]. Řitka, Čas 2012.
- 4 KUSÁK, Alexej: *Kultura a politika v Československu 1945–1956* [Culture and politics in Czechoslovakia 1945–1956]. Praha, Torst 1998; KNAPÍK, Jiří: *V zajetí moci: Kulturní politika, její systém a aktéři 1948–1956* [Captured by power: Cultural policy, its system, and actors 1948–1956]. Praha, Libri 2006; see also KNAPÍK, Jiří – FRANC, Martin: *Průvodce kulturním děním a životním stylem v českých zemích 1948–1967* [A guide to the cultural life and lifestyle in the Czech Lands 1948–1967], Vols. 1–2. Praha, Academia 2011.
- 5 Cf., for example, NOVÁK, Radomil: *Česká literatura jazzující* [Czech literature jazzing]. Ostrava, Faculty of Education of the University of Ostrava 2012; TRAXLER, Jiří: *Já nic, já muzikant: Vzpomínky z let 1918–1978* [The cat did it: Recollections of the 1918–1978 period]. Toronto, Sixty-Eight Publishers 1980; HLOUŠEK, Vít: *Swing ve stínu hákového kříže* [Swinging in the shadow of the swastika]. In: *Revue politika*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (2005), pp. 12–16; DORŮŽKA, Lubomír: *Za socialistický jazz: Studená válka v českém jazzu (1948–1965)* [For socialist jazz: Cold War in Czech jazz (1948–1965)]. In: *Harmonie*, Vol. 16, No. 11 (November 2008), pp. 45–47.
- 6 Cf., for example, VANĚK, Miroslav: *Byl to jenom rock'n'roll? Hudební alternativa v komunistickém Československu 1956–1989* [Was there only rock'n'roll? Musical alternative in communist Czechoslovakia 1956–1989]. Praha, Academia 2009.
- 7 Cf., for example, NOSÁLEK, Petr: *Propaganda v populární hudbě: Cesta komunistickým režimem s písní na rtech* [Propaganda in popular music: A voyage through the communist regime with a song on one's lips]. In: *Jeden svět na školách: Audiovizuální vzdělávací portál* [One world at schools: Audio-visual education portal] [online] [cit. 2015-03-22]. Available at: <http://www.jsns.cz/propaganda-v-popularni-hudbe>; RŮŽIČKA, Daniel:

As for classical music, which is in many respects specific and offers more complex cultural experiences to its audiences, only partial studies analyzing efforts of the communist regime to make use of classical music for its own propaganda have been available so far.⁸ Excellent biographic texts on Maestro Václav Talich written by Mila Kuna and Jiří Křestán look both into the Protectorate period and into the reality of the communist regime.⁹ However, we are still waiting for a major monograph in the case of his no less prominent successor Karel Ančerl, who was, *inter alia*, the chief conductor of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra in the 1950s and 1960s.¹⁰ Some other personalities who were forming the shape of Czech classical music after the Second World War and also maintaining close relations with official institutions might also deserve modern critical evaluation. As to composers, the above holds true, for example, for politically active Václav Dobiáš,¹¹ the regime's protégé, or Miroslav Barvík, a long-time functionary of the Union of Czechoslovak Composers. Reflections of

Major Zeman: Zákulisí vzniku televizního seriálu. Propaganda, nebo krimi? [Major Zeman: The background of the birth of the TV series. Propaganda, or a detective story?]. Praha, Práh 2005.

- 8 BEK, Mikuláš: Socialist realism and the tradition of Czech national music, or who goes with whom? In: *Musicologica Olomucensia* VI., Olomouc, University of Palacký 2002, pp. 39–50; KOTEK, Josef: Poválečná masová hudba a její dobové svědectví [Postwar mass music and its period testimony]. In: *Hudební věda*, Vol. 33, No. 4 (1996), pp. 357–373; ŠPAČEK, Jan: Ideová, politická, mocenská a stylová doktrína socialistického realismu na poli hudby [The ideological, political, power, and style doctrine of socialist realism in the field of music]. In: *Ateliér*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (2003), p. 6; FUKAČ, Jiří: O socialistickém realismu opravdu s odstupem? [On socialist realism really from a distance?]. In: *Opus musicum*, Vol. 33, No. 5 (2001), pp. 25–28; PANTŮČEK, Viktor: “Nové, opravdu realistické opery”: Činnost operního kolektivu brněnské odbočky Svazu československých skladatelů 1949–1954 [“New, truly realistic operas”: Activities of the opera group of the Brno branch of the Union of Czechoslovak Composers 1949–1954]. In: *Musicologica Brunensia*, Vol. 48, No. 1 (2013), pp. 87–97; STEHLÍK, Luboš: Hudba duševní bídy [Music of intellectual poverty]. In: *Harmonie*, Vol. 2, No. 12 (1994), p. 34.
- 9 KUNA, Milan: *Václav Talich 1883–1961: Šťastný i hořký úděl dirigenta* [A bittersweet lot of a conductor]. Praha, Academia 2009; KŘESTÁN, Jiří: *Případ Václava Talicha: K problému národní čistoty a českého heroismu* [The case of Václav Talich: On the issue of national purification and Czech heroism]. Praha, Akropolis 2014 (initially published as two studies: IDEM: Srdce Václava Talicha se ztratilo [Václav Talich's heart has been lost]. In: *Soudobé dějiny*, Vol. 16, Nos. 1 and 2–3 (2009), pp. 69–111 and 243–275); see also KADLEC, Petr: Václav Talich: Od umělce vždy žádám nemožné [Václav Talich: I always ask the impossible from an artist]. In: *Harmonie*, Vol. 19, Nos. 1–12 (2011), pp. 22–24, 22–24, 12–14, 24–26, 21–23, 20–23, 24–26, 22–23, 20–21, 24–25, 24–25, and 30–31.
- 10 Apart from a few shorter articles in the *Harmonie* and *Rudolfinum revue* journals and Ančerl's correspondence with his friend Ivan Medek, only a brochure on the occasion of Ančerl's 60th birthday has been published so far: ŠROM, Karel: *Karel Ančerl*. Praha – Bratislava, Supraphon 1968.
- 11 Just one minor study has hitherto been published, namely: PECHÁČEK, Stanislav: Václav Dobiáš. In: *Cantus*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (2008), pp. 12–13 and 43. Also available are Dobiáš's recollections and official biographies published during the communist rule; cf. HEJZLAR, Tomáš (ed.): *Václav Dobiáš: Sborník vzpomínek a statí* [Václav Dobiáš: A collection of reminiscences and articles]. Praha, Panton 1979; LADMANOVÁ, Milada: *Skladatel Václav*

their lives and work set into a period context would certainly enrich the discussion on culture in communist Czechoslovakia. In this respect, the life story of Jan Kapr, initially favoured by the regime and later, during the so-called “normalization,” persecuted, is a typical example of a twisting and winding life path characteristic for the Czech cultural environment.¹²

However, histories of orchestras during the communist rule, and particularly problems of their existence in an environment that was far away from freedom, have not yet attracted consistent interest on the part of researchers as the topic would probably deserve. In this respect, the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, whose activities have never ceased to be a unique example of Czech performing art reaching up to the world’s top, might seem a bit neglected. Until now, the reader has been able to peruse publications of a more or less representative nature, summarizing activities of the orchestra during a certain period of time and mentioning a broader historical context only marginally.¹³ An interesting document of the period is certainly a monograph on the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra written by musicologist Václav Holzknecht in the early 1960s.¹⁴ However, the otherwise captivating text of the long-time headmaster of the Prague Conservatory and popularizer of music is basically focused only on musical aspects, leaving matters concerning politics and specific historical situations aside, as its objective is to present, in an amusing and attractive form, activities of the orchestra and lives of its members. It is thus very good that the attention of young researcher Michaela Iblová has now focused on the fate of the famous Czech orchestra and its relations with official authorities in the reality of the 1950s. In many respects, her work summarizes – and, even more importantly, substantially expands and broadens – existing fragmentary observations which have so far been devoted to the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra by basically just one author, musical publicist Petr Kadlec.¹⁵

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- Dobiáš* [Composer Václav Dobiáš]. Praha, N/A 1952; ŠTILEC, Jiří: *Václav Dobiáš*. Praha, Panton 1985; EGOROVA, Valeria Nikolaevna: *Václav Dobiáš*. Moscow, Muzyka 1966.
- 12 Cf. BÁRTOVÁ, Jindřiška: *Jan Kapr: Nástin života a díla* [Jan Kapr: An outline of his work and life]. Brno, Janáček’s Academy of Fine Arts 1994.
- 13 Cf. KOLÁČKOVÁ, Yveta: *Česká filharmonie 100 plus 10* [Czech Philharmonic Orchestra 100 plus 10]. Praha, Academia 2006; MLEJNEK, Karel: *Česká filharmonie: Deset kapitol ze stoleté historie orchestru* [Czech Philharmonic Orchestra: Ten chapters from the hundred years’ history of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra]. Praha – Litomyšl, Czech Philharmonic Orchestra – Paseka 1996; *100 let České filharmonie: Historie, osobnosti, kontexty. Sborník z mezinárodní muzikologické konference, Praha 17. a 18. října 1996, pořádané Českou filharmonií ve spolupráci s Ústavem pro hudební vědu Akademie věd České republiky* [The hundred years of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra: History, personalities, contexts. Proceedings of the International Musicological Conference, Prague, 17 and 18 October 1996, hosted by the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra in cooperation with the Institute of Musical Science of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic]. Praha, Czech Philharmonic Orchestra 1997.
- 14 Cf. HOLZKNECHT, Václav: *Česká filharmonie: Příběh orchestru* [Czech Philharmonic Orchestra: The story of an orchestra]. Praha, Státní hudební nakladatelství 1963.
- 15 Cf., for example, KADLEC, Petr: *Duch nesmí být spoután politikou* [The spirit must not be tethered by politics]. In: *Harmonie*, Vol. 12, No. 6 (2006), p. 10; IDEM: Karel Ančerl v osidlech StB [Karel Ančerl in the snare of the State Security]. In: *Ibid.*, Vol. 17, Nos. 1

Michaela Iblová devoted her attention to relations between Communist Party authorities and the best-known local symphonic orchestra for several years. She had presented partial results of her work even before the reviewed monograph was published, delivering a keynote lecture on conductor Karel Ančerl at a seminar organized by the Institute for Studies of Totalitarian Regimes in May 2013.¹⁶ The competencies of the author, a university-educated historian, who also possesses personal experience from the environment of a symphonic orchestra, promised an erudite grasp of the topic. Although the text is not quite up to the expectations and contains several deficiencies, it still deserves attention.

The first two chapters representing roughly a third of the book introduce the reader to the historical setting. The author first describes the situation in the field of classical music in Czechoslovakia from the viewpoint of communist cultural policy after February 1948 and then summarizes the history of the Czechoslovak Philharmonic Orchestra in the initial decades of its existence. As these two chapters are not based on primary sources (save for a few exceptions) and largely summarize known facts, their shortening may be worth considering to streamline the route to the topic of the work. However, the author was probably targeting a broader audience encompassing musical enthusiasts and fans of the most renowned Czech orchestra, who need not necessarily be familiar enough with all the relevant facts.

Activities of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra taking place in the atmosphere of the 1950s are covered by five chapters accounting for two thirds of the text. Their core consists of a description how the orchestra operated in confrontation with incessant efforts of the communist regime to control its activities through Communist Party bodies and especially through security authorities. The description is supplemented by remarkable recollections of two former members of the orchestra, hornist Rudolf Beránek and flutist Lutobor Hlavsa. However, assigning a special chapter (pp. 206–219) for them seems rather illogical, particularly in view of the fact that some of this information appears elsewhere and therefore is only repeated. This concerns for example Hlavsa's recollections of the negative reception of Karel Ančerl by the orchestra's members at the beginning of his stint with the Czech Philharmonic

and 2 (2009), pp. 2–3 and 6–9; KADLEC, Petr – SLAVICKÝ, Milan: Hudba za totality aneb Umění posluhující: Z myšlenek a postřehů Milana Slavického [Music under a totalitarian regime, or the art as a servant: From thoughts and observations of Milan Slavický]. In: *Ibid.*, Vol. 17, No. 10 (2009), pp. 13–15; KADLEC, Petr (ed.): Neodpovíte-li, pochopím: Počátek světové slávy v emigraci a počátek normalizace v Československu z dopisů Karla Ančerla a Ivana Medka, 1968–1973 [If you don't answer, I will understand: The beginning of the worldwide fame and the onset of the "normalization" process in Czechoslovakia as reflected in letters of Karel Ančerl and Ivan Medek, 1968–1973]. In: *Ibid.*, Vol. 16, Nos. 1–12 (2008), pp. 31–33, 10–12, 10–12, 3–5, 25–27, 26–29, 6–7, 14–15, 34–35, 14–15, 33–34, 14–15 and 17. Petr Kadlec also studied the personality of Václav Talich (see Footnote 9).

16 The lecture was delivered as part of a series of public historical seminars on 23 May 2013. The seminar was entitled "Karel Ančerl: The Life and Paths of an Artist in the 20th century," and was a loose continuation of the seminar "The Pilgrimage of Václav Talich through the Valley of Humiliation: A Contemplation on an Artist and Society," held in the same institution on 21 June 2012.

Orchestra (p. 210), which the author has already covered in the chapter dealing with the famous conductor (p. 74). Indeed, such returns to what has already been said are not uncommon in the book.¹⁷ In my opinion, the dedication of a special chapter to Karel Ančerl is redundant as well, as his personality passes through the whole book anyway. While the emphasis placed on the voices of the orchestra's ex-members is probably attributable to the author's personal leaning towards the excellent musicians whom she reveres and whose personal experience she believed needed to be made more visible, in Ančerl's case her admiration is probably complemented by the awareness that the career of the exceptional conductor has not yet undergone a proper and thorough professional evaluation.

In her monograph, Michaela Iblová is asking, as one of the first authors in the Czech context, herself a question under what circumstances a top-level musical body can operate in a totalitarian environment and, in fact, in spite of it; and how the state was supervising the orchestra's activities and how the ubiquitous supervision was affecting the dramaturgical plans and specific human lives. It is perhaps almost surprising that the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra's management and members were able to meet the most stringent artistic requirements, although these are invariably side-tracked in totalitarian regimes. The most important mission of culture – whether for the Communists, Nazis, or Fascists – was always ideological education and promotion of their own interpretation of the world, not freedom, quality or diversity of artistic expression. The Czech Philharmonic Orchestra was basically fulfilling all of the latter values only due to its own professionalism and naturally high artistic requirements and capabilities of the entire orchestra, which both the conductor and musicians refused to resign to. It is possible to agree with Michaela Iblová, when she compares the maintaining, or even increasing, of the artistic credit of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra to nothing short of a miracle (p. 222).

The author touches upon these issues as early as in her initial description of the Czechoslovak musical reality of the 1950s. She mentions, *inter alia*, the fates of some composers who refused to waive rights to artistic quality of their music and to submit to the pressure of socialist realism in music. In segments dedicated to the origin and broad proliferation of mass songs, however, the name of Petr Eben, one of the key representatives of Czech classical music in the second half of the 20th century, is somewhat absent on the list of opponents of such musical expressions. Eben was watching the promotion of socialist realism in music with contempt, composing, for example, the very impressive *Missa adventus et quadragesimae* for a male choir, which uses completely different musical techniques and represents a revolt against official imperatives, as early as at the turn of 1951 and 1952.

Having contemplated the specific place of music among other branches of culture, Iblová justifiably starts her narrative with the Košice Government Programme. This binding government programme, implemented even before the onset of the

17 The author mentions the suspicion of intentions to emigrate, which the State Security was harbouring toward the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra's concert master Karel Šroubek, as many as five times (pp. 121, 186, 198, 209, and 216).

communist regime, restricted, *inter alia*, the free political competition and abandoned some democratic principles, which fact was also reflected in matters of culture. The author of its 15th chapter dedicated to education and culture was Zdeněk Nejedlý, some of whose texts, in addition to Ždanov's curricula and concepts of influential Minister of Information Václav Kopecký, were accepted by Communist Party cultural officials basically as a dogma after February 1945. Michaela Iblová also pays attention to the role of the Union of Czechoslovak Composers, which she correctly characterizes as an essentially corrupt environment in which all principal positions were assigned exclusively to pro-regime and politically reliable composers during the period of Stalinism (p. 19). Disloyal composers basically did not stand any chance of work unless living in emigration, such as Bohuslav Martinů, the most criticized composer in Czechoslovakia in the 1950s. However, the nature of the entire communist regime was corrupt; a similar approach was employed in perhaps every sphere of public life in those days, as evidenced, *inter alia*, by a gradually improved system of nomenclature functions and positions. The system kept looking for cadres suitable for building the state in the spirit of communism, and rewarded them appropriately for their loyalty. Of course, performing art had its specifics.

The bureaucratic fetter of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra by both official and unofficial ties is examined in the sixth chapter titled "Political and State Security Supervision and Control." Even a mere description of the complex mechanism of the Communist Party and state control of the orchestra, or practices used by the State Security recruiting informers and collaborators among its members is very valuable and important. Using numerous examples, Iblová shows how the State Security was continuously striving to monitor the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra because of its close foreign relations and contacts and its extraordinary position in Czech culture, and also to abuse some of its members to further own interests. The author has managed, among other things, to identify six specific individuals among a total of 11 State Security collaborators within the orchestra, who are known at least under their code names. In addition, she has identified seven other confidantes or informers among the orchestra's members, and also candidates of collaboration or confidantes in affiliated organizational elements of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, such as Smetana's Quartet or the Czech Nonet (p. 182). The monitoring of conductor Karel Ančerl, in which people outside the orchestra were probably also participating, is a case unto itself. It is still enlightening to learn how the State Security did not hesitate to exploit human weaknesses of musicians, their mutual antipathies, or material worries when recruiting its collaborators and confidantes. In this respect, Iblová often uses excursions to the reality of the 1960s to the 1980s to help herself, as she frequently lacked primary sources, i.e. State Security documents, for the period which the book is primarily focused on, which had been discarded or shredded. (The data on the number of State Security collaborators among the orchestra's members thus need not – and probably cannot – be complete.) As Iblová explicitly states, the efforts to use musicians of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra for collaboration with the State Security, tailing of their colleagues, or exploiting their contacts at home or abroad showed practically no change between the 1950s and the 1980s (p. 181).

It is rather a pity that the author sometimes appears too dependent on the speech of sources in this key part of the book, and reluctant to undertake a more profound analysis. Some connections which she mentions would also merit elaboration. For example, the reader will not learn the outcome of the dispute between the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra and the Prague Symphony Orchestra over an offer of a tour in Italy in 1957 (p. 154); similarly, the reader is denied information on how double-bass player František Helcl found his way to the British Army during the Second World War, later to be arrested and sentenced to six years in prison, probably also on the basis of a denouncement of State Security collaborators among the orchestra's members (p. 199).

When analyzing the attitude of individual members of the orchestra to the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, the author refrained from condemning the mass joining of the Communist Party by most of them in 1948, stating that their step was excusable, as “for a musician (and in fact any artist), his or her work always comes first” (p. 157). In my opinion, the above statement holds true for many other professions, and applying any special criteria to members of a philharmonic orchestra seems to be rather tricky. As a matter of fact, the whole society was coping with similar dilemmas of everyday life under the totalitarian regime, and the level of entanglement in the regime's nets considered unacceptable depended on the values scale of each individual. It is also necessary to add that joining the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia on a mass scale was a characteristic phenomenon of the second half of the 1940s and that the ruling party itself was later forced to take measures to stop it and to reduce the number of its members; these were also reflected in the leading Czechoslovak symphonic orchestra, in which the number of Communist Party members was continuously dropping since 1948 (pp. 156–159 and 165).

Michaela Iblová also dedicated a substantial part of the publication to the programme and dramaturgy of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra. Its management was forced to adapt the selection of compositions played by the orchestra to requirements of the Communist Party embodied in directives issued by the Ministry of Education, Sciences and Arts; the programme was subsequently approved by the Artistic Council of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra. From time to time, the musical ensemble thus had to include politically “engage” works in its repertoire, such as cantatas praising Stalin or Gottwald, or regularly appear at celebrations of ideologically significant anniversaries or political events. However, it always managed to live up to artistic values and maintain programme diversity. This concerned mainly subscription concerts in which Karel Ančerl even managed to include compositions by the regime-criticized Bohuslav Martinů. Ančerl also helped promote the work of this excellent personality of Czech classical music by including, as the first conductor in Czechoslovakia, the composer's postwar compositions (p. 93). However, Ančerl could not enjoy real artistic freedom. It was often a compromise, when the fulfilment of some dramaturgical requirements did not clash with normal artistic objectives. We can use the performance of works of Bedřich Smetana and Antonín Dvořák as an example. Expressed in the music of the two classical composers, Czech history and national pride were supposed to contribute to legitimization of communist ideology, but an impartial fan

of classical music could perhaps object only to their overpresence, in particular with respect to Smetana's works. However, the author demonstrates a discrepancy, sometimes smaller, sometimes greater, between proclaimed slogans and loudly trumpeted goals on the one hand and the real concert and artistic life of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra on the other. It should be noted that the relationship between official control authorities of the state and the artistic management of the orchestra was neither unilateral nor free of conflicts. It is certainly good that the author notices such circumstances, as it is necessary to take into account the complex ambivalence of relations among actors holding various positions when analyzing the everyday life in a totalitarian society in different periods of its existence.

It is just a pity that some authentic interesting statements of the orchestra's members appear only in footnotes and have not been properly critically evaluated and incorporated into the main narrative in what is an otherwise succinct and information-rich text. This applies, for example, to the report concerning a conversation between double-bass player František Fišer and conductor Rafael Kubelík, which allegedly took place during the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra's tour of Great Britain in 1956 and in which Fišer was persuading the famous conductor to return home from emigration (p. 165). It is also surprising that the abovementioned works on Václav Talich written by Jiří Křesťan and Milan Kuna are absent in the book's bibliography. Finally, I will take the liberty of correcting two minor errors I have found in the author's bibliographic note: Holzknec's monograph *Česká filharmonie – příběh orchestru* [The Czech Philharmonic Orchestra – the story of an orchestra] was published in 1963, not in the 1970s (p. 223), and Zdeněk Nejedlý was by education a historian, not a musicologist (p. 224).

The above critical remarks notwithstanding, my overall evaluation of Michaela Ibllová's work is positive, especially from a factual viewpoint. She has drawn a lot of very valuable information from sources of the Musical Archive of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Archive of Security Forces, and autobiographic records. In my opinion, the quality of the text would have benefitted from a more thorough interlinking and a deeper analysis of the sources mentioned above, as well as a broader critical evaluation of available literature. Unfortunately, some interesting aspects of activities of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra in the 1950s, such as concert tours, have also been touched only marginally. I am concluding my review by a wish that the author will continue to work on the topic and combine the results she has produced so far with research of fates and fortunes of our foremost orchestra during the following decades, until the period of another outstanding conductor, Václav Neumann. It would certainly be very beneficial.

The Czech version of this article, entitled Kontrola proti umělecké tvorbě, was originally published in Soudobé dějiny, Vol. 23, No. 1–2 (2016), pp. 228–235.

Translated by Jiří Mareš

Review

All the Things Film History Is

Alena Šlengerová

SKOPAL, Pavel: *Filmová kultura severního trojúhelníku: Filmy, kina a diváci českých zemí, NDR a Polska 1945–1970* [Film culture of the Northern Triangle: Films, cinemas and audiences of the Czech Lands, the GDR and Poland 1945–1970]. (Filmová knihovna [Film library], Vol. 3.) Brno, Host 2014, 308 pages, ISBN 978-80-7294-971-7.

So far, two monographs have been published by the Host publishing house in its Film Library series, both of them perceiving film in a broader historical context through the personalities of the directors Gustav Machatý and Ladislav Helge.¹ The third book of this series, Pavel Skopal's *Filmová kultura severního trojúhelníku* [Film culture of the Northern Triangle], has a territorial rather than a biographical focus. The work deals with the film culture of Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic and Poland, which, in the geography of postwar Europe and the strategy of Soviet hegemony, formed the “Northern Triangle” (with Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania representing the “Southern Triangle”). In the introduction to the book, the

1 HORNÍČEK, Jiří: *Gustav Machatý: Touha dělat film: Osobnost režiséra na pozadí dějin kinematografie* [A desire to make films: The director's personality against the background of the history of cinema]. Brno, Host 2011; BILÍK, Petr: *Ladislav Helge: Cesta za občanským filmem: Kapitoly z dějin československé kinematografie po roce 1945* [Ladislav Helge: The journey towards the citizen's cinema. Chapters from the history of Czechoslovak cinema after 1945]. Brno, Host 2011.

author convincingly justifies this territorial demarcation, including the restriction of the Czechoslovak line of research to the Czech Lands. Given the focus and scope of Skopal's work, it is evident that the film culture of Slovakia represents "a fourth side of a triangle," which would be more efficiently researched within a different framework. The selected period between 1945 and 1970 is also logically justified, allowing the author to develop a comprehensive picture of parallels and continuity.

Pavel Skopal has a long-standing interest in the Czechoslovak film industry after 1945 within the context of the Eastern Bloc.² He adopts an approach in line with the "New Film History," which liberates him from using traditional categories and periodization, and allows him to focus on issues such as different economic aspects of the film industry, distribution mechanisms or audiences. Such research entails a certain amount of interdisciplinary overlapping and requires working with highly varied sources. In cooperation with other experts in the field, the author conducted extensive research in the archives of the Czech Republic, Poland, Germany, the United States, Hungary and Russia. The results of his archival research are critically and organically interlinked with information from other sources, such as eye-witness testimonies, press articles or characteristics of particular films. He has also used dozens of specialized publications. The author drew on some of his own, previously published texts based on his long-term research; however, without preparing a collection of essays. He indeed succeeded in describing the process of research and initiating a discussion on the phenomenon in concern. On top of that, it is important to note that the text also contains links to the different websites devoted to film culture research projects, where a host of other data, cinema programmes and results of oral history can be found, and which would not be possible to reproduce in full within this book.

The book *Filmová kultura severního trojúhelníku* presents the research results on three levels, which in the structure of the book correspond to three independent, albeit related parts. The first part deals with cultural transfers within the Northern Triangle, as well as in the interaction of the Soviet Union and other countries of the communist bloc on the one side and the capitalist countries on the other. The central theme in this part is the issue of co-productions, which through synchronization tendencies reveal similarities and differences between individual production systems. There are also other minor, but inspirational issues, such as the "Conferences of the Film Industry Workers of the Socialist Countries," a series of events used by the Soviet Union to promote its "cultural diplomacy."

In the second part of the book, the author maps the role of film distribution, through which the regime sought social integration of its citizens, within the context of Stalinism and the subsequent "thaw," as well as economic reforms. The regime offered its own preferred values in cinema; however, there was also an increasingly evident strategy of opening up to Western film production or local films of the "bourgeois" or Nazi era. This opening was influenced not only by changes in the political course,

2 He is, *inter alia*, an editor of the collection of essays published under the title *Naplánovaná kinematografie: Český filmový průmysl 1945 až 1960* [Planned cinema: Czech film industry 1945–1960]. Praha, Academia 2012.

but also by certain institutions and functionaries. The conflicts and paradoxes of this situation are captured in the book through detailed case studies focusing on the film culture in Leipzig, Brno and Poznan.

Of great value and highly readable is the third part of the book, focusing on the film-audience reception. By building on the second part, and through analyzing contemporary statistics and sociological surveys, as well as making comparisons with Western countries, clear differences emerge between the intentionally fabricated (“ideologically mature”) and the real cinema-goer. This part is also supported by local case studies in a chapter on the behaviour and attitudes of audiences in postwar Leipzig.

While reading the book, we should always bear in mind the political-historical background, which is, within the seemingly compact space of the Northern Triangle and during the short period of a quarter of a century, somewhat variable. For example, with regard to the changing relations between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, the chronology of events and causality can be easily confused. However, Skopal’s text is very reader-friendly, not only by providing factual information, but also by the logical and helpful structuring of the text into shorter subchapters. The summarizing chapters at the end of each part are likewise useful for the reader.

Nevertheless, the comparative approach that is used does not primarily lead to a clear-cut generalization; it is neither mechanical nor simplifying. Apart from the comparative perspective, tensions within the Northern Triangle as a whole are still obvious. These tensions are not, however, reduced to observing the unidirectional effects of certain influences (Sovietization of the cultural policy, onset of the television as a direct competitor to the cinema, etc.), but are subject to further relativization and partial comparisons.

As for the formal side of the book, there is not much to criticize. Black and white images effectively illustrate specific parts of the text. Perhaps the only downside is the rather poor printing quality of the charts – as a result, the curves in the shades of grey are difficult to see. In fact, the book could have used even more charts and tables, provided they were produced in better quality. This applies especially to some passages in the second part, where the text is cluttered with statistical data on the cinema networks and their use.

To conclude, Pavel Skopal’s book can be shortly characterized as a long-awaited achievement in mapping the state-controlled culture, based on a model methodological basis. The concept of the Northern Triangle proves to be a suitable starting point for research into cinema as part of the state economy, and an educational and diplomatic instrument, or as a significant indicator of changes in leisure activities and cultural life of the 20th century towns and countryside.

The Czech version of this review, entitled Čím vším jsou dějiny filmu, was originally published in Soudobé dějiny, Vol. 23, No. 1–2 (2016), pp. 217–219.

Translated by Blanka Medková

Abstracts

Essays and Articles

American Policy, the Korean War, and the Lessons of Munich

Petr Mareš

In this article, the author traces how the lessons of the Munich Agreement of September 1938 (on the basis of which Czechoslovakia was forced to cede the predominantly ethnic-German Sudetenland to Nazi Germany) were projected into US foreign policy. In Part One of the essay, based on published sources and unpublished documents from American archives, the topic is covered from the late 1930s to the outbreak of the Korean War (which is discussed in Part Two, to be published in the next issue of *Soudobé dějiny*).

The author looks at immediate American reaction to the North Korean attack on South Korea in June 1950, and then returns to autumn 1938 to test his hypothesis that behind the unusual unity of this reaction was the ingrained negative attitude of the United States to the policy of appeasement. He demonstrates that since the late 1930s the terms 'Munich' and 'appeasement' have remained forever linked in US policy and US public discourse, and he discusses the transformations of the perception of the two concepts during the Second World War, after the war, and at the beginning of the Cold War. The lessons of Munich, he argues, have drawn on the idealistic as well as the pragmatic sources of US policy, because they stem from the conviction that appeasement is immoral and does not pay. Whereas in Roosevelt's policy the general lesson was not to allow Hitler's expansion, Harry S. Truman, Roosevelt's successor in the White House, had to use the lessons, despite his own self-restraint, to try to counter the steps of a wartime ally, Stalin's Soviet Union. The Communist take-over in Czechoslovakia in February 1948 and the blockade of the western sectors of Berlin beginning in the summer of that year were important events on this path.

The author further considers the influence of this factor on the US approach taken in the Korean War in the early 1950s. He seeks to demonstrate that the decision of the Truman Administration to substantially intervene in this conflict was a direct consequence of the negative attitude to the policy of appeasing an aggressor. This attitude was also shared by the American public, regardless of party affiliation and political sympathies. Arguments based on the rejection of appeasement, however, soon began to be used by the Republicans as ammunition in the election campaign against the incumbent Democrats and the choice of strategy also became a matter of dispute in the choice of strategy on the Korean battlefield after China entered the war. Whereas the White House wished to avoid an unlimited conflict with China, the Commander-in-Chief of the United Nation Command in Korea, General Douglas MacArthur (1880–1964), was in favour of an uncompromising approach and in fact ceased to obey President Harry S. Truman (1884–1972). After being relieved of his command by Truman, MacArthur became the chief critic of his policies and a hero of Truman's Republican opponents. In spring 1951, the Republicans organized a special Senate committee hearing on the circumstances of MacArthur's suspension. The author looks in detail at this exceptional clash in post-war US domestic politics, which was meant to be triumphantly used against MacArthur, but gradually changed into a debacle in consequence of, among other things, the compelling testimonies of Secretary of State Dean Acheson (1893–1971) and Secretary of Defense George C. Marshall (1880–1959). In his conclusion, the author seeks to demonstrate how other US presidents returned to the 'lessons of Munich', and he argues that these lessons became Truman's lasting political legacy and as such became firmly rooted in American political discourse.

**Terror, Failure, Resistance:
Conflicting Memory of Armed Acts of Anti-Communist Resistance
in Czechoslovakia**

Markéta Devátá

This article is concerned with the memory and commemoration of acts of armed force which were committed as part of the civilian resistance to the Communist régime in its 'founding period' after February 1948. It focuses on how memory is constituted around this minority form of anti-Communist resistance, particularly by means of memorial sites in the process of their formation in the period before the Changes that began in mid-November 1989 and also afterwards. In the first part of the article, the author looks at armed conflicts at the edge of the Iron Curtain, that is, on the western borders of Communist Czechoslovakia. She seeks to demonstrate that the way of looking at border crossings by people fleeing to the West is still considerably influenced by the memory and commemorative activities of veterans of the former border guards, amongst whom dominates the image of these refugees as internal enemies of the State. The second part of the article is

devoted to instances of so-called ‘political murder’, that is, acts of violence against Communist politicians, which are connected particularly with villages. Most of these stories are gradually being forgotten; society does not want to recall them. An exception, however, is the memory of the sad events in the village of Babice, in the Bohemian-Moravian uplands, in 1951, which has repeatedly been used by politicians. In the third part of the article, the author considers the social discourse about the ethical dimension of armed anti-Communist resistance, which is almost exclusively focused on the atypical case of the group led by the Mašín brothers, and the process of forming the memory of the three resistances (the first, against Austria-Hungary during the Great War; the second, against the German occupying forces during the Second World War; and the third, against the Communist régime during the Cold War). She describes the commemorative activities of the Confederation of Political Prisoners as part of the strategy to bolster the social standing of the third, anti-Communist resistance, and she points to certain analogies between the unchallenged memories of political prisoners and the memories of the former border guards in contemporary historiography.

How Much Totalitarianism Remained in the “Normalization” Era?

Karel Hrubý

This article considers the nature of Communist régimes, particularly in Czechoslovakia. The author searches for an answer to the question of whether the political and social system launched in Czechoslovakia in late February 1948 maintained its totalitarian nature throughout its existence, or whether, in its later phases, it had already become another type of totalitarianism, or had even developed into a quite different kind of undemocratic or authoritarian régime. The author develops the topic, which is still a matter of dispute, against the background of changing theoretical reflections on Communist régimes. He first recapitulates the main criticism of ‘revisionist’ historiography regarding the lack of classic models of totalitarianism, and he comments on some of their competing interpretations, pointing out how later versions of the totalitarianism theory problematized or weakened some of the ‘revisionist’ criticisms, and also how they reacted to the changes that began after Stalin’s death in 1953. By comparing the two main approaches – one that declares that there is such a thing as totalitarianism, the other that rejects such a notion (or at least suggest its revision) –, the author traces the connections between the individual phases that the Communist dictatorship and society passed through in Czechoslovakia from 1948 to 1989. He thus seeks to discover the extent to which the preserved structures and operations of the totalitarian way of ruling (dictatorship) changed or remained the same since the initial period (post-February 1948), and, at the same time, endeavours to discover how, over the decades, political ideas and value systems were preserved or, by contrast, changed in the consciousness of society. Conceptually, the author starts from the definition

of post-totalitarianism which appears in the later works of the political scientist Juan José Linz, and thus, after the end of Stalinist totalitarianism, he distinguishes in Czechoslovakia the period of early post-totalitarianism, the late 1960s attempt to reform the system, the Husák years of hard-line post-totalitarianism, and the post-totalitarianism of the late 1980s decline. In his opinion, the ‘Normalization’ régime in Czechoslovakia, although weakened and increasingly dysfunctional, maintained many of the totalitarian structures (political, security, economic, social) and practices (of power, ideology, surveillance, and repression) until its collapse, unlike the régimes in Poland and Hungary, where totalitarianism was slowly eroded.

Adolf Hitler’s *Mein Kampf*

Milan Hauner

Christian Hartmann, Thomas Vordermeyer, Othmar Plöckinger, and Roman Töppel (eds.). *Hitler, Mein Kampf: Eine kritische Edition*. Munich and Berlin: Institut für Zeitgeschichte, 2016, vols 1–2, 947 + 1019 pp., ISBN 978-3-9814052-3-1. With Edith Raim, Pascal Trees, Angelika Reizle, and Martina Seewald-Mooser. Includes illustrations, maps, a list of all known translations of *Mein Kampf* before 1945, a list of abbreviations, a detailed bibliography in three parts (before 1932, 1933–45, after 1945), and four indexes (a biographical index and indexes of persons, places, and subjects).

In the form of an essay, the author comments here on the 2016 critical edition of Hitler’s *Mein Kampf* (1925–26), edited by a team of historians from the Institute of Contemporary History in Munich, with additional assistance from others. He contemplates the nature and importance of this book and discusses its author and his meaning in the history of twentieth-century central Europe. He then discusses some of the ideas of *Mein Kampf*, and clarifies the historical context of the work, returning to the circumstances that led to its being written and published. He also discusses some of Hitler’s fellow travellers in the Nazi movement, who were of importance for this key work. The author brings up episodes in Hitler’s life, and pays particular attention to his still unclear transformation from an apolitical soldier into a zealous antisemite and political agitator of exceptional rhetorical skill, who was able to bewitch the German people and become their Führer. The author also discusses the difficulties that the editors of this critical edition had to struggle with, and he praises their work as utterly solid and astonishingly thorough, particularly the commentaries in the huge critical apparatus. The author concludes by discussing reactions both to the first edition of *Mein Kampf* and to this critical edition, and he discusses various attempts to publish a Czech edition.

Book Reviews

On the Waves of RFE: The First Historical Synthesis of the Czechoslovak Service of Radio Free Europe

Petr Orság

Tomek, Prokop. *Československá redakce Radio Free Europe: Historie a vliv na československé dějiny*. [The Czechoslovak service of Radio Free Europe: Its development and impact on Czechoslovak history]. Prague: Academia, 2015, 422 pp. + 32 pp. of illus., ISBN 978-80-200-2490-9.

The book under review is considered here in the context of current research on the history of Radio Free Europe and Tomek's own work in which he presents a synthesis of his long-standing interest in the topic. The reviewer sees the contribution of the book chiefly in its bringing together and clearly sorting out a wide range of facts, and, to a lesser extent, its preliminary analyses. The author chronologically traces the development of Radio Free Europe, especially the Czechoslovak Service, and also determines the effects of its broadcasts and the interaction with its audience at home behind the Iron Curtain as well as amongst the top-level Czechoslovak politicians of the time. With this work, he has filled a palpable gap in the Czech historiography of mass media in exile, and has established an important basis for further research.

Southern Hospitality? Czechoslovak Relations with Africa until 1989

Rosamund Johnston

Dvořáček, Jan – Piknerová, Linda – Záhořík, Jan. *A History of Czechoslovak Involvement in Africa: Studies from the Colonial through the Soviet Eras*. Lewiston, NY & Lampeter, The Edwin Mellen Press, 2014, 208 pp.

Muehlenbeck, Philip: *Czechoslovakia in Africa, 1945 – 1968*. London, Palgrave MacMillan, 2016, 271 pp.

Two recent volumes on Cold War Czechoslovak involvement in Africa challenge the notion of Czechoslovak powerlessness during the socialist period. On the scale of Czechoslovak autonomy from Moscow, however, the works in question diverge. Philip Muehlenbeck goes furthest in emphasizing the self-interest underpinning Prague's Africa policy. Dvořáček, Piknerová and Záhořík's volume, meanwhile, shows how Prague's levels of autonomy from Moscow varied from decade to decade and state to state. While Muehlenbeck reflects on the racism experienced by African exchange students in Prague, *A History of Czechoslovak Involvement in*

Africa suggests that racism was a problem above all in Moscow: in Russifying the negative aspects of African involvement in this way, the authors miss an opportunity to analyze a broader Czechoslovak ambivalence toward socialist-era Africa policy. Both books make a convincing case for the particular importance of the African continent to Czechoslovak diplomacy during the Cold War. This review asks whether, conversely, relative unimportance on the global scale might provide a useful framework for future analyses of Czechoslovakia's room to maneuver in the global south during the period.

An Arduous Road of the Exile toward the Fall of the Iron Curtain

Martin Nekola

Raška, Francis D. *Dlouhá cesta k vítězství: Československá exilová hnutí po roce 1968*. Trans. from the English by Vojtěch Pacner. Prague: Academia, 2015, 272 pp., ISBN 978-80-200-2472-5.

The book under review is a Czech translation of *The Long Road to Victory: A History of Czechoslovak Exile Organizations after 1968* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, distributed by Columbia UP, 2012). Raška's work is, according to the reviewer, the result of careful research using personal papers and other archival documents in the Czech Republic, Great Britain, the United States, and Italy. It is a unique comprehensive work that offers much that is new and of interest, concerning a little known chapter in the history of Czechs and Slovaks in exile. In nine chapters, the author acquaints us with Czechoslovak life in exile, that is, clubs, organizations, and individuals, after they had caught their second wind, and were listened to by other exiles after 1968, once the West had received the large wave of Czechoslovak refugees driven out of their country by the Warsaw Pact military intervention. Although the book under review does not, in that sense, cover the full range of exiles and their activities, it remains an extraordinarily useful work of reference.

On Science in the Service of People

Jan Randák and Marek Fapšo

Olšáková, Doubravka. *Věda jde k lidu! Československá společnost pro šíření politických a vědeckých znalostí a popularizace věd v Československu ve 20. století*. [Science meets the people! The Czechoslovak society for the dissemination of political and scientific knowledge and popularization of science in Czechoslovakia in the 20th century]. (Šťastné zítřky, vol. 10.) Prague: Academia, 2014, 678 pp., ISBN 978-80-200-2318-6.

The two reviewers praise this volume, “Science meets the people! The Czechoslovak society for the dissemination of political and scientific knowledge and popularization of science in Czechoslovakia in the 20th century” as a work on a hitherto neglected topic of Communist adult education in which a fundamental role was played by the Czechoslovak Society for the Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge, which was founded in 1952, and was, from the mid-1960s, operating under the name of the Socialist Academy. In addition to the reviewers’ acknowledgement of the wealth of facts presented here and the compelling interpretations of particular topics, they also find conceptual and methodological shortcomings in the work, which, in their opinion, have made it impossible to get more out of the topic. The author has thus failed, they argue, to give a more well-rounded account of the relations between centralized decision-making and the practical application of adult education at the regional level, and does not provide an answer to the important questions of how Communist adult education was special, and in what respect it was merely following more universal modern efforts to educate the masses.

Supervision against Artistic Freedom: The Czech Philharmonic Orchestra after February 1948

Václav Nájemník

Iblová, Michaela. *Česká filharmonie pod tlakem stalinské kulturní politiky v padesátých letech*. [The Czech Philharmonic Orchestra under the pressure of Stalinist cultural policy in the 1950s]. Prague: Karolinum, 2014, 247 pp., ISBN 978-80-246-2332-0.

The reviewer first offers an overview of scholarly research on music (primarily classical music) and music culture in relation to politics and institutions in Czechoslovakia under the Communist régime. The author of the book under review, he claims, is one of the first Czechs to ask how and why a leading music ensemble could operate in totalitarianism and even in opposition to it. The core of book comprises the author’s discussion of the Czech Philharmonic during the first decade after the Communist takeover in late February 1948, in the face of continuous efforts by the régime to keep an eye on the orchestra by means of Party institutions and, particularly, the

secret police. The author uses excursions into Czechoslovak life from the 1960s to the 1980s, and writes that the efforts to enlist Czech Philharmonic musicians to collaborate with the secret police were practically continuous throughout the period. She discusses the programme and production plans of the orchestra, in which the musicians had to accept compromises with the demands to perform ideologically engaged works. Despite some minor criticisms, the reviewer, on the whole, judges the book positively, particularly concerning the factual information it presents.

All the Things Film History Is

Alena Šlengerová

Skopal, Pavel. *Filmová kultura severního trojúhelníku: Filmy, kina a diváci českých zemí, NDR a Polska 1945–1970*. [Film culture of the Northern Triangle: Films, cinemas and audiences of the Czech Lands, the GDR and Poland 1945–1970] (Filmová knihovna, vol. 3.). Brno: Host, 2014, 308 pp., ISBN 978-80-7294-971-7.

The author of the book under review uses the approaches of the ‘new film history’, which frees him from writing about film using traditional categories and periodizations, and allows him to turn his attention to economic aspects of the film industry or to distribution mechanisms and audiences. That approach entails overlaps with other disciplines and work with a wide range of material. The author has undertaken extensive research in the archives of six countries, and has critically and organically linked this research together with information from other sources, including eyewitness accounts. The first part of this methodologically exemplary publication is devoted to cultural transfers in the “Northern Triangle” (Czechoslovakia, East Germany, and Poland) with other Soviet bloc countries and also with capitalist states. In the second part, in the context of Stalinism and the subsequent Thaw, the author looks at the role of film distribution which the régime sought use to integrate its citizens into society. An exceptional contribution of the publication, according to the reviewer, is the third part, which focuses on film-audience reception, supported by local case studies on the behaviour and attitudes of Brno, Leipzig and Poznan audiences after the Second World War.

Authors

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životopis slovem a obrazem [Hitler day by day: The complete biography through words and pictures] (Prague, 2017).

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Rosamund Johnston is a student of modern European history at New York University. She is currently teaching at the Faculty of Humanities, Charles University, Prague. Her doctoral dissertation focuses on how radio was employed to manage space and populations in Czechoslovakia between 1945 and 1969. Her research interests include sound studies, media and communications, migration and oral history. She has published in Czech in Pavel Mücke and Martin Brychta (eds.): *Na hranicích mezi minulostí a přítomností: Současné perspektivy orální historie* [On the edge between past and present: Current perspectives of oral history] (Ostrava, 2016) and a chapter on foreign radio listening in Czechoslovakia in 1948 is shortly to appear in Muriel Blaive (ed.) *Perceptions of Society in Communist Europe: Regime Archives and Public Opinion* (London, 2018).

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Book Reviews (Petr Orság, Rosamund Johnston, Martin Nekola, Jan Randák – Marek Fapšo, Václav Nájemník, Alena Šlengerová)